

CSEA Champions New Child Care Apprenticeship Program

A Small Step in a Larger Struggle

In early December, a press conference featuring Governor Ned Lamont, Department of Labor Commissioner Danté Bartolomeo, and Connecticut Office of Early Childhood Commissioner Beth Bye unveiled CSEA's latest initiative—the Registered Child Care Apprenticeship Program. The program is designed to help address the critical wage crisis among child care educators by providing a new avenue to achieve the National Association of Family Child Care (NAFCC) accreditation, which under the CSEA Care4Kids contract provides significant wage increases.

In Connecticut, approximately 50% of the state is classified as being childcare deserts, with shortages of providers causing long wait lists. Shockingly, from 2019 to 2021, 28% of childcare providers left the field for better-paying jobs outside childcare. The crisis impacts not only providers and the working families they

serve, but also has serious ramifications to our economy.

The Apprenticeship Program

The apprenticeship program is just one facet of the larger battle our union is leading to address the ongoing and worsening child care crisis. While the press conference celebrated the framework for creating an exciting new professional development opportunity for providers, there continues to be a pressing need for broader discussions on fundamental issues like health care access and fair wages—key components missing from the current childcare landscape.

CSEA Union Leader Maria Amado, who is the NAFCC 2023 Accredited Provider of the Year, was the featured speaker at the press conference. Her accomplishments as a model child care educator shine a spotlight on the potential of family child care educators, and she stands as an ideal mentor for those advancing their

careers.

Upon completion of the Apprenticeship Program, licensed providers receive a 12.5% wage increase, on

top of the 22% wage increase over the next 2 years, along with their CDA credential NAFCC accreditation. However, these qualifications are becoming increasingly difficult to obtain. CDA courses at Community Colleges across the state, essential for mentor qualification, face uncertainties due to on-going higher education funding challenges. CDA courses in Spanish have also been cut at Capital Community College for many years.

Union Advocacy: Looking Beyond the Program

While the press conference celebrated the union-led initiative, President Travis Woodward and Maria Amado highlighted

the need to address critical gaps. Many child care educators, for instance, lack reliable, affordable healthcare coverage. And, despite the large raises negotiated in the current CSEA/Care-4-Kids Collective Bargaining Agreement, wages continue to be inadequate.

While it is important to take a moment to celebrate the new apprenticeship program, much more is needed to address the child care crisis. The Registered Apprenticeship Program marks progress, but CSEA child care educators will continue to lead the charge to demand comprehensive healthcare and wage reform.



ABOVE: Maria Amado shares her story at the podium.

Looking Back on 2023

Reviewing the biggest communication wins of the year

By: Drew Stoner, Communications Director

Throughout this year, we have made huge strides to strategically update our communications program to leverage new digital tools as well as our tried and true traditional methods. 2023 was a year of firsts:

- Communications grant for \$50,000 from SEIU International
- First CSEA-led coordinated digital ad campaign
- First CSEA media blitz days

On May 5th and 6th, we witnessed an extraordinary convergence of strength and solidarity as over 150 passionate CSEA members united for a transformative media blitz. What transpired surpassed all expectations,

serving as a powerful reminder of the unbreakable bonds that define

our union family.

This monumental event was not just about interviews, headshots, and ads; it was a rallying cry for justice and a celebration of the resilient spirit that thrives within our collective. The goal went beyond creating lasting worker-led content – it was about reaffirming our commitment to each other and to the shared values that bind us together.

In the midst of creativity, we created over a dozen ads that will echo our message for years to come. However, it was the overwhelming turnout at our union hall that truly embodied the essence of what it means to be a union family. Our gathering overflowed with unity, with more

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SEBAC Digital Worker Committee

Highlighting worker's stories on social media

CSEA, like all of the constituent unions in the State Employee Bargaining Agent Coalition (SEBAC), has several high-stakes battles coming up over the next three years. As social media continues to be a vital part of our work, state employee union members must ramp up effective content creation that is responsive

and strategic. SEBAC's Digital Worker Committee will be a group that meets in-person on a regular basis to skill share, brainstorm and create content to be shared throughout our movement.

Join us for our first meeting on Wednesday, January 17th at 5:00PM at the CSEA Union Hall (760 Capitol Avenue, Hartford CT 06106).

