



77th Annual Business Convention
June 1, 2024

The Fox Tower @ Foxwoods
Ledyard, Connecticut

REPORTS

PRESIDENT'S REPORT

77th ANNUAL AFT CONNECTICUT BUSINESS CONVENTION

Good morning, union siblings. This is the 77th Annual Business Convention of AFT CT, which means the first convention was in 1947. Think of all the changes and challenges this organization has endured. The United States was just returning from World War Two, and ahead of us were wars in Korea, Viet Nam, and the Middle East. The Civil Rights, Women's Rights, and Gay Rights movements were only beginning to take form. The American economy would grow at an unprecedented rate, but the benefits of that growth would go almost entirely to one percent of the population.

Ten conventions ago, in 2015, I was elected President and John Brady was elected Vice-President. Think of how much the world has changed since then. We have had the Supreme Court decide that corporations should be treated as people for election financing, that women have no national right to reproductive freedom, and that public unions – unlike any other organization – must provide services to people who refuse to pay for them. We have seen local school boards taken over by people who want to destroy public education, and we have dealt with a global pandemic which changed life in we are still addressing. It's been quite a time.

I am proud to report that despite all these challenges, at our 77th Convention AFT CT is larger and stronger than ever. We have grown and we have extended our reach. We have done this while keeping our values intact. We continue to fight for the working people of Connecticut. We stand with our members for dignity at the workplace, dignity in their communities, dignity in the classroom, dignity in healthcare, and dignity in retirement. We are able to do this because of the work of the people in this room and our 30,000+ members throughout this state.

In our State Senate, AFT CT has a voice unlike any other union in any state in this country. Martha Marx in the 20th District and myself in the 13th District have just finished our first term. Our merger with AAUP means that Gary Winfield in the 10th District also represents AFT. We also hired Jorge Cabrera, Senator in the 17th District, as a field rep this year, so four of the 36 Senators are AFT CT. Our members know that their voices are represented when issues are brought to the legislature.

One of the issues that did arise this past year was addressing the tragic disparity between the incredible work our paraeducators do for our most vulnerable students and the meager compensation they receive. This year, money was budgeted to address the deductible paraeducators who have their health insurance through the school district. The State this year paid most or all the deductible, saving most paraeducators over \$1000, the equivalent of a 4% raise for many of our paraeducators. While all of the AFT CT legislators supported this policy, the real work was done by AFT CT Divisional Vice-President Shellye Davis, our amazing Legislative Advocates Teri Merisotis and Jim Vigue, and especially by the dozens of paraeducators who testified during the public hearing about the work they do and the struggles they face because of the wages they receive. It was an important first step, but there is still a long way to go until paraeducators are paid the wages they deserve. Paraeducators for the first time organized to have their voices heard at the state level. I am confident that now that they have seen what can happen when we speak together, paraeducators will continue to be a force at the legislator.

AFT CT is also the leading voice in healthcare. John Brady and AFT Divisional Vice-President Sherri Dayton are two of the most important voices in healthcare policy, not only because of their own tireless effort and command of details, but because it is clear the over 5000 healthcare workers in AFT CT stand with them. At a time when a few corporate healthcare conglomerates treat patient care as an avoidable inconvenience in their path to endless untaxed profits, AFT CT has become the strongest advocate for patients in the state. Whether it is demanding the CON process

be followed, ensuring that the new safe staffing law is actually followed, or weighing in on the Yale purchase of Prospect hospitals, AFT CT is leading the way. That also includes at the bargaining table, where the Danbury Nurses just became the latest nurses' union to negotiate a contract that will greatly benefit its members.

Our teacher locals continue to battle for school policies that are arrived at collaboratively with teachers and not simply the result of the doctoral thesis of someone who has not been in front of a class in years, if ever. We are also again fighting for the belief that our communities need fully funded public education. In Middletown, Capital Prep is pushing for a for-profit charter school that will transfer scarce resources from the public school system to a private company. When someone spoke against it, she was compared to George Wallace standing at the school door barring black children from entering. Let us be clear: our public schools still have a very long way to go to reach racial equity for the students and the teachers. We largely agree on the problem. We do not believe that handing tax dollars to private corporations is the answer. Neither is demonizing the people who disagree with us. I have had several difficult but productive conversations with people who support the charter school movement. So have many of our preK-12 members. By keeping dialogue open and focusing on the students' needs, we can find a path forward.

