

MVFT LEADERSHIP CONFERENCE 2018 A WEEKEND OF INSPIRATION



MVFT Attendees of the Union Leadership Weekend

Front (L-R): Alexis Paupaw-Myrie, Nadine Shields-Alcalde, Carene Domato, Isabel Garcia, Nikysha Copeland Bey, Francia Mendoza, Lisa Cavallero **2nd (L-R):** Christine Iaffaldano, Jessica Pizzuti, Angelique Perez, Amanda Velazquez, Anita Amieiro, Karen Wheeler, Justine Jacobson, Tamisha Hall, Stacia Fogg **3rd (L-R):** Jeanne Casino, Charlene Clarke, Mike Malocsay, Nicole White Lee, Josephine Kirkland-Hudson, Deborah Thompson, Francina Jubilee, Jhanice McDonald, Pat Duggan, Tashi Campbell-Tulloch, Marcia Wint, Tonja Hills **Back Row(L-R):** Melvin Campbell, Scott Pollard, Marcus Green, Keith McCall, Karl Nifontoff, Monique Bell, Rich Suozzo, Derrick Thompson, Shondu Young, Angela Cortijo-Brewer

The MVFT Leadership Conference was held at Doral Arrowood in Purchase, NY on November 16th and 17th. Participants from MVFT and YFT attended sessions on Internal Organizing, Leadership Skills, Legal Updates and Social Media. Those in attendance were inspired, energized and solidified their solidarity!

MVFT ANNUAL HOLIDAY DRIVE

By Carene Domato, MVFT President

Each year the MVFT brightens the holidays for our needy students, and each year that list grows longer.

For our students in need, we will be purchasing 350 gift cards for our secondary students and ensuring that every elementary student has been matched with an "angel". The district's "Be an Angel" project is organized by Lillian Reynolds and our social workers.

The MVFT kicked off its Annual Holiday Drive at our Leadership Conference November 16-17. Each of our schools and the Retiree Chapter donated creative gift baskets that were raffled off at the conference. In a matter of a few hours, we were able to raise over \$1600!

With the support of Supt. Hamilton, the districtwide dress down days, sponsored by the MVFT, will help us to reach our goal of \$10,000 this year.

Our MVFT Retiree Chapter will once again make sure our elementary students stay warm this holiday season, and will be donating hundreds of scarves, many of which will be handmade by our talented retirees.

Although the members of the MVFT make an extra special effort during the holidays to take care of their students, it is the daily, year-round commitment we have to our students and community that makes me most proud and grateful. Together, we make a difference in the lives of our students. Together, we provide the resources and opportunities they need to succeed. Together, we make sure they have the skill they need for a bright future.

May each of you receive the gift of love, the gift of peace, and the gift of happiness. May these be yours this Holiday Season.





Mentor Program Committee, coordinated by Katie Santoro and Carene Domato, along with Julie Termini, Tanganyika Lindner-Brown and Lucille Martir, welcomed this year's participants on November 19, 2018.

WHAT WE WISH TEACHERS KNEW BEFORE THEY BECAME OUR CLIENTS

By Jeanne Casino

During our Leadership Conference, union leaders participated in a Legal Update session with NYSUT attorney Jennifer Hogan. Below are some highlights we should keep in mind:

- Even when you are off duty, you are still a teacher, regardless of your location
- Everyone has a camera
- If a colleague talks to you about actions you are taking at work that appear inappropriate, listen and check yourself
- If you receive a counseling memo, consult with your union rep and issue a written response
- You can be disciplined for excessive absenteeism, even if you have many sick days
- The students are not your friends, especially on Instagram, Facebook, and Snapchat!
- 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
- Off-color "jokes" to make a point are never okay, regardless of the age of the students
- You have no right to privacy when using District email, phones, etc.
- Just because someone else is getting away with something doesn't mean you will

NEWS FROM YOUR TEACHER CENTER: FUNDS FOR YOUR CLASSROOM

By Mary Beth Anderson

The Teacher Center of Central Westchester (YOUR Teacher Center!) is offering awards of \$500 for conference attendance and curriculum projects that will enrich your classroom. Go to www.teachercentercw.org to find the application, due February 28, 2019. The application must be signed by your union president, your principal, and your superintendent. We received zero applications from Mount Vernon CSD during the past year. Please think about applying! In the next MVFT newsletter, we will write more about all of TCCW's programs so that you might know your Teacher Center better.

APPR UPDATE

By Jeanne Casino

Currently, we are still using the 2017-2018 APPR document. It can be located in Ed Vista under the tab for observation forms. The Danielson rubric is also there. MVCSD obtained a waiver for observations which means unannounced observations may be done by your school administrators (previously it had to be done by an outside evaluator) if needed.

On Tuesday, November 5, 2018 the State Board of Regents said it would extend by a year the existing moratorium on linking teacher evaluations to statewide math and English test scores. This decision extends the moratorium through the 2019-2020 school year. Hopefully, lawmakers will pass legislation to permanently ban any mandatory links between the tests and teacher evaluations.



