

WELCOME NEW COURT ATTORNEYS

A warm welcome to the 28 new court attorneys who have joined us since January. At orientation, hopefully you enrolled for health coverage. However, you must enroll separately for union membership and benefits. If OCA did not provide you with a welcome letter and packet from the union, please call the union office 212.387.8707 for membership information and forms. Also, please visit our website — www.nyscala.com — for an overview of benefits.

EXECUTIVE BOARD CHANGES

Due to transfers, promotions, retirements, and a new judgeship, we have lost several of our long standing Union Reps.

Heartfelt thanks to Ann Chabot, Yacine Barry-Wun, Dejana Perrone, Charlie Liu, Doug Forman, Alexandra Standish, Jim Clynes, Christina Biondo, and Jacqui Sclafani for their many years of dedication and hard work. Best wishes in your new legal positions — or in retirement!

We welcome our new Reps who have agreed to fill these vacancies: Melissa Livingston and George Santana in NY Civil Court; Brian Lowy joining Ed Kerins as Co-Rep in NY Criminal Court; Michael Faleck & Cynthia Isales in NY Housing Court; Elena Popova and Tyedanita McLean in Kings Civil Court; Javier Ortiz in Kings Criminal Court; Robbin Ditto and Sheridan Chu in Queens Supreme Court Criminal Term and Queens Criminal Court; Tara Szap and Sharon Ferguson in Bronx Civil and Civil Supreme Court; Wilfredo Suarez joining Melissa Lubin as Co-Rep in Bronx Family Court.

Contact information for all our Union Reps is available at www.nyscala.com on the Executive Board page.

CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS

Our 2011-2016 collective bargaining agreement expired last April. However, contract negotiations in the Judicial Branch were on hold while we waited to see what settlements were reached in the Executive Branch, since — for



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Citywide Association of Law Assistants of the Civil, Criminal & Family Courts in the City of New York

better or for worse — the raises the Governor approves for Executive Branch employees sets the pattern for all of us. We now know that the unions in the Executive Branch who have settled are receiving 2% per year increases.

Following ratification of the first Executive Branch contract, OCA offered us a three-year contract with increases of 2% each year, with the first 2% retroactive back to last April, the second 2% to take place this April, and the final 2% April 2018. They are also offering a modest increase to location pay and additional money for welfare fund benefits. The latter would permit us to bring back the lump sum Supplemental Welfare Fund benefit that has ranged in the past from \$200 to \$550 per member. Other important items under discussion include health insurance costs and our demand for some form of job protection.

When OCA makes its final offer, members will receive a newsletter with complete details and explanations. At that time, the Executive Board will be able to answer any questions members have. At the present time, though, things are still in flux and with the probable exception of the percentage raises, nothing is set in stone.

As protracted as negotiations were the last time, they are moving extraordinarily quickly this time. As per the grapevine, OCA is already close to settlement with some unions. It has been suggested that unions who settle in April/May could have a membership ratification vote in May/June, and a pay bill before the NYS Legislature before

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CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS

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it adjourns for the summer. Assuming a pay bill passes and the Governor signs it, the office of the State Comptroller usually needs about two months to calculate back pay and raises, so those employees would most likely receive their money in September/October.

One very important point — regardless of what occurs with the contract, reclassification is a non-mandatory subject of collective bargaining and is NOT part of the collective bargaining process. Reclassification discussions with OCA are taking place separately, and members will receive an update on that in the near future.

WE NEED YOUR INPUT

We have a very large panel of participating dentists, and it can be difficult to choose a provider from the list without knowing anything about the dentist. We are asking for your input. If you have had a positive experience with any of the providers, please let us know so we can create a list of recommended dentists when members call asking for recommendations. (Of course, if you have had any negative experience, please report that right away!) Your comments would be most appreciated.

A FEW MORE ITEMS...

Enclosed is your 2017 membership card. We have always considered anyone who was part of our bargaining unit a “member,” but at the present time, we have started to ask our Court Attorneys to sign membership enrollment forms.

These forms are now given to new members at orientation, and we are starting the process of collecting the forms in each court from everyone else.

For the present, we are particularly looking to gather the cards so that we have everyone’s personal email addresses. That way, we can

NYSCALA
How to Reach Us

Union Office Number
212.387.8707

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Union Address
63 East 9th St., #9K
New York, NY 10003

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Website
www.nyscala.com

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Welfare Fund Benefits Office
Administrative Services Only, Inc.
516.396.5500 or 800.537.1238

send email blasts when necessary. In the future, though, the enrollment forms may become mandatory as proof of membership. Regrettably, in the event of future labor law changes at the federal level, it may become necessary to distinguish “members” from “nonmembers.” More on this at our informational lunches...

Because of the expense, we are trying to minimize our mailings and instead post updates on our website. So please check the website at www.nyscala.com for periodic updates.

Two quick previews: We will most likely hold another one of our Mets excursions this summer, on a mid-summer Sunday afternoon. We also anticipate doing our all-day CLE programs in October. Much more info to follow...