Our public employees – through SEBAC – passed a wage reopener along party lines this past session. They also have had to fight the scourge of privatization. Our Governor, unfortunately, seems to want to end his term by enriching businesses at the expense of the taxpayers. Every study shows that public employees provide better services at lower cost. Yet throughout State government, especially in higher education, the desire is to move toward privatization. We have stood firm and stood together with our SEBAC allies, and we have fought off the most egregious of these plans. We know that this fight will continue, but in the words of Tom Petty – we won't back down.

Seventy-seven conventions ago, the people gathered were entirely members. They didn't have political dignitaries, and they didn't have staff. Today, AFT CT is blessed with an amazing staff that works diligently with local leadership to empower the workers. We always have candidates and legislators – even those who are not part of AFT – join us. But we are today what we were then, and what I talked about in my first convention in 2016: a member-driven union. Members point us in the direction they want to go and walk with us to get there. Membership, the people in this room and the people you represent, are the reason why AFT CT is the most important voice for working people in the State. I am proud to stand here with you.

Thank you.

Respectfully submitted in solidarity,

Jan Hochadel
President, AFT Connecticut

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT'S REPORT

77th ANNUAL AFT CONNECTICUT BUSINESS CONVENTION

As I reread last year's report, I came across this statement. "SB 1067, now in the state senate, will further improve the voices of healthcare professionals and their working conditions and retention."

Shortly thereafter, SB 1067, which saw over 40 members testify in favor of, died in the Judiciary Committee, after some procedural maneuvers by forces opposed to the bill.

But those who had advocated for it and worked out language, from legislators to other unions and associations, to agency staff, would not let it die. It was resurrected in the budget implementor, and the result was landmark legislation that calls for hospital staffing committees that will, among other things, establish ratios for each hospital. The best part? Unions get to select 50% plus one of the committee members, giving us control. The bill also eliminates mandatory overtime for nurses, something that has been driving them from the bedside.

This year, building on that momentum and following the tragic murder of a visiting nurse, we passed legislation to protect healthcare and social service members from workplace violence. Both bills were a part of the national AFT Code Red campaign, which called for a push on these two issues in legislation and at the bargaining table. Never did I think that we would achieve both goals in the first two years of the campaign.

AFT CT had set additional goals, including increasing member engagement through this campaign, and becoming a voice on healthcare issues in Connecticut, much as we are on education and public service issues. I think that our members' engagement in passing these bills and now, in enacting them through their respective committees, shows we are succeeding in these goals too. In addition, our Public Employees and our Educators fought back draconian budget cuts and of course, our retirees (our daytime army) helped in every campaign.

I have been asked to speak several times, in several states, about our legislative wins. I have had a couple of articles in AFT Health Care magazine. People want to know how we did it. Sometimes it seems like a miracle that we achieved safe staffing and workplace violence legislation in two years. That we have a statewide coalition that bargains for state employee contracts (SEBAC), that we have laws like a minimum wage tied to inflation and paid time off. That we are a voice in the state that people listen to, in public service, education, healthcare, and retiree issues. But it is no miracle. It's a result of all our 30,000 plus members getting up every day and taking care of business, at their job site, in their home life, in their communities, and in their union advocacy. Its members serving as local leaders and building reps. Its members serving on town boards and committees, and commissions. Its members showing up for lobby days, legislative breakfasts, picket lines, door

knocking, food drives, and book giveaways. And yes, its members serving in the legislature. Its members being involved, members owning their union.

The strength of AFT Connecticut is not in our elected leaders, it is in our members. We believe in a member engaged, member led union, an organizing union, not because it is the easiest way, but because it is the ONLY way that works. This year, in addition to cochairing the AFT Healthcare PPC, I was asked to cochair the AFT Organizing Committee. That honor (and extra work) is because of the work you do, your engagement, your talents, your advocacy, and your results.