Visit our union's website at: CSEA-CT.com

Postmaster: Please forward address changes to:
CSEA, 760 CAPITOL AVE., HARTFORD, CT 06106

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Solidarity Season



MEETING DATES

The January Delegates Meeting will be held as a hybrid meeting on Thursday, January 18th at 10am at the CSEA Union Hall and via Zoom

Chapter 401 (Hartford area)
Thursday, February 1st - 1pm
760 Capitol Ave., Hartford
Zoom Meeting ID: 833 1491 7718
Patrice Peterson - (860) 416-0306

Chapter 402 (Danbury area)
Wednesday, January 10th - 10am
Guest Speaker: Kevin Sullivan
CSEA Council 400 Organizer
5 Clapboard Ridge Rd. Danbury
Linda Albanese - (860) 354-6965

Chapter 403 (Norwich area)
Tuesday, January 9th - 1:30pm
Rose City Senior Center
8 Mahan Drive., Norwich
Carol Burgess - (860) 859-3641

Chapter 404 (Waterbury area)
Tuesday, January 9th - 10am
Guest Speaker: Cigna Rep.
Trinity Orthodox Church
937 Chase Parkway, Waterbury
Tina Franco (203) 721-4382

Chapter 405 (New Haven area)
Thursday, January 11th - 10:30am
Guest Speaker: Cherie Strucaly
Agency on Aging of CT
Hamden Government Center Bldg
3rd Floor (elevator available)
2750 Dixwell Ave, Hamden
Sue Pierson (203) 376-7207

Chapter 406 (Middletown area)
Tuesday, January 9th - 1pm
Guest Speaker: Wayne Duffy
Scuba Diving Expert
American Legion Post 75
58 Bernie O'Rourke Dr.
Middletown, CT
Joe Formica - (860) 347-4532

Chapter 407 (Bridgeport area)
Wednesday, January 17th - 1pm
Guest Speaker: Aetna Rep.
St. Josephs of Stratford Church
1300 Stratford Road
Stratford, CT (on Rt. 113)
Joan Matzonkai - (203) 751-0300

Chapter 408 (Willimantic area)
Wednesday, January 10th - 12:30pm
Guest Speaker: Cigna Rep.
Mansfield Senior Center
303 Maple Road. Mansfield
Doug Racicot - (860) 234-2537

Chapter 409
(Retired University Professors)
Friday, December 15th - 10am

CSEA Union Hall & via Zoom
760 Capitol Ave., Hartford
Zoom Meeting ID: 868 8922 7158
Dave Walsh - (860) 684-4773

Chapter 410 (Windsor area)
Monday, January 8th - 1pm
Suffield Senior Center
145 Bridge St., Suffield
Amelia Smith - (860) 687-1848

Chapter 411 (Rocky Hill area)
Thursday, March 21st - 12:30pm
Guest Speakers: Aetna & Cigna
Representatives
Online & at CSEA Union Hall
760 Capitol Ave., Hartford
Zoom Meeting ID: 876 7278 2961
Sebastian Puglisi (860) 529-8336

Chapter 412 (Putnam area)
Tuesday, January 16th - 1:30pm
Guest Speaker: Kevin Sullivan
CSEA Council 400 Organizer
The NEW Putnam Town Hall
200 School St., Putnam
Don Gladding - (860) 933-9998

Chapter 414 (Torrington area)
Monday, January 15th - 10am
Cooperative Service Ext. Bldg
843 University Dr, Torrington
Karen Pineman - (860) 354-6727

Chapter 415 (Manchester area)
Monday, January 22nd - 1pm
Guest: Sgt. Christine Sampaio
Manchester PD - Senior Fraud
Manchester Elks Lodge
30 Bissell St., Manchester, CT
Stuart Clark - (860) 205-0657 (c)
(860) 454-4818 (h)

Chapter 416 (New London area)
Tuesday, January 9th - 12pm
Guest Speaker: Chris Conley
Groton Public Library
52 Newtown Rd., Groton
John Knaff - (860) 857-4244

Chapter 417 (Plainville area)
Wednesday, January 10th - 1pm
Plainville Public Library
56 East Main St., Plainville
Mark Kirschner - (860) 882-2717

Chapter 418
(Community College Retirees)
Tuesday, February 20th - 10am
Guest Speaker: Colleen Masse
Elder Law Attorney
4C's Union Hall
907 Wethersfield Ave., Hartford
Bill Searle - (860) 745-3692

February Out of State Meetings will be Annual Meetings and Social Events with Kevin Sullivan (CSEA Retiree Organizer), Aetna and Cigna Representatives speaking and answering questions.

