2019 Joe Hutten LCFT Scholarship Award

by Deborah Phelps, LCFT Scholarship Chair

Joe Hutten was a long-time Union leader in both Waukegan and Zion. He taught Business Education and was a member of the LCFT Executive Board, as was his wife Angie.

Please join me in thanking the Scholarship Committee members, Lynne Jeffries and Pat Termini for all their hard work and assistance during this year’s process. In addition, a big thank you to Sue Eberle for her help in getting out the applications and letters, and having the check ready!

It is truly an honor to present to you, the LCFT Membership our 2019 Recipient: We have selected Bradley Wilinski of Gurnee, Illinois to receive this year’s scholarship. Bradley is currently a senior at Warren Township High School and hopes to have a career in which he can help others and make the world a better place. He is considering majoring in Communications/Public Relations because he enjoys working with others. Bradley’s essay and resume along with his academic achievements, included in his application process, provided the Scholarship Committee with a view of a very determined and kind spirited young man.

Bradley’s Community Service projects include but are not limited to volunteering for the Gurnee Park District, a Leader for Integrated PE, an Assistant for Special Needs Allied Soccer and he has sung the National Anthem for the Lake County Honor Flight and other Veterans groups. He has also received numerous Achievement Awards including but not limited to: American Red Cross Hero Award, 10th Congressional District Leadership Award, Illinois Governors Volunteer Service Award, Chicago Tribune Youth Activist Award and Illinois PTA Outstanding Youth Service Leader Award.

Bradley’s activities include not only being a member of the Warren Concert Choir and a member of the Warren Varsity Bowling Team but also working as a Youth Ambassador for the Illinois Tourette Syndrome for the past 6 years, Camp Counselor for YMCA Camp Duncan and as a Program Assistant for the Warren Special Recreation Association supervising special needs teens and adults.

In his letters of recommendation Bradley is described as self-motivated, a high achiever, going the extra mile to be the best he can be, an effective recruiter, great listener, willing to seek advice and direction, takes full advantage of resources to learn, along with incredible people skills. Bradley sounds like someone every teacher would like to have in their classroom.

On behalf of the Lake County Federation of Teachers please join me in congratulating Bradley on his accomplishments and wishing him the very best in the future. Congratulations Bradley!
From the Desk of
Michael T. McGue

It’s time for a fair income tax plan for Illinois schools, educators and our students. The fiscal outlook for Illinois is the worst of any state in the nation. Historically, our Illinois Governors and General Assemblies have spent more than they have received in revenue. However, the reasons why spending has exceeded revenue has little, if anything, to do with those of us who go to work in the public schools day in and day out.

Governor JB Pritzker has proposed a progressive tax structure for Illinois. Changing the current “flat” tax structure requires an amendment to the Illinois constitution. The Illinois Senate has approved placing a proposed amendment on the ballot for Illinois voters and the anti-tax zealots have, predictably, come out swinging with cries whining of the impending “disaster” such a plan will create for the economy of Illinois. Much of the rhetoric from “think tanks” like the Illinois Policy Institute and conservative editorial boards led by the Chicago Tribune blame pension costs as the source for the Illinois projected fiscal deficit. These conservative groups use pensions as a wedge issue for voters in a similar way that a magician diverts one’s attention while pulling the rabbit from the hat.

Here’s the truth: pensions work and are a sound fiscal policy. A pension is a promise of an income paid later in life for dedicated work one performs in an earlier age. The underlying promise here is that the money you pay in, and the earnings from that savings, will not be spent to fund other legislative pet projects. But, repeated misuse of our pension monies has occurred over the years and continues to this day. Past Governors and General Assembly members have been “borrowing” from the pension systems to fund other necessary programs and projects while allowing them to “buy” votes by promising no new taxes. It is easy to promise champagne on a beer budget now and pass the real cost on to generations to come.

Make no mistake in this understanding: the pension debt is not the fault of pensioners who have followed the rules and paid their fair share into the fund. The politicians of the State of Illinois, from both political parties, have deceived not just the pension recipients but the taxpayers, as well.

“This proposed tax plan is not only fair, it is realistic in terms of supporting growth.”

--Mike McGue, LCFT President

A progressive tax is a fair tax plan. I have advocated for this equitable approach to funding education for decades going as far back as the Dawn Clark Netsch proposal and have written about it numerous times over the years. The current proposed plan is a streamlined version of her plan which applied the tax increase to all income levels across the board. Governor Pritzker’s plan will charge higher tax rates to only 2.8% of Illinois residents who are making over $250,000 per year and only on the monies earned over this $250,000 threshold. Those under $100,000 in net income will see a reduction in their marginal tax rate while those between $100,000 and $250,000 will see no change. The same individuals who have benefitted from good schools and unwarranted tax breaks most of their lives are the ones now crying the loudest about this logical proposal.

