

West Suburban Teachers Union, Local 571, IFT, AFT, AFL-CIO

Union Messenger

"A Union of Professionals"

WSTU/June/July Calendar

6/10—ExBd Mtg. (5:00 p.m.—Westmont)
 6/17—Registration Deadline for Social Security Webinar (Westmont)
 6/19—Social Security Webinar—Westmont
 7/1—Councils' election reports due to 571
 7/8—Registration deadline for Social Security Webinar (Westmont)
 7/9—Social Security Webinar—Westmont
 7/14—Councils' year-end financial statements and audit forms due to 571

Union Messenger

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 Rachel Esposito, Vice President
 Sandra Erickson, Treasurer
 Cathleen Pope, Secretary
 Jonathan Pazol, Financial Secretary
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 Julie McShane, COPE/PAC Chairperson
 Tom Smith, IFT Field Service Director
 Arnavaz Mistry-Mujthaba, IFT Field Service Director
 Julie Masterton, Membership Secretary
 Patty Clancy, Office Secretary
 Andrew Bendelow,
 571 Web Administrator
 Robin Hancock,
 571 Union Messenger Editor



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Fair is Fair! (Part 2)

Hopefully you did your homework to determine how the Illinois Fair Tax will affect your family by using the calculator, www2.illinois.gov/sites/gov/fairtax.



Why a Fair Tax? Illinois could cut middle-class taxes, balance the budget and grow the economy. Data from State and Local Tax Shares of Family Income (for non-elderly taxpayers) shows the top one percent of income earners pay 7.4 percent of their income in state and local taxes while the bottom 20 percent of earners pay 14.4 percent of their income. The percent of Illinois taxpayers whose net income is \$100,000 or less is over 86%.

Like the federal government and 33 other states, income is taxed in steps or brackets. As this is being written, the proposed marginal (graduated) rates for different incomes or brackets were passed out of the Illinois Senate (SB687) and sent to the Illinois House. Included is both property tax relief and child care credits. The Illinois House will most likely make some changes to what the Senate has proposed. **Both houses need to pass the bill by 3/5 majority before it can be sent to the Governor.** Assuming the Governor signs the bill, the proposed amendment will be on the November 2020 ballot changing the article in the Illinois Constitution from a flat tax to a graduated tax. Illinois voters must approve of the proposed constitutional change by a certain margin.

With the Governor's proposed plan, 97% of Illinois households will see tax relief in their income tax. Only those making over \$250,000 will pay over the current flat tax of 4.95%. Any income earners making over \$1,000,000 will pay the highest rate.

If not now, then when?

The state is desperate for funding to be able to pay its bills, estimated at \$3.4 billion in 2020. The only suggestion and what was done under a previous administration was to cut funding for social services, higher education and safety, which has proven to be disastrous for the welfare of Illinois citizens. All one needs to do is listen to the news or pick up a local paper to find examples of people, particularly those in poverty, who have suffered and continue to suffer as a result of services cut by lack of state funding.

Randi Weingarten's Speech to the National Press Club on Saving Our Profession

By Bonnie Saracco

Teaching is in trouble. According to statistics reported by AFT, teachers and other school staff are quitting the profession at the rate of approximately 300,000 each year, two-thirds of them before retirement age. Between 2008 and 2015, enrollment in teacher education programs decreased 38%. Last year there was a teacher shortage in every state, totaling more than 110,000 vacancies. **Over 100,000 classrooms in our country are now staffed by teachers without proper credentials.** Every one of these situations hits students of color and students living in poverty the hardest.

We all know the answer we will get when we ask a newly-retired teacher how he or she feels about retirement. **And for the first time in fifty years, the majority of parents in the United States do not want their children to become teachers.** Teachers in focus groups typically report entering the profession with excitement only to soon become stressed and demoralized.

AFT President Randi Weingarten discussed this heartbreaking situation in her April 2019 speech to the National Press Club, **giving its two main causes as our country's disinvestment in its schools and the deprofessionalization of teaching.**

Weingarten talked about the national disgrace of school disinvestment. Twenty-five states spend less on public education today than they did a decade ago. **Teachers earn 24% less than other college graduates, and often work at second and third jobs to support themselves and their families.** Last year saw several statewide teacher strikes. The American Society of Civil Engineers gave a grade of D+ to our public school buildings, citing schools with rats, toxic mold, hot classrooms in summer and cold classrooms in winter. A shameful example of this situation occurred when the water was turned off in several Detroit schools last year due to high levels of contaminants, including lead.

Weingarten also described how deprofessionalization is killing the soul of teaching. **Two of the biggest culprits are the testing obsession and its accompanying mountain of paperwork.** Also, many teachers report being micromanaged to the point of having to adhere to textbook publisher provided scripts, schedules, and even classroom decorations.

There are three goals that we need to focus on to negotiate and legislate our country out of this crisis. They are creating a culture of collaboration, maintaining proper teaching and learning conditions, and ensuring that teachers have true voice and agency.

