

A MESSAGE FROM THE PRESIDENT

CARENE DOMATO

WELCOME BACK!

It feels like only yesterday we were wishing each other a happy summer.

I lost count on the first day of school of how many of our members asked, “Where did the summer go?” And no matter how many summers fly by, we all have trouble getting to sleep the night before we have to return to school. It is like being stuck in a recurring “Groundhog Day.”

Many of our members spent their summer working in order to make ends meet. When those dreaded “Back to School” sales started and the stores were packed with parents and kids trying to buy everything on their supply lists, we reached deep into our pockets to make sure all of our students had the supplies they needed. On average, teachers spend close to five hundred dollars on instructional materials and student supplies each year, and it isn’t for the tax deduction.

Last year, the US Supreme Court made a decision that could have torn our union apart: The Janus vs. AFSME decision was an attack on our right to organize, threatening our right to tenure, our right to negotiate a contract and a right to our hard-earned pensions. The decision was made with the sole purpose of destroying unions

MVFT EXECUTIVE BOARD AND DELEGATE ASSEMBLY 2019-2020

The MVFT Executive Board and Delegate Assembly represent our members with commitment and fervor. They not only come to school each day prepared to give our students the best they have to offer, they also go above and beyond to protect all of our MVFT members. Help them help you. Know your building reps, know your contract and attend your MVFT building meetings. Let’s work together to keep our union strong!



Pictured: Front Row L-R: Charlene Clarke, Thalia Langley, Christine Ceglie-Iaffaldano, Diane O’Sullivan, Jackie Simone, Angelique Perez, Jeanne Casino, Anita Amieiro and Isabel Garcia. 2nd Row L-R: Michael Malocsay, Stacia Fogg, Lynne Petrone, Nicole White, Modesta Curzio-Spies, Toba Duggan, Annette Coppola, Carene Domato, Rebecca Challop, Denisha Hawkins and Charissa Manigault. 3rd Row L-R: Lydia Rose, Andrea Hyatt-Copeland, Nikysha Copeland-Bey, Tashi Campbell-Tulloch, Nadine Shields-Alcade, Janeen Clayton, Tonja Hills, Kathryn Santoro, and Marcia Wint Back Row L-R: Shawn Harper-Tarrant, Melvin Campbell, David Israel, Richard Suozzo, Keith McCall, Donald Emerson, David Watson, Andre Upson, Karl Nifontoff, Eddie Sauls, Alexis Paupaw-Myrie and Michael Jernegons.

Photographer: Josephine Kirkland-Hudson

and decimating public schools. However, much to the surprise of the wealthy anti-union, anti-public school billionaires like Betsy Devos and the Koch brothers, the US Supreme Court decision brought the MVFT together, strengthening our conviction to unite and fight!

Every day, each and every one of you stand up for your rights and advocate for your students. Your commitment and dedication to our students is inspiring. I draw my strength from knowing how passionate you are about what you do and who you represent. We are a unique breed and every day I am proud to represent each and every one of you! As we continue to negotiate our contract, we ask all of our members to “Stand up for Yourself, Stand Up for Each Other, and Stand Together.”

WHAT DID YOU DO THIS SUMMER?

by Josephine Kirkland-Hudson



MVFT Executive Board at Summer Leadership Pictured L-R: Josephine Kirkland-Hudson, Jeanne Casino, Stacia Fogg, Keith McCall, Tashi Campbell-Tulloch, Angelique Perez and Carene Domato

The MVFT Executive Board attended the NYSUT Summer Leadership Conference which was held on August 14-16, 2019 at the Hilton Parsippany in Parsippany, New Jersey. Participants attended presentations from NYSUT leaders which included social injustice projects. The focus this year will be on advocacy, assistance and acceleration. Break-out sessions included topics on Internal Organizing, Grievances, Negotiations, Union Representation, Discipline & Discharge and Advocacy & Taylor Law. Our group was inspired, energized and solidified in their solidarity!

Mt. Vernon Federation of Teachers Welfare Fund Financial Counseling Program

Services Available to Each Member (at no cost):

1. Free financial consultations annually: Consultations are held at the Union office, schools, the local NYSUT office (in Tarrytown) or at Stacey Braun's office in New York City. You can receive up to six hours of time, in person or over the phone or in combination. For more information or to schedule an appointment call 1-888-949-1925.