Westchester/Putnam AFL-CIO Central Labor Body delegates Carene Domato, Tonja Hills, and Retiree Diane Torstrup attended the Annual Celebration of Labor Event on October 10, 2018 at the Riverview. NYS Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli was honored for his ongoing dedication to the labor movement and the working men and women in New York State.

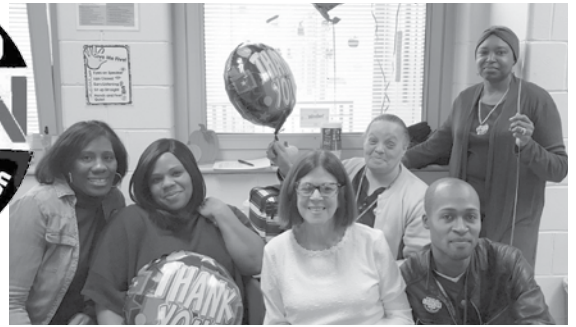
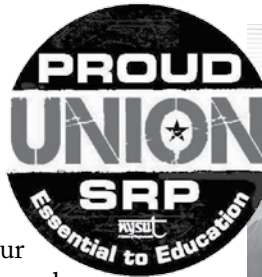
THE MVFT CELEBRATES OUR HARD-WORKING SRPs!

By Carene Domato, MVFT President

The MVFT celebrated SRP Recognition Day on November 20th; it is a day to acknowledge the contributions and hard-work of our School-Related Professionals.

Our MVFT reps planned a celebration in each of our buildings to thank our teaching assistants and security guards for their dedication to our students and staff.

The MVFT was one of the first of NYSUT's affiliates to organize teaching assistants and security. For close to fifty years, school-related professionals have transformed our workplace and contributed mightily to the success of our schools. TA Chapter Leader Melvin Campbell, and Security Chapter Leader David Watson, represent our SRPs during negotiations. They work tirelessly to improve working conditions and strengthen contract language. The MVFT will only consider ratification of our contracts when ALL three of our units are in agreement.



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 Ceglie
PreK-8 VP
- Patricia Duggan
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

- | | |
|---------------------------|----------------------------|
| Jhanice McDonald #1 | Marcus Green #10 |
| Jessica Pizzuti #1 | Deborah Thompson #10 |
| Toba Duggan #2 | Monique Bell #12 |
| Modesta Curzio-Spies #2 | Annette Coppola #12 |
| Diana O'Sullivan #4 | Greg Vandecarr #13 |
| Shawn Harper-Tarrant #4 | Aret Ishan #13 |
| Thalia Langley #5 | Nicole White Lee #14 |
| Marcia Wint #5 | Charissa Ayala #14 |
| Rebecca Challop #6 | Tonja Hills #16 |
| Kathryn Santoro #6 | Francina Jubilee #16 |
| Tashi Campbell-Tulloch #7 | Nadine Shields Alcalde #17 |
| Derrick Thompson #7 | Isabel Garcia #17 |
| Lisa Cavallero #8 | Andre Upson #18 |
| Nikysha Copeland Bey #8 | David Israel #18 |
| Francina Mendoza #9 | Eddie Sauls #18 |
| Alexis Paupaw-Myrie #9 | Jacqueline Simone #18 |

UNION OFFICE *The Agenda*

MVFT Rm. 303
22 West First St.
Mount Vernon, NY 10550
Phone: (914) 664-3189
Fax: (914) 664-0860
Online at: www.mvft.org

Editor
Lisa Cavallero
Staff
Carene Domato
Karen Molinaro



SPOTLIGHT

Special Education Teachers at Grimes ordered shirts to wear on a dress down day. The shirt reads "IEP's: Because every child is special. No one is better than the other #inclusion."

GRIMES CAFÉ

By Kacie Danielson, Media Specialist, Grimes School



Many students flock to the same shelves, series, and books that they know they enjoy and do not take the opportunity to explore the other books available to them in their library. With the book tasting, students were able to 'taste' books across different genres of both fiction and nonfiction and then review them, making note of what they enjoyed (or didn't!) about each book they read briefly. Kindergarten students engaged in musical books, similar to musical chairs, but with books! These book experiences allowed students to see a wider variety of books in the library that they may not have thought to pick up and borrow otherwise.



FAMILY MATH NIGHT AT EDWARD WILLIAMS SCHOOL

By Keith McCall

On Thursday evening November 8th, well over 200 students, parents, and staff members attended family math night at



Edward Williams Elementary School. This event consisted of parents and students playing math games together, solving math problems, and participating in math center activities. One student even won a raffle for an X-Box Gift Card. The event was a huge success thanks to the more than 25 staff members who assisted at the math stations, the Leadership of Dr. Waterman & Mr. Thomas, as well as the Math Night Event Coordinator, Mrs. Rita James.

MATH NIGHT AT PARKER

Parker School held its first Math Night which was a rousing success! So many students came

with their families and enjoyed the different math stations and the raffles.



