

An Uncertain Future - Council COPES with Trenton Power Shift

President's Report Nicholas C. Yovnelo

The election for Governor of our state is now over. Congratulations Governor-elect Christie. Members are already asking: what does this mean for our bargaining unit and for public higher education? The simple answer is we don't know. We will notify the Governor-elect of our desire to work cooperatively with his administration in seeking bi-partisan support for a desperately needed funding source for NJ public colleges and universities, in particular their operating and capital project budgets.

No doubt, many of you have read the lead article in the November 10 *Star Ledger*, which reports that according to unnamed advisors, Governor-elect Christie is examining the possibility of declaring a "financial emergency", which he believes would allow him to override our Agreement and the Agreement on furloughs and wage deferrals negotiated this summer that included a no-layoff guarantee. Christie stated at a news conference "It may turn out that there are no layoffs. If we can reach a fair agreement with all parties that recognizes the pressures that the taxpayers are under, I would hope to have no layoffs. But that's going to be a product of the negotiations that we are going to have. So that's not something that can wait."

Our July 7, 2009 Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) dealing with furloughs and wage deferrals was negotiated by the Governor's office with the participation and approval



of the colleges/university administrations. Despite comments attributed to Chris Christie during the campaign and in the press that he is not bound by this agreement, it is our position that his administration will be legally obligated to honor its provisions.

With respect to the MOA, this agreement also provides for the establishment of a state-wide committee that will report to the Governor on the status of public higher education in New Jersey with respect to tuition, ratio of administrators to faculty, ratio of full-time faculty to adjunct faculty, compensation, graduation rates, overall state support and other factors. We hope that this report provides the basis for a collaborative effort to improve the system.

Meanwhile, we have unfinished business with the current administration. As I mentioned above, the MOA calls for the creation of a state-wide committee, consisting of management and labor representatives and outside experts to study crucial elements of our system of public higher education. Now that the election is over it is up to Governor Corzine to appoint the committee and establish a firm time table for completion of its mission.

Our current four year master agreement expires July 1, 2011. We anticipate very tough negotiations because of the economic forecast for the nation and the State of NJ over the next several years. Will the governor-elect add another dimension to contract negotiations that will make reaching an agreement that much more difficult? While Mr. Christie's campaign rhetoric was unfriendly to public employees, it is too early to tell what he will do as governor. We hope he realizes that it will be in the best interest of the State, the citizens of New Jersey and all the state employee unions to reach a fair agreement.

On the legislative front, both Governor Corzine and the legislative leadership had indicated that they were committed to passing what is known as "non-imposition" legislation to prevent management from imposing its final offer should negotiations reach an "impasse." This would provide parity for state and municipal unions with their counter parts in the K-12 sector, who already have this protection.

Another item that unites all public sector unions is the "scope of negotiations" bill. The intent of this bill is to restore broader collective bargaining rights to public employee unions and to reverse the notoriously restrictive Ridgefield Park decision. The bill would limit the use of "management prerogative" as a shield for refusing to negotiate over many

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SECOND AFT NEW JERSEY CONFERENCE A SUCCESS

On September 11-12, 2009, over 150 AFT members gathered for the second annual AFT/New Jersey Conference, held in the Hilton Hotel in East Brunswick, NJ. All sectors of the AFT in New Jersey were represented—senior public colleges/universities, county colleges, K-12 and health care. Governor Jon Corzine was the featured speaker.

Political Organizing took center stage at the conference. Chris Runge and Chris Mattingly, from the AFT Political Mobilization Department, joined Chris Aikin, AFT/New Jersey Political Organizer in discussing membership outreach, COPE fund-raising and strengthening our presence in the political arena. Specific training exercises were conducted to develop political organizing skills. Chris Aikin also provided a general overview of AFT/New Jersey's political activities in the upcoming elections for Governor and State Assembly. On the federal level, he explained the AFT's strategy of building ongoing relationships with the NJ Congressional delegation and encouraged activists to volunteer to serve on local committees that would meet regularly with their Congress persons to educate them on our issues.

panding health insurance coverage for children, establishing marriage equality and the abolition of the death penalty. He praised the labor movement as the answer to gross income disparity in our nation.



