



Local 1321 News

DISTRICT COUNCIL 37, AFSCME, AFL-CIO
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 (212) 815-1188 • FALL 2018 Vol. 18, No. 1

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President's Message— Your Union Will Always be Here



John Hyslop
Local 1321 President

FOR OUR 50TH ANNIVERSARY year, all of us need to remember why our predecessors fought for a union, created a contract, and then enforced it. And when faced with right-wing attacks, remind ourselves that without our union our lives would be so much more difficult.

Prior to our founding in July 1968, Queens Library was run by political hack trustees appointed by the Queens political machine.

These ignorant trustees hired draconian, inept, directors who created a culture of intimidation and fear. Work-life at Queens Library was difficult for staff:

- Vacation scheduling preference was given to management favorites.
- The library would arbitrarily pay people weekly or biweekly, for no good reason.
- The library did not pay overtime or shift differential.
- Staff did not have access to their personnel records.
- Staff were transferred to branches if they were not liked.
- The promotion process was opaque and given to Administration favorites.
- Miniscale raises were given every other year, if at all.
- They did not have legal, education, and health benefits.
- Staff were even hired and fired by the trustees!

Queens Library workers were angry, yet afraid because they knew they could be fired without cause.

In the 1960s, our country was going through an upheaval of activism and change, and New York City library workers were not immune to this activism. In 1965, Brooklyn Public Library workers organized to form Local 1482, Brooklyn Library Guild. Their union brought sta-

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A New Employee's Perspective

By Jo-Ann Wong



As a new employee of Queens Library, it has been a wonderful experience working with the public community. A graduate of Pratt Institute, I received my Master's in Library Science, with Archives Certification. I expanded my studies by working at a variety of libraries during my tenure at Pratt Institute: i.e. Map Division at NYPL, Gagosian Gallery, ARChive of Contemporary Music, etc. After I graduated, I worked as a librarian at the Chancellor Robert R Livingston Masonic Library. While I enjoyed my time there, I became interested in working more with the public and finding more community-driven employment.

As a General Librarian on the Floating Team, I am currently located at the Cambria Heights branch. At the center of the community, the Library creates opportunities for staff to brainstorm creative ways to engage with the public. I am able to use my creativity to help create programs, such as teenage guitar lessons and ongoing craft programs for children/teenagers, as well as think of new and inventive ways to merchandise our collection. I was also excited that Queens Library offers the opportunity for grants from the Queens Library Innovation Fund, which supports forward-thinking programming in the community branches. Being based in Cambria Heights, I was able to assist staff in creating a grant proposal concerning Music Production for teenagers. Overall, I have had the opportunity to connect with many members of the com-

munity, ranging from all age groups. It is always fulfilling to see customers interacting with the activities and displays that I played a part in creating, and leaving with a positive experience.

In addition, Queens Library provides many opportunities for growth among its staff. For instance, I have been able to continue my professional development by attending meetings on Tuesday mornings at the Central branch. In doing so, I have kept abreast about what the NYC library systems are doing together, such as the NYC Culture Pass and services for people who are justice-involved. In addition, Queens Library is supportive of staff attending major conferences. I recently requested to attend this year's New York Library Association conference in Rochester, NY, and hope I am picked to go and represent our library system.

Being a part of Queens Library, I have also had the opportunity to be a part of DC37; particularly Local 1321. It is wonderful to know that there is a group actively working to ensure our employee rights. I always look forward to seeing the monthly newspaper, to see what other locals are accomplishing in their fields, as well as the different educational opportunities that the union provides. For instance, I have started to explore options in the AFSCME Free College program.

Overall, it has been a great experience working in the Queens Library system, and I am excited to see what the future brings!

2017-2021 Economic Contract Explained

On June 25, 2018 DC 37 and New York City agreed to an economic contract that includes 8.10% in total compensation and 7.42% in raises. And on August 14th, we approved it by 98%. This agreement was a culmination of months of complicated negotiations with the City, Municipal Labor Committee (MLC), and DC 37 presidents.

