Dear Colleagues,

Well it seems like we may be through the worst of winter weather. Though I wouldn’t put the snow shovel away just yet, it does seem like the longer hours of daylight and the sun being higher in the sky makes the hardest days a little easier.

Speaking of hard days, I hope you have all taken the time, no matter how busy you are, to write, e-mail, and/or Fax your legislators. One way to do this is to log on NY-SUT’s MAC (Member Action Center). You can do this through the NYSUT website. Also they now have an app you can put on your smart phone which makes access to the MAC very easy. It is as easy as a few clicks of your mouse, touch pad, etc. to send a FAX to legislators and/or Governor Cuomo.

There are several legislative issues that NYSUT has posted on which you can easily take action. One of the legislation expands the application of the Freedom of Information Law (FOIL). Another is legislation to help restore funding to Teacher Centers. Given the changing expectations and requirements of the state’s APPR legislation and efforts to “raise the bar”, it would seem like that would be one of the wiser investments the state could make. Some of the other legislation NYSUT is asking for support on an increase in minimum wage, SUNY funding, funding special education schools and human services and reforming the tax cap.

The state has a limited number dollars to spend. We can help our legislators know what is important to us their constituents, by going on the MAC and taking action. This is certainly one time when your voice should be heard and really counts for something. We know how valuable our programs are and how hard we work at them. We know how important the work we do for our students is. We need to help our state government know where they need to spend dollars. Our students deserve our support in an attempt to get their educations properly funded. Cutting costs at the expense of quality programming is very shortsighted and we need to do what we can to help our elected officials have a long term view, one which goes beyond their present term of office.

The students we serve need all the educational help we can give them. Many of our students need everything we can educationally do for them. If they are short changed in this, it may mean the difference between self-sufficiency and a meaningful life or continued reliance on a governmental system that simply maintains an existence.

And, please continue to support your Association. Make sure you are involved and vote in our local AFT delegate election this spring and our officer election in 2014. Become a Rep, come to Rep Council and be a part of the decisions we make, which may very well directly affect you. Another way of supporting your Association is by supporting the staff members with whom you work. Help each other out when you can. Resolve small differences that exist between you and those you work with. Ask for help from your officers or other members with things that aren’t easy to work out.

As an Association we are together for common purposes. In this difficult and changing political environment, where the politicians with little to really offer have made public education the enemy, we need to stick together. Don’t allow small differences to divide us. We can not be successful if we don’t work together.

Looking forward, Doug
The Capital Region BOCES Faculty Association Constitutional Review Committee has completed it’s job. The Executive Board will review and then present to the Representative Council. After that you will be sent a copy with all changes and additions to the Constitution. Please take time to review and be ready to vote when you get the notification.

Capital Region BOCES Faculty Association
Important Dates for 2012-13

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<th>BOCES Board of Education</th>
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Capital Region BOCES Faculty Association Leadership

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<td>President</td>
<td>H. Douglas Harple</td>
<td>899-1044</td>
<td>862-4776</td>
<td><a href="mailto:hdharple@msn.com">hdharple@msn.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Vice President</td>
<td>Patricia Gollub</td>
<td>583-1119</td>
<td>862-4716</td>
<td><a href="mailto:Gollub02@yahoo.com">Gollub02@yahoo.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>CVP TA/EA</td>
<td>Colleen Condolora</td>
<td>393-2244</td>
<td>356-8349</td>
<td><a href="mailto:condolora@aol.com">condolora@aol.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CVP Service</td>
<td>Sandy Smith</td>
<td>869-7421</td>
<td>229-1403</td>
<td><a href="mailto:shortmom02@yahoo.com">shortmom02@yahoo.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>CVP Spec. Educ.</td>
<td>Flora Fasoldt</td>
<td>674-0223</td>
<td>377-9018</td>
<td><a href="mailto:electflora@aol.com">electflora@aol.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>CVP C T E</td>
<td>Jeannine Moran</td>
<td>587-7662</td>
<td>862-4816</td>
<td><a href="mailto:jnmrmoran@hotmail.com">jnmrmoran@hotmail.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Recording Secretary</td>
<td>Barbara Burnham</td>
<td>334-1193</td>
<td>862-4720</td>
<td><a href="mailto:baburnham@gmail.com">baburnham@gmail.com</a></td>
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<td>Vacant</td>
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<tr>
<td>Treasurer</td>
<td>Deborah Sorvari</td>
<td>452-8138</td>
<td>334-1296</td>
<td><a href="mailto:debmom39@nycap.rr.com">debmom39@nycap.rr.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>Membership Chair</td>
<td>Lisa Mink</td>
<td>372-7240</td>
<td>464-3979</td>
<td><a href="mailto:lmink8@hotmail.com">lmink8@hotmail.com</a></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grievance Chair</td>
<td>E.J. Hanley</td>
<td>321-0485</td>
<td>356-8342</td>
<td><a href="mailto:ehanley1@nycap.rr.com">ehanley1@nycap.rr.com</a></td>
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“Isn’t that Special?”