In the months to come well-heeled opponents to a fair and progressive tax will argue that this will somehow keep our state from providing good jobs and they may threaten the need to move businesses to another state. The truth is, good businesses aren’t attracted...
from an email from Kathy Shaevel, IFT Director of Collective Bargaining

In late April, the IPI (Illinois Policy Institute) sent a mailer to union retirees who continue to pay retiree union dues. It inaccurately told the recipient that union retiree dues go to political purposes. It included drop forms for retirees to submit to the union and their pension system.

**Here is some background on Retiree dues:**
**All retiree union dues are voluntary, there are no compulsory or mandatory union fees ever taken from retirees.**

**Retirees can sign up to have union dues automatically taken from their annual pension and sent to the unions. Many retirees choose to do this, but plenty do not.**

**Retirees who have dues deducted through the pension system pay $20 per year. The local keeps $8 and the IFT keeps $12. Retiree dues are NOT used for IFT COPE.**

**Some locals collect retiree dues from members and then pay the IFT per caps for those retiree members. Again, none of this money goes to IFT COPE.**

**Some locals have local COPE funds that retirees contribute to and some retirees write checks directly to IFT COPE. These are voluntary contributions to COPE and they are distinct and separate from the voluntary dues deductions that occur through the pension systems.**

**About how the IPI got retiree member info:**
The IPI submitted a FOIA to SURS, SERS, and TRS for retiree contact information. Some of the info they requested was legal to request and obtain, but the pension systems should have withheld the zip code, which is considered prohibited because it is tantamount to the address, which is prohibited. (By matching the name and zip code in the voter database, they could determine a retiree’s full mailing address). At this time, we know that SURS did give names and the zip codes. We have determined that TRS gave names, and other information about annuitants, but they did not give zip codes. So far, only SURS retirees have received the IPI mailer.

**Lies in the mailer:**
The mailer states, “According to SURS, a portion of your retirement income is deducted and sent your union. That’s money taken from your pocket – and sent to politicians such as Mike Madigan. But you can tell the union no more.” To be clear, IFT retiree dues are not mixed with IFT COPE money in any way.

**What to do if you receive a mailer:**
Please let your Council President, IFT Field Service Rep, or LCFT Business Agent know that you received a mailer from IPI. Make sure to ask questions about the information in the letter. As you can see, the IPI does not always feel the need to tell the truth. Always remember that we are STRONGER TOGETHER!

---

**President continued from page 2**

to states where schools are failing because of lack of funding. Healthy states thrive when their schools are supported by their leaders and their taxpayers. This proposed tax plan is not only fair, it is realistic in terms of supporting growth. Don’t let the few, loud opponents make you think that the rabbit really comes out of the hat! Join me in supporting Governor Pritzker and the Illinois Senate in supporting a more fair progressive income tax for the future of all of Illinois.

In Unity,

Michael T. McGue, President, Lake County Federation of Teachers
Warren Township HS Federation of Teachers Ratifies Five-Year Deal with District 121 Board

by Matt Beverly,
IFT Field Service Representative

The Warren Township High School Federation of Teachers overwhelmingly voted to ratify a new contract April 16, 2019, with the Board of Education unanimously approving the deal April 23, 2019. The negotiations, which began on Jan 24, 2018, concluded on March 13, 2019, and entailed over 200 initial proposals from both parties. The final settlement comprised major substantive changes, multiple clean-up provisions and the herculean effort of merging the 2013-2018 “dual” certified-classified contract into a single agreement, mainly to reflect the fact that all members—teachers and classifieds—are in one bargaining unit. New changes will enhance working conditions, the teaching and learning environment and members’ pay and benefits.

Some highlights include:
**Enhanced union security language
**Expansion of union release time
**Clarification of teacher evaluation language to comply with ISBE rules, and enhancements, including more robust PDP language and preservation of a fair and teacher-friendly evaluation committee
**Enhancement to existing classified due process language, including tightening up just clause provisions
**Creation of new language and benefits for school and post-secondary counselors, school nurses, case managers, program case managers, social workers and school psychologists regarding additional summer work
**Modification and clarification of teacher new and vacant position language, and transfer language, to align with School Code
**Enhancement and clarification of teacher seniority and RIF language to align with School Code
**Modification of classified working condition article, including enhancements to vacation and holiday leave
**Complete overhaul, including enhancements, to teacher and classified leave article
**Major enhancements to health insurance, including preservation of 100% single coverage with a new wellness component and a change from the old diminishing dependent stipend to a new, robust dependent percentage cost-sharing structure that will generate between $1,500 and $4,000 annual premium relief for dependent insurance takers
**Elimination of all 2-tier pay and benefit structures for both teachers and classified staff
**Reorganization of entire teacher lead section, including substantial lead teacher stipend increases
**Reorganization of teacher retirement incentive article that preserves value of old benefit while allowing for return to 6% cap rule in the event the Legislature invalidates the new 3% cap legislation
**Reorganization of classified pay scales to reflect current job titles and duties
**Retroactivity, including virtually all financial items, to July 1, 2018
**Increases to classified service recognition benefit, shift differential and special classified duties (e.g., substitute and paraprofessional work)
**Increases to classified staff retirement incentive program
**A complete overhaul of the grievance article
**A complete overhaul of all extra duty language and pay schedules, including hard-fought pay increases to many stipend positions to achieve pay equity with other county schools
**A 5-year deal with no new reopener language