I am honored to serve as you Vice President. Honored to serve alongside Jan, Shawn, and the rest of the Executive Committee. Honored to work with an incredible leadership team of Stuart, Stephanie, and Eric and the best staff a VP could ask for. The next year will bring challenges, including an incredibly important fall election, but we are ready for these challenges, and we will face them together.

Respectively submitted in solidarity and service,

John Brady

Executive Vice President, AFT Connecticut

PSRP: ANNUAL DIVISIONAL REPORT

MAY 2024

Over the past year, AFT Connecticut PSRPs have worked diligently to continue our path toward achieving the respect, security, and compensation we deserve and that truly reflects the value we bring to schools and children across Connecticut. We knew this road to equity and justice for all PSRPs would be long and the fights difficult, but we have persisted and made significant progress.

We have worked hard to build on the achievements of the previous legislative session which earned PSRP across Connecticut the right to district-paid professional learning opportunities. The 18 required hours of professional learning time that we were able to achieve in the previous year unfortunately did not go far enough. Upon review of the law's implementation, we realized we needed to be even more prescriptive to make sure that districts were providing quality professional learning opportunities. We weren't looking for checks in boxes, but rather that districts give Paraeducators the time and opportunity they deserve as professionals to invest in themselves and in their own professional growth. We are working in districts across Connecticut to make sure that we have a voice at the table when districts are creating professional learning plans for Paraeducators in their district. We now have a seat at the table in all district PDECs and we are working with locals, leadership, and members to better understand our role in these committees and the opportunities they present.

We still have work to do. We still have too many Paraeducators who are unable to put food on their own tables. Who are unable to pay for their prescriptions. Who are working two or three jobs just to be able to survive. We continue to make the goal of a living wage for all Paraeducators across Connecticut a priority. Likewise, we will continue to fight for access to high-quality affordable healthcare for all Paraeducators across Connecticut. These are not pipe dreams. These goals are attainable through our vision, hard work and continued dedication to our ideals.

Our work with our students is becoming more and more challenging. Ever increasing academic rigor, better scores and outcomes, continuously escalating expectations, and the same number of hours in each day equate to increased responsibilities and constant reinvention of our roles as Paraeducators. Pair with that the continued emotional and psychological trauma experienced during COVID and it's no wonder why we see profound increases in the dysregulation, anti-social behaviors, and emotional fragility of our students. And to each new challenge and to every new need, we rise to meet the call. We work each day to remember and celebrate the humanity of each young life we are called on to care for and to nurture. It is difficult work. It is honorable work. And we do it with dignity and pride every single day with the support of our union AFT CT and with the strength we derive from the solidarity we find with each other.

Respectfully submitted in solidarity,

Shellye Davis

Hartford Federation of Paraprofessionals, Local 2221 President

Divisional Vice President for Paraprofessionals & School-Related Personnel

PREK-12: ANNUAL DIVISIONAL REPORT

MAY 2024

The AFT-CT PreK12 Council is committed to implementing solutions from AFT's Real Solutions Campaign.

- **Create Joyful and Confident Readers** - Several AFT-CT locals have successfully organized Reading Opens the World events distributing thousands of books to students and families across the state. By partnering with school districts and community partners, we are helping our students build home libraries to foster a lifelong love of reading.
- **Expand Community Schools** - Whether through federal grant funds from the Biden-Harris-Cardona Department of Education or through ongoing partnerships with relevant agencies in our cities and towns, AFT-CT recognizes the impact that wraparound services play when we are working to meet the needs of our students and their families.
- **Provide All Children the Opportunity to Learn By Doing** - Members across the state are committed to providing students with hands-on learning opportunities, providing them with real-world, real-life skills, and boosting academic achievement. With these opportunities, students are better equipped to enter professions in traditional trades, healthcare, education, manufacturing, and technology.
- **Further Care for Children's Mental Health and Well-being** - Through attending workshops on trauma-informed practices and advocating for increased services for youth throughout the state, AFT-CT members are reflective practitioners actively working to deliver the support and resources our students deserve.
- **Fight For Investments Schools Need** - In partnership with the Connecticut For All Coalition, our members organized, rallied, testified, lobbied, and advocated at the local and state levels for increased funding for our PreK-12 public schools, as well as for housing, healthcare, aid for distressed municipalities, and more. We are ready to strengthen these partnerships and learn how to improve outcomes at the negotiation table by prioritizing the needs of our communities and bargaining for the common good.

