



contracts looked to form unions to get them, today large segments of the public seems to prefer instead to work politically to take these things away from us, the attitude being, "If I can't have these things, neither should you."

In recent times, it seems that each new year makes the raising of political action dollars more urgent - more central to the mission of progressive organizations like the PCT and NYSUT.

Your SRC Reps will shortly be distributing your pre-printed NYSUT VOTE/COPE contribution forms. This has been an unusually difficult year for your building reps what with all of the chores related to negotiations that have fallen on them. This year's VOTE/COPE drive is just another burden falling to them. You can show your appreciation for their efforts by returning your VOTE/COPE contribution to them immediately. This year's recommended contribution has been kept at \$40 in light of the fact that we have yet to achieve a contract.

Last year NYSUT's political action work saved us from significant layoffs by getting the state to target a significant portion of the federal stimulus money to local school districts. When those on the right tell us that the stimulus legislation is not working, we know better. We also know that it was VOTE/COPE dollars that made this possible.

#### **EMPIRE'S DEPENDENT ELIGIBILITY PROJECT**

All members who have Empire family coverage must provide proof of eligibility to the New York State Health Insurance Program (NYSHIP) by **November 25, 2009. Members who do not provide proof of eligibility may lose their coverage as of February 1, 2010 and could be held responsible for paying back claims covered by NYSHIP, dating back to when the dependent was first added.**

People with family coverage should have received a packet from NYSHIP by now. The packet includes a dependent eligibility confirmation form that lists dependents. After marking eligible dependents "eligible" and non-eligible dependents "non-eligible," members are responsible for providing documentation which verifies that their dependents are eligible for coverage.

To prove a spouse is eligible for coverage, send:

- a copy of page one of your 2008 tax return, blacking out all financial information and the first five digits of social security numbers OR
- a copy of a marriage certificate (or printout of an online marriage record) and proof of joint ownership. Marriage certificates must be issued by the state or locality. Examples of proof of joint ownership would be mortgage statements, property tax statements, rental agreements, credit card statements, loan obligations or bank account statements. All financial information should be blacked out. *If you were married between January 1, 2009 and February 1, 2009, send only a copy of your marriage certificate.*
- Domestic partners must send copies of two proofs of financial dependence such as joint

This year there is an increasingly shrill call for a constitutional convention where untold damage can be done to the welfare of public employees. A constitutional convention could end the guarantee that no New York public employee pension can be changed during the pensioner's retirement.

Remember, your dues dollars are not used for political action. All of this very important work both at the state and local level is funded by the voluntary contributions of members like you. Last year, we raised \$15,745 in contributions. The officers of the PCT have set a goal of a minimum of \$20,000 for this year. This can only be achieved if each member does his or her part.

#### **TRACT CLASSES A SUCCESS!**

Over a dozen Plainview teachers have joined teachers from other districts to take Smartboard courses offered through the Tract Center. Many colleagues have taken advantage of the opportunity to have intensive training count as their professional development hours.

Have you taken advantage of the work of the Teacher Center? Go to [nassautract.org](http://nassautract.org) for a complete listing of courses. Have other questions about how our center can help you, contact Blaise Martinelli at 937-6380.

ownership on your residence or joint obligation on a loan AND a joint bank account or credit card statement. You must also provide proof of residency, showing that you and your partner share the same address. Auto registrations, passports, driver's licenses and telephone bills are examples.

· For natural born-children, stepchildren or legally adopted children under 19, you must submit one proof of relationship such as:

1. A birth certificate, report of birth abroad, court approved adoption papers, child support orders or state paternity acknowledgements.

1. For children over 19, you must also produce proof of their full-time status as students.

Please remember to send copies. NYSHIP will not return original documents. For more detailed information go to:

[www.cs.state.ny.us/nyshipeligibilityproject/index.cfm](http://www.cs.state.ny.us/nyshipeligibilityproject/index.cfm) or call 1-888-358-2198 from noon to 8:00 p.m. Mondays through Fridays.

#### **DATA CORRECTION FORMS**

By now you should have received your PCT/Welfare Fund Data Correction Form. In order to serve you better and process your Welfare Fund claims more efficiently, it is imperative for the office to have accurate data on file. **If anything needs to be corrected, please make the changes(s) in red and return it to the PCT Office.** If the data is correct, simply keep the form as a copy of what the office has on file.