In October 2017, soon after our last contract expired, DC 37 requested to negotiate a new contract with the city. We agreed to have our first bargaining session November 2017. In that first session, we lauded praise on each other. The City said it had a great workforce, yet its healthcare costs were growing too much, too fast. We thanked the city for its previous contract and presented our demands highlighting sufficient raises and contributions to the DC 37 Welfare Fund (The Welfare Fund is our DC 37 administered benefit fund. The city or library contributes \$2,040 per employee. The fund pays for our prescriptions, dental, eyeglasses, audiology, legal services, education, personal services benefits. Currently, most of the benefit goes towards our prescriptions to the detriment of the other benefits, as seen with our dental reimbursement.)

In January 2018, we had another bargaining session. In that session, the city gave us a list of demands, the most onerous being increasing our financial contribution to our healthcare including paying for premiums, hospitalization tiering, increasing copays, and restricting doctors. These financial burdens would destroy any wage increase and was unacceptable. However, we know that healthcare costs are out of control and is a huge burden. We agreed to investigate healthcare savings as long as any savings did not have a financial impact. Furthermore, any

changes to our healthcare must be negotiated by the City and MLC.

The MLC is comprised of city unions: Uniformed Firefighters Association, Corrections Officers Benevolent Association, United Federation of Teachers, Patrolman's Benevolent Association, DC 37, etc. In the 1970s the MLC unions and the City decided that they would bargain for our healthcare because we all get the same healthcare and it was easier to manage one set of health insurance. Since then, all healthcare bargaining is done between the MLC and the City. With those years of experience, the MLC staff have gained the expertise to negotiate and protect our healthcare.

From January to June, the MLC analyzed data, worked with actuaries, spoke with EmblemHealth, negotiated with the City. They came up with useful savings for the City that would NOT have a financial impact on the members and may even provide better healthcare outcomes. They include:

- Medicare Advantage - adoption of a Medicare Advantage benchmark plan for retirees
- Consolidated Drug Purchasing - welfare funds, PICA, and health plan prescription costs pooling their buying power and resources to purchase prescription drugs;
- Comparability - investigation of other unionized settings regarding their methodology for delivering health benefits including the prospect of coordination/cooperation to increase purchasing power and to decrease administrative expenses;
- Audits and Coordination of Benefits - audit insurers for claims and financial accuracy, coordination of benefits, pre-65 disabled Medicare utilization, End

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0.52% Additions to Pay

ON Friday February 2, 2018, many of us received a small amount of retroactive money and money added to our gross pay. (I know, this article is a long time coming). That money came from a provision in our 2010-2017 economic contract negotiated by DC 37 and the City. It stated union members get an 0.52% additional compensation fund (ACF). In our history, many contracts have had this type of money that we use to add money to our base salary, e.g. longevities, recurring increment payments, assignment differentials, hazard pay, uniform allowances, etc.

The method for determining how to use the ACF was developed over the decades by City and Union negotiators and is very complicated. Basically, the total ACF money is equal to the nego-

tiated percentage (in this case 0.52%) of the total payroll for each bargaining unit, e.g. culturals, clericals, blue collar, librarians, accounting, social workers, IT, etc. The union, comprised of the unit bargaining committee and a DC 37 negotiator, evaluates the existing length of service payments and demographics of the members in the unit to determine how to add this money, e.g. in earlier steps to cover more members; or later steps to cover more senior members and generate more money for those steps. We make a decision and inform the City how we want the money spent.

Since it is by individual bargaining units, such as culturals, clericals, blue collar, librarians, accounting and IT, etc, small units had a smaller amount of money, and large units had a proportionately larger amount of money.

The following chart lists all of Local 1321's classifications in alphabetical order and how the 0.52% was added.