Additional PreK12 Council highlights include:

- Tireless work on state-level councils related to educator evaluations, educator certifications, education mandates, play based learning, special education, HVAC/indoor air quality, and more
- Statewide Summit to Protect and Transform Public Education in November 2023
- New partnerships with emerging Tenants Union across the state
- New partnerships with higher ed union siblings as we advocate for public education PreK-16+
- High turnout at AFT-CT legislative meetings across the state where elected officials listened to the concerns and proposed solutions of our members
- Organizing at the local level in coalition with students, parents, and caregivers against ongoing threats of budget cuts and layoffs as federal ESSER funds expire
- Participation in the first ever White House Teacher of the Year State Dinner in May 2024 hosted by Dr. Jill Biden
- Participation in AFT sponsored Powerful Partnerships Institute, Innovation Fund, and Teacher Leader Programs
- AFT-CT members “Writing Our Own Future” with op-eds published in [local](#) and [national](#) outlets

Respectfully Submitted,

Leslie Blatteau
New Haven Federation of Teachers, Local 933 President
Divisional Vice President for PreK-12

HEALTHCARE: ANNUAL DIVISIONAL REPORT

MAY 2024

The year started out June 2023 with a great win with an act concerning adequate and safe health care staffing getting passed. This led to AFT CT Healthcare getting busy educating members and local leaders on the law, unsafe staffing forms, and how to restructure, or in some cases begin, an effective staffing committee. The big challenge was to develop a staffing plan to submit by January 1, 2024. We have made progress in the uphill battle, but are hopeful all our strong work will start to pay off as the enforcement date of 10/1/2024 will begin.

We continue to stand side by side with Windham United on fighting to save labor and delivery at Windham Hospital. On December 1, 2023, OSH announced the approval of a plan to terminate labor and delivery. We now have a new CON fight for Windham's Progressive Care Unit which they have "Paused." Another concerning labor and delivery closing was at Johnson Memorial. Johnson Memorial Hospital's proposal to close its birthing unit has been denied by OSH January 2024. Johnson Hospital is appealing.

The Yale New Haven buy out of Manchester, Waterbury, and Rockville Hospital CON approved, but Yale is now suing Prospect to get out of the deal stating Prospect was a poor manager of the hospitals.

We have seen an increase in international nurses with three-year contracts and travelers that have held positions for over a year, which is problematic because they are not in the union. Incentives for picking up extra shifts have significantly decreased in the last year; however, staffing has not improved in all hospitals. With the elimination of mandating with the new law this becomes an important issue.

This year we had many successfully new ratified contracts: New Milford, Natchaug, Johnson Memorial, and VNA of SE CT. UCONN had a wage reopener with significant raises. Danbury Hospital currently has a tentative agreement going to a ratification vote this month.

Yale has laid off VNASC school nurses and the local is currently negotiating the effects of this on the bargaining unit.

Again, UCONN is fighting off privatization. With another Kane Brother's report. Our stance is not only should UCONN not be privatized, but it needs to be expanded.

AFT CT worked with AFL-CIO on a Striking Workers Bill that would allow the ability to collect unemployment. The bill has passed both the House and the Senate and is awaiting the Governor's signature. It is expected to be vetoed, locals are organizing to get it signed. If you have not sent the Governor a letter on this, please do so.

We have had a couple of Professional Developments this year. We had mediators teaching conflict resolution and Eric Chester discussed malpractice lawsuits and how to protect yourself.

Joyce Grayson, a behavioral health nurse was killed on Oct. 28, 2023, during a home visit in Willimantic, CT. We did attend vigils to grieve the loss of Joyce Grayson, but we also worked with legislators to get SB 1 passed and to the Governor's office for a signature. The bill is expected to be signed. AFT Healthcare participated with Joe Courtney hosting Sec Su for discussion on healthcare workplace violence prevention for his federal bill.