A culture of collaboration requires building time into school schedules to enable teachers to observe and learn from one another, and to look at student work and plan together. We need to create proper teaching and learning environments by asking teachers, students, and parents what is needed and then acting on their answers.

Weingarten said that teachers will never have voice as long as they are required to “check their ideas, imagination, and initiative at the schoolhouse door.” For example, the Metro Nashville Public Schools now forbids its teachers to use Donors Choose because school officials want to control the donations themselves. As Weingarten

pointed out, “The further away from the classroom, the more authority someone seems to have over teachers’ work. This makes no sense.”

She concluded, “If we want our

public school to be all we hope, if we want to attract and retain a new generation of wonderful teachers to educate the nation’s children, this cannot be solely a teacher issue or a teacher union issue. We must act, and act together.”

For more information on this crisis, go to: <https://www.aft.org/freedomtoteach>.

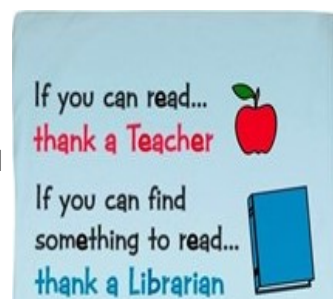
If a doctor, lawyer, or dentist had 40 people in his office at one time, all of whom had different needs, and some of whom didn't want to be there and were causing trouble, and the doctor, lawyer, or dentist, without assistance, had to treat them all with professional excellence for nine months, then he might have some conception of the classroom teacher's job.

(Donald D. Quinn)

We Honor School Librarians

In our last issue we forgot to recognize April as school library month.

Thank you to our school librarians for their resourcefulness, support, and dedication to our students and staff.





2019 WSTU Scholarship Winners

The West Suburban Teachers Union (WSTU), Local 571, proudly awarded more than \$25,000 in scholarships to outstanding students and teachers in April. Winning students are the dependents of Local 571 members.

College-bound high school seniors were judged based upon academic excellence, involvement in extracurricular activities, and community service participation. Applications were reviewed and scored by members of the union's Scholarship Committee and Chair Chris Schulz, a counselor at East Leyden High School in Franklin Park.

Six WSTU *Mary Wheeler* scholarships of \$2,850 each were awarded to:

Jessica Hendrickson of Hinsdale South High School. Her father is **Scott Hendrickson**, a teacher at Proviso West High School, District 209.

Amanda Kural of Lyons Township High School. Her mother is **Bethany Kural**, a teacher at Proviso Area Exceptional Child, PAEC Elementary.

Alison Rasso of St. Charles North High School. Her mother is **Julie Rasso**, a teacher at DuPage County High School District 88, Willowbrook.

Tess Rutstein of Oak Park River Forest High School. Her father is **Neal Rutstein**, a teacher at Proviso Math and Science Academy (PMSA), District 209.

Emma Uremovic of Loyola Academy. Her mother is **Mariana Uremovic**, a counselor at West Leyden High School, District 212.

Anika Wilen of Bartlett High School, U-46 District. Her mother is **Natalie Stack Wilen**, a teacher at DuPage County High School District 88, Addison Trail High School.

The union also awarded one \$2,850 *Jo Ann Horowitz/Mary Ann Karlovsky* Scholarship to **Nicolette Kelsay**, a student at the University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana. Her mother is **Mary Kelsay**, a teacher at Willowbrook High School, District 88. This scholarship is presented each year to a college student who is pursuing a career in K-12 teaching or women's/gender studies.

The final 2019 awardees received the *Julienne Phillips* Scholarship. Each recipient is a current, licensed educator who is pursuing an additional degree through graduate work. The four winners are:

Scott Leu, a teacher at East Leyden High School, District 212.

Maureen Lynch, a teacher at Hauser Junior High School, Riverside District 96.

Paulette McNally, an educator at Player Early Childhood, Indian Springs, District 104.

Eleni Sianis, a teacher at DuPage County High School District 88, Willowbrook High School.

The West Suburban Teachers Union, Local 571, represents over 5,300 K-12 teachers and paraprofessional and school related personnel in Cook and DuPage counties.

(pictures on next page)

2019 WSTU Scholarship Winners

Hendrickson



(l->r) Mother Kathy with Jessica Hendrickson, and father Scott

Rasso



Alison Rasso is with parents, Julie and Tim

Rutstein



Mother Andrea Despotes is with Tess Rutstein

Wilen



In the middle is scholarship winner Anika Wilen (l->r) with mother, Natalie Stack Wilen, sister Tegan, brother Adler and father, Jason

Leu



Scott Leu and family

McNally



(l->r) Jane Russell, Katie Kayastha and Chris Schulz

Sianis



Eleni Sianis and daughter Dia

Mary Wheeler Scholarship Winners



Congratulations to Tess Rutstein, Jessica Hendrickson, Alison Rasso and Anika Wilen



Not pictured: Amanda Kural, Emma Uremovic, Nicolette Kelsay and Maureen Lynch

A Social Security Webinar for Local 571 Members

Sponsored by the West Suburban Teachers Union, Local 571

Identical Social Security Webinars will be presented and questions will be answered by a representative of the Social Security Administration.