Chapter 421 (Daytona, Florida)
Thursday, February 15th - 11:30am
Meeting to be held at: Crane's Roost
Restaurant Located within: Crane
Lakes Community, 1850 Crane
Lakes Blvd, Port Orange, FL 32128
Price for lunch is \$18.50 per person
Make checks payable to:
"CSEA Chapter 421"
Send checks to: John Veray,
Treasurer, 107 White Ibis Ct,
Daytona Beach, FL 32119
Checks should be received by
February 7, 2024. Please indicate
choice for your meal(s) on your
check from following Menu Choices:
Roost Burger, Reuben, French Dip,
Turkey Sandwich, or Roost Cobb
Salad. Sides included (Choose one);
Sweet Potato Fries/French Fries,
Sauteed Seasonal Vegetables,
Mashed Potatoes, Black Beans &
Rice, Coleslaw & Onion Straws.
Dessert and non-alcoholic drinks
included.

Chapter 422 (Ocala, Florida)
Thursday, February 1st - 11:00am
Francesco's Ristorante
16770 US-441 Summerfield, FL
Menu Choices: Chicken Parmesan,
Sirloin Tips, White Fish Piccata,
or Eggplant Rollatini. Includes:
salad, bread, coffee/tea & dessert
Door prizes and 50/50 raffle
Cost: \$19/member and \$24 guest
Send meal choice and
"CSEA Chapter 422" Checks to:
Hilda Spotts,
513 Fairways Cir., Unit A
Ocala, FL 34472.
Deadline is 1/15/24
Questions? Call Frank Berlinkski
(860) 604-7688

Chapter 423
(Highland Beach, Florida)
Monday, February 12th - 12pm
Renzo's Cafe,
6900 N Federal Highway
Boca Raton, FL
Lunch: Order off the Menu
Questions? Call Ron Herzig
(561) 994-6428

Chapter 424 (Sarasota, Florida)
Wednesday, February 7th - 9am
Carlisle Inn & Conference Center
3727 Bahia Vista St,
Sarasota, Florida 34232
Continental breakfast \$20/person
Checks to "CSEA Chapter 424"
Robert Mackiewicz,
414 Pelican Moorings,
Venice, FL 34285.
Deadline is 2/1/24
Questions? Call Bob Mackiewicz
(941) 497-2370

Chapter 425 (Clearwater, Florida)
Tuesday, February 6th - 11am
Perkins Restaurant
2626 Gulf-to-Bay Blvd.,
Clearwater, FL 33759
Menu Options: Steak Tips & Bell Pepper Skillet, Grilled Fish & Shrimp, Teriyaki Glazed Chicken Skillet, Southwest Avocado Salad
Lunch includes beverage and choice of dessert
Cost: \$16 per person
Send meal choice and
"CSEA Chapter 425" Checks to:
Richard LeVine
1020 South Tennessee Ave
Lakeland, FL 33803
Deadline is 1/26/24
Questions? Call Linda Callahan
(727) 821-4048

Chapter 426 (Ft. Myers, Florida)
Friday, February 9th - 11:30am
KJ's Steakhouse
10950 S Cleveland Ave,
Fort Myers, FL 33907
Lunch: Taste of Italy Buffet
Including; Chicken and Eggplant
Parmesana, dessert and coffee bar
Price: \$20 per person.
RSVP by January 19th by sending
your check to: Ray McCabe
2312 NW 5th St
Cape Coral, FL 33993
Make Checks to:
"CSEA Chapter 426"
Questions? Call Debra Gould
(203) 605-6690

