

INSIGHT



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FULL DUES OR AGENCY FEE?

By Jackie Guarini-Sheehan, PANJ 2nd V.P.
Membership Committee Chair, Local 115 President

Many members have asked: What is the difference between full dues members and agency fee members? The basic differences are how much money you pay to the union each pay period and whether or not you have a voice in union decisions, such as accepting/rejecting contract proposals. Full dues members pay dues to the union each pay period, which gives them the right to vote in union decisions such as electing union officials and ratifying contracts, and become a candidate for an elected position, etc. Agency fee members pay a fee to the union for representing them, but cannot participate in union decisions.

Under Article IV Membership of the PANJ CONSTITUTION AND BY-LAWS it states as follows:

ARTICLE IV Membership:

Section 1: There shall be three (3) classes of membership as follows:

A. **ACTIVE** - Any employee holding a title in a unit represented by PANJ shall not be refused membership in a local organization affiliated with PANJ. To be eligible for Active Membership in PANJ, one must be employed in a position in the State of New Jersey within the judicial system and pay 100 percent prescribed monthly dues. Active Members in good standing are those not expelled, under order of suspension, owing any portion of a fine, or delinquent in dues. Active Members are entitled to vote at all general membership meetings, subject to the limitations contained in Article IX of the By-Laws, and receive PANJ literature and benefits. No member shall be eligible to be nominated or hold any executive office in PANJ unless he/she has been an Active Member in good standing of PANJ for a period of three (3) years immediately prior to the election.

B. **ASSOCIATE** - Any member of the general public shall be eligible for Associate Membership. Associate Members may not vote or hold elective office within PANJ but are entitled to all other rights and privileges. Associate Members shall pay prescribed annual dues.

C. **HONORARY** - Honorary Membership may be conferred upon any member of the general public, and any Active Member who retires in good standing with this Association. Honorary Members shall not vote or hold elective office.

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Section 2 - All Associate and Honorary Memberships must be approved by the PANJ Executive Board.

Section 3 - Those members of the judiciary who are members of bargaining units represented by PANJ, but are not Active Members, will be subject to the agency fee process under applicable law. Those persons will be excluded from holding elective office, voting and are entitled to only those benefits as determined by the Executive Board.

The financial breakdown of full member dues and the agency fee is as follows: Full members pay \$17.42 to PANJ per pay period, some locals add an additional \$1 to \$3 which is disbursed back to them usually twice a year, and the agency fee is \$14.80 per pay period.

It is the goal of the Membership Committee to have all units represented by PANJ to become full members. It is going to be a tough road ahead, but one WE can overcome when we all have a voice. If there is anyone who would like to become a full dues member, please contact the PANJ office or your local representative.

HOW TO PROTECT OURSELVES FROM DISCIPLINES

By Ellen Cribbin, PANJ 1st Vice President, Line Staff

Although this may sound like my recurring theme, I did want to share with you what I've learned since starting this position.

Most disciplines are preventable!

As employees we are expected to show up to work on time each and every day. If you don't, you may be disciplined. If you violate a Judiciary policy or the Code of Conduct, you may be disciplined. The Judiciary has the ability to track all of our acknowledgments for their policies. We routinely see those acknowledgments when we receive discovery for members that are being disciplined. If we don't report involvement in litigation, we may be disciplined. We cannot use Judiciary-run systems like NJKids or NCIC for our own personal use. If we do, we may be disciplined. If we aren't accurately reflecting the time we are arriving at and leaving work, we may be disciplined. If we make inflammatory or derogatory comments on social media sites, we may be disciplined. When we are involved in a discipline action it affects our work product, our health and our well-being. It also affects our home life and our families.

If we use good judgment, make sound decisions and follow Judicial Policies, we will be able to avoid being disciplined.

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A Message From the President

Brothers and Sisters,

Solidarity is defined as unity (as of a group or class), which produces or is based on unities of interests, objectives, standards, and sympathies. It refers to the ties in a society that bind people together as one.

Solidarity is not a matter of sentiment, but a fact. If the basic elements, identity of interest, clarity of vision, honesty of intent, and oneness of purpose, or any of these is lacking, all sentimental pleas for solidarity, and all other efforts to achieve it will be barren of results. (Eugene Debs)

What does this mean to PANJ Members? It means that I, as your President, and the other Executive Board members have clearly set forth the above principles in the challenges that all of our members are staring at head on. The identity of interest is in best representing our membership in securing our pensions, legislation that benefits members and their families, and wages and working conditions that benefit us all. The clarity of vision and honesty of intent is in how to best achieve these results for all members; and the oneness of purpose is in knowing that we all reap the same gains.