Adrienne Eaton (Rutgers AAAUP-AFT), Nick Yovnello (Council Governor Corzine), Ann Twomey (HPAE) & Bill Lipkin (NJSFT)

Other workshops with direct Council involvement included Public Pensions, led by Executive Director Steve Young, one for Treasurers, led by Council Staff Bookkeeper Carol Itskowitz, Bullying in the Workplace, led by Staff Representative Debra Davis and Grievance Handling, led by Staff Representative Bennett Muraskin. Adjunct faculty issues were addressed in a panel discussion led by William Lipkin, President of the New Jersey State Federation of Teachers along with Elaine Bobrove, President of United Adjuncts of NJ and Mike Slott, President of the Rutgers AAUP-AFT part-time local.



The AFT in New Jersey has grown recently due to the organizing of administrative employees at Rutgers University, the affiliation of Rutgers AAUP and other organizing successes. There are now over 35,000 employees represented by AFT spread throughout the Council, Rutgers AAUP-AFT, the Union of Rutgers Administrators, the New Jersey State Federation of Teachers and the Health Professionals and Allied Employees. Yet the AFT in this state does not wield political power commensurate with its numbers. The political organizing workshops were well attended and well received. Now it is up to the Council and its locals to move forward with a coherent and dynamic political action program. Chris Aikin is fully prepared to assist you.

Speaking of politics, Governor Corzine was present to accept the AFT/New Jersey endorsement and to appeal for support in his reelection bid. He conceded that he was constrained by the economic climate from doing more for public higher education, but he pledged to assert greater State oversight over the management of the state colleges/universities should he win a second term. He cited among his accomplishments, the Paid Family Leave program, ex-



Political Organizing workshop

Ed Muir, Assistant Director of the AFT Research Department conducted a workshop on Union Research and Employer Budget Transparency which provided valuable information on how to research state college/university budgets. Brian Adams (labor attorney for NJSFT) led a discussion on issues that arise in the workplace surrounding digital recording, social networking websites, and other technology issues with legal ramifications. Broader social issues were

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CONFERENCE A SUCCESS

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Health & Safety Plenary Session

addressed by workshops on New Jersey's new Paid Family Leave bill and Health Care Reform.

There were three plenary sessions—the first featuring State Education Commissioner Lucille Davy, the second addressing Health and Safety issues in the workplace including preparation for the outbreaks of H1N1 and the third on legislative and political mobilization. Council Executive Vice-

President and President of MSU Local 1904 Dierdre Glen Paul participated as a panelest in Health and Safety Issues in the Workplace along with union activists with experience in preparation for flu/pandemic season. Also discussed were the latest updates for the workplace from AFT. Peter Guzzo, our lobbyist in Trenton and AFT NJ's Chris Aikin led the legislative and political mobilization session.

Other attendees included a representative from the AFT teachers local in New Orleans, AFT Regional Director Mark Bostic and AFT National Representative currently assigned to New Jersey, Sean Richman.

According to Council President Nicholas Yovnello, "These conferences have obvious educational value, but they are also important in building union solidarity. Meeting an adjunct from a county college, a nurse working in a private hospital, a teacher from Newark or a Rutgers employee broadens our perspective on what the AFT means to workers throughout our state. Exchanging ideas and strategies across sectors strengthens us all. We also get to see AFT National staff in action. In these difficult times, AFT has proven that it is a powerful and constructive force for progressive change and that it exists to serve our needs."

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items affecting terms and conditions of employment. The Council needs the latitude to be creative at the bargaining table if we are to craft a collective bargaining agreement that is acceptable to all parties.

A small group of public employee union leaders are currently in discussion with the legislative leaders and representatives of various state agencies over the terms of a Scope of Negotiations and a Non-imposition legislative bill and the best strategy to ensure passage. Unfortunately, outgoing Governor Corzine will not have the clout necessary to get these bills passed by the legislature. However, we believe that he will sign them into law if we are successful in getting the legislature to adopt them. To have Non-imposition

enacted into law when we begin bargaining for a new agreement will be a tremendous advantage and protection.