Spouses and/or other family members may attend consultations with you.

2. Unlimited access to Stacey Braun's proprietary website: This password protected website is a useful financial tool intended to address many of your financial concerns. The website contains financial narratives, market data, quotes, charts, portfolio tracking, financial news, financial glossary, financial calculators, links to other useful financial sites and the email helpdesk. To access the site, please visit staceybraun.com and use "money" as your password and "mtvernon" as the User ID.

3. Unlimited use of Stacey Braun's email helpdesk: To provide answers to basic financial questions, you have access to qualified professionals via Stacey Braun's email helpdesk.

Topics for consultations include, but are not limited to:

Retirement Planning, Debt Management, Education Funding (i.e. 529 plans), Refinancing, Mortgages, Budgeting, Divorce, Investments (403B, Pension Advice), Taxes, Savings, Elder Care, Social Security, Second Opinions & Life, Disability and Long-Term Care Insurance

Consultation days at the union office are scheduled for the:

Oct. 28th, 2019 Nov. 4th, 2019
Dec. 9th, 2019 Jan. 13th, 2020

Call Stacey Braun Assoc. at **(888) 949-1925** to make an appointment. If these dates are not convenient for you, you should still contact Stacey Braun Associates and other arrangements can be made.



STACEY BRAUN PERSONNEL ARE PROHIBITED FROM SELLING INVESTMENTS OR INSURANCE PRODUCTS
STACEY BRAUN IS NOT AFFILIATED WITH ANY 403(B) PROVIDERS



The Trustees of the MVFT Welfare Fund are pleased to announce the Stacey Braun Financial Planning Benefit which is available to all active members and retirees who continue their benefits through the "Plus" plan.

Welcome New Hires!

Michelle Autiero	RTES	Special Education	Anne E. Murphy	MVHS	Social Studies
Patsy Belfonte	MVHS	Computer Technology	Mark Murray	RTES	Teaching Assistant
Andrew Binder	Hamilton	School Psychologist	Carlton Naughton, Sr.	Graham	Teaching Assistant
Dessrick Boothe	Parker	Elementary	Daniel Oldis	BTMS	Health
Shannon Bracey	Parker	Special Education	Cesar Olivares	MVHS	Social Studies
Falliemarie Caldwell	Pennington/Graham	School Counselor	Brianna Perricone	Pennington	Special Education
Amanda Candal	Graham	Elementary	Tara Peters	BTMS	Art
Gabrielle Carroscio	MVHS	Mathematics	Melissa Petrosino	Pennington	Special Education
Alexandria Castracucco	Williams	Elementary	Caroline Prydal	Grimes	Elementary
Samantha Cohen	MVHS	Culinary Arts	James Puma	Thornton PVAM	Social Studies
Jasmin Cooper	MVHS	ENL	Joanna Quaranta	Pennington	Elementary
Stephanie Cooper	Thornton PVAM	Teaching Assistant	Mercedes Quinteros	Grimes	Science
Melanie D'Addario	Williams	Elementary	Danielle Ramirez	RTES	Special Education
Dorrie Davis	RTES	Teaching Assistant	Dorothy Ranellone	Lincoln	Elementary
Scarlette Deleon	Pennington	Teaching Assistant	Jessica Redmond	Williams	Elementary
Jared Dendy	Pennington	Teaching Assistant	Isiah Rhodes	MVHS PreK	Teaching Assistant
Leandra Duncan-Ross	Williams	ESOL	Alfredo Riullano	RTES	Teaching Assistant
Robert Einfrank	BTMS	Music	Julio Rodriguez	Thornton PVAM	Science
Elizabeth Farone-Carpenter	Parker	Art	Ashley Rodriguez	Pennington	Elementary
Alexandra Fernandez	RTES	Teaching Assistant	Bernadette Romanelli	Lincoln	Business & Entrepreneur
Alexis Gonzalez	Pennington	Teaching Assistant	Nadine Rosas	Pennington	Teaching Assistant
Phylcia Green	Grimes	School Social Worker	Kimberly Ross	Graham	Reading
Rebecca Guziczek	MVHS	Social Studies	Danielle Roviezzo	Hamilton	ENL
Jessica Hazel	Traphagen	Speech & Language	ShaVonne Santos	Hamilton	Teaching Assistant
Brandon Hinds	Grimes	Teaching Assistant	Milette Shanon	Pennington	ENL
Rany Hosny	Thornton PVAM	Mathematics	Elizabeth Sheehan	Thornton PVAM	Social Studies/French
Jennifer Jackson	Thornton PVAM	Dance	Akilah Smith	Thornton PVAM	English
Judith Jones	RTES	Teaching Assistant	Alana Sokol	Grimes	Special Education
Jamela Joseph	Pennington	Special Education	Margie Soto	Grimes	ENL
Allison Kennelly (Serrano)	Hamilton	Bilingual Kindergarten	Lauren Spiegel	Holmes	Science
Teresa LaBianco	RTES	Library Media	Chad Ubiwa	MVHS	Photography
Elizabeth Lenci	Lincoln/Graham	Foreign Language	Thomas J. Walsh	Columbus	Physical Education
Michael Leone	Thornton PVAM	Mathematics	Essence Ware Bryant	Grimes	Social Worker
Janelle Manson-Henry	MVHS	ENL	Michael Webb	Pennington	Music
Samanthia Meek	Pennington	Teaching Assistant	Neka Williams	MVHS	English
Sahar Miandoabi	Pennington	Special Education	Richard Williamson	Thornton PVAM	Mathematics
Rochelle Miller	Williams	Teaching Assistant	Jenilee Wilson	BTMS	ESOL
Krystal Mims	Williams	Elementary	Jacqueline Zenon	Traphagen	ENL
Mona Moore(McRae)	Grimes	Teaching Assistant	Samantha Alvarenga	MVHS	Special Education
Elizabeth Motycka	MVHS	Special Education	Maria Ardila	Traphagen/Grimes	Spanish
Thomas Murawski	STEAM	Science	Aimee Arreguin	Edward Williams	Elementary