In Solidarity,

Dwight Covalleskie

Dwight Covalleskie
President

A Message From the Editor

Brothers and Sisters,

Sometimes pressure, stress, anxiety and depression can get the better of us all; whether it is work related or in our personal lives. Everyone handles and reacts to them differently. Most of the time we manage to get by, sometimes they can even make us stronger and more determined; but occasionally we need to seek help. It's okay to ask for help, whether it's from family, friends, coworkers or professionals. There is absolutely no stigma or shame attached to this. As I said, everyone suffers from these burdens and afflictions at some point in their lives. It is better not to suffer in silence.

In Solidarity,

Nick Briscuso

Nick Briscuso
Editor

OPIOIDS IN THE WORKPLACE

From HealthCare Assistance with Member Support's February Newsletter

A recent National Security Agency study shows that approximately 80% of the United States workforce has been impacted by the use of prescription medications. The prescription opioid painkiller epidemic has union leaders nationwide struggling to manage its devastating consequences. Gone are the presumptuous days of believing that one could separate themselves from chemical dependency based solely upon their credentials or pay-grade. The overwhelming misuse and abuse of prescription pain medication has merely made acquiring one's drug of choice an effortless and legal trip to the neighborhood pharmacy. The opioid crisis is critically impacting the workplace and demonstrates serious risk to employees and substantial costs for employers. Employers that are committed to safe and healthy workplaces must implement strong workplace policies, accessible health benefit programs, valuable educational trainings, and confidential Employee Assistance Program services.

HCAMS | 1-888-828-7826 | www.unionsupport.org

LEGISLATIVE UPDATE, WINTER 2016

By Gerry Gibbs & Sabeen Kalyan-Masih, Capital Impact Group

Start of the 217th Legislature

Continued Leadership

The 217th Legislature convened January 12th, announcing the continued leadership in the Senate of Steve Sweeney (D-3) as Senate President, Senator Loretta Weinberg (D-37) as Majority Leader, and Tom Kean Jr. (R-21) as Minority Leader. Continued leadership in the Assembly includes Vincent Prieto (D-32) as Assembly Speaker, Louis Greenwald (D-6) as Majority Leader, and Jon Bramnick (R-21) as Minority Leader.

New Leadership

Ten new members of the Assembly took office this session, including Bruce Land (D-1); Arthur Barclay (D-5); Joe Haworth (R-8); Joann Downey and Eric Houghtaling (D-11); Andrew Zwicker (D-16); James Kennedy (D-22); Angela McKnight and Nicholas Chiaravalloti (D-31); and Annette Chaparro (D-33).

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Governor Christie's FY 2017 Budget and What it Means for Pension

Governor Chris Christie made his first public appearance since suspending his presidential campaign last week. In his seventh budget address given on February 16th, the governor made clear that now he is here to stay.

For the next fiscal year, Governor Christie detailed his budget plan which proposes a \$34.8 billion state budget which increases spending by 2.2 percent from FY 2016, and would allocate \$1.86 billion towards pension, and other funds to health benefits and debt repayment. Though specific plans were not revealed, Governor Christie made one thing clear throughout his budget delivery; his promise to maintain his stance on no new taxes for New Jersey citizens is unyielding.

Changes to public workers' and retirees' health plans will result in a savings of \$250 million, and a reduction of local government expenses will result in a savings of \$200 million and save employees \$100 million in premiums. The budget also adds \$554 million towards pension. This makes up for 40 percent of the amount actuaries say should be contributed which is far less than the 85 percent envisioned by the reform laws in 2010 and 2011.

Governor Christie continued to urge his colleagues to work with him and to put aside partisanship for the sake of bettering the state. He asked the legislators in the room, "Will we work together to make progress for our citizens, or will we just engage in partisanship?" Christie also listed his accomplishments throughout his past six years in office achieved on his own as well as through bipartisan efforts including a decline in the unemployment rate, no new taxes, and reductions in property tax increases.

Though much has been done in the past, Governor Christie was adamant that much more needs to be done, and now that his sole focus is on New Jersey, he wants others to join him in prioritizing state matters.