The legislature must be convinced that there is support for the legislation we seek. Therefore, we will be asking the COPE committees of the Locals to organize visits to State legislators in their district or Trenton offices and to initiate a statewide campaign to bombard legislators with personal visits, letters, e-mails and phone calls. If these actions are not taken, we will be unable to counter any pressure generated against these labor law reforms by high powered lobbyists hired by State agencies, our own higher education institutions and other public entities.

Beginning in January 2010, the two major parties will be sharing the reins of power in Trenton. It is essential that we maintain a presence in the State House. To engage in effective lobbying effort, we need your participation in the COPE payroll deduction program. Donate \$5.00 per pay period or whatever you can afford to fund our efforts on your behalf.

Consider participating in COPE as an investment in your future.

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MEMBER ASSISTANCE SERVICE AVAILABLE

If you need assistance with stress, mental health problems or substance abuse that is affecting your job performance—or if anyone in your family is experiencing similar problems—help is available from Healthcare Assistance with Member Support (HCAMS). **This is a**

free service available to the entire bargaining unit—and yet another good reason to join the UNION.

For more information on this service, please visit the Council's web site at www.cnjscl.org

Another Botched Health Benefits Program State Health Benefit Plan's "Flexible Spending Account" is anything but flexible.



The Council office has received numerous complaints about reimbursement denials from the State's Flexible Spending Account (FSA) administrator "Fringe Benefits Management Company" (FBMC). This is an incredible development since the money in these FSA accounts comes solely from members' pre-tax dollars.

What is FSA?

The FSA is an approved IRS benefit program called Tax\$ave that lets eligible public employees deposit pre-tax salary dollars into a managed account to take care of certain medical, dental and dependent care expenses.

There are several components to the FSA each with specific enrollment criteria.

The Premium Option Plan (POP) allows employees to pay any State Health Benefits Program medical and/or dental premiums they have with before-tax dollars. Enrollment in the POP is automatic unless enrollment is declined.

The Unreimbursed Medical Flexible Spending Account (FSA) allows employees to set aside money to pay for qualified medical and dental expenses not paid by any group benefits plan under which they or their dependents are covered. Reenrollment is required each calendar year.

The Dependent Care Flexible Spending Account (FSA) allows an employee to set aside funds to pay for anticipated expenses related to dependent care required to permit the employee and

spouse to work. Reenrollment is required each calendar year.

By enrolling in this program, participating employees avoid federal taxes and ostensibly, they save money. (<http://www.state.nj.us/treasury/pensions/taxsave.htm>). However, after reviewing members' complaints we've discovered that the FSA is anything but flexible.

The Problem

FBMC administers your flex accounts for the Division of Pensions and Benefits. Once you are enrolled and determine the amount of pre-tax dollars to set aside, FBMC issues a card to be used like a debit card. In the past, under a different administrator, there were few if any denials of payment. Now however, FBMC rejects the card at drug stores, doctors' offices, etc., so that you have to pay up-front with a check or other credit cards. After being rejected, FBMC further impedes the



reimbursement process by challenging claims and then demanding excessive and intrusive documentation for details about medical conditions, procedure codes, etc. In other words, FBMC seems to be determining the medical necessity of some eligible expenses to either reject or reimburse claims.

So begins a catch-22 situation whereby you go through the time and trouble of putting together the requested documentation and fax it to FBMC. Often, they lose your fax or claim not to have received it. While you are busy verifying that you sent your information or you go through the trouble of resending it, FBMC automatically puts a 'freeze' on your card. Until the situation is re-

solved, you have to keep paying all covered expenses. The worst part of this scenario is if this Byzantine process takes a long time to fix — say several weeks or a month— and you are near the end of your plan year, you could end up having the unused balance in your account forfeited to the State. In effect, you take a salary cut that by law you cannot recoup.