Accountant	Increase 15 year Service Increment by \$237
Assistant Accountant	Increase 15 year Service Increment by \$237
Associate Bookkeeper	Increase 15 year Service Increment by \$237
Audio Visual Technician	3 year Recurring Increment Payment of \$468
Bookkeeper	Increase 15 year Service Increment by \$237
Certified Applications Developer	3 year Recurring Increment Payment of \$468
Certified Applications Specialist	3 year Recurring Increment Payment of \$468
Certified IT Administrator (LAN/WAN)	3 year Recurring Increment Payment of \$468
Certified IT Developer (Applications)	3 year Recurring Increment Payment of \$468
Computer Aide	3 year Recurring Increment Payment of \$468
Computer Associate 1 Software	3 year Recurring Increment Payment of \$468
Computer Associate 1 Tech	3 year Recurring Increment Payment of \$468
Computer Programmer Analyst	3 year Recurring Increment Payment of \$468
Computer Service Technician	3 year Recurring Increment Payment of \$468
Computer Specialist (Operations)	3 year Recurring Increment Payment of \$468

Computer Specialist (Software)	3 year Recurring Increment Payment of \$468
Computer Systems Manager	3 year Recurring Increment Payment of \$468
Purchasing Agent	Increase 15 year Service Increment by \$237
Supervising Computer Services	3 year Recurring Increment Payment of \$468
Systems Administrator	3 year Recurring Increment Payment of \$468
Telecommunications Associate	3 year Recurring Increment Payment of \$468
Administrative Accountant	Increase 15 year Service Increment by \$237
Media Services Technician	3 year Recurring Increment Payment of \$468
Customer Information Representative	After 6yrs \$370; After 9yrs + \$372; After 12yrs + \$425; After 15yrs + \$445; After 18yrs + \$900
Assistant Maintainer	Increase 7-year longevity differential by \$677
Library Attendant Guard	Increase 7-year longevity differential by \$677
Library Maintainer	Increase 7-year longevity differential by \$677
Senior Library Attendant Guard	Increase 7-year longevity differential by \$677
Senior Museum Instructor	Increase 7-year longevity differential by \$677
Supervising Library Maintainer	Increase 7-year longevity differential by \$677
Supervising Museum Instructor	Increase 7-year longevity differential by \$677
Associate Graphic Artist	New RIP schedule - 1-4yrs -\$143, 5-17yrs - \$144 and 18+ yrs - \$145
Associate Project Manager	New RIP schedule - 1-4yrs -\$143, 5-17yrs - \$144 and 18+ yrs - \$145
Construction Project Manager	New RIP schedule - 1-4yrs -\$143, 5-17yrs - \$144 and 18+ yrs - \$145
Graphic Artist	New RIP schedule - 1-4yrs -\$143, 5-17yrs - \$144 and 18+ yrs - \$145
Illustrator	New RIP schedule - 1-4yrs -\$143, 5-17yrs - \$144 and 18+ yrs - \$145
Project Manager	New RIP schedule - 1-4yrs -\$143, 5-17yrs - \$144 and 18+ yrs - \$145
Senior Illustrator	New RIP schedule - 1-4yrs -\$143, 5-17yrs - \$144 and 18+ yrs - \$145
Information Assistant	Increase the 7-year RIP, + \$499
Librarian	Increase the 7-year RIP, + \$499
Librarian Trainee	Increase the 7-year RIP, + \$499
Principal Librarian	Increase the 7-year RIP, + \$499
Senior Librarian	Increase the 7-year RIP, + \$499
Supervising Librarian	Increase the 7-year RIP, + \$499
Clerical Associate	Increase the 9-year RIP, + \$357
Office Aide	Increase the 9-year RIP, + \$357
Office Associate	Increase the 9-year RIP, + \$357
Office Machine Associate	Increase the 9-year RIP, + \$357
Principal Administrative Associate	Increase the 9-year RIP, + \$357
Stenographer/Secretary	Increase the 9-year RIP, + \$357
Technical Support Aide	Increase the 9-year RIP, + \$357
Word Processor	Increase the 9-year RIP, + \$357
Associate Word Processor	Increase the 9-year RIP, + \$357

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Local 1321 50th Anniversary Celebration



DURING the January 2018 general membership meeting, President Hyslop spoke about the necessity of having a Local 1321, 50th Anniversary Celebration. He then solicited volunteers for the 50th anniversary committee. Shanta Gee, Sharon Diamond, Benedicia Ebba, and Sueli Zaquim, volunteered that night. President Hyslop encouraged Executive Vice President, Margaret Gibson, to chair the committee. Later during the planning, Yvonne Melendez joined the committee.