New Teacher Orientation held on August 26-28, 2019

SPOTLIGHT

"DADS TAKE YOUR CHILD TO SCHOOL DAY" IS FOR EVERYONE!

by Josephine Kirkland-Hudson, Social Worker, RTES/Lincoln



Rebecca Turner Elementary proves everyone can celebrate "Dads Take Your Child to School Day." On September 18, 2019, the school celebrated this event by encouraging positive male role models to take their children to school. Jamal Doggett, RTES principal, leads by example. He poses proudly with his father who has been an active participant since 2013. Mr. Doggett says, "This special event is an opportunity for my father, the most important role model in my life, to engage in fellowship with other men of the RTES community."

Jennifer Goire-Peralta, RTES counselor, is pictured with her father. According to Mrs. Peralta, "Having my father celebrate this special day with the staff, students and families reminds me how important it is to build relationships and create memories with the ones you love." We look forward to this being an annual tradition!



GRAND RE-OPENING!

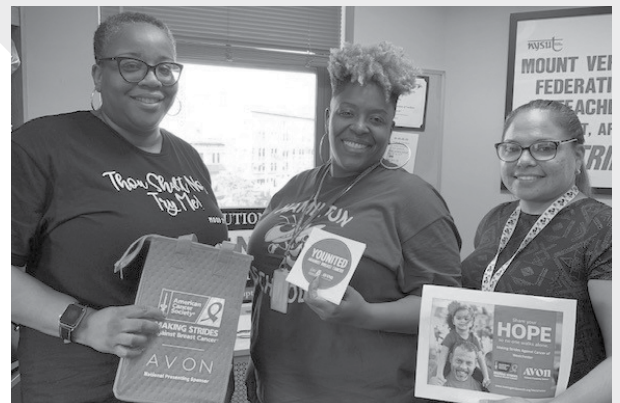
By Christine Iaffaldano, Teacher, Graham



Graham Elementary School celebrated its new entrance on Wednesday, September 11, 2019. Dr. Kenneth L. Hamilton, Superintendent, and Dr. Natasha Hunter-McGregor, Principal, did the honors of cutting the ribbon.