The Fix

If you log in to your FBMC account and scroll down to the NEWS menu, you will see that FBMC is aware of its claims denials and that members are upset about the possibility of losing their unused balances to the State. In fact FBMC's notice is written in a soft tone that says, "hey, we're in this together" — but do not be fooled. The State and FBMC are in it together. You however, may be left out in the cold with no Flex account balance. Don't let this happen to you. Even though your union has contacted the Governor's Office of Employee Relations to start an investigation (if necessary we are prepared to file a grievance alleging a reduction in health benefits) you should be proactive about knowing your rights. There is a list of FAQs on FBMC's website about the deadlines for reimbursements but the bottom line is that you must know when the end of your plan year occurs. You can find out more from your enrollment documents or you benefits department on campus.

In the meantime, keep calling and complaining to FBMC at: www.myfmc.com or mail in your complaints to the Division of Pensions and Benefits at: Division of Pensions and Benefits 50 West State Street, PO Box 295, Trenton, NJ 08625-0295 (Attention: Ms. Florence Sheppard).

Finally, let your local union or the Council office know if you are experiencing problems with FBMC reimbursements. We are here to help.

* FBMC account service numbers are: (609)984-1594 or (609)292-8256.

Meet Your Union Reps on the State Health Benefits Plan

The State Health Benefits Program (SHBP) was established in 1961 under N.J.S.A. 52:14-17.25 et seq., to provide health benefits to State employees, retirees, and their dependents. The SHBP was extended to employees, retirees, and dependents of participating local public employers in 1964. Local employers must adopt a resolution to participate in the SHBP. Rules governing the operation and administration of the program are found in Title 17, Chapter 9 of the New Jersey Administrative Code.

The State Health Benefits Commission is the executive body established by statute to be responsible for operation of the SHBP. The Commission meetings are open to the public and are conducted at the Division of Pensions and Benefits in Trenton. Plan members are entitled to appeal to the Commission for resolution of any complaints after they have completed the formal grievance procedure (appeals process might be better than grievance procedure) of their plan administrator.

Labor has a "seat at the table" because the Commission includes two union representatives. These positions were created by legislation at the urging of several labor leaders, including Council President Nick Yovnello on behalf of AFT members employed at the state colleges/universities. They are appointed by the NJ AFL-CIO's Public Employee Committee. However, there are three other commissioners representing the administration. This at times makes it difficult to move a pro-union agenda.

Current union representatives are Patrick Nowlan, Executive Director of Rutgers University AAUP-AFT, and Dudley Burdge, Staff Representative of CWA local 1032.

Union representation on the Commission has been important in dealing with the increased number of union grievances related to insurance company initiatives aimed at diminishing existing coverage. Attempts to reduce out-

patient mental health services and creation of exemptions for non-biological mental health groups are being met with resistance from your union representatives on the Commission. Union reps have pushed to protect member treatment by "out of network" providers – especially in the field of mental health – who do not wish to participate in the Magellan/Horizon Blue Cross Blue Shield plans. Magellan is trying to "manage" the out of network benefit which potentially compromises care and confidentiality.

Recently, union representatives were instrumental in modifying the unrealistic deadlines initially required for submission of dependent eligibility confirmation/changes. Union representation on the commission also addressed union members' concerns related to possible identity theft in the dependent eligibility procedures.

Your union representatives continue to function as watchdogs on your behalf regarding proposed changes in health coverage. In some cases proposed changes may violate existing contracts, and in others may simply be illegal under existing statutes.

Your union representatives on the SHBP Commission continue to advocate on your behalf. They constantly remind other plan members that the SHBP was established for people, not profits – and defend hard-won gains established by the legislature and through collective bargaining on behalf of union members and their families.



Patrick Nowlan

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In Memoriam - David Emmons & Ralph Bean

Educator and labor activist **David Emmons** passed away October 21, 2009. Dr. Emmons first joined the Richard Stockton College faculty in 1982 as an instructor, taking a leave to pursue his advanced degree from the University of Chicago (Ph.D. in Sociology, 1986) and returning as an Assistant Professor of Criminal Justice in 1987. He earned tenure and promotion to Associate Professor in 1994 and was promoted to Professor in 2005.