NEW VENUE GIVES NEW INSPIRATION FOR PANJ-EF 73RD ANNUAL CONFERENCE

By Jacqueline Guarini-Sheehan, PANJ 2nd V.P., PANJ-EF President

The PANJ-EF 73rd Annual Conference was held November 22-24, 2015 at the Golden Nugget in Atlantic City. The new venue was a welcoming change, with great feedback from those who attended. The committee is excited to begin the planning for the 74th Annual Conference. The conference is a great atmosphere for training, as well as networking with colleagues. Through the past several years the committee has managed to keep the cost of the training affordable to attend. Along with the welcoming change of venue came the ability to pay with a credit card and register online.

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There are many people behind the scenes who are committed, and work hard year round, to make the conference a fulfilling educational experience, as well as a fun time. Through the change of venue, the training rooms are conveniently located near one another giving easy access to classes. The hotel rooms are modern with nice views. The committee tried a few new things, such as the Monday night party at the Haven Night Club with a tasting of different foods from various restaurants within the hotel, and a boxed lunch on Tuesday afternoon. The committee welcomes the feedback from the attendees, to make their experience one they will enjoy.

The Conference Committee members are [Deneen Hohman](#), [Gary Haase](#), [Nicholas Briscuso](#), [Nicole Mlynarczyk](#), [Susan Smith](#), [Titessa Smith](#), [Miriam Abreu-Borchert](#), [Linval Lewis](#), [Gavin Cummings](#), [Georgette Warren](#), [Colleen Christie](#), [Sabrina Beyah](#), [Tracie Woodall](#), [Sue Lively](#), [Thomas Kaylor](#), [Thea Fitzpatrick](#) (retired), and [John Koerber](#) (retired). These individuals are committed to giving all attendees a conference they will remember, and continue to attend each year. It is the goal of the committee, along with the PANJ-EF Board of Trustees and PANJ President, Dwight Covaleskie, to provide excellent workshops, as well as create a welcoming, relaxed environment for all.

With the rising cost of college, PANJ-EF holds various fundraisers for the three scholarships awarded to either a member, or their family, who attends an accredited college or trade school. The main fundraiser we sponsor every year is the Annual Golf Outing, which is being held this year on May 9, 2016 at Mercer Oaks Golf Course in West Windsor, New Jersey. Anyone can support this fundraiser, as a player, hole sponsor or by donating an item to be raffled. All information for scholarships and fundraisers will be posted on the [panj.org](#) website.

The planning has already begun for the 74th Annual PANJ Conference, and we look forward to seeing you there. If you have any recommendations for a workshop, specific trainer or a guest speaker, please feel free to contact Nicole Mlynarczyk or Titessa Smith. Also, if you would like to help in any way, please contact Deneen Hohman or myself. The conference can be even more successful with your input.

TRACKING RECIDIVISM RATES

By Dwight Covaleskie, PANJ President

During the 216th Legislative Session, PANJ saw P.L.2015, c.144 signed into law on November 9, 2015. This is extremely important to all members and the citizens of New Jersey. The Judiciary claimed that they were unable to define recidivism. Well now that has been done for them and PANJ will now see certain statistics tracked. PANJ wholeheartedly supported this Legislation from its onset and fought to have it introduced in the Assembly and Senate. The Judiciary receives just under a billion dollars a year in their Budget and there was little accountability in regards to what programs work, what can be revised and overall tracking of offenses committed by probationers.

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With the contract that was just negotiated, we should want to see where every penny is going and what programs are successful. This will also benefit officers through tracking on dangerous probationers and hopefully improve safety and information available to the Probation Officers. The Judiciary fought against this legislation to the bitter end. The last (8) EIGHT police officers killed in New Jersey were killed by probationers, not parolees.