Chapter 427 (Vero Beach, Florida)
Tuesday, February 13th
Fort Pierce Elks Lodge 1520
608 S 5th St., Fort Pierce, FL 34950
Lunch includes Buffet, choices-
Chicken, Pot Roast, Potatoes au
Gratin, Salad, Rolls, Soft drinks
Cost is \$25.00/ member and guest
Make Checks Payable to:
"CSEA Chapter 427" and mail to:
Deborah Manganaro,
10111 Greatwoods Pond Dr.
Ft. Pierce, FL 34945
Questions? Call Martha Jurek
(860) 558-8172

Chapter 431
(North and South Carolina)
Tuesday, February 20th - 11am
Golden Corral
868 Oak Forest Lane
Myrtle Beach, South Carolina
Cost: FREE for members!
Questions? Call John Yopp
(203) 507-1022

Chapter 441 (Cape Cod, MA)
Meeting Date: TBD
Questions? Call Sherrill Stott
(774) 237-0220

Important numbers to have on hand:

Retirement Division Payroll: 860-702-3528

Aetna Customer Service: 1-855-648-0391

Retirement Division Life Insurance: 860-702-3537

Caremark: 1-800-318-2572

Retirement Division Health Insurance: 860-702-3533

Cigna: 1-800-244-6224

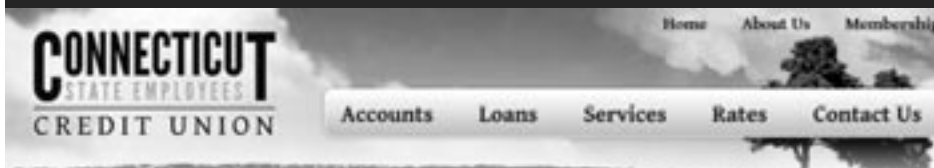
Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield: 1-800-922-2232

CSEA Retiree Organizer, Kevin Sullivan:
860-951-6614 x118

HEP Care Management Solutions: 1-877-687-1448 or visit them at their portal:
<https://www.connect2yourhealth.com/ParticipantPortal/Default.aspx>



Visit Our Website: www.CSECreditUnion.com



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www.CSECreditUnion.com

**Closed Martni Luther King Jr. Day
 January 15th**

Dividend Rates - Third Quarter 2023

	Dividend Rate	Annual Percentage Yield
REGULAR SHARES	3.00%	3.05%
SHARE DRAFTS (Checking)	1.25%	1.26%
CLUB ACCOUNTS	2.00%	2.02%

Minimum opening balance \$25.00. The annual percentage yield is accurate as of the last dividend declaration date. Rate may change after the account is opened. Fees or other conditions may reduce the earnings on the account.

7 Full Service Offices To Serve You

NORWICH Uncas on Thames 401 West Thames St. Norwich, CT 06306 (860) 889-7378	HARTFORD 84 Wadsworth St. Hartford, CT 06106 (860) 522-5388 (Savings) (860) 522-7147 (Loans)	NEW HAVEN 1666 Litchfield Turnpike Woodbridge, CT 06525 (203) 397-2949
MIDDLETOWN 15 Ward Street Middletown, CT 06457 (860) 347-0479	STORRS 1244 Storrs Rd. Storrs, CT 06268 (860) 429-9306	SOUTHBURY Southbury Training School P.O. Box 644 Southbury, CT 06488 (203) 267-7610
		NEWINGTON O'Neil Plaza 2434 Berlin Turnpike Newington, CT 06111 (860) 667-7668

Hours: Main Office: Mon-Fri, 9am-4pm Branches: Mon-Fri, 9:30am-4pm
 Drive-Up Teller (Hartford & Middletown): Mon-Fri, 8:30am-4pm; Paydays Open Until 5pm

**Gone too Soon:
 CSEA Members Who Have Passed On**

The Office of the State Comptroller has provided CSEA with the following members that have recently passed away. Our condolences are with their friends, family and loved ones.