MAKING STRIDES AGAINST BREAST CANCER

Charlene Clarke, Teacher, Hamilton



Pictured L-R, Monique Bell, Charlene Clarke and Charissa Manigault

MVFT continues to support the American Cancer Society's *Making Strides Against Breast Cancer*. We are focused toward breaking our record in fundraising. Monique Bell, Charlene Clarke and Charissa Manigault have been leading the charge on achieving this goal. In order to raise funds, we have sold t-shirts for \$15, created a link to make pledges online at www.MakingStridesWalk.org/Westchester to team "I PINK We Can!" and partnered with the MVBOE for a dress down day held on Tuesday, October 15th. Please join us at Manhattanville College to walk on Sunday, October 20th at 8 am and represent the MVFT!

FAMILY ENGAGEMENT AT ITS BEST! "BUILDING BRIDGES WITH HIM"

by Christina King, ENL Teacher, Edward Williams Elementary School

The family engagement team at Edward Williams Elementary School created an event called "Building Bridges with Him." This event is aligned with the district's initiative to welcome fathers and respectful male figures to participate in their child's education. This event turned out to be more than just successful; it was epic! Participants were greeted with a continental breakfast and planned activities for all grade levels. One of the activities challenged parents to help build bridges using gumdrops and toothpicks. Even though this stem project seemed difficult, the guests were not only amazing participants, but even better teachers. The effortless team work and enthusiasm was evident in each classroom. Family engagement is a world where we are all connected to one another in the community.



A parent helps Mr. Slansky's 5th graders build a bridge using gumdrops and toothpicks



Pictured L-R: Kristen Wall, Rita James, Christina King, Jessica Baruffo and Leandra Duncan-Ross.

THE HARRIS PROJECT

supports the prevention of co-occurring disorders (COD) through our CODA (Co-Occurring Disorders Awareness) peer-led model, and the development and implementation of best treatment practices (including the building of a co-occurring system of care) to meet the complex needs of individuals." Please visit www.theharrisproject.org to learn more.

**Pictured: L-R:
Josephine
Kirkland-
Hudson (MVFT)
and Stephanie
Marquesano,
Founder &
President of the
Harris Project**



LIFE SKILLS STUDENTS ESCAPE FOR "AN ISLAND GETAWAY"

by Richard Suozzo, Teacher, MVHS

The MVHS Life Skills Program held their Annual Dance this past summer at MVHS and it was loads of fun! Under the guidance of Miss Casey, an enthusiastic group of teachers and teaching assistants put in countless hours organizing, planning and decorating to put together a spectacular evening that our students will remember for a long time. This year's theme was "An Island Getaway." The decor reflected a Caribbean Island. The event was well attended with many guests showing their support for the students. A special thank you to our Life Skills staff who did a great job making a memorable event for the children. We are already looking forward to this year's party!



RETIREE *News*

by Karen Wallace, MVFT Retiree



Seminars/Field Trips/Social Gatherings Committee
Pictured L-R: Gayle Wyckoff, Maeve Nolan, Karen Wallace, Bob Fetonti and Joanne Cathcart

As the students reported to school on September 4th, fifty-eight of our MVFT Retirees gathered for lunch at Fogarty's in Bronxville; a lively gathering with plenty of smiles and non-stop conversation! NYSUT Executive VP Joline T. DiBrango and MVFT President Carene Domato joined us and shared information about the *MVFT Mentor Committee for Retirees* and the *NYSUT Women's Committee*.

Special thanks to Co-chairs Gayle Wyckoff, Joanne Cathcart and the committee for organizing what we hope is the first of many gatherings.

THE MVFT RETIREE CHAPTER CONSTITUTION COMMITTEE: RICK CASTELLITTO, CHAIRPERSON

The committee has completed our constitution and will present it at the fall retiree chapter meeting on October 30th, 11:00 am, MVFT Office. The constitution will address the issues of dues, election of officers, retiree representative on the executive board, membership and ratification. Please join us!