The Interstate Nurse Compact Bill passed and was sent to the Governor's office and is expected to be signed. However, AFT CT Healthcare was able to help with negotiating out any negative effect to Haven of Hope.

AFT CT Healthcare Locals participated in Legislative Regional Meetings, Legislative Conference, AFT National Leaders Conference, and Lobby Day.

Next year we will continue to facilitate the continued roll out of the Staffing Bill and to police it. We will also have to make sure the new Workplace Violence Bill is instituted correctly. The goal is an effective staffing and workplace violence committee. So good wins and the work continues.

Thank you for the opportunity,

Sherri Dayton AGPCNP-BC, WCC, CEN
Backus Federation of Nurses, Local 5149 President
Divisional Vice President for Healthcare

PUBLIC EMPLOYEES: ANNUAL DIVISIONAL REPORT

MAY 2024

This year's report is all about Coalitions. We are not alone in our fight and this year showed that more than ever. WE worked with Higher Education and Healthcare at the State Capitol where so many of our fights end up.

We had success this year in our visits to the State Capitol to show legislators the importance of funding Higher Education. We were able to get additional funding for UCONN, UCONN Health Connecticut State College and The Community College systems.

We were also able to secure a wage re-opener success through SEBAC (State Employee Bargaining Agent Coalition) to get 2.5% GWI and Step Increase in the final year of a 4-year deal. For those not keeping track, that makes 6 consecutive years with wage increases.

We also had to take UCONN Health back to the arbitrator over the pandemic pay arbitration. The arbitrator again sided with us, and that will make a difference for multiple State Employees, including many AFT members.

We still have work to do. We had legislation that just did not make it over the finish line this year. But next year, our privacy language for our Assistant Attorney Generals will hopefully make it across the finish line.

We have continued to work with Connecticut For All, because we are not finished with these fights. The fiscal guardrails which have been in place since 2017 have hamstrung our growth abilities. All the AFT Connecticut Groups are working together. Funding for K-12 and our Paraprofessionals helps our students and patients. Which in turn helps Healthcare, Higher Education and Public Employees. It is almost like we are all connected.

In Solidarity,

Bill Garrity

University Health Professionals, Local 3837 President

Divisional Vice President for Public Employees

AFT CT RETIREE DIVISION: ANNUAL DIVISIONAL REPORT

MAY 2024

The Retiree Division of AFT Connecticut consists of those Chartered Locals for retirees. The Retiree Council is comprised of the Presidents, other officers or their delegates of those chartered retiree locals, and members of Local 8006R that attend to those meetings. The Council meets monthly, either in person or virtually via Zoom.

During the long 2023 Legislative Session, a Bill was passed creating two new seats on the Teacher's Retirement Board (TRB) with four-year terms. These new seats were created exclusively for retirees to fill and voted on by only retirees. The election ran from late July 2023 through October 2023. Working in conjunction with The Association of Retired Teachers CT (ARTC), and with significant resources provided by both AFT Retirees and the AFT CT Communications Staff, AFT CT Retiree Ed Vargas was elected to a 4-year term to one of those newly created seats. In the 2024 short Legislative Session, an attempt was made to significantly modify the TRB election and terms of these newly created seats. This modification of the existing format was defeated.

Mary Moniger-Elia continued to spearhead the Connecticut effort to repeal the WEP-GPO, which affects the social security benefits of many AFT members in several states. She continues to coordinate these efforts with the Association of Retired Americans via lobbying efforts with the CT delegation, but also throughout the nation. Currently in the House of Representatives, there are over 300 co-sponsors for the passage of HR82, which would repeal the WEP GPO penalties. In the Senate, there are only 54 co-sponsors. All the CT Congressional delegation has co-sponsored HR82 with the exception of Rep. John Larson.

On a National level, AFT Retirees through the Program and Policy Council (PPC) has shown continued support for retiree issues. Among those are the continued work of the Legacy Subcommittee, which is recording members' historical experiences during the Civil Rights movement and other Social Justice Issues. Significant support has also been rendered to the WEP-GPO repeal effort and the Code Red initiative with regards to safe staffing in Healthcare. There is also an ongoing project to obtain and update current contact information for all AFT Retirees.