- Abate, Sarah, Administrative Clerical
- Araujo, Leonel, Comm College Admin - Cccc
- Bailey, Mittie, Education B
- Ball, Johanna, Administrative Clerical
- Bernard, Raymond, Health Professional
- Bernstein, Madeline, Health Professional
- Bishop, David, Education B
- Bracker, Heinrich, St Vocation Federation Teacher
- Broadnax, David, Social And Human Services
- Carraway, Tobi, Protective Services
- Cavallaro, Isidoro, Health Nonprofessional
- Colli, Sandra, Administrative Clerical
- Colson, Robert, Service/Maintenance
- Curti, Ciro, Engineer, Scien, Tech
- Ellsworth, Michael, No Designated Unit
- Feldman, Elaine, Administrative Clerical
- Feldman, Seymour, Judicial - Non-Professional
- Figueroa, Olga, Correctional Officers
- Flynn, Patrick, Correctional Officers
- Frew, Robert, State University Faculty
- Gallo, Donald, State University Faculty
- Geer, Richard, Correctional Officers
- Harris, David, Education B
- Hennessey, Joan, Health Nonprofessional
- Hodis, Cynthia, State University Non-Fac Prof
- Jean, Arthur, Correctional Officers
- Kinne, Rosalyn, Social And Human Services
- Lancia, Rozanne, Social And Human Services
- Laporte, William, Comm College Faculty Cccc
- Lessor, John, Judicial - Professional
- Lima, Arthur, Judicial - Non-Professional
- Macken, June, Judicial - Non-Professional
- Matney, Robert, Managerial
- Mckee, Gerardine, Service/Maintenance
- Medlicott, Alexander, Uconn - Faculty
- Monroe, James, Service/Maintenance
- Obrien, Edward, Comm College Faculty Cccc
- Popolizio, John, Health Professional
- Rowe, Diane, Comm College Confid Exclusions
- Rychlec, Thomas, Correctional Officers
- Sewell, Geraldine, Social And Human Services
- Sturman, Bruce, Dpds Chief Public Defenders
- Tarasuk, Paul, State University Faculty
- Torcasio, Antonio, Service/Maintenance
- Tran, Tho, Engineer, Scien, Tech
- Waller, Robert, St Vocation Federation Teacher
- Wildowsky, Edna, Health Nonprofessional

CSEA NEWS

*The Voice of Connecticut's
 Public Service Employees & Retirees*

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CONNECTICUT STATE EMPLOYEE ASSOCIATION

Local 2001, Service Employees International Union, CTW/CLC

- Travis WoodwardPresident
- Beverly LeeSecretary/Treasurer
- David GliddenExecutive Director
- Drew E. StonerCommunication Specialist
- Jason P. WebsterGraphic/ Technical Assistance

INSERTION DEADLINE: 1st of prior month.

MAILING ADDRESS: CSEA/SEIU Local 2001, 760 Capitol Avenue, Hartford, CT 06106;
 PHONES: (860) 951-6614, toll-free: (800) 894-9479, FAX: (860) 951-3526; INTERNET:
www.csea-ct.com.

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CSEA Members Celebrate the Holidays as a Union Family!

Throughout the month of December, CSEA members gathered to celebrate the holiday season and the many union victories we've won throughout the year. The Governor and other high-ranking elected officials joined us for these celebrations and members did not waste this opportunity to discuss the work that is necessary in 2024 to ensure that working families thrive in our great state.

We hope that you and your families enjoyed the holiday season and are rested and recharged for the upcoming fights we have ahead!



New Aetna Medicare Advantage Card

And 2024 Medicare Part B Reimbursement Information

State of Connecticut retirees who are age 65 and older will be receiving a new Aetna Medicare Advantage insurance card in the mail. You can use this new one moving forward. If you do not receive a new card, you can call Aetna Customer Service to request it at 1-855-648-0391. If you do not receive the new card, your old one will still work.

MEDICARE OPEN-ENROLLMENT PERIOD CLARIFICATION

The Medicare open-enrollment period can be overwhelming, with an influx of mailers, phone calls, and television advertisements. However, we want to clarify the following for State retirees:

As a State retiree, you are not required to take any action during the Medicare enrollment period. Doing nothing will keep you enrolled in the State of Connecticut Aetna Medicare Advantage plan for Retirees.

This enrollment period applies to non-State retirees who need to make changes to their Medicare plans. Therefore, you can safely disregard any calls, emails, mailings, and ignore television commercials related to Medicare enrollment. Only communication bearing the State of Connecticut Comptroller's Office address or insignia should be given attention.

We also want to address any notifications from Aetna that mention the option to "opt out" of your current plan. We strongly advise against opting out of your State retiree health insurance plan. This information is included in communications to meet federal Medicare requirements, but State Retirees will find it extremely challenging to secure a better plan elsewhere. Therefore, do not opt out of the plan. You earned it!