The reaction to what I do for a living is more consistent than one might think. I hear it over and over…”It takes someone really special to do that job.” I usually reply that it takes someone really insane. And I used to believe that.

However, over the past 31 years, I have seen things in a different light. My first supervisor used to get frustrated with teachers who came to strand meetings (yes they were strand meetings then) constantly complaining about the students. The problems we faced then would be welcome nowadays. When he had enough of the griping, he would just start spelling: S – P – E – C – I – A – L. He rarely had to finish the word before the point was made.

So, are people that go into our line of work special? You bet! And not only that, so are our students. With all of the budget cuts, we get the students that the school districts do not want to deal with. So we have to deal with them in a special way because the usual methods do not work. However, there are success stories because of what we do. I work at Maywood where we rejoice at little victories and we do treat the students as special people. Why? Because they are and they deserve it.

Recently I heard that we need to drop the word special and not spotlight our students. So does our division need a new name? Does the CSE (Committee for Special Education) in a school district need to become the CE? We have come up with new names and terms but do we give up that we are special?

In my opinion, the word special has not been overused, abused, or become passé. We need to highlight and spotlight our students and our staff in any way at our disposal. What we do is noteworthy and we do it for and with noteworthy young people. I hope I never lose sight of how special our students and colleagues are and can always use that “special” designation when describing them.

Quality Counts rankings support value of collaboration

This year’s Quality Counts rankings from Education Week offer further proof that focusing on collaborative, evidence-based strategies; teaching over testing; and investing in rather than destabilizing public schools is essential to helping all children learn, grow and succeed in life, AFT president Randi Weingarten says. That's what the top-ranked states—Maryland and Massachusetts—and the nations that lead the world in student achievement focus on, and it's what we should be building on. The new report, "Quality Counts 2013: The Code of Conduct—Safety, Discipline, and School Climate," also makes clear that creating safe, nurturing learning environments is critical to ensuring that teachers can teach and students can learn.
Dear Constituents,

The winter months are moving along quickly, and spring will be here before we know it. At this time of writing this article, we are heading into our February break. I hope everyone has an enjoyable break and is able to get some added rest. The school year is flying by once again and before we know it we will be getting ready for summer school employment. Those who are interested in working during the summer months should get their completed form in to Peter Taormina. The application is located on the BOCES website under Staff Resources.

The Teaching Assistants affected by the change from the Employee Retirement System to the Teacher Retirement in 2003-04 should have received their letter in late January from BOCES. If anyone has any question regarding the procedure, please contact me or Human Resources for clarification. For the TA retirees who receive the TRIAD and were part of this ERS to TRS transition in the retirement systems in the school year 2003-04, please contact the Teacher Retirement System to request how much service credit you were given specifically for the school year 2003-04. There could possibly be a mistake in your credit and salary reported, which could possibly affect your retirement benefit accuracy. The contact phone number for the TRS is 518-447-2900.