The AFTerburners, a retiree group that utilizes virtual phone banking and texting, has continued to grow in numbers of participants. This group has been significant in achieving support for issues that directly affect our retired members. Also, this group has assisted in political action by contacting our members. A few examples of these endeavors include obtaining a Pension COLA for retired teachers in Texas who hadn't had a COLA for decades. Assistance in passage of safe staffing legislation in multiple states (the Code Red project) and in Connecticut with the election of an AFT Retiree to the Teachers Retirement Board.

Respectively Submitted,

Walter O'Connor
Divisional Vice President for AFT CT Retirees



A Union of Professionals

AFT Retirees

2022 AFT National Program on Retirement and Retirees

AFT Retiree programming encompasses nearly half of a million retired members from all active units within AFT. This program has become a major force for continuing and supplementing our union's commitment to preserving and strengthening the promise of American Education. AFT Retirees embody the idea of the "daytime army". The AFT National Program on Retirement and Retirees supports our work in several ways, outlined below.

AFTerburners

The AFT virtual phone banking and outreach team was formed as a response to the socially-distanced world created by the pandemic. It brings together AFT retirees from across the country to continue their political activism safely and virtually. AFTerburners played critical supporting roles in 2020 national, state, and local elections, and legislative campaign efforts in addition to making wellness calls to AFT members during the pandemic.

In 2022 and beyond, the AFTerburners will continue its political activism and will continue outreach to build and support retiree locals and chapters around the country.

Communications

AFT Retiree E-news keeps retirees up to date with all the latest happenings in the retiree world, on all relevant AFT and partner activities, and how Retiree Activists can get involved. We also work with the moderators of our Retirees Facebook group. Find us on Facebook at www.facebook.com/groups/aftretirees

Grant program

Grants are provided to locals to aid in building retiree power through a strategic organizing plan to grow and engage membership around political, social justice and specific retiree issues. The next grant cycle begins in winter of the 22-23 school year.

Retiree Legacy Initiative

The AFT Retiree Legacy Initiative is a group of retired unionists that share and embrace their truths and lifelong journeys to empower and encourage others to join them in using their voices to advocate for and become champions of social justice. They consider crucial and difficult conversations, host ally workshops, trainings, panels and other events to educate, activate and organize around all issues of Racial and Social justice that affect everyone even in retirement!

Contact us for further information!

E: aftretirees@aft.org | **T:** 202-585-4375



A Union of Professionals

AFT Retirees

Information Sessions and Trainings

Information sessions are held on a regular basis, covering topics that matter to retirees including Medicare, pension reform, state pension boards, legislative priorities, etc.

Virtual and in-person trainings tailored to the needs of individual locals are offered by request. These trainings help build power at the local, state, and national levels around the issues that matter to you and your local.

Tech Training sessions are offered virtually to help retiree members and locals utilize the range of virtual tools that AFT has made available to locals throughout the course of the pandemic.

AFT Retiree Program and Policy Council

In accordance with the AFT Constitution, the AFT Program and Policy Council (PPC) was created to represent retiree interests. Members of the PPC and their chairpersons are appointed by the AFT executive council, upon recommendation by the AFT president. Recommendations from the PPC are presented to the AFT executive council for its consideration. The PPC has five subcommittees:

- **Organizing, Mobilization & Member Engagement** - Work to coordinate organizing and engagement in a way that prepares for virtual and in-person mobilizations while growing membership, communication and unity at the national level.
- **Political Action & Legislation** - Support the AFT Political department. Coordinate with the Organizing Subcommittee for turnout and planning for larger national actions within our retiree program. Work with AFT Government Relations department to identify, evaluate and recommend legislative priorities that affect current and future retirees.
- **Human and Civil Rights** - This subcommittee is charged with identifying and offering suggestions for actions implementing policies and practices in accordance with President Biden's Executive Order on Advancing Racial Equity and Support for Underserved Communities Through the Federal Government.
- **Legacy Fund** - Research and establish protocols for sustainably funding retiree-led programs and initiatives for future generations of retired members.
- **Healthcare**- Represent the interests of AFT Retirees from the Health Care unit and make recommendations on Healthcare related issues as they will best benefit the retiree community.

