



## Hearing Education Services

### CHAPTER NEWSLETTER



Dear ,

We celebrated International Women's Day on March 8 to honor women's achievements and promote gender equality. This includes ensuring women have the same opportunities as men in pursuing professional goals. On that note, I want to take a moment to celebrate all of the wonderful women in our chapter. You do a great job and help so many children.

All the members of our chapter, men and women, are committed to serving our students, and I strongly believe that we have made progress towards our common goals. Thank you for all that you do to ensure the city's students receive quality hearing services.

Our monthly consultation meetings give us the opportunity to directly address chapter issues and keep in touch with the administration. You are welcome to share your concerns with me at [ccortez@uft.org](mailto:ccortez@uft.org) so that I can raise them at our meetings.

I thank all of you for your support. In closing, I'd like to offer this quote from Helen Keller: "Alone we can do so little; together we can do so much."

In unity,

Cecilia Cortez  
Hearing Education Services Chapter Leader

## Consultation committee meetings

We continue to have consultation meetings once a month with Assistant Superintendent Helen Kaufman to discuss important chapter issues. At these meetings, we discuss topics that the HES staff sends us such as attendance, personal days, lesson plans, audiology, schedules, TRAC (Travel, Reimbursement and Approval Certification) and coverages.

[Consultation meeting minutes](#) are posted on our chapter website.

## Our Functional Chapter Weekend

Our chapter, once again, participated in the UFT's Functional Chapter Weekend on March 4–5 in Rye, NY. Each year, members from the union's functional chapters gather for enlightening workshops on many topics including public speaking, union rights and benefits and effective communication.

During breakout sessions by chapter, we were fortunate to hear from Amy Arundell, the director of personnel, payroll and special projects. We also heard a presentation on pensions from UFT Pension Representative Frank Panebianco. He explained how the different pension tiers work, and how the benefits vary. Overall, it was an enjoyable and informative experience for the HES members who attended.



Chapter Leader Cecilia Cortez with HES members.

## Jose P. training on March 10

The HES teachers had an all-day DOE-sponsored professional development session on March 10 that focused on the Jose P. class-action lawsuit. The training covered how to effectively meet our students' different needs. We also learned about the history and ramifications of the legal case.

We truly enjoyed the day and are grateful for all the training we receive in different areas. We're looking forward to another Jose P. training at the Brooklyn borough office on April 7 as well as our professional development in June.



HES teachers learn about the Jose P. class-action lawsuit at a DOE-UFT workshop held at the Brooklyn UFT borough office.

## New technology for HES

In February, Beth Haft, a HES provider from Queens, and I applied for a state grant for technology for HES. This grant would pay for a laptop for every HES teacher, which would allow each of them to more easily handle SESIS. I will keep you updated about the status of our application.

## Transition Fair on March 30

Hearing Education Services sponsors an annual Transition Fair for students to explore some education options after graduation. This year, our fair is on March 31. Deaf and hearing-impaired high school students from around the city will gather to learn more about colleges. Representatives from city and state colleges as well as Gallaudet University will be available to speak to students. It is always inspiring to see our students take the initiative and pursue their goals.

## Join our #PublicSchoolProud campaign

The UFT launched a new [#PublicSchoolProud campaign](#) after the Delegate Assembly passed a resolution on Jan. 18 to celebrate the accomplishments of public schools.

With voucher advocate Betsy DeVos at the helm of the U.S. Department of Education, we will have our work cut out for us in the coming years. We need to protect public education and our rights as professionals.

Here are a few actions you can take to protect public education:

- Join the #PublicSchoolProud campaign to stay informed and learn how you can take action now to stand up for our public schools.
- Visit the UFT's Show Your Love for Public Schools webpage to learn more about how your school can organize a #PublicSchoolProud project or event and use the hashtag **#PublicSchoolProud** in your social media posts.
- Make sure your colleagues are [signed up on UFT.org](#) to receive relevant information and action alerts.

## Claim your tax deductions before April 18

According to the IRS, eligible educators may deduct up to \$250 of any unreimbursed expenses spent in 2016 for books, supplies, computer equipment (including related software and services), other equipment and supplementary materials used in the classroom. Union dues may also be filed as a miscellaneous deduction. For more information about tax deductions for educators, [please read our information item](#) or [see the IRS website](#).

## Grief and loss counseling through the MAP

We all experience challenges in our personal and professional lives. In some instances, those challenges can be too difficult to face alone. One of the many important benefits we have as union members is confidential, professional and supportive assistance through the Member Assistance Program (MAP).



Member Assistance Program

MAP provides short-term counseling to in-service UFT members by professionally-trained mental health staff and referrals to outside resources when necessary. These services may help you if you are having difficulty with a traumatic experience or a difficult loss.

For more information, email [MAPinfo@uft.org](mailto:MAPinfo@uft.org) or call 212-701-9620. Registration is limited. [See this flier](#) for more details.

## Upcoming events

- **On Tuesday, March 28**, the Jewish Labor Committee Educators' Chapter and the UFT Jewish Heritage Committee, in collaboration with The Workman's Circle, invite you to celebrate Passover at the annual Labor Seder. The seder runs from 5:30-7:30 p.m. on the 19th floor at UFT headquarters, 52 Broadway in Manhattan. The cost is \$36 for adults and \$15 for children. For more information, [see the event listing](#).
- **On Saturday, May 6** at 9 a.m. the UFT will hold the 4th annual 5K Family Run/Walk to benefit the UFT Disaster Relief fund. The cost is \$25 for adults and \$15 for children under 12. It begins and ends at Coney Island's MCU Park in Brooklyn. For more information, [see the event listing](#).
- **On Thursday, May 18, from 6:30 to 10:30 p.m.**, the District 75 annual scholarship dinner will be held at the Vanderbilt at South Beach, 300 Father Capodanno Blvd. on Staten Island. Tickets cost \$90 and include a cocktail hour, dinner, dancing and open bar. The deadline to purchase tickets is Thursday, May 4. For a list of award recipients and to download the mail-in ticket coupon, [see the flier](#).