

INSIGHT



PUBLISHED BY THE PROBATION ASSOCIATION OF NEW JERSEY
OFFICE ADDRESS: UNITED PROFESSIONAL CENTER, BLDG. 2, 617 UNION AVE • BRIELLE, NJ 08730

ISSN 1065-7800

DECEMBER 2012

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LEGISLATIVE UPDATE

By Capital Impact Group

As the legislative session adjourns for a short holiday recess in the coming weeks, the political landscape in New Jersey is beginning to heat up. With Governor Christie recently announcing his re-election campaign and Senator Barbara Buono (D-18) being the first Democrat to officially declare her candidacy as a gubernatorial challenger, the race for Governor is in full swing.

Governor Christie's announcement comes on the heels of his unprecedented approval ratings in the wake of Hurricane Sandy and his strong handling of the recovery efforts. Republicans, Independents, and Democrats alike give the Governor strong marks for his leadership qualities and his ability to effectively tackle the many issues of rebuilding our state's devastated areas. Appearing on national television shows such as Saturday Night Live and campaigning for Republicans throughout the country, the Governor has not only enhanced his popularity and approval ratings, but his significant national profile has helped build a considerable war chest for his 2013 re-election campaign.

One of the Governor's strongest and most consistent critics, Democrat Senator Buono (Middlesex), offers a clear contrast to Christie, should she win her party's gubernatorial primary to challenge him in the fall. During the Governor's pension and health benefit overhaul, Buono broke with leadership in her own party by siding with public unions and teachers. Focusing on jobs and women's issues, Buono will seek to appeal to the middle-class voters of New Jersey that she is the woman for the job by highlighting the state's high unemployment rate, the Governor's record on women's issues, and his reluctance to increase the minimum wage.

What remains to be seen is who will jump in the race along with Buono as a potential Democratic challenger to the Governor. There have been rumors that Newark Mayor Cory Booker and Senate President Sweeney may throw their hat in the ring, setting the stage for a contested Democratic primary fight. Determining factors for potential Democrat candidates include the Governor's overwhelming popularity and a possible U.S. Senate seat up for grabs should Senator Frank Lautenberg decide not to seek reelection in 2014. Additionally, because 2013 is also a state legislative election year, New Jersey lawmakers would have to relinquish their legislative seat to run as a challenger in the Democratic primary.

Despite Governor Christie being considered a strong favorite for re-election, New Jersey has 700,000 more registered Democrats than Republicans and is traditionally considered a "blue" state. While the Democrat challenger faces an uphill battle to defeat the popular Governor in November, experts predict any head-to-head match-up will tighten in the fall, and the 2013 race will be one to watch.

As if the Governor's race isn't enough political theater for one year, the entire New Jersey Legislature, all 120 seats, is up for reelection next year as well. There will be some contested races to watch, but the question will be whether or not the Governor's name at the top of the ballot will have enough gravitas to sway a few contested legislative elections. That question is yet to be answered, but will certainly play out in the coming months ahead.

Happy holidays from the team at the Capital Impact Group and please feel free to reach out to Chrissy Buteas at Chrissy@cignj.com should you have any questions.

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Anthony Persico, Morris

Region 2

Edda Burry, AOC
Michael LaCosta, HUnterdon
Susan Smith, Middlesex

Region 3

A. Francis Nunan, Cape May
Greg Wolf, Salem
Susan Lively, Cumberland

A Message From The President

Brothers and Sisters,

I can't believe that it's the Holidays already; this past year has come and gone so quickly! I know that it has been a very busy year for all of us with all that has been going on. I want to wish you and you families a very safe and Happy Holiday Season. I also want to take a moment to say thank you to all our Local Presidents, and the members of your State Executive Board, both in the Line Staff and Supervisor Staff. Our representatives have worked so hard over the past year to speak our voice and to improve our working conditions, and continue to do so during this Holiday Season.



In Solidarity,

George Christie
President

A Message From The Editor

Brothers and Sisters,

The Winter Edition of the Insight is chock full of informational articles that pertain to each one of us. During a time in our Country when Labor organizations are under attack it is so important that we educate ourselves on our own working conditions and our rights under our Contracts. Each article touches upon events that our representatives and our organization as a whole have been working hard on. I know that this past year has been a hard one for some of our brothers and sisters, and I want to take a minute to say to them Stay Strong during this Holiday Season. I know that these Officers are an inspiration to me, and their spirit will strengthen us as a family.

Have a Safe and Happy Holiday Season!

In Solidarity,

Ellen Cribbin
Editor

Line Staff Contract Negotiations

By Dwight Covalleskie, First Vice President, Line Negotiations Chairman

The Line Staff commenced negotiations on August 6th, 2012, for a successor agreement to our contract, which expired on June 30th, 2012. This will prove not to be an easy task in these times, but however difficult, the Line Staff Negotiations Team is facing this challenge head on.