During his tenure at the College, David served as President of the Stockton Federation of Teachers (SFT) from 2000



David Emmons

– 2004, was a member of the Council's Executive Council, and a longtime council delegate. Dr. Emmons was a member of the Council bargaining team for the 2004-2007 agreements for both the FT/PT Faculty and the Adjunct Faculty.

David pioneered one of Stockton's largest courses ever to be offered: Understanding September 11, the curriculum for which he co-created with his colleague, the late Professor Paul Lyons. Several hundred of the photographs that David himself took in the

days immediately following September 11, 2001, have served as a central teaching artifact in the course materials.

An avid scholar, Dr. Emmons was the author of thirteen journal articles and monographs and the co-author of the book *Environmental Crime: The Criminal Justice System's Role in Protecting the Environment*.

Dr. Emmons is survived by his daughter, Molly, brothers John and James Emmons, and his father, Alton Emmons.

Atlantic City native **Ralph Bean** died on Sunday, July 19, 2009. His father, also named Ralph, tried to unionize milk drivers and was fired and

Congratulations! You're Hired — Now What?

You're a newly appointed professional staff member and you are looking forward to building a long and successful career in your chosen field at your institution. To do that however, you have to make it through five full years of employment before you are awarded a multi-year contract and more likely than not, no one from human resources explained how you go about getting reappointed.

Reappointment can be a confusing and daunting prospect. Even though Article XIII.J. in our contract states that all personnel procedures must be fair and equitable and universally applied to all reappointment candidates, each institution's procedures vary in terms of submission deadlines, document formatting, evaluation ratings, peer reviews, etc. That's why the first thing any new hire should do when facing that first reappointment process is run — not walk — to the local union for guidance.

Each local has a professional staff officer whose primary role is to answer your employment related questions and to provide general guidance regarding all personnel procedures and contract provisions. Your local's professional staff officer is also a member of the Council's Professional Staff Committee, which meets each semester to discuss mutual concerns, gather information related to negotiations and other suggestions for demands for contract negotiations. To see who is on the committee go to (http://cnjscl.org/Prof_Staff_Comm.htm)

We encourage you to visit your local union office to meet your professional staff representative and to become knowledgeable about the 'politics' of reappointment on your campus. After you've been reappointed a few times, it may be your turn to help a newly hired colleague navigate the system. Until then, we hope you find the following reappointment strategies helpful:

1. Be visible. Eventually, in the year you apply for a multi-year contract,

you will need your peers' and if applicable, faculty members' letters of recommendation.

2. Attend all meetings. Be on time and be prepared to participate.
3. Volunteer for school and college wide activities that are appropriate for professional staff service requirements (if any); if all positions are appointed or elected and you are not chosen, volunteer.
4. If possible, find a mentor—a multi-year colleague* (the Council is working with locals on forming a reappointment mentoring program for new hires and employees on annual contracts).
5. Ask a colleague who has been successfully reappointed to let you review his or her last reappointment papers. This is helpful so that you are not caught unawares on file formatting issues.
6. "Get along" with your colleagues. Be mindful of school/college politics and be careful about what you put in memos regarding anything that is in dispute. Consult the Union before you send anything about 'hot topics' that could be considered controversial, inflammatory or non-collegial. Memo wars have been known to end careers.
7. If you are in a faction-riven area, look out. Be nice to everybody and especially avoid the gossip game.
8. Avoid student/client complaints.
9. Remember that all supervisors are different. Some will be extremely helpful by assisting you with your application while others are barely interested in the process until your application reaches her/his desk.
10. Be sensitive to any subtle changes in your relationship with your supervisor. Sometimes by the time you get to your reappointment process, subtle changes can become huge and insurmountable obstacles to reappointment.