P.L.2015, c.144 (New section)

- a. The Administrative Director of the Courts shall establish a program to record and analyze the recidivism of all persons sentenced to a period of probation pursuant to N.J.S.2C:43-2 and N.J.S.2C:45-1 et seq. The purpose of this program shall be to assist in measuring the effectiveness of the State's rehabilitation initiatives and programs.
- b. The program shall record data regarding types of crimes committed by offenders that result in a sentence of probation, the arrests for all offenses committed by probationers within three years following their sentence of probation and any convictions resulting from the arrests, crimes committed while on probation, the number of repeat offenders and the number of probationers concurrently serving a parole sentence. These data shall be analyzed to determine whether the rates and nature of rearrests and convictions differ according to the criminal histories and personal characteristics of probationers, the treatment they received during the period of probation, participation and involvement in rehabilitation initiatives and programs, and such other factors as may be relevant to the purposes of this section, including, but not limited to, race, gender, ethnicity, and age.
- c. The Administrative Director of the Courts shall prepare and disseminate to the public annual reports summarizing the recidivism rates, patterns, and other findings and analyses resultant of the information gathered pursuant to this section. These reports shall include summaries of the treatment received by the probationers and shall make recommendations concerning the effectiveness of the rehabilitation initiatives and programs. These reports shall be available to the general public and shall not contain personally identifying information. To facilitate the accessibility of these reports to the general public, the administrative director shall, to the greatest extent possible, utilize the Internet.
- d. The Administrative Director of the Courts shall annually prepare and transmit to the Governor and the Legislature, pursuant to section 2 of P.L.1991, c.164 (C.52:14-19.1), the reports prepared, along with any recommendations the Administrative Office of the Courts may have for legislation to improve the effectiveness of the State's rehabilitation initiatives and programs.

1[2.] 3.1 This act shall take effect [immediately] on the 365th day following enactment¹.

PANJ will work towards having the Sick Leave Injury bill reintroduced in the Legislature during the 217th session. PANJ had a SLI bill last session. However, the Governor vetoed a similar bill for Corrections. PANJ will work towards having it signed into law, because it is very important to our Officers.

GLOUCESTER COUNTY LOCAL 108, SERVING OUR COMMUNITY

By Chastity Robinson, SBPO, PANJ Local 108 Secretary

On December 9, 2015, we gathered together for our 5th Annual Holiday Luncheon. The Gloucester County PANJ Local 108 Executive Board enjoys sharing kindness in giving by providing a lunch on us, catered by one of our local restaurants. We had the pleasure once again of PANJ 1st Vice President of Line Staff, Ellen Cribbin, attending our luncheon, who gave us a brief contract update. This year, we collected hygiene products for Inspira Children and Adolescent Behavioral Health Services in Woodbury, NJ. A representative came from the Adolescent program to tell us about the children they serve and needs we are meeting by donating our time and hygiene products to the organization. We really enjoy giving back to our Probation Officers that work hard throughout the year and are delighted at the opportunity to catch up with Probation Officers from other units and divisions. We had a very merry holiday spending time with about fifty (50) of our fellow Probation Officers and friends!

On December 21, 2015 we had the honor of doing a community service at the Inspira Medical Center Woodbury Children's Behavioral Health Center that provides behavioral services to about 12-16 children similar to the intensity and scope of inpatient treatment, but with significantly less disruption to the lives of the children and their families. We were shocked at the statistic of it being estimated that 1 out of 5 children living in the United States experience a behavioral, mental or emotional health disorder. We joyfully hosted a Holiday Luncheon with pizza, juice, water, and chips for the Children and Adolescent programs offered through the Children's Behavioral Health Center of Inspira in Woodbury, NJ. Ten (10) Probation Officers met up in the parking lot of the Inspira Children's Behavioral Health Center, where we cheerfully greeted children under the age of ten (10) and staff inside. We sang Christmas Carols with them until the pizza arrived and then ate lunch together while we answered questions they had for us. After lunch, we handed out special goodie bags and dental hygiene products donated from a local dentist. The children thanked us for lunch and we wished them a Happy Holiday. Then, we went to Inspira's Adolescent Partial Hospitalization program to greet the adolescent group with ages ranging from 12-18 years. Our fellow Probation Officer, Sylvia Sampson delivered a great presentation that gave an overview about Probation Officers while they enjoyed the pizza, soda and chips we delivered to them. We had a Q and A session where they asked us questions about Court and our specific job duties. We had a fun raffle where we gave them a chance to win gift cards to Five Below and we handed out dental hygiene products donated from a local dentist. We wished them a Happy Holiday and left feeling filled with the joy of giving. I wonder where we will be led next year to give. I cannot wait to find out and hope more Probation Officers join us!