2024 Medicare Part B Reimbursement Update!

We want to keep you informed about important developments regarding your Part B (and Part D if applicable) reimbursements for the year 2024. The standard amount for Medicare Part B for the upcoming year will be \$174.70.

Standard Part B Premium:

If you are paying the standard, basic amount for Part B, you don't need to take any action. Your Part B reimbursement will be automatically included in your pension check, just as it has been in the past.

Higher Part B Premium (or Part D Premium):

If you pay an amount higher than the basic rate for Part B or if

you are enrolled in Part D, please be prepared to submit the relevant information, as you have done in previous years. The administration of Part B submissions will now be handled by the Aetna Medicare Advantage Plan, our new provider.

If you are being charged more than \$174.70 for Medicare, you must submit your Social Security Statement/Medicare Premium Notice to the following address by February 29, 2024:

Email, Fax or Mail a copy of your Medicare Premium Notice to:

Email: STCTMailbox@aetna.com
 Fax: 1 (855) 481-312
 Mail:
 Aetna, Inc.
 PO Box 7083
 London, KY 40742

DO NOT SEND CERTIFIED - Certified Mail will be rejected!

Rest assured, you will receive additional notifications through various channels, including CSEA News, emails from our team, and you will also be informed by the Comptroller's Office via traditional mail.

In 2027, the SEBAC Pension and Healthcare Agreement is set to expire - and through negotiations, the state will surely be seeking to extract savings from retirees, including but not limited

to changing Part B reimbursements for retirees and their spouses. The size of our membership is an important way that CSEA Council 400 demonstrates our power, our voice and our strength—and for 2024 we've set out to drastically increase our membership numbers ahead of upcoming contract negotiations and legislative threats.

Spouses are a large part of our membership, and it's no secret why—they are affected by health insurance and pension benefit changes and are often slated for survivor benefits. By becoming a member, your spouse will ensure they will continue to receive the CSEA News and important notifications regarding the benefits you worked hard to secure if you were to pass away. They will also be eligible for SEIU Member Benefits like travel rewards and reduced auto and home insurance rates.

Most importantly though, by becoming a member, they will help to increase our membership numbers so that CSEA Council 400 will have an even larger voice against our opponents who want to slash benefits—your benefits, their benefits. If your spouse isn't yet a member, contact our Retiree Organizer, Kevin Sullivan at Ksullivan@csea760.com or 860-951-6614 x 118 to get them signed up!



Important Update: Protecting Our Pensions and Healthcare in 2027

Dear CSEA Council 400 Members,

I hope this message finds you in good health and spirits. As we approach the critical negotiations of 2027, I want to update you on our ongoing efforts to safeguard our hard-earned benefits – pensions and healthcare.

Our Union's Strength:

It's with great pride I share that our union is at its strongest in years, now boasting well over 12,000 dues-paying members. This remarkable growth is a testament to our collective resolve and unity. It enhances our ability to advocate effectively for our rights and benefits.

Our Unwavering Commitment:

CSEA has always stood firm in the commitment to protect the pensions and healthcare benefits that you, our valued members, have earned through your dedicated service. As we face new challenges and opportunities in the upcoming negotiations, this commitment remains steadfast.

Key Focus Areas:

Pension Security: Ensuring the sustainability and fairness of our pension system is paramount. We are actively working toward solutions that maintain the strength of our pension fund while ensuring it continues to serve the needs of all members, both current and future retirees.

Healthcare Benefits: Affordable, quality healthcare is a priority for us. We are dedicated to maintaining the excellent healthcare benefits that we have successfully negotiated with the State, ensuring they re-

main accessible and comprehensive.

Medicare Reimbursement: We fully understand the significance of main-

taining the reimbursement for Medicare Part B, along with other related Medicare expenses, for our retirees and their spouses. This benefit is a key priority for us, and we are dedicated to vigorously advocating for its continuation.

Negotiation Strategy:

We are developing a robust strategy to advocate for our interests effectively. This includes gathering insights from you, our members, to understand your concerns and priorities fully.

Your Voice Matters:

Your input is invaluable in shaping our approach. We encourage you to participate in upcoming surveys and Chapter meetings where you can voice your opinions and concerns. Remember, our strength lies in our unity and collective voice.