As you may be aware, the Teachers’ evaluation process (APPR) has gone through a major state mandated change this year. You probably have heard terms such as SLO’s (Student Learning Objectives) and CORE content area being discussed at length through the media and in schools. Although, Teaching Assistants have not had these evaluation changes thrust upon them directly we have had these changes brought to us indirectly. Since we are under the guidance of the teacher and work directly with students we certainly have an indirect impact on student achievement. Therefore, we have an effect on the Student Learning Objectives. Since we have this impact, I feel that it is necessary that each Teaching Assistant have professional development opportunities regarding the APPR process so we have a better understanding of all the implementations. I have spoken with administration and they agree Teaching Assistants are an important component to making the APPR process successful for the classroom team. More information will be forth coming regarding professional development opportunities for all Teaching Assistants.

The negotiation team (Colleen Condolora, Barb Burnham, Kevin Rheden and Chris McDonough) will be meeting in the month of February to discuss our options. The Teacher and Service Chapter have not yet settled their respective contracts, which expired on June 30, 2012. We will be watching closely what transpires with those two Association contracts. Our current contract will expire on June 30, 2013. If anyone has any suggestions regarding the contract, please speak with one of the members of the negotiation team. Your ideas are always welcome.

That’s it for this article. I have no more updates at this time. If anyone has any concerns or questions, please call or email me and I will do my best to assist you. Enjoy your February break and please find some time to have some fun.

In Solidarity, Colleen Condolora

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Equal pay for women

Four years ago, President Obama signed the Lilly Ledbetter Fair Pay Act, which was an important first step in the long fight for pay equity and fairness. On the anniversary of the signing, Ledbetter is asking people to urge Congress to take the next step and pass the recently reintroduced Paycheck Fairness Act, which would close some of the loopholes in the Equal Pay Act of 1963 that have made it less effective.

Reprinted from the Electronic AFT Newsletter, January 2013
In a recent news story (January 25, 2013) on WNYT Channel 13, "Federal health advisors want new restrictions on hydrocodone, the highly addictive painkiller that has grown into the most widely prescribed drug in the U.S.”

If you have had surgery or been injured you may want to take note of this new possible classification especially if you have taken this prescription or may need to in the future.

“The recommendation from a panel of drug safety specialists would subject Vicodin (Hydrocodone) and dozens of other medicines to the same restrictions as other narcotic drugs like oxycodone and morphine. The Food and Drug Administration panel voted 19-10 in favor of the move, which is supported by the Drug Enforcement Agency. The FDA will weigh the vote in its decision-making process.

Hydrocodone belongs to a family of drugs known as opioids, which include morphine, heroin, oxycodone, codeine and methadone.

Panelists who voted for new restrictions said it would send a signal to doctors about the potential dangers of hydrocodone drugs.”

“Hydrocodone is sold in combination pills and formulas with other non-addictive ingredients like acetaminophen and aspirin. The formulations are used to treat chronic pain and cough. In 2011, U.S. doctors wrote more than 131 million prescriptions for hydrocodone, making it the most prescribed drug in the country.

It also consistently ranks as the first or second most-abused medicine in the U.S. each year, according to the DEA, alongside oxycodone.

The DEA has asked the FDA to reclassify hydrocodone as a schedule II drug, limiting which kinds of medical professionals can write a prescription and how many times it can be refilled. The Controlled Substances Act, passed in 1970, put hydrocodone combination drugs in the schedule III class, which is subject to fewer controls.

Currently a prescription for hydrocodone-containing Vicodin can be refilled five times before the patient has to see a physician again. If the drug is reclassified patients could only receive a single 90-day prescription, similar to oxycodone. The drug could also not be prescribed by nurses and physician assistants.”

But the debate continues. “Panelists who voted against the classification change said it would have unintended consequences, driving addicted patients to obtain the drugs illegally.”

"If prescribing decreases, illicit opioid use will increase, with dire consequences," said Dr. John Mendelson, of St. Luke’s Hospital in San Francisco. "I think this is a mistake and we will be back here with other problems."

“Several physician and pharmacist groups also argued that new restrictions would burden medical professionals and disrupt patient care”

“The FDA is not required to follow the advice of its expert panelists, though their input is often critical in its decisions. FDA officials closed the meeting by acknowledging the difficulty of combating hydrocodone abuse, while keeping the drugs available for patients who legitimately need them.”