11. After your first reappointment—re-read your supervisor's reviews and letters carefully. Watch out for phrases like "we look to Mr. X to . . ." "We expect Ms. Y will..." **Take these comments as directives; they are not suggestions. These statements define goals for you to meet.**
12. If any processes set forth in your procedures are violated or not carried out, consult the Union immediately (even a missed calendar deadline is important!).
13. You have the right to respond to all letters or evaluations—**DO NOT FAIL TO DO SO.** If you need assistance in writing these responses, always ask the Union for help.
14. Your personnel folder: know its location. You have the right to review it. You may ask a Union representative to go with you to review the file (See article XXIX of the Agreement for information on your rights concerning personnel files).
15. Basic grievance information is found in Article VII of the Agreement. If you think you may have a grievance, consult your Union for advice and help.
16. Be pro-active — get involved in your local union, become familiar with the contract — especially Article XVI (Professional Staff) and Appendix I (Multi-Year Appointments for Professional Staff).
17. Remember that your union is your best ally on campus.

Best Wishes for a Successful Reappointment!



Bookmark Our Website: www.cnjscl.org

The Council publishes the VOICE twice a semester and we do our best to include up-to-date union news, but when you need crucial information about emerging issues on state health benefits, important legislation, AFT benefits, etc., you will find it on the Council's website at www.cnjscl.org. Surprisingly though, we find that too few members are not taking advantage of this useful tool.

Essential information is available *when you need it*, not just during business hours. For example, if you misplaced a copy of your contract, you can find the Full-time/Part-time and Adjunct Faculty Agreements in both HTML and PDF formats on the website. You can view them on your screen in HTML or download them in PDF format (you will need the Adobe Acrobat Reader — it's a free download at www.adobe.com).

Do you need a copy of the Memorandum of Agreement on Furloughs and Wage Freezes? It's there on the site along with a FAQ sheet to help you better understand the MOA and what it means to your employment situation.

Do you need to put your hands on an old VOICE article but you've already recycled your collection? The Council has archived VOICE editions (in PDF) back to December 2001 — just click on "Publications". This link will also take you to downloadable versions of informational pamphlets such as "Copyright — When It's Yours". All PDF documents on our website are available in a word or phrase searchable format.

Do you have a grievance? Not sure? The "Grievance Information" menu could be one of the most important features on the site. Anyone who has ever filed a grievance knows that it can be a confusing and arduous procedure. Yet, it is without a doubt the most useful tool the Union has in protecting your employment rights and this link should be the first place you check to see if management violated your rights under the contract.

Do you need financial advice or planning a trip? AFT Members Benefits is a direct link to the National AFT Plus Member Benefits Page. You will find a host of information

about the "Benefits of Belonging" ranging from financial services to travel and hotel discounts. It's good to be a member!

Are you nuts about politics or only mildly interested? The Political Action page provides members with the Union's latest legislative activities, information about why and how to join COPE and a user-friendly tool to contact your elected representatives at the state and national levels. Or, if you want to write a letter to the editor about something you found on the Political Action page, go to Useful Links. There you will find contact information for New Jersey's media outlets, state and national government, your local union's site as well as links to other public sector unions in the state.

Professional staff can find a host of information and useful tips for navigating through reappointment or reclassifications procedures and faculty can everything they need to know about New Jersey's tenure law — it's all there.

Finally, one of the most important features on the Council's site is "About the Council". It's where you can find out how the Council functions, where it's located, the services it provides to members and who the staff representatives and office personnel are who assist you with all your Union needs. We are sure you will agree that the Council's website helps fulfill its mission of protecting your rights and privileges public employees in New Jersey's institutions of higher education.

Above all, the Council's website is your site — created with you in mind. We are always improving the site in order to enhance your browsing experience and in fact, we have won AFT National awards for providing succinct, easy-to-find information to members. Whether you visit www.cnjscl.org only occasionally or you visit on a regular basis, please bookmark (add to favorites) the site on your browser.