Stay Informed:

We will continue to provide regular updates as negotiations progress. Stay tuned for emails, articles in *CSEA News*, and meeting announcements to keep abreast of all developments. Opt into text message updates by texting "CSEA" to 787753. Standard message rates apply.

Support and Solidarity:

In these times, supporting each other is more important than ever. We urge you to stay connected with your fellow mem-

bers and support our collective cause.

As we move forward, remember that our goal is to secure a fair and equitable outcome that honors your service and dedication. We are in this together, and together, we will strive for the best possible result from the 2027 negotiations.

Thank you for your continued support and solidarity.

Michael O'Brien
Council 400 President



Care Champions Summit: Uniting for Change in Washington, DC

Child care and healthcare workers from across the nation converged in Washington, DC on December 5-7th for the Care Champions Summit, a transformative event addressing the pressing care crisis. Over three days, these dedicated individuals shared their stories with Members of Congress, advocating for critical reforms and investments in the care sector.

We find ourselves in the midst of a pivotal moment for care—spanning child care, home care, and long-term care. The underinvestment in this essential social infrastructure not only adversely affects working women but also

disproportionately impacts Black, Brown, and immigrant families. Moreover, it undervalues the indispensable work carried out by the care workforce. Recognizing

this, the Care Champions Summit shed light on the urgent need for meaningful changes in care policies.

As we navigate this transformational moment, the call for care investments echoes loudly. The summit emphasized the necessity to elevate compensation and standards for care workers, addressing the longstanding undervaluation of their work. The ultimate goal is to rebuild our economy while ensuring that working families do not face the peril of falling off the proverbial cliff amid the expiring CR (Continuing Resolution).

Day 1 kicked off with a reception, setting the stage for unity and collaboration. Day 2 was packed with a Lobby Day, a press conference, and a special Care Champions reception, providing care workers with a platform to make their voices heard on Capitol Hill. The summit concluded on Day 3 with a conversation featuring SEIU Secretary-Treasurer April Verrett and a roundtable discussion with US Secretary of Health and Human Services Xavier Becerra.

The Care Champions Summit stands as a testament to the collective strength and determination of care workers nationwide. By coming together, sharing experiences, and engaging with policymakers, participants ignited a powerful movement that will reshape the care landscape for the better.

Looking Back on 2023

Reviewing the biggest communication wins of the year

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members present than we had chairs – a poignant testament to the strength of our shared purpose.

The pinnacle of the day unfolded in a powerful rally before

the Governor's Mansion. There, we raised our voices collectively, demanding acknowledgment of our pleas for essential rights – for healthcare, fair pay, and a quality life for future generations. This was more than a media blitz; it was a

declaration that, together, we are an unstoppable force advocating for the well-being of our union family and the generations to come.

As we embark on 2024, we will be advancing our communication efforts further. We remain committed to connecting with both our existing members and those yet to join our union, as well as

fostering meaningful dialogues with legislators.

Through a strategic presence on both social and traditional media platforms, we will continue to amplify and champion our core values. Here's to a year of continued growth, strengthened relationships, and impactful communication.



HONORING LABOR LEADERS WHO HAVE PASSED IN DECEMBER


CSEA deeply mourns the loss of two exceptional labor leaders, whose dedication and passion for workers' rights have left an indelible mark on our union and the broader labor movement. Their legacy will be remembered with gratitude and respect.

John Lessor
Long-time Council 400 Leader

Mary Ann Handley
Former State Senator & Higher Ed Champion



Does CSEA have your correct contact info on file? Update your info by scanning the QR code.



December Press Hits Reflect Union Advocacy and Member Stories

As we bid farewell to December, it's crucial to reflect on the impactful press coverage our union received throughout the month. These articles not only shed light on our ongoing efforts but also underscore the significance of members sharing their stories. Here's a roundup of key press hits:

Town Times - December 7, 2023

Title: "New Apprenticeship Program Aims to Fill Childcare Jobs"

This piece delves into the new apprenticeship program to address the childcare crisis. Travis Woodward, President of CSEA SEIU Local 2001, emphasizes the union's commitment to fighting for better wages, benefits, and professional development. Maria Amado, founder of Green World Family Child Care, adds, "This program builds additional workers and invests in Connecticut's effort to expand quality childcare access."