Contact us for further information!

E: aftretirees@aft.org | **T:** 202-585-4375

FERGUSON, DOYLE & CHESTER, P.C.

May 2023 – May 2024

During the last year Ferguson, Doyle and Chester provided defense to nine tenured teachers who were being terminated. This number includes cases that were settled during the statutory hearing process as well as those that went through the hearing process to a decision. Included in the teacher termination process were numerous meetings with the client to negotiate settlement agreements and/or prepare the client for his/her termination hearings, as well as writing proposed findings, briefs and reply briefs at the end of the proceedings.

The firm provided representation to one hundred and forty (140) AFT-CT members for investigations with the Department of Children and Families in the past twelve months and seven (7) of those investigations resulted in our representation at Substantiation Appeal Hearings along with writing the accompanying briefs and reply briefs.

The firm represents our members for contested Workers' Compensation claims and we provided representation to one hundred and fourteen (114) members for new Workers' Compensation claims. We have attended and advocated at hundreds of Workers' Compensation Hearings at the Informal, Pre-Formal and Formal Administrative Trial Hearing levels. When a member is referred to us for a Workers' Compensation matter, our attorneys and staff dedicate an enormous amount of time preparing for hearings, communicating with insurance adjusters, medical providers and/or attorneys as well as meeting with clients and answering their questions and putting their minds at ease in what can be a very complicated and frustrating process. In the past twelve months Ferguson, Doyle & Chester has favorably settled multiple Workers Compensation claims including two this year with over six figure settlements.

In the past twelve months the firm assisted L&M Local 5123 with their ongoing contract negotiations, negotiated a reconciliation process with Prospect Hospital for the locals effected by a malware attack and provided support for Danbury Local 41 in organizing their Informational Picket. We represented the Hartford Federation of Teachers and the Salem Federation of Teachers defending and advancing the rights of Union members and leaders to participate in Union activity. We have provided support to the Norwalk Federation of Teachers in mediations, prohibited practice complaints and grievance arbitrations. We defended the New Britain Federation of Teachers and Bloomfield Federation of Educational Personnel from CHRO Discrimination Complaints. In the last year we have also defended two members in Unemployment Appeal Hearings before State Labor Department Trial Referees.

We regularly consult with AFT-CT leadership and the management team on legal matters. We provide support and guidance to Staff Representatives in their work on behalf of affiliate Locals.

As always, we stand ready to assist AFT-CT, affiliated locals, their elected leaders and members in any way we can.

HIGHER EDUCATION: ANNUAL DIVISIONAL REPORT

MAY 2024

Looking back at the past year and past years there are many of the same issues that Higher Education Institutions, nationwide and here in Connecticut have and are dealing with.

Nationally, the AFT has continued to push for student debt relief and has met with some success. Hopefully we can accomplish significantly more.

Here in Connecticut, our unions engaged with the Legislature to secure increased funding that would allow us to continue our mission and commitment in providing quality and relevant educational opportunities for our students along with continuing our partnerships with the business and industry community. All this while the reality of massive funding cuts and continued under funding loomed over our heads on a daily basis.

This lack of necessary funding translated to tuition increases, reduced enrollments, reductions in program and course offerings in addition to reduced hours and staffing for libraries and academic support programs. Additionally, student services, including advising personal and mental health counseling were held hostage as well.

Some of the needed funding was provided by the legislature by the session's end. All the unions and individuals' efforts need to be applauded. However, it's not over, we are meeting and attempting to engage our respective Boards to use these additional funds appropriately. We are also strategizing to secure more funds as well.

We have also continued our involvement with efforts to increase enrollment, reduce tuition, address food and housing insecurity and assure campus security. Concurrently we are working to overcome the aftereffects of an ill-conceived reorganization which will keep us busy for the near term and the future.
Respectfully Submitted,

Dennis Bogusky
Federation of Technical College Faculty, Local 1942 President
Divisional Vice President for Higher Education