"There is an unquestioned epidemic of opioid abuse, overdose and death in this country, an epidemic we need to address as a society," said Douglas Throckmorton, FDA’s deputy director for regulatory programs.”

For the full story, go to WNYT.com, click on the News link and then on “Health.” This will take you to Benita Zahn’s “Health Reports.” In the Site Search box type in FDA panel or hydrocodone.

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Watch for:

NYSUT United breaks down the governor's budget

Watch your mail for the February issue of NYSUT United. It includes the union’s analysis of the executive budget proposal; news on the Common Core and the "bar" exam; and perspective on President Obama’s second inauguration.

NYSUT MAC FOR YOUR CELL PHONE

To get the NYSUT MAC app for your iPhone/iPod Touch: Visit the App Store on your iPhone or iPod Touch and search for "NYSUT."

To get the NYSUT MAC app for your Android phone (v 2.3.3+): Visit Google Play on your Android Phone and search for "NYSUT."

Us this link also. http://mac.nysut.org/_tmp/html_email_33/index.html

Support Me in Tour de Cure!

Once again, I will be volunteering in the American Diabetes Association’s Tour de Cure @ Saratoga fund-raising event. Please support me with a donation by selecting the "Click Here to Sponsor Me" button. Our efforts will help set the pace in the fight against diabetes. So let’s get in gear and bike to beat diabetes! This year I may have the opportunity to ride in the Finger Lakes Tour, I have heard it’s quite hilly, so it will be a challenge!

Pedal power works!

Each mile I ride, every hour I volunteer, each dollar I raise will be used in the fight to prevent and cure diabetes and to improve the lives of all people affected by diabetes.

No matter how small or large, your generous gift will help improve the lives of the more than 20 million Americans who suffer from diabetes, in the hope that future generations can live in a world without this disease. Together, we can all make a difference!

http://main.diabetes.org/site/TR/Events

Thank you!
Brent Pierce

Up Coming Conferences

Workplace Health and Safety
March 1-2, 2013
Hilton, Saratoga Springs, NY

AFT PSRP Conference
March 22-24, 2013
Minneapolis, MN
www.aft.org/psrp

NYSUT Local and Retiree Council Presidents Conference
April 10-11, 2013
Washington, DC

NYSUT Representative Assembly
April 11-13, 2013
Washington, DC
Greetings From Frigid Upstate New York,

This mid-January Arctic blast has reminded us of what winter is all about.

What a nice surprise to hear that a 4.4% increase in school aid will be forthcoming as proposed by our governor in his State of the State address. With the budgetary problems and debt at the Federal, State and local levels we expected to hear of a reduction. (Gazette 1/23/13)

It may help with negotiations now knowing the funds they have to work with. From what we have read, the funding is related to the governor’s proposal for a longer school day. He has been very effective in getting his proposals approved by the legislature as we have seen with the Teacher Evaluation process and gun control legislations.

According to the Rep Council minutes, the January meeting was lacking a quorum again. Very disappointing in view of the changes a new contract can bring.

In reviewing the minutes, we noted that consideration is being given to replacing our current health care agencies with self–insurance.

We recall attending a NYSUT workshop which discouraged Associations from becoming self–insured. NYSUT’s rationale for steering clear of it was the possibility that the fund could be depleted by a handful of members experiencing major health problems.

Admittedly our information is dated and we have no in depth knowledge of how the self–insurance process works. As retirees, we will be affected as will all those currently employed by whatever decision is made. The answer to some questions would help us prepare.

- Would there be a cap on the maximum allowable expenditure for each individual?
- If so, what is the amount?
- Could the plan run out of funds?
- If that happens, then what?
- Will we be limited to a specific list of health care providers?
- Will we need to leave our current health care providers?
- Will our prescription plan change?
- Will those out of the area have to pay out of pocket and apply for reimbursement?
- Have other Associations used it?
- If so, what has been their experience?

For many long retired, the Triad is their only source of Association/BOCES information since not all use computers. The answers to these questions are vital as the maladies of aging take their toll and health care becomes more crucial. Responses to these questions in the Triad would be appreciated by us old timers and may also bring a reality check to those who take their benefits, and the work the Association has done, for granted.