Our Collective Bargaining Agreement is a binding legal agreement between PANJ and the Judiciary that establishes the rules and regulations that govern the relationship between the parties. The CBA contains both the responsibilities and rights of both parties. The CBA also allows for avenues to seek redress if one party does not live up to the expectations and obligations as stipulated within the agreement.

A critical section regarding violations of the contract is the grievance procedure. PANJ has spent extensive time preparing proposals that solidify the fairness of the grievance process and will continue to aggressively defend this article, as it is one of the most important articles contained with the CBA.

In addition, when one of our Brothers or Sisters is disciplined, we will continue to seek fair and impartial hearings. A fair and impartial hearing officer from the Judiciary is so important because their decision could result in very serious implications for our members.

The team will be focusing on each and every article contained with the CBA. While we have established parameters for proceeding, we are seeking a contract that allows for PANJ to remain strong. My expectation is that our members in Child Support, Criminal Case Management, Family, and Probation Services be treated with dignity and respect because they serve and provide valuable services to the citizens of New Jersey.

On December 11th Michigan passed Right to Work Legislation into law, making it the 24th state in our Country to enact such legislation. A dark and ominous cloud hangs over members of Labor organizations during these tough economic times, through no fault of our own. PANJ will continue to endeavor to secure fair wages and working conditions for our members, because we deserve a fair contract. We did not cause banks, wealth management companies, and the economy to collapse, poor policies and politics did. We will continue to stand united within PANJ.

Your committee is made up of a wide range of members from all our divisions. I thank each and every one of them for their hard work and dedication. Daniel Zirrih is our lead attorney for this CBA. Your committee members are as follows; George Christie, President; Kevin Farley, Central Regional VP; Patrick Barrea, Southern Regional VP; Dan Bergin, Northern Regional VP; Ellen Cribbin Business Manager; Anthony Persico, Morris; Dorothy Robinson, Bergen; Linval Lewis, Gloucester; Sabrina Beyah, Essex; Susan Campbell, Middlesex; Jackie Sheehan, Hudson; Lynne Taylor, Somerset; Steve McMullen, Ocean; Georgette Warren, Morris; Francis Nunan, Cape May.

If you have questions or suggestions please contact your committee members, as your input is so valuable.

Supervisor Update

By Brad Fairchild, First Vice President, Supervisory Unit



Contract negotiations for Professional Supervisors started in June and are progressing at slow pace. At the initial sessions the Judiciary took a very aggressive posture in attacking areas such as Union Leave and time off for the PANJ Conference. The committee is hard at work drafting and presently proposals regarding a host of issues.

It will no surprise that a large share of time is devoted to Article 9.8 which is the Article that permits the Judiciary to remove supervisors without giving any reasons or rational. PANJ has observed that this provision has been utilized by the Judiciary increasingly in the last two years and it has been abused to by pass the discipline chapters that provide for hearings and cross examination. PANJ strongly believes that the abuse of this Article has lead to many Probation Officers and Senior Probation officers deciding not apply for Supervisor positions. The 9.8 abuse has also been extremely detrimental to morale throughout the state.

The contract committee includes Gavin Cummings from Monmouth, Glen Moton from Camden, Donald DeHart of Passaic, Linda Clark and Pat Jackson from the AOC, Greg Wolf from Salem, Susan Ormsby Cuzzo of Morris, Joanne Morrison from Cape May, and Brad Fairchild from Cumberland. David Fox is counsel to the committee and PANJ President George Christie provides valuable guidance to the Negotiators.

PANJ-EF Conference Update

By Dottie Robinson, Recording Secretary

As I write this article, I'm thinking back to the wonderful time I had at the year's PANJ-EF conference. Well right up until I got sick Monday night, but that's a story for another time!

This year's conference, as usual ran very smoothly. The classes were great, and the company was even better. Once again I would like to thank all the volunteers that make this so spectacular; Sue Cuzzo our fearless leader, Anne Dutton, Deneen Hohman, Georgette Warren, Thea Fitzpatrick, Connie Dolan, Nick Briscuso, and John Smack. The boys in the hospitality suite, who give up their time and sleep led by Peter Pan himself John Koerber, along with Gary Haase.

Without these volunteers, and so many others who help with whatever we ask of them, the conference would not go on. I know that I haven't names everyone, mostly because old age has robbed me of my memory, but I truly thank them all.

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PANJ-EF Conference Update (Cont'd)

This year we were once again fortunate enough to be able to confer five scholarships for PANJ member's children. These scholarship can only be given with the help of all those who contribute to our annual golf outing, and our other big fund raiser this year, the boat cruise. The scholarship winner this year were; Samantha Christie, Patrick Dolan, Erin Hicks, Brea Speziale, and Morgan Taylor. These are very deserving young people and it is PANJ-EF's please to be able to assist them with their education.