"Because of the bargaining team who stepped up two years ago to lead this effort, and equally important, the membership’s resolve and patience to fight for a fair contract, we got the deal done," said Council President and history teacher Jason Jeemen. "In the end, our membership’s unity, as reflected with
our 99.7% strike authorization vote, allowed us to secure a good contract that supports our members and the entire Warren educational community.”

In addition to many other changes to the contract, another notable win for the Union was settling a 5-year wage deal for teachers and classified staff. Teachers will realize, with step, an average 6.65% raise in 2018-19, 5.8% in 2019-20, 5.6% in 2020-21, 5.1% in 2021-22 and 4.65% in 2022-23. Classified staff will realize a 6% raise in 2018-19, 5% in 2019-20, 5% in 2020-2021, 4.5% in 2021-2022 and 4.5% in 2022-23. The teacher and longevity raises and stipends were preserved.

The bargaining team consisted of Members Jason Jecmen, Nikki Thompson, Dave Zaban, Dan Heupel, Jean Ferrara, Christina Cooper and Pieter Kreunen, and IFT Field Service Director Matthew Beverly.

Solidarity and mobilization wins 5-year deal at Winthrop Harbor

by Matthew LaPierre,
LCFT Business Agent

After almost a year of contract negotiations the Winthrop Harbor Council reached an agreement on a new five-year contract that provides a new step salary schedule and wage increases for each year. The contract expired June 30, 2018 and members started the 2018-2019 school year without an agreement in place. The first year of the new contract will be retroactive to that date.

The new Agreement calls for teacher salaries to increase by 8% the first year. That includes a step of 2% plus the steps increase by 6%. The salary schedule has now been doubled from 15 steps to 30 steps which brought several members on longevity back into the salary schedule. Each of the next four years teaching staff shall receive 3% increases. There had also been a cap on the compounding of longevity pay that was lifted for this contract.

Classified staff were also woefully underpaid in this District. For the first year they will receive a $2.00 per hour increase and 3% increases thereafter. Extra duty stipends were increased by 8% the first year and 3% each year thereafter.

After several years of staff contributing to their health insurance premiums now the District will fully fund the individual coverage for staff.

The Council won several other items of importance to the membership. The Agreement calls for the final four years before retirement to be increased if the state law changes. Union orientation for new employees and “just cause” standards for disciplinary action were also added.

The negotiations hit some bumpy times due to the retirement of the superintendent and hiring a new one.

Council co-Presidents Pat Wallace and Dierdre Cook led the Council Bargaining Team. “The membership was very clear about what they wanted. We developed a solid plan as a team with data to support our position. With the education of our community via social media and car signs we were successful in making a satisfactory agreement with the Board” stated Cook.

The final tentative agreement was reached with the assistance of a federal mediator from the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service. However, without the mobilization of members, attending Board meetings and community education it may not have ended the way it did.

According to Wallace, “The membership worked together to this contract. We put posters in our car windows telling the community we still had no contract. We worked to rule, coming into school and leaving as a group. Some of the students even clapped for us to show support. This was a complete group effort.”

Wallace and Cook were assisted on the bargaining team by Ted Brooks who was a researcher par excellence, along with Donna Torkelson, Lauri Serdar, and Ronda Nissan.

May 2019
ZBFT Raises Money to Help Our Own

by Kelly Regnier, ZBFT President

Towards the end of the first semester, the members of the Zion Benton Federation of Teachers received some distressing news. Mary Stella, the one-year-old daughter of Lisa Woodson, and niece of Tina Greico, both members of the ZBFT council, had been diagnosed with an aggressive AML Leukemia.

Upon hearing this news the officers of the ZBFT sprang into action, coming up with the idea to hold a benefit dinner of some kind to help the Woodson family cover the growing costs of Mary Stella’s treatment and other expenses related to the family being available for her during this treatment. By the end of the week, Ruth Davis and Kristin Niemara-Valerugo had volunteered to head the fundraiser.