Margaret Gibson considered her acceptance as chair of the committee to be a sense of great honor, because it was important to her to make the event a memorable one for the membership. One thought that was consistent with her was the enormity of the task of finding a banquet hall that was capable of accommodating at least 500 people; and also consistent with the Local's budget for the event.

The most convenient way to meet and discuss plans for the event was via conference calls. Everyone liberally shared their opinions and offer suggestions. During the initial conference call; finding a banquet hall was the first item of discussion. Shanta Gee didn't hesitate, and immediately following the meeting, she started the mission of finding a hall. They were very few banquet halls to choose from because the quotes were astronomically and exceeded the Local's planned budget by almost 100%. Despite the issues with finding a banquet hall that met all of the criterions; it actually turned



out to be easier than was anticipated. Shanta Gee contacted Riccardo's by the Bridge, and successfully secured a quote that was less than the Local's budgeted needs. Some of the committee members visited Riccardo's and were not only pleased with the hall, but the willingness of the owner to work with Local 1321 because he previously worked with another Local.

Considering that component of the planning was solved, and there will be more than enough money remaining after calculating the payment for the banquet hall; the focus

was, "what can be done that the membership will appreciate and have a memorable 50th anniversary celebration?" After reviewing a variety of favors, the committee decided a mug would be a favorable memento. As a side attraction and another means of entertainment, the photo booth was suggested, and it turned out to be a hit with the attendees. A suggestion was made to have a raffle. The Committee members enthusiastically donated the prizes to be raffled off. In addition, the need to have the banquet hall with a celebratory look, but maintaining the Local's colors was easily decided.

One month before the event, as encouraged by the owner of Riccardo's; the committee members held its major last meeting there at Riccardo's. That night the menu was selected along with the seating arrangements.

Incorporating Newly Unionized... Finally

FOR nearly fifty years, the library had a large group of at will employees who could be fired without cause and had no rights of representation. Many of us saw our friends and co-workers fired on the smallest pretense. That changed when on March 23, 2017, after a long organizing campaign, many formerly non-union library employees joined Local 1321.

Joining the union was only the first step. Almost immediately after the newly unionized joined, the Administration and Union leadership realized this group had a number of unresolved issues that needed to be negotiated, such as how to incorporate longevities, incorporating into the bargaining unit new classifications, etc. The local's leadership held numerous meetings with the whole group, subsets of the group, and communicated directly with many of them to establish how we should negotiate these terms and conditions. We proposed the demands and after several constructive negotiations sessions, the Administration agreed to many of them; and we incorporated them into an agreement.

Below is a summary of this agreement (For the complete agreement go to www.local1321.org).

1. We agreed that newly represented members will earn time toward "additions to gross" (e.g. longevities) starting March 23, 2017. If you had prior union service, your time in the union title will be added to your calculation.
 - a. Example 1, you started at the Queens Library as an union Office Aide in 1998. You became a Principal Administrative Associate in 2008. You came back into the union on March 23, 2017. There-

fore, the library must include the first ten years of your employment when calculating the longevities.

- b. Example 2, you started work as a non-union Principal Administrative Associate in 2006. The library must calculate your time starting March 23, 2017.
- c. Example 3, you started work as an union Senior Librarian in 1998. You became a Computer Associate (Software) Level I in 2009. You will earn any librarian longevities that are ten years or less. Any additions to gross a Computer Associate (Software) earns is calculated starting March 23, 2017.
2. We included the additional classifications we agreed to incorporate into the bargaining unit.
3. We acknowledge management's right to create in-house job descriptions with work that is within the scope of the classification.
4. We discovered that for years the library used classifications that DC 37 did not directly bargain for, e.g. Custodial Assistant, Audio Visual Technician, Principal Administrative Associate, etc. We agreed that the library will follow DC 37 negotiated raises and additions to gross. To do this, we agreed to equate non-DC 37 classifications to DC 37 classifications. This allows all raises and additions to gross to be paid on the same effective dates.
5. The staff who are getting reclassified will get reclassified and any salary increase will be paid at the Queens Library hiring rate and will be retroactive to February 1, 2018.
6. Upon joining the union, we discovered

