



NEWSLETTER

Dear Friend,

Now that we're well into the school year, we hope you're learning how to strike a comfortable balance between your professional and personal lives. We are excited about building upon the immense progress New York City's public high schools have enjoyed in recent years. Nothing better embodies the tremendous work you do than the fact that last year marked both the highest graduation rate and highest college readiness rates this city has ever seen. This simply would not be possible without the herculean efforts of the thousands of high school educators throughout this city.



We all know there's still work to be done, but it is also important to celebrate success. When you have a chance, take a moment to reflect upon both the importance and the joy of this profession. We at Team High School cannot thank you enough.

In solidarity,

Janella T. Hinds, Vice President for Academic High Schools

Sterling Roberson, Vice President for Career and Technical Education

Coming Home to Teach

Team High is proud to recognize the amazing work of Sakena Sampson. Sakena graduated from the High School for Service and Learning at Erasmus Hall, Brooklyn, in 2011, and returned as a special education teacher. She is starting her fifth year of teaching after graduating from Penn State in 2015.

"I decided to pursue a career in public education because of the motivation I received from dedicated teachers throughout my time as a student. My educators made me the confident woman I am today and I too wanted to make a difference," Sakena reflected.

It was an easy decision for Sakena to return to her alma mater. "I returned to the High School for Service and Learning at Erasmus because as a teenager, it was my home away from home," Sakena said. "I never wanted the day to end. Being at school with my teammates, classmates and teachers — it felt like home at a time in my life when I needed it. When a student says, 'You don't know what it is like to go to school here,' I can say, 'Oh yes I do!'"

As a teacher, Sakena understands the importance of unionism. "It is important to be a UFT member because of all the services the union provides that members can't imagine," she said. "The seminars in becoming a first-time homeowner and the parental leave are important to me."

We thank Sakena for all the hard work she contributes on behalf of her students and school community.



Sakena Sampson is a special education teacher at her alma mater, the High School for Service and Learning.

Please email [Team High School](#) if you work with an outstanding educator who has "come home to teach."

A Tribute to Two UFT Giants

two indomitable figures in the UFT, [Lucille Swain](#) and [Abe Levine](#).

Swain coordinated every UFT contract since the union's inception. She came to the UFT in 1961 during efforts to organize city teachers, and she stayed to negotiate the first comprehensive collective bargaining agreement covering teachers anywhere in the nation.

"That contract," she later said, "broke the ground for teachers to start organizing across the country."

Michael Mendel, a former executive assistant to the UFT president, said, "Every union member owes a debt of gratitude to Lucille Swain for all the work she's done."

Lucille is survived by a sister, Alice Gill, a union activist who worked for the American Federation of Teachers.

Abe Levine served as the union's first vice president for elementary schools and remained a steadfast presence at the UFT until his final months. Abe played an instrumental role in uniting this city's teachers guilds which ultimately resulted in the creation of the UFT in 1960.

UFT President Michael Mulgrew said, "If there was a UFT event, Abe was there. The UFT was his life. There has never been anyone more committed to this union. His passing leaves a huge void."

Levine served on the UFT Executive Board for nearly 59 years, including his time with the Teachers Guild, until he stepped down in 2013.



Lucille Swain negotiated the UFT's first contract.



Abe Levine was a founding member of the UFT and its first vice president of elementary schools.

The UFT Joins Students at Climate Strike NYC



Janella Hinds, UFT vice president for academic high schools, joins fellow educators at the Global Climate Strike on Sept. 20 in Battery Park.

UFT members from around the city joined students and activists at Climate Strike NYC: A Call to Action on Sept. 20. Speakers inspired the crowd to use individual and collective action to mitigate the impact of climate change and influence the politics surrounding climate-related legislation. The event clearly illustrated how

We've Got That Covered

Each [per session](#) activity must be reviewed by the chapter leader and posted in a public place at least 20 days before the activity commences.

Assigning coverages: Schools will request volunteers who want to perform coverages. Volunteers should be selected first, then selected by rotation. The first covered class of each term is unpaid.

Paraprofessional Awards Luncheon

Each year, the UFT recognizes outstanding paraprofessionals who have made contributions to their school, their community and their union. Submit this [nomination form](#) to nominate a full-time paraprofessional for this award. The deadline is Thursday, Nov. 21.

To process your nomination, all of the requested information must be filled in correctly. All winners will be contacted by Paraprofessionals Chapter Leader Shelvy Young-Abrams. Awardees will be honored at the annual Paraprofessional Festival and Awards Luncheon on Saturday, March 14, 2020, at the New York Hilton.



Please note: Paraprofessionals may not nominate themselves and prior winners are not eligible.

Nominate a Colleague for a High School Award

Our sixth annual Team High School Awards Ceremony will take place on Friday, April 24, 2020. 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 or your school's chapter](#) for a High School Award. The award categories include Excellence in Education, Outstanding Union Activist, Community Champion and the Team High School Award. [Read the award descriptions](#). For information regarding the awards, please contact [Angel Valentin](#).

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