Remember, your union is only a click away! — • —



In Memoriam - David Emmons & Ralph Bean

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blacklisted. The family moved often in search of work, especially during the depression. Ralph's early experiences instilled a keen sense of justice which led him to many civil rights causes, union work, and mediation. He earned a Ph.D. in mathematics in 1962. He was on the faculty at the University of Wisconsin and the University of Tennessee until he joined the original fac-



Ralph Bean

ulty of Stockton State College in 1971, where he taught until 2006.

Ralph was very active in the Stockton Federation of Teachers and the

Council, serving as SFT president on three separate occasions. He is survived by his wife, Eileen; his siblings, Joan, Judy and Larry; his children Justin, Marina and Adrian; and his grandchildren, Emma, Quentin, Preston, Devin, Dora and Olivia. He also had a deep appreciation of music, especially opera. He supported many causes including Amnesty International, SPCA, and the Philadelphia Opera. Ralph had requested that friends not send flowers or gifts. They should, instead, live a good life, as he did.

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OUR TAKE ON THE ELECTION RESULTS

Although we are all greatly disappointed at Governor Corzine's loss in his bid for re-election, there is some good news to report. The Assembly remains in Democratic hands and all the incumbent candidates in key races targeted by the Republicans were re-elected, including two of our best friends, Assemblywoman Linda Greenstein and Assemblyman Wayne De Angelo in the 14th district.

Overall, the Council endorsed 57 candidates for the State Legislature. Fifty-one were elected or re-elected, including 45 Democrats and six Republicans. In one of the hardest fought elections, Assemblymen Matthew Milam and Nelson Albano, Democrats, both retained their seats in the 1st district. Six of the seven "labor candidates", i.e. union members schooled by the NJ AFL-CIO, were victorious, including Thomas Giblin, a strong ally in the 34th district.

In local races, David Mayer, a Rowan local member, was elected Mayor of Gloucester Township, while Domenick Stampone, a mem-

ber of the AFT local at Raritan Valley Community College lost in the election for Passaic County Freeholder.

The Council thanks all members who worked for our endorsed candidates, in particular the volunteers from Local 4277 at Thomas Edison College who sacrificed their lunch hours to assist the NJ AFL-CIO in various aspects of its election work in support of the Corzine campaign.

There can be little doubt that the Council and its locals will face possible serious threats under the new Christie administration since he went out of his way to bash public employee unions in his campaign. The first thing locals can do to prepare for the battles ahead is to recruit new members and become active with their State legislators. All the locals should have membership chairpersons and should be actively working on membership recruitment. Please contact the Council should you require any assistance.

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NOT A MEMBER YET? BECOME INVOLVED!

Make **your** voice heard in the workplace by joining the union today. Occupational Liability Insurance comes with membership!

Visit your local office for a membership card or visit the council's website (www.cnjscl.org) for membership information.

Save Hundreds of Dollars on Your Home Heating Oil — Join New Jersey Citizen Action's Oil Group Today!

If you heat your home or commercial property with oil, the NJCA Oil Group can save you up to 25% on the cost of oil. During these troubling times of high energy prices, it is something you can't afford not to do!

Plus, if you sign up and reference **Council of NJ State College Locals or AFT**, your first year of membership is free! That is an additional \$15-\$30 savings. Membership dues are usually \$30, \$15 for Senior Citizens (over the age of 60).

The Oil Group is a consumer buyer's organization that uses our bulk purchasing power to negotiate lower prices for home heating oil. "For over twenty years, our group has successfully secured oil at discounted prices from well-established, full service oil companies,"

stated Wende Nachman, Oil Group Director. "Our companies provide full service contracts, credit options, budget billing and tank insurance," she added.

1. Members are guaranteed a fixed markup above wholesale prices for their heating oil purchases. Some suppliers even provide price-cap programs to further benefit members. Generally, the prices members receive are \$0.20 lower than average retail prices.

Currently there are thousands of members statewide. Buying oil through the group is very easy. After being assigned a supplier, members make arrangements for fuel delivery directly with the fuel company, but at the Oil Group price.

Call for an Oil Group application or visit their website at www.njcaoilgroup.com! Toll Free 1-800-464-8465 OR www.njcaoilgroup.com