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2018-2019 Scholarship Winner

CONGRATULATIONS to Sharanjit Singh Purewal the son of Mohinder Purewal, Technical Support Aide II, Metadata Services, the winner of Local 1321's Scholarship and student at New York City Institute of Technology. The committee was greatly impressed with his work at the Queens Library, his volunteerism, and his school work.

His work demonstrated to the committee that he is committed to his community. His parents should be proud of his accomplishments.

We need to thank the Scholarship



Committee members: Justin Levinson, Chair, Lisa Greer, John Hyslop, Hasibur Khan, Patricia Miller, Charlene Vicks, David Wang. Their volunteer efforts helped make our first ever scholarship a success.

2017-2021 Economic Contract Explained (continued from page 3)

Stage, Renal Disease, PICA, and Payroll Audit of Part-Time Employees;

- Potential RFPs (request for proposals) for all medical and hospital benefits;
- Other areas - Centers of Excellence for specific conditions; hospital and provider tiering; precertification fees; amendment of Medicare Part B reimbursement; reduction of cost of pre-Medicare retirees who have access to other coverages; changes to the Senior Care rate; changes to the equalization formula.

With these savings the City:

- provided the wage increase as you see in the mail;
- will contribute two \$100 per member one-time payments for actives and re-

tirees to DC 37's Welfare Fund on July 1, 2018 and July 1, 2019;

- in April 2021, if the MLC generates \$600 million in recurring healthcare savings the City will increase its contribution to our Welfare Funds using the following formula:
 - the first \$68 million over \$600 million will be used to make \$100 per member per year increase; if savings amount is over \$600 million but less than \$668 million, the \$100 per member per year will be prorated;
 - any savings over \$668 million will be split equally between the City and Welfare Funds and applied in a manner agreed to by the parties.

0.52% Additions to Pay (continued from page 5)

Senior Library Custodian	Create a new 8-year RIP, +\$275 for a total of \$899
Assistant Library Custodian	Create a new 8-year RIP, +\$275 for a total of \$899
Junior Library Custodian	Create a new 8-year RIP, +\$275 for a total of \$899
Library Custodian	Create a new 8-year RIP, +\$275 for a total of \$899
Motor Vehicle Operator	Creation of new 15yr RIP \$413 (additional) and 20yr RIP \$412 (additional)

President's Message (continued from page 1)

bility, professionalism, raises, benefits, and respectability to Brooklyn Library staff. A year later, a core group of Queens librarians, clerks, custodians, and drivers were angry enough to start talking about a union to protect their rights. Following the lead of Brooklyn Library Guild, Queens staff decided that their organizing group must include all staff because that would make a union stronger. By July 1968, Queens Library employees organized drivers, custodians, librarians, clerical, and more to vote for a union. We joined DC 37, and became Queens Library Guild, Local 1321.

As soon as they joined, our union fought an intransigent board of trustees, administration, and their premier anti-union law firm. With the help of the expertise of DC 37, Local 1321 successfully got decent raises, negotiated their own contract, and rectified many of their issues. They began filing grievances to enforce the contract. We started receiving all the benefits DC 37 had to offer including legal services, educational services, personal services.

Local 1321 members achieved all of this because of staff solidarity. That solidarity forced the Administration to recognize a union. That solidarity forced the Administration to the bargaining table. That solidarity forced the Administration to pay a decent wage. And fifty years later, we are thriving. Right-wing forces hate this solidarity and have been attacking every attempt by workers to organize from 19th century factory workers in England; to 1968 library workers in Queens; to 21st Century public sector employees around the world. Right now, these forces are funding legal attacks against unions. They are ensuring anti-union judges get appointed to courts around the nation. They then look for plaintiffs who hate unions. The Janus case was one of those right-wing funded cases.