Does anyone know the whereabouts of our friend “Dear Gabby”? Maybe those in the know could find her and have her check into these questions.

Until next month, when we hope it’s a little warmer.
January 16—Rep Council Notes
By Lanny Barsale, Teacher, Spec. Ed.

Roll Call – short one for a quorum, meeting will be held but can’t vote.

Chapter Vice-Presidents’ reports

TA/aides: Colleen Condolora
- Had a meeting with Human Resources last week. A letter is coming out about service credit for the years 2003 – 2004. It will explain the procedure of what to do if there was an error. You can check your booklet, call or go on-line with Teachers’ retirement. It doesn’t take long.
- Professional Development: Level 3 identified and e-mails went out about how to get Professional Development reported. From this point on, use form that was sent to you.
- Seniority list – get from Colleen.
- NYSUT Health and Safety Conference – March 1st and 2nd. Colleen has workshop offerings. Can be used for professional development.

Service: Sandy Smith
- There was concern that people did not receive an e-mail about the shootings in Sandy Hook. Dr. Dedrick had met with all department heads to disseminate information. To go along with this, there was concern voiced about security of buildings. Doug said that all safety concerns, e.g. unlocked doors, should be reported.

Special Ed: Flora Fasoldt
- APPR – meetings were cancelled and will be rescheduled. The plan has been verbally approved by the state. Waiting for written approval. Percentages, teacher improvement plan, and appeals process were covered. No new observation form yet. Will be drafting a new one.

Health and Safety – January 30th @ CTE
If you see a safety concern, take it to your supervisor. There are still problems with people in buildings. Some schools are issuing swiper cards. At Maywood, people don’t have keys to their classrooms in case of a lockdown and there are doors that don’t lock from the inside upstairs. Dr. Dedrick wants to be informed.

Appointments: Joanne Cogswell appointed as Special Ed. Teacher Rep. Also appointed to District PDP committee.

Negotiations:
Right now the main part of negotiations centers around health insurance. Executive Board is meeting January 23rd @ 3:00. There has been concern on the part of members. Information will be disseminated as soon as they have it. It is part of negotiations and any decision must be voted on by membership. Nothing else can be negotiated until this is worked out. These are the hardest times we have ever seen and have to be patient.

Budget:
- Committee being formed. Don Orlando from CTE and Anne Conway from Spec. Ed. Still need someone from Service and TA/aides chapters. It is one meeting for about 2 hours at the end of February.
- Funds need to be transferred from savings for RA expenses this year. Will need a quorum to vote on that.

Audit: 1 member from each chapter needed.

Nominating: This year the election is just for AFT delegates. The convention will be in the summer of 2014. The nomination form will be in the TRIAD.

Constitution Committee: Will have one more meeting. Mainly discussing elections and how to do ballots. Information will be brought to Rep Council. Will have to have a vote by the membership for any changes in bylaws. Policy changes can be done in Rep Council.

December Board meeting: Report in TRIAD

Concerns have been voiced about the running of the meeting and that reps are not coming because of what they consider a negative attitude of other reps. *

*Editor’s note: I felt a great deal of concern when I heard why people are staying away. We have only had one quorum and we have not been able to do the work of the Association. As a rep and the parliamentarian, I take ownership in the problem and resolve to be part of the solution. People are frustrated and their frustration comes out in a place that they feel they can voice that frustration. However, we have a time for FYI topics. As the parliamentarian, I can do a better job of keeping us to the agenda and using the FYI time for those more emotional topics. To the reps that have not been with us, please consider returning and allowing us the chance to make this the meeting that it is supposed to be. If you still are not going to attend, please let your Chapter Vice-president know so we can find a suitable replacement. Thanks!
IN MEMORY OF MIMI MOUNTeer

We grieve the loss of our dear friend Mimi (Mary E.) Mounteer, who passed away on January 11, 2013, three days before her 84th birth day. In 1970 Mimi began her teaching career as a Special Education teacher with BOCES when her seven children were grown and on their way to adulthood. It was the days of church basements, Lisha Kill Reformed Church, Pine Grove Annex and eventually O.D. Heck and Maywood.