In addition to handing out scholarship's we also award our fellow brothers and sisters for their hard work both within our Union and for the job that they do every day. This year the John Augustus award was given to Kevin Farley, the Central Regional Vice President of our Union. Kevin has worked tirelessly for our organization and continues to sit on the negotiation team for the Line Staff, and on the Legal Committee. This is truly our highest award we can give to our Brother. Amelia Teo was awarded the Probation Officer of the year. Rita Esposito received the Supervisor of the Year Award. It's not an easy task to pick one Probation Officer, and one Supervisor out of all that are nominated each year. Both Amelia and Rita exemplify everything that is great about what we do every day, and both truly deserve the recognition.

As I said earlier everything went pretty well this year, almost everyone remembered to wear their identification tags, and brought their tickets for the events. We were also able to give away a lot of prizes this year at the exhibitor party. Unfortunately there are still counties that don't contribute, and I won't name names, but it is only a \$25.00 contribution. The more prizes we receive the more chances our members have to win. My goal for next year is to have 100% participation.

In parting, I would like to inform everyone that Sue Cuozzo is stepping down as the Chair of the Conference Committee. It has been my privilege to work with Sue for the past dozen or so years. I will miss working with her on this event, and think that we as an organization owe her a huge thank you for her hard work and dedication.

I look forward to seeing everyone at next year's conference, and hope that you bring someone new with you because this is how our Union grows and remains strong.

2012 PANJ-EF Conference Awards

Probation Officer of the Year

AMELIA S. TEO, ESSEX VICINAGE

Supervisor of the Year

RITA J. ESPOSITO, HUDSON VICINAGE

John Augustus Award

KEVIN F. FARLEY, SPO, MERCER VICINAGE

Legislator of the Year

ASSEMBLYMAN CHARLES MAINOR

Citizen of the Year

ROBERT LAVIN

PRESIDENTIAL AWARD RECIPIENTS

RALPH J. DeGROAT, SPO

Passaic Vicinage

ADAM PENN, SPO

Mercer County Vicinage

PATRICIA JACKSON, CSS II

AOC

VALERIE T. NAPIER, SPO

Ocean Vicinage

MAURA PROCOPIO, SPO

Camden Vicinage

GLENN A. GUARINO, SPO

Burlington Vicinage

BRIAN SKOBLAR, SPO

Gloucester Vicinage

Ad Hoc Committee

By George P. Christie

In February 2012, Assignment Judge Yolanda Ciccone of the Somerset Vicinage asked for a meeting with PANJ as directed by the Chief Justice. This meeting was to discuss areas of concern to the Probation Association of New Jersey.

Over the past ten months, representatives of the AOC upper management met with myself, PANJ attorney David I. Fox, Dwight Covalleskie, 1st Vice President, Line Staff, Brad Fairchild, 1st Vice President, Supervisors, and Stuart Martinsen, PANJ Legislative Consultant. PANJ outlined a number of areas of concern which included better communications with the police, expanded Tac Pro training to include all probation officers, handcuffs for probation supervision, two-way radios, New Jersey State Police shooting reports, unfair hearing officers assigned to our disciplines, the use of 9.8 removals of supervisors, and weapons screening at satellite offices.

As of the last meeting with the committee, the AOC indicated that there are many topics which they cannot discuss. Issues related to the legislation calling for a transfer to the executive branch as well as other law enforcement concerns. They also will not discuss issues that are under litigation or in negotiations.

We have been discussing the possible issuing of radios for field work, the receiving of statistical information, and improved training for all officers.

Your committee members have been doing a great job representing the interest of all probation officers in New Jersey. We will continue to press for better and improved working conditions.

The View from Health and Safety

By Brad Fairchild, First Vice President, Professional Supervisors

The issue dominating health and safety concerns for PANJ is the lack of coherent and consistent policies in the area of Probation/Police communication. The streets of many of New Jersey's towns and communities have become increasingly dangerous with increased incidents of gun and gang violence. Having intelligence regarding recent shootings and advance knowledge of police activity in the areas Probation is preparing to conduct community supervision, is vital to keeping Officers safe in a violent time.

While some counties do a good job in this area others show extreme negligence. It is distressing that after a full generation of alleged "unification" the Judiciary allows such variance in these policies. Why there is not one policy for a state Judiciary is unacceptable. Sadly but sincerely Probation Officers must pose this simple question to the Judiciary on the most critical facing Probation Officers and the families they go home to each evening, "when will the State take over?"