SCARVES FOR KIDS: MAZ HOGAN, CHAIRPERSON

Scarves and donations are beginning to arrive at the MVFT Office. Thank you! Please deliver all scarves to the MVFT Office or to a building rep by December 1. If you would like to send a donation to purchase scarves, make the check payable to MVFT Retirees and put scarves on the memo line. Mail to: MVFT, 22 West First Street, #303, Mount Vernon, NY 10550, ATTN: Maz Hogan

RONALD MCDONALD HOUSE MEAL PREP: KAREN WALLACE, CHAIRPERSON

During the last two years, the RMH Cooking Teams have prepared 650 meals for the families staying at Ronald McDonald House while their children are in the hospital. Thanks to all who have so generously contributed to this program with their monetary donations and cooking skills! Caring for the caretakers is a most rewarding endeavor. We are asking for donations to continue this effort. With your generous support, we will begin our third year in January. The average cost of a meal that feeds 25 people is \$110. Please make checks payable to MVFT Retirees and put RMH on the memo line. Mail to: MVFT, 22 West First Street, #303, Mount Vernon, NY 10550. ATTN: Karen Wallace

VIRTUAL MENTORING CHALLENGE?

by Carene Domato, MVFT President

In our profession, making the decision to retire does not always come easy. There are as many reasons as there are members who retire. Since I have had the honor to work with so many of our members who have retired in the past several years, one thing I have noticed they all have in common: they still have the heart of a teacher. Many of our most recent retirees were also part of the MVFT leadership. I knew there had to be a way others could benefit from their wealth of experience.

Imagine the support these retired teachers could offer the new members that were hired to replace them. Our MVFT retirees were excited about the prospect of becoming a voluntary virtual mentor, so we formed a committee. Retirees and former MVFT leaders, Anne Marie Kiernan, Pat Griffin, Pat Duggan, and Diane Torstrup stepped up to organize the virtual mentoring initiative. Although it is in the infancy stage, the concept of virtual mentoring offers the retiree and new teacher the flexibility of virtual mentorships, scheduling Skype or Facetime calls during either a quick break or at the end of a school day from the comfort of their homes. Virtual mentors also offer the new teacher a safe zone, where they can openly ask questions without fear of judgment. Our retirees know the pitfalls and struggles and are realistic with their expectations. The virtual mentor program could be an important teacher retention support tool and have a positive impact on the teacher shortage we presently face in our nation.

If you are a retiree interested in finding out more about how you can become involved in the Virtual Mentoring Committee, call the MVFT office.



Virtual Mentoring Committee
 Pictured L-R: Diane Torstrup,
 Pat Griffin, Carene Domato,
 Pat Duggan, Anne Marie Kiernan

WHAT NYSUT LEGAL WISHES EVERY TEACHER KNEW BEFORE THEY BECAME A CLIENT

In August 2019, at the NYSUT Tarrytown Regional Office Summer Leadership, NYSUT Associate Counsel, Rachel Paster ESQ., forewarned our members with some sage advice:

1. Even when you are off duty, you still are a teacher, teaching assistant and/or security monitor who represents the district.
2. Everyone has a camera.
3. The students are not your friends-maintain professional relationships with your students, including Facebook, Instagram and Snapchat.
4. If a student of the opposite sex wants to talk to you about his/her problems on a regular basis, refer him/her to a guidance counselor immediately.
5. Off-color “jokes” to make a point are never okay, regardless of the age of the students.
6. Just because someone else is getting away with something doesn’t mean you will.
7. If you receive a letter of counsel, consult your union rep and issue a written response to it.
8. You have no right to privacy when using district email, phones, etc.
9. If a colleague talks to you about actions you are taking at work that appear inappropriate, listen and check yourself.
10. You can be disciplined for excessive absenteeism, even if you have many sick days still in your sick bank.

KEEPING HEALTHY PAYS OFF ONE MORE YEAR!

by Carene Domato, MVFT President

Congratulations to our MVFT members who received the newly negotiated sick incentive stipend this summer. The MVFT is proud to announce that a total of 589 teachers, teaching assistants, and security guards stayed healthy enough during the 2019-2020 school year and were awarded a \$500 stipend this summer.

For those of us hoping to stay healthy again this school year and having it literally pay off in next summer, the **sick/personal leave incentive** states:

“Effective July 1, 2017, in the event a unit member **uses 7 or less personal and/or sick days in a year (9/1-6/30)** said unit member shall be eligible for a payment in the amount of \$500 at the conclusion of each qualifying school year. Unit members must work a full school year in order to be eligible for said payment. Those on unpaid leave of absence for any period of time shall be ineligible for said payment.”