Mark Janus was an Illinois AFSCME

member who sued his union saying he should not pay his dues because they took away his right to free speech by negotiating and advocating for him. For his lawsuit, right-wing groups paid for his lawyers. He won in the Supreme Court and now anyone who decides to not join a union does not have to pay union dues.

The ultimate outcome of the decision is too soon to tell. However, right now the decision does not have a direct financial impact on Local 1321 because we are not full public sector workers. Everyone in an unionized title still has to pay his or her fair share. However, it will have other impacts on us. As of the date of the decision, anyone who works in a union classification for New York City and pays agency fees, as opposed to union dues, must have their payments given back to them. Moving forward, union members (not Queens Library members) can elect to not pay their union dues. That has a direct financial impact on DC 37 because our dues go towards negotiators who negotiate contracts, representatives and lawyers to enforce those contracts, support staff, and the building to house these people.

However, not all has been negative. The other and more significant impact is AFSCME, DC 37, and your local have reacted to the attack on our way of life by organizing our members. DC 37's representatives are meeting with members everyday to ensure their needs are met. DC 37 is holding town hall meetings throughout the city to engage our members and ensure they know what we are doing. Local 1321, is always engaged with membership and our leaders are always accessible, advocating, and fighting for you and our library.

Needless to say, no one gets anything for free. We all need to be physically, mentally, and financially invested in our union. Our union is only as strong as our invest-

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Incorporating Newly Unionized, Finally (continued from page 8)

the library was paying a few people less than minimum for their classification. We agreed that the library will pay these people the correct salary retroactive to March 23, 2017.

7. We agreed that the library will memorialize any changes to people's classifications in the Employee Profile Form.
8. In order to address staff who were on the fiscal year calendar for raises, we settled on a prorated amount of the 2016 collective bargaining increase. The 0.75% prorated amount is equivalent to three months of the 2016 increase, effective July 1, 2017. Future increases will be consistent with the effective date of the master economic agreement.
9. In regards to annual leave, we agreed that no employee's current annual leave accrual rate will change. However, upon the anniversary for when the employee's annual leave will increase, you will move to the annual leave accrual chart in the contract that corresponds to your date of hire.
10. When FLSA exempt employees work approved overtime, they will be compensated in straight time for working over 35 hours through March 23, 2019. All this time will be placed in a "comp time bank" to be used when the employee requests it or paid out upon retirement or separation at the final salary rate. Time earned during this period will not be subject to conversion to sick leave after four months. After March 23, 2019, these FLSA exempt employees will earn

overtime according to the terms of the contract.

11. After non-union staff joined the union, the union's leadership was notified that in 2012 the administration gave the non-union staff long-term disability insurance and a death benefit, instead of a raise. Then, we were notified that the terms of the policy issued by the insurance company is only for non-union members. The local's leadership spoke with Dennis Walcott and Lewis Finkelman to discuss how to ameliorate this unfairness. We initially agreed that the library would contribute \$500 to the newly-unionized employees' TIAA/CREF or Lincoln Life account. The administration discovered that if they made this contribution it would have a negative effect on their tax status and requested that we modify this arrangement. We agreed the library would give people \$500 lump sum cash.

This was a very complicated and long process. No collective bargaining process ever ends with one side getting everything they want. However, with input from the newly unionized and the fair negotiations with the Administration, we created a structure that provides retroactivity; recognizes staff for the work they do; streamlines the Library's salary process; ensures staff are compensated fairly and correctly; includes due process rights; a say in the workplace through a voice and vote; and overall makes the library a better place to work. We appreciate your patience and faith in the process.

President's Message (continued)

ment. We saw this in 1968 when Queens Library employees formed an union and brought justice to our workplace. We see

it today fighting for our Queens Library. Local 1321 and DC 37 will always be here because when workers experience workplace injustice they organize!

Queens Library Guild
Local 1321 News

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