



Dear Anne,

We are a couple months into the school year and we hope you have found a healthy balance in both your personal and professional lives. Creating space for calm is all the more important given that the national landscape continues to be marked by challenges and tragedies. We struggle to make sense of the senseless and mourn for the victims of disaster, both natural and man-made. At times, the weight of it all can feel crushing — yet we cannot shrink in the face of the awesome responsibility we undertake daily.



For many of our students, we are the safe harbor in the storm and the shoulder they turn to when their lives become defined by helplessness and confusion. In difficult times, it is all the more important that we redouble our efforts to create working environments and schools that nurture both growth and healing.

For example, on Oct. 31, at Brooklyn's HS for Public Service: Heroes of Tomorrow, members dressed up as comic book heroes to create a magical learning environment for students. Later that day, just as school was getting out, members and staff at Stuyvesant High School stood strong and protected the students they serve while tragedy unfolded outside their doors. This is our work.

We know that our members are building a caring and responsive school community because we all value the experiences of our colleagues and students. We see the humanity in all with whom we work. We tend to the social-emotional health of our students with the same vigor with which we approach students' academic and intellectual lives. To create such a place is difficult, but we are doing it. We are building schools that engage students, celebrate our colleagues and partner with parents to improve our communities.

Despite the enormity of this charge, we know that we do not face any of these challenges alone. Because we are the UFT. The union is here to join you in times of struggle and in times of triumph. Let us know what's going on in your schools. We can't wait to stand with you!

In solidarity,

Janella Hinds, Vice President for Academic High Schools

Sterling Roberson, Vice President for Career and Technical Education

Vote NO to a state constitutional convention

On the back of the Nov. 7 ballot where referendum questions appear, New Yorkers will be asked if the state should hold a constitutional convention to amend the state's constitution. Business interests are financing a campaign to encourage New Yorkers to vote "yes" because they want to rewrite our state's laws for their benefit. With those interests holding sway in our federal government, state-level protections are more critical than ever. We need you to convince every registered New York State voter you know to join you in voting NO on Proposal #1.



Vice Presidents Janella Hinds and Sterling Roberson will vote NO on Proposal #1. Don't forget to flip the ballot! The proposals are on the back.

We have a lot to lose as a constitutional convention could set us on a path that eliminates workers' rights to form a union, drain money from public schools and threaten our pensions. As unionists, we must protect the laws that provide for a dignified retirement as well as safeguard the right to collectively bargain.

The UFT's first line of defense is COPE, which is funded through voluntary contributions from our members. The funds are used for political actions aimed at preserving the protections that are so important to our profession. See your chapter leader if you would like to enroll in COPE or if you would like to increase your contribution. You can also [join the UFT in mobilizing your friends and family to vote NO! to the Constitutional Convention](#) through online efforts. Volunteer at UFT phone banks in all our boroughs and promote awareness through social media.

Nominate a colleague for a Team High School award

The 4th annual Team High School Awards Ceremony will take place on Friday, April 13, 2018. This event is an opportunity to honor those who go above and beyond in serving students, schools, communities and the union. Please take a few minutes to nominate a colleague, community leader, or your school's chapter for a High School Award. For information regarding the awards please contact Angel Valentin at avalentin@uft.org.



[Download a nomination form »](#)

Seeking outstanding Career and Technical Education Teachers

Help shine a spotlight on the great work our Career and Technical Education teachers do! The Career and Technical Education awards ceremony is scheduled on Thursday, Feb. 15, at UFT headquarters, 52 Broadway.

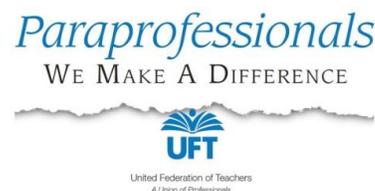


Nominees for the Outstanding CTE Educator award must be teaching a Career and Technical Education course or engaged in academic integration in the CTE programs of study. We'll email the nomination form in the near future.

For more information, please contact Elizabeth Cardona-Diaz at ecardona-diaz@uft.org.

Outstanding paraprofessionals

Each year, the UFT recognizes outstanding paraprofessionals who have made contributions to their schools, their communities and their union. Use the link below to nominate a full-time paraprofessional for this award. The deadline is Thursday, Nov. 16, at 5 p.m.



To process your nomination, all of the information requested on the form must be filled in correctly. Paraprofessionals Chapter Leader Shelvy Young-Abrams will contact the winners.

[Download the paraprofessional nomination form »](#)

The union makes us strong!

Since 2014, the chapter at Staten Island's Tottenville HS has, with the support of the UFT, been fighting violations of the UFT/DOE collective bargaining agreement. We are happy to report that the union has been successful in every case from Tottenville that has been taken to arbitration over the last several years. From grievances about improper comp time and Circular 6R assignments to oversize classes, the chapter has prevailed in these and other challenges to Principal Joseph Scarmato's inappropriate actions. We stand with our chapter at Tottenville HS as their struggle continues.