Added to PANJ's concerns is the impact of the massive police layoffs experienced by many municipal police departments during the last two years. Local police are the critical "back up" component for our Offices in the field.

PANJ is also disappointed at the Judiciary's continued defiance at collecting statistics regarding probationers committing murders and other acts of violence. The appearance of denying that Probation Officers have a dangerous job is the equivalent of denying the sky is blue and the grass is green. Those who put their safety on the line, as well as their families, deserve better. PANJ will continue to fight this battle which is the basis for our continued advocacy of the transfer of Probation to Parole. Updates on the continued progress of this legislation is available through the PANJ Office or its statewide officers.

Camden City Police

By George P. Christie

Many of you may know that the City of Camden has requested a pilot program with the approval of The Civil Service Commission to eliminate all the Camden City Police Officers. The city intends to lay off the entire police department and establish a 1 year pilot project to hire anew, all county officers to patrol the city.

If any of you know about the Civil Service Commission you should know that a 1 year pilot program will continue to be a permanent program. The city believes that this program is necessary because it will allow them to provide police protection at a lower cost. In reality it allows the city to stop paying salaries and ignore the existing contracts.

The Fraternal Order of Police has filed an appeal to the Civil Service Commission asking for a stay of this pilot program. Both PANJ and the Fire Fighters Mutual Benefit Association (FMBA) have joined The FOP Camden Lodge #1 in their appeal.

The Civil Service Commission did reject the appeal which forced the FOP Camden Lodge # 1 to file with the New Jersey Appellate Court. Again, PANJ and the FMBA have joined the FOP as Friends of the Court (Amicus Curiae).

PANJ strongly believes that the City and County of Camden are wrong to violate existing contracts and lay off Civil Service Police Officers. PANJ does not believe this program will make the City of Camden safer.

A Job Well Done Out Of Burlington County

By Glenn Guarino- President Local 114 Burlington

More than once in a while, our officer's go far beyond their daily duties. Unfortunately, they are not always recognized.

On 11/9/12, Burlington Juvenile Officer's, Jubilee Wested and Brittany Relvas were in the field conducting field visits. At approximately 2:30pm, they were en route to a juvenile's home on River Road, Burlington City. As they came to cross a small bridge that was over looking a river, an abandoned warehouse, and an old construction site, the officer's noticed a petite 5'2", 125 lb elderly woman. She was standing on the bridge. They immediately turned around, and approached her. She responded that she was ok and was just taking a walk. She said that she lived close by and walked this way every day. They asked her if she needed help and she responded "No, I'm fine. But thank you". PO Wested and PO Relvas continued to question deeper into where did she lived and how she got to the area, having a gut feeling something wasn't right. She responded that she lived "way down the road". They asked if she would like a ride home due to the location seeming so unsafe, especially for an elderly woman alone. She accepted very gratefully. Once in the car, they continued to ask her for her address to put in the GPS. She responded with a street address that sounded French. The Officer's asked her if that was in France, she responded "yes". When asked her name in which she responded "Margerite", the officer's asked her for any ID , in which she responded that she had none. Noticing she had a necklace on under her coat, they asked to see her beautiful necklace. On her necklace was a red medical cross on the front side and on the back side was a phone number and "Alzheimer's" inscribed into the charm. The hunch was right and the officer's were so glad that they had acted.

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A Job Well Done Out Of Burlington County (Cont'd)

Jubilee and Brittany immediately called the number on the necklace which was her daughter, who reported that she had been missing since 8am that morning. The officer's transported Margerite to her daughter's location, which is where she went missing. Once there, they met with Margerite's daughter, Margerite's husband, and Det. Brandon Robertson from the Burlington Township Police Department and 2 other uniform officers. PO Relvas spoke to the officers while PO Wested spoke with family giving all of the details. Early that morning, Margerite Spillman and her husband went to the Credit Union. He reported she was doing her crossword puzzles in the car, while he ran into the bank for 5 minutes. He noted he had done this numerous times, and she would never leave the car until he got back in. He reported he will never do this again, as he now knows she will leave. When her husband saw her, he immediately starting crying. When he came out of the credit union, he reported she was gone. He said he searched all of the area for her, calling the police reporting her missing and called their daughter. Her family reported that she loves to walk and is in great physical shape. One would not know she was sick unless you really took the time to talk to her in detail!

The officer's said their 'goodbyes' to Margerite. The Family, Local Police and Probation feels very grateful to have had Margerite cross the path of Officer's Wested and Relvas! This is who we are and what we do!!!



It's that time of year, when we look back and thank all of our members who have made their presence felt in our lives and in PANJ.

*Happy Holidays to you and your loved ones.
Have a safe and successful New Year.*

In Solidarity,

Dwight Covaleskie, 1st Vice President
and
Ellen Cribbin, Business Manager