Please be aware that the district will be relying on the daily attendance roll sent in by your building attendance secretary. The district management system, AESOP/ Frontline, will **not** be used to determine who is eligible to receive the incentive. The MVFT cannot stress enough how important it is to keep accurate records of your absences/personal days and check in with your school attendance secretary quarterly. Wishing all of our MVFT members a healthy, germ-free school year.



*Not
 Receiving
 Retiree
 Emails?*

Email Karen Wallace
kkwallace312@gmail.com
 for your address
 to be added
 to the retiree group.

**MVFT
 Retiree Chapter
 FALL MEETING
 October 30, 2019**

**11:00am
 MVFT Office
 Presentation of
 Constitution**



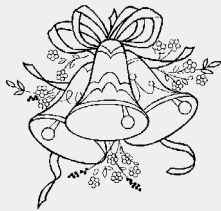
The MVFT wants to hear about you and your accomplishments and spotlight your talent! Email MVFT Agenda editor, Josephine Kirkland-Hudson, at jkirkland@mtvernoncsd.org

CORRESPONDENCE REPORT

By Anita Amieiro, Secretary

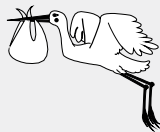
WEDDING BELLS

- Frank Claro (*Steam*)
- Laura Fishlock (*Steam*)
- Brianna Reason (*Holmes*)
- Lori Gill (*Edward Williams*)
New name: Lori Gill-Drayton
- Tamisha Hall (*Edward Williams*)
New name: Tamisha Grey



BIRTHS

- Ian Smith (*Steam*) birth of daughter
- Kevin Middleton (*Steam*) birth of son
- Mary Dempsey (*Steam*) birth of daughter



CONGRATULATIONS

- Meghan Aldridge (*Steam*) engagement
- Yvonne Blount (*Rebecca Turner*) retirement



CONDOLENCES

- Andrea Gelling (*Graham School*) loss of mother
- Krystal Mims (*Edward Williams*) loss of sister
- Derrick Thompson (*Edward Williams*) loss of mother
- Adria Gallman (*Security*) loss of mother
- Josephine Manganiello (*Retiree*) loss of husband
- Jean Hurst (*Retiree*) loss of sister
- Barbara DeGeorge (*Retiree*) loss of mother
- To the Family of Deborah Thompson (*Security*)
- To the Family of Sheryl Whilby (*Teaching Assistant*)
- To the Family of Patricia Lyon (*Retiree*)

Membership Report

Active	1115
Leave	16
Retirees	538
Total	1669

EXECUTIVE BOARD

- Carene Domato
President
- Jeanne Casino
Vice President, Grievance Chair
- Angelique Perez
Treasurer
- Anita Amieiro
Secretary

Karl Nifontoff
High School VP

Richard Suozzo
High School VP

Christine Ceglio
PreK-8 VP

Diane O'Sullivan
PreK-8 VP

Charlene Clarke
PreK-8 VP

Keith McCall
PreK-8 VP

Josephine Kirkland-Hudson
Pupil Personnel VP

David Watson, Jr.
Security Chapter Leader

Melvin Campbell
Teaching Assistant Chapter Leader

BUILDING REPS

- Ryan Kirk #1
- Jhanice McDonald #1
- Toba Duggan #2
- Modesta Curzio-Spies #2
- Andrea Hyatt-Copeland #4
- Shawn Harper-Tarrant #4
- Thalia Langley #5
- Marcia Wint #5
- Rebecca Challop #6
- Kathryn Santoro #6
- Tashi Campbell-Tulloch #7
- Stacia Fogg #7
- Janeen Clayton #8
- Nikysha Copeland Bey #8
- Michael Jernegons #9
- Alexis Paupaw-Myrie #9
- Lynne Petrone #10
- Scott Pollard #12
- Annette Coppola #12
- Donald Emerson #13
- Lydia Rose #13
- Nicole White Lee #14
- Charissa Manigault #14
- Tonja Hills #16
- Denisha Hawkins #16
- Nadine Shields Alcalde #17
- Isabel Garcia #17
- Michael Malocsay #18
- David Israel #18
- Eddie Sauls #18
- Jacqueline Simone #18

The Agenda

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