Kudos to the members at Brooklyn's Academy for Conservation and the Environment. Chapter Leader Judith King and chapter members worked together to address concerns raised about a multiple-page unit plan mandate. By resolving this issue with the administration, the chapter has ensured that the collective bargaining agreement remains strong in their school.

For more information on paperwork complaint procedures, review this list of [successful resolutions](#).

Making Strides Against Breast Cancer walk



UFT Vice President Janella Hinds, left, joined the students and staff of Pelham Prep Academy at the Making Strides Against Breast Cancer walk at Orchard Beach in the Bronx.

High school members, students and parents from all five boroughs came out on Oct. 15 to raise money in support of breast cancer awareness, prevention and treatment. It was a day of community-building, remembrance and resilience as we walked for a good cause.

If you have pictures or stories from the event that you would like to share, please [email Team High School](#) or share them on Twitter by tagging [@UFTTeamHS](#).

Help is a phone call away

The UFT Health and Cancer HelpLine provides union members with counseling and information services. This helpline provides counseling to those experiencing mental health issues as well as those dealing with a serious medical issue.

Referrals are also offered for care-giving services; individual, married-couple or group therapy; and substance-abuse treatment.

Most counseling is provided in-person or by telephone during business hours. It's best to call ahead to ensure that time will be set aside for you. Call the UFT Welfare Fund's main number at **212-539-0500** and ask to speak with a Health and Cancer HelpLine counselor.

All contacts are strictly confidential.

An educational odyssey

In collaboration with National Geographic and the city's Department of Education, the UFT's Division of Career and Technical Education hosted educators on Oct. 19 and 20 at the premiere of an unusual event – an immersive multi-media experience that allows people to explore life in the ocean!

Hundreds of UFT members were invited to attend the opening of this virtual aquarium as guests. (Some people had time to go through the exhibition twice!) Afterwards, members attended a reception and had time to talk about what they had seen.

National Geographic Encounter Ocean Odyssey is an immersive experience in Times Square that uses groundbreaking digital technology to “transport” teachers and students on an incredible journey across and in the Pacific Ocean complete with sound.

The show is scheduled to run through March 2018.

Welcome new members

Team High School extends a warm welcome to newcomers to our profession. Your first year is filled



UFT Vice President Sterling Roberson with Shannon Hebert, National Geographic Encounter's head of marketing and sales.

[Member Handbook](#) is an invaluable resource that can answer questions related to compensation, health benefits and certification to name just a few. Additionally, the [newcomer's checklist](#) provides a quick “to-do” list to help you stay on track. Finally, every new teacher is entitled to in-school mentoring services. The mentor should be an experienced classroom teacher, ideally in your subject area. Check out the [DOE's Guide to Mentoring](#) to fully familiarize yourself with the process.

We do this work together!



UFT members from Bronx International HS join Chapter Leader Brendan Kolbay during a chapter meeting earlier this year. The members discussed handling beginning-of-year issues and possible resolutions.

UFT supports striking spectrum workers

The UFT stands with striking Spectrum workers of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers Local 3. Nearly 1,800 members of that union have been on strike for more than five months in an effort to save their retirement and health benefits. For its part, Spectrum has refused to negotiate in good faith with its employees. Show your support by uploading the orange ribbon to your social media accounts and use the hashtag #spectrumstrike as a symbol of solidarity. For additional information on taking action, log on to <http://spectrumstrike2017.com/>



2017-18 citywide academic and high school meetings

Every month, UFT members from academic and CTE high schools convene to discuss issues of interest regarding our union, our profession, our schools and our students. Our conversations cover national, state and local concerns. These meetings are open to all UFT members and we hope you will join us.

Citywide academic high school meetings: All meetings take place on Wednesdays in UFT borough offices and begin at 4 p.m.

Date: Wednesday, Nov. 15

Location: UFT Queens borough office, 97-77 Queens Blvd.

Citywide career and technical education high school meetings: All meetings take place at 4:15 p.m.

Date: Thursday, Nov. 16

Location: UFT headquarters, 52 Broadway, 19th Floor, Room H

Set up a visit at your school

We would love to visit you at your school. To schedule a visit, please fill out the appropriate form:

- Academic high school and secondary schools
- Career and Technical Education high schools

OUR CHAPTER | OUR UNION



United Federation of Teachers
A Union of Professionals
52 Broadway, New York, NY 10004
(212) 777-7500 • UFT.org

asilverstein@uft.org is currently subscribed to the UFT email list. If you would like to stop receiving emails from the UFT, you can unsubscribe at any time.

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