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Inspira Community Service Event

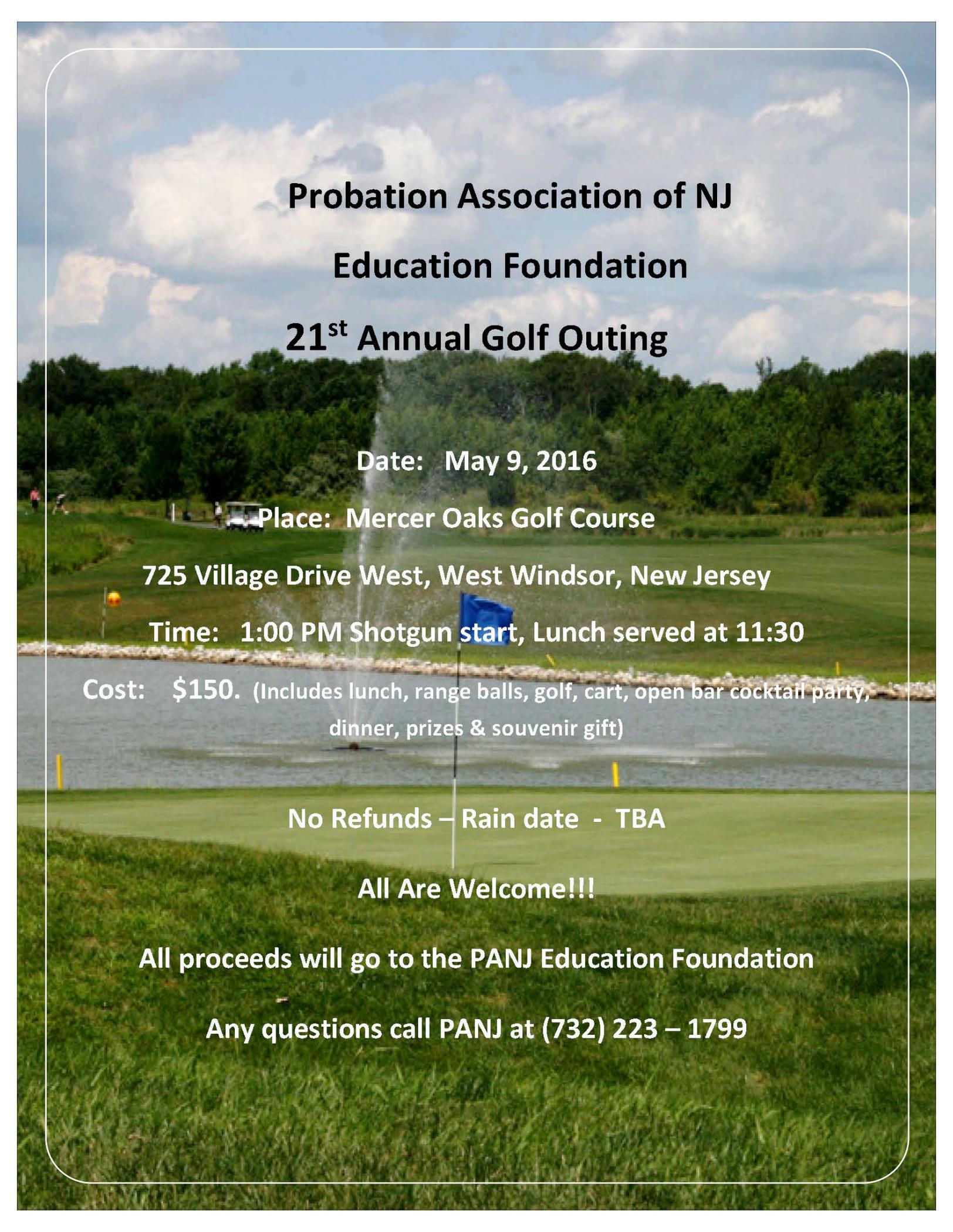


Gloucester County Local 108 Leadership



Local 108 Holiday Lunch 2015





**Probation Association of NJ
Education Foundation**

21st Annual Golf Outing

Date: May 9, 2016

Place: Mercer Oaks Golf Course

725 Village Drive West, West Windsor, New Jersey

Time: 1:00 PM Shotgun start, Lunch served at 11:30

**Cost: \$150. (Includes lunch, range balls, golf, cart, open bar cocktail party,
dinner, prizes & souvenir gift)**

No Refunds – Rain date - TBA

All Are Welcome!!!

All proceeds will go to the PANJ Education Foundation

Any questions call PANJ at (732) 223 – 1799