WHEN: Wednesday,
June 19, 2019
10:00 a.m.—Noon

OR

Tuesday,
July 9, 2019
1:00 p.m.—3:00 p.m.
Local 571 members

FOR:

WHERE: Robert M. Healey
Conference Center
500 Oakmont Lane
Westmont, IL 60559

R.S.V.P.: If you plan to attend the June 19 Webinar, contact Patty Clancy by June 17 at 630-468-4083 or pclancy@ift-aft.org.

If you plan to attend the July 9 Webinar, contact Patty Clancy by July 8 at 630-468-4083 or pclancy@ift-aft.org.

Light refreshments will be served.

Need PD Hours?

We encourage members to register for Local 571 professional development classes being offered this summer. The 2-session classes are \$50 each and for Union Members Only. Refreshments will be served and all materials will be provided. All of the classes will be held at the Robert M. Healey Conference Center in Westmont, IL 60559.

June 17 & 18, 2019 - 8:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

**Managing Anti-Social Behavior - 9 PD hours - 2 sessions - registration deadline: May 31*

June 19, 2019 - 9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. - 1 day only- Free to Union Members

**Supporting Grieving Students - 3 PD hours - 1 session - registration deadline: May 31*

July 15 & 16, 2019 - 8:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

**Instructional Strategies That Work - 9 PD hours - 2 sessions - registration deadline: July 5*

July 17 & 18, 2019 - 8:30 a.m. to 1:00 p.m.

**Start the School Year Right - 9 PD hours - 2 sessions - registration deadline: July 5*

For more information, see the Local 571 website: www.wstu571.org where you will find information about each class and a registration form. You may also contact Patty Clancy by phone at 630-468-4083 or at pclancy@ift-aft.org.

Who dares to
TEACH
must never cease to
LEARN

Save the Date!

**Local 571 Legislative
Breakfast**

Saturday 9/28/19
9:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

To be held at:
**Hilton Chicago/Oakbrook Hills
Resort & Conference Center**
3500 Midwest Road
Oak Brook, IL

ADDITIONAL SUMMER COURSE OFFERING

We encourage members to register for the Local 571 professional development class being offered this summer. The 5-session class is \$50 and for Union Members Only. Cost includes materials and a light dinner each day. NOTE: For an additional cost, participants can earn one GSU graduate credit hour. Signup and payment is due on the first day of class. The classes will be held at the Robert M. Healey Conference Center in Westmont, IL 60559.

June 3, thru June 7, 2019—4:30 p.m. to 8:00 p.m.
15 PD hours—5 sessions—registration deadline is May 29

Course Description: *ELL 101 Planning for Student Success—How is teaching ELLs to read different than teaching for main-stream students? What are effective instructional practices to make content comprehensible for English learners?*

For more information, see the Local 571 website: www.wstu571.org where you will find information about the class and a registration form. You may also contact Patty Clancy by phone at 630-468-4083 or at pclancy@ift-aft.org.

(cont'd from page 1)

Fair is Fair! (Part 2)

If not this, then what?

Several budget "fixes" have been floated. **Remember how the Illinois lottery was going to be used to fund schools?** State government now has the least number of workers of any state having reduced its staffs considerably. Taxing services and increasing gas taxes to fund Illinois roadways continue to be discussed. Not one of these changes will provide the amount of sustained funding needed to operate the state nor pull the state out of its debt.

To be able to generate the funds needed, it is calculated that the current flat tax would have to increase from 4.95% to 5.95%. This would be a final resort if there is not a Fair Tax proposal. The Fair Tax proposal will generate more money for schools and public services if the wealthiest are asked to pay their fair share.

For further information, go to: <https://www.ift-aft.org/fair-tax>.

Your final homework assignment for this school term: email or call your state representative and tell them to vote YES for a Fair Tax.

In unity,

Jane A. Russell

Local 571 President

Celebrate the Holidays with Union-Made Products

Vienna Beef
Hormel Hot Dogs & Brats
Ball Park Hot Dogs
Oscar Meyer Hot Dogs
Johnsonville Brats
Boar's Head Deli Meats & Hot Dogs
Hillshire Farm
Farmland Hot Dogs
Hofmann Hot Dogs
Farmer John Meats
Sara Lee Deli Meats
Tyson Chicken
Chiappetti
Beef Products, Inc.



For more union-made products, go to: <https://www.chicagolabor.org/union-resources/union-made-bbq>

Monday May 27



The WSTU Local 571 Officers and Staff wish our members a relaxing and fun-filled summer with friends and family.

Congratulations to those retiring from education. We appreciate your service to our students, their families and community.



What's Missing from the Messenger?

Is there something innovative or exciting happening at your school? If so, we want to hear from you!

Email your news to Robin Hancock at: 571editor@gmail.com

We Want To Hear From You



We're on the Web!!!
www.wstu571.org

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