The ZBFT membership voted to cover the costs of the food for the fundraiser, while the members would volunteer their time and energies to work the event. This made the event a pure donation to the family of all money raised.

The fundraiser was held on February 12 for two hours in the ZBHHS South Cafeteria. The pasta dinner was busy from the very moment it opened until they ran out of pasta less than two hours later. ZBFT members and administrators donated baskets and other large items to be raffled off during the event.

The entire community came together, with members bringing their families and students bringing their parents. The ZB boys basketball team was playing the Lake Forest Scouts later that evening, and the parents of the team joined us for dinner as well. In addition to this, the ZB Cheerleaders collected money during a “Miracle Minute,” at half time of the game.

When the event was over, the ZBFT had raised $10,765.13 for the Woodson family, and the members gained a renewed sense of pride and community.

Sadly, Mary Stella lost her battle with AML Leukemia in March. As a group, the members of the ZBFT grieved for loss of such a young life filled with promise, but also for our friends Lisa and Tina and the entire family.

Mary Stella inspired us with her strength throughout her battle. She made us stronger as a group, and we are sure she keeps watch over us all.

The members of ZBFT should be proud of their caring and compassion for our members in need, and embodying one of the founding principles of all Unions; we are stronger when we stand together to help each other.
REGISTRATION FORM
LCFT LOCAL 504 – 2019 SUMMER
PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COURSES

(Please Print Clearly)
NAME: ___________________________ Home Phone: ________________________

Home Address: _____________________________________________________________________________________________

City: ___________________________ State: ____ Zip: ______________

PERSONAL E-mail (Home): ___________________________ School District: ___________________________

No District Emails

IEIN NO.: ___________________________

PLEASE SIGN UP EARLY TO HELP ENSURE THE MINIMUM NUMBER OF 10 FOR THE CLASS.
Select courses you will attend:

ER&D CLASSES OFFERED

☐ STRATEGIES FOR STUDENT SUCCESS part 2
   June 17 – June 21  9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

☐ BEGINNING READING INSTRUCTION
   July 1 – July 5  9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

☐ ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS (15 HR)
   July 15 - July 17  9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.
   Class ends at noon on July 17th

☐ MAKING STUDENT LEARNING OBJECTIVES WORK FOR YOU:
   July 22 – July 26  9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

☐ FOUNDATIONS I
   August 5 – August 9  9:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m.

☐ STRATEGIES FOR STUDENT SUCCESS part 1
   June 24 – June 28  9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

☐ ENGLISH LANGUAGE LEARNERS 101 (15 HR)
   July 17 - July 19  Class starts on June 17th.
   at 1:00 p.m. - 3:00 p.m. 18th & 19th 9:00 a.m. to 3:00 p.m.

☐ MATHEMATICS K-2
   July 29 - August 2  9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

☐ FOUNDATIONS II
   August 12- August 16  9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

DAILY ATTENDANCE IS REQUIRED

Number of courses selected: x Cost per course: $50 = $ __________

CHECKS AND REGISTRATION FORM MUST BE IN THE UNION HALL TWO WEEKS PRIOR TO THE
START OF THE CLASS. ALL CLASSES ARE HELD IN THE UNION HALL.

Enclose check or money order (no cash) made payable to: AFT Local 504
Return form with non-refundable payment to: Lake County Federation of Teachers, Local 504
248 Ambrogio Drive
Gurnee, IL 60031
Be an IFT Convention Delegate

LCFT is looking for members who would like to attend the IFT Convention October 18-20, 2019 in Rosemont, IL. Delegates are responsible for shaping the direction of the IFT and its endeavors, and for electing officers to carry out those directives. If you are interested, please fill in the form below and return it to the LCFT office NO LATER than June 30. Delegates will be elected at our August LCFT Executive Board Meeting.

YES! I WANT TO BE A DELEGATE AT THE
2019 IFT CONVENTION!

Name: ________________________________________________________________

Address: ____________________________________________________________

City: __________________ State: ______ Zip Code: ______________

Cell Phone: __________________________________________________________

Non-school Email Address: ____________________________________________

Council (School District): _____________________________________________

BE SURE TO RETURN THIS FORM TO THE LCFT OFFICE BY JUNE 30.

WE LOVE EDUCATIONAL EMPLOYEES!

Great Lakes Credit Union has partnered with the Lake County Federation of Teachers Local 504 to provide specialized benefits, including: Free Checking, Savings, Mobile Banking, Money Manager, 11 branches, Auto & Lifestyle loans, Mortgages, Visas, even interest-free Strike Loans (if needed)!

Open an account with Nick today!

Mention: "Nick Sent Me" & we'll deposit $5.00 into your account.

Nick Mager
Business Development Manager
D: (847) 309-0342
Nicholas@glcu.org

Don't forget to say "Nick Sent Me!"