VIP LUNCH AT PENNINGTON

Ms. DeVincentis, Ms. Hawkins, and Ms. Roberson's students are eligible weekly for a reward recognition luncheon. The teachers choose students who have been outstanding for the week in class and who have displayed positive behaviors. Between the two classes, seven students sit at a VIP table in the cafeteria during the lunch period. They have VIP PASSES, where Ms. DeVincentis provides them with gift bags and other goodies. A new set of VIP students are chosen each week. Ms. DeVincentis believes in building the entire morale at Pennington; teachers and students alike.



VETERANS DAY AT GRAHAM

By Christine Ceglie

Graham School celebrated Veterans Day with a visit from one of our veterans, Sgt. Christina Nesbith-Subryan, retired from the U.S. Army. The children learned all about the Armed Forces and the importance Veterans Day. Our pre-K class was also able to visit the upper grade art gallery. Pictures were made by the third fourth and fifth graders and presented to our veterans.



MIX IT UP

By Josephine Kirkland-Hudson



Rebecca Turner Elementary School continues to raise awareness with bullying prevention activities. Students, staff, and parents participated in "Mix It Up at Lunch Day." Students were encouraged to sit with and talk to someone they did not know or someone they had never interacted with before during lunch. Participants wore a black shirt to show unity in taking a stand against bullying and unkind acts of intolerance!

THANKSGIVING MEALS

By Lisa Cavallero

Staff at Grimes each year donate to create Thanksgiving bags for families in need. Each bag includes all the fixings for a Thanksgiving feast, including a turkey, stuffing, fresh vegetables, and pie. This is a true Grimes tradition that couldn't continue without the support of the whole staff making monetary donations, shopping, contacting families, and bagging items.



THANKSGIVING FEAST

By Angela Cortijo-Brewer

Grimes held its 9th annual 2nd Floor Thanksgiving Celebration. This is a collaborative effort amongst the teachers and parents to provide an opportunity for students to have a family style lunch the week of Thanksgiving.



Hamilton Elementary "Gobble Until You Wobble" Feast for both staff and students, held on November 20, 2018.





Show Your Union
Pride on dress
down days and
purchase this popular
T-shirt for \$18.
See your MVFT
building representative today!

NYSUT WOMEN'S COMMITTEE



NYSUT Women's Committee continues to lead the movement on women's issues. MVFT President Carene Domato has been a member of this movement since its inception two years ago. The committee, chaired by NYSUT Executive Vice President Jolene DiBrango, met in Albany on November 2-3. It is no coincidence that women candidates were swept into office in record numbers the following week at the polls in New York and throughout the nation. The four main goals of the women's committee is to encourage locals to develop in-house women's committees; educate female members about the work of the union; highlight women-specific issues, including inequalities in pay, health care and education; and involve more union women in leadership roles.

CORRESPONDENCE REPORT

By Anita Amieiro, Secretary

GET WELL WISHES

Susan Stanton (Pennington)

WELCOME BACK

Bella Spektor (Hamilton)

WEDDING BELLS

Jennifer Goire (RTES) Name Change: Jennifer Goire-Peralta

CONGRATULATIONS

Gabriella Suarez (Thornton) Marriage

Karen Manna (Graham) Son's Engagement

Carene Domato (MVFT Pres) Birth of Grandson

CONDOLENCES

Warren Nixon (Parker) Loss of Wife

Frank Claro (STEAM) Loss of Grandmother

Victor Diggs (STEAM) Loss of Sister

Ron Gager (STEAM) Loss of Mother

Lucille DiRuocco (Retiree) Loss of Mother



MVFT WELFARE FUND

By Karen Molinaro

The MVFT Executive Board/Delegate Assembly voted to approve Carl Caprio (retiree) Welfare Fund Trustee for another term of four years and welcome Jeanne Casino (active) as Welfare Fund Trustee for the remainder of the term ending October 31, 2020 previously held by Carene Domato, (*Ms. Domato remains a trustee by virtue of the presidency*). Congratulations to both!

Reminders...

Co-pay reimbursement benefit, (for SWSCHP members only), runs each year from July 1st – June 30th and allows a full year beyond the June 30th deadline to submit a claim.

The co-pay reimbursement allows for up to \$200 of reimbursement for an individual or \$400 for a family. The components that are reimbursable are the following:

\$10.00 of each doctor's visit copay

\$25.00 of any outpatient hospital service copay

\$50.00 of an ambulance copay

\$100.00 for hospital admittance copay

ANY prescription copay

To file for the benefit, you must submit a claim form to Administrative Services Only, Inc. Claim forms may be obtained through the insurance website: www.asonet.com or by requesting one from the MVFT office, along with the following information:

For the medical copays - send a COPY of your EOBs (explanation of benefits) which illustrate your copay.

For the prescription copays - you can call the phone number listed on your prescription card to request a statement of your copays **OR** go to the website listed on your prescription card and print a summary of your copays.

Optical Benefit runs from January – December.

Dental exams and cleanings are allowed two times within a twelve month period.



Many thanks to all who participated in the Making Strides Against Breast Cancer fundraiser. MVFT collected \$11,000!