CT News Junkie - December 11, 2023

Title: "Cost-Saving Policy Decried As Unsafe By Correctional Supervisors' Union"
Reporter: Hugh McQuaid

The article focuses on concerns raised by Brandon McCloud, Chief Steward for CSEA SEIU Local 2001, regarding a cost-saving policy in correctional facilities. McCloud expresses worry about compromising safety and states, "With the influx of assaults in the department, the concern from the union is you're taking a vital position — sometimes a shift commander — and you're utilizing them to fill a lieutenant's position."

CT Mirror Podcast - December 11, 2023

Title: "PODCAST: CT inmates, correctional officers, advocates clash over how to address prison staff assaults"
Reporters: WSHU's Ebong Udoma / *CT Mirror's* Jaden Edison

The podcast explores the clash of

perspectives on addressing prison staff assaults, featuring voices from inmates, correctional officers, and advocates. It offers a comprehensive view of the complexities surrounding this critical issue.

CT Insider - December 23, 2023

Title: "Amazon expands its network across CT as warehouse pushback builds"
Reporter: Liese Klein

Drew Stoner, Communications Director for CSEA SEIU Local 2001, contributes to the discussion about Amazon's expansion. Stoner advocates for workers' rights, stating, "Ultimately these are really state-subsidized facilities, and the workers inside should have good, union-protected jobs."

Why Member Stories Matter:

These press hits underscore the importance of our members sharing their experiences and perspectives. By telling your stories, you contribute to a narrative that not only amplifies our union's advocacy but also shapes public discourse on crucial issues. Let's continue to stand united and make our voices heard.

#SolidaritySeason

Strengthening the Labor Movement Across the Country

In the midst of #SolidaritySeason, a surge of collective strength is reshaping the American labor landscape. The recent wave of victories, highlighted by nearly 900,000 unionized workers securing double-digit pay raises, marks a transformative period for the labor movement.

The current climate, marked by low unemployment and high profits for many corporations, has emboldened workers to demand better wages and improved working conditions.

The surge in wage increases, with more than 700,000 workers securing pay hikes over the last six months, reflects a monumental achievement for unions. Strikes, negotiations, and activism have propelled the labor movement forward, providing nearly a million Americans with double-digit raises.

High-profile strikes, including those by the United Auto Workers union and healthcare workers at Kaiser Permanente, have been instrumental in securing significant pay increases and job protections. The Writer's Guild and SAG-AFTRA strikes in the entertainment industry also played a crucial role in highlighting the power of collective bargaining.

While not everyone has the right to strike, many achieved success without resorting to picket lines. Notable examples include the Teamsters' deal covering 340,000 members at UPS and the Culinary union's series of agreements preventing strikes at 18 Las Vegas Strip casinos.

Some contracts, such as those for 32,000 workers at DisneyWorld and 30,000 non-teaching employees of Los Angeles schools, received relatively little attention but are contributing to the broader narrative of improved working conditions.

The airline industry, operating under unique labor laws, faced negotiations that often flew under the public radar. Despite the inability to go on strike, skilled negotiations resulted in substantial wage gains. Pilots at American and United airlines secured immediate pay increases of more than 20%, with over 40% over the life of their contracts. Flight attendants at Southwest also achieved immediate wage increases of more than 20%.

Union leaders are setting ambitious goals, often elected on promises of better contracts and improved conditions. This

new wave of activist leadership has been effective in negotiations, emphasizing the need for fair compensation amid growing income inequality.

The economic environment, characterized by record-low unemployment and high profits for many employers, has given unions a strategic advantage. Workers, cognizant of their increased leverage, are rejecting negotiated deals and demanding more, echoing the sentiment that employers could have been paying fair wages all along.

While union members are experiencing significant gains, the broader labor market is also witnessing positive changes. Average hourly wages have increased, indicating a shift in the balance of power between workers and employers. Nonunion workers are also benefiting from higher wages, driven by a tight labor market.

Despite these victories, challenges persist. US labor law remains a hurdle, limiting the ability of unions to represent additional workplaces. However, the momentum generated by recent successes is undeniable, with the potential to drive further change and bring attention to the power of collective action.

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