Mimi was an intense person who pursued and followed through on what she believed in. She was a pioneer in the formation of our Association and an active member until her retirement. She gave to her community as a long-time activist, volunteering for many boards, organizations and committees in the Albany area. Mimi was the recipient of various awards as volunteer of the year. She enjoyed people, hearing their stories and learning of their connectedness to mutual acquaintances and friends.

We met at Lisha Kill and throughout our over 40 year friendship, we shared the pathways of our lives in our work and values, holidays and milestones, joys and sorrows. Always remembered will be the 100’s of meals Mimi sent with John when he stayed with Stan after the stroke. We shared also, their fears, frustration and uncertainty when two grandchildren were abducted seemingly without a trace. After years of worry and investigations they were found in Morocco.

We give to those we love, part of our heart and when they leave us, they take that part with them. And so it is.

Mimi was predeceased by her husband John P. Mounteer. She is survived by her children, Ellen (Bernie), John (Rena), James, (Bonny), Catherine (David), Ann (Jorge) Tom, and Stephen (Cindy) and many grandchildren and great grandchildren. Memorial contributions in memory of Mimi can be made to a charity of your choice.

Jeanette K. Christoff

The only comfort comes in thinking about how nice it was to know them, and how nice it was to brush against goodness for a season.

Real Live Preacher, RealLivePreacher.com Weblog, August 5, 2003
Two division budgets were presented:

NERIC:
- Distance Learning- a virtual AP grant with Educational Support Service will assist districts with support for high school credit-recovery program
- There will be infrastructure upgrades to support platform changes and growth of services.
- Support for Instructional services (model schools, trainings, integration of technology, sharing tools)

Career & Technical Education:
- Program closings: Early Childhood, Alternative Education
- Albany CTE received Middle States accreditation
- Future Opportunities: Title IV funding for adult workers (welding, nursing)
- Growth in Adult Health Services and Adult workforce
- CTE needs a facelift to sustain, promote, grow in the future
- Concerns: sustainable funding, state/district budgets, district enrollment (large districts remain steady but the middle district enrollments are declining)
- CTE moving to a five-year enrollment average (roll Tech Valley into a blended bill)
- Partnerships with other BOCES, Joint Management Team, Association Career and Technical Education Association
- Utilize Business Advisory Partners (internships) and emerging technologies
- Albany CTE is collaborating with Questar III BOCES in a pilot program from Richmore Aviation
- Health Career is expanding at Rosewood site (new Labs)

Dr. Chuck Dedrick Highlights:
- There will be a meeting of districts in the area on January, 31st at Columbia High at 6:30 PM. The topic will be the magnitude of financial crisis facing school districts. Rick Tims will be the main speaker as well as three district leaders (Guilderland, Schodack, and Schenectady.) Topics such as mandate relief, and the state tax cap will be discussed. The forum is open to all educators, parents, legislators, community members (PTA), press and administrators. There will be a second forum on February 11th at Niskayuna High School.
- Dr. Dedrick mentioned the false view that citizens believe the state budget has decreased. The only thing that has been reduced is education. The budget, in fact, has increased.
- BOCES Lobbying day will be February 12, 2013
- BOARD members Jack Phalen and Jeff Bradt were recognized by NYS School Board Assoc. for their professional development achievements
- The BOCES APPR was approved by State Education Department. Dr. Dedrick recognized the Association, Carl Strang, Laura Wells, Peter Taormina and Terry Swett for their hard work and professionalism. Carl Strang mentioned the scenario of pitting teachers against administration but BOCES remained professional and did not allow this to happen.
- Leasing for NERIC’s new home is moving forward. Carl said it will be a state-of-art center.
Captial Region BOCES Faculty Association
NOMINATIONS FORM

It’s that time of year again, and you know how important it is to get involved. It’s time to
look to yourself and your colleagues for new faces to add to those familiar faces who have
been providing strong leadership for our organization. Make your recommendations and
return to the address below.

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Submitted By: ______________________________
, Please Print ______________________________ Signature

DEADLINE: ____________

RETURN TO: Catherine Jakway, Nominations Chairperson
331 East Campbell Road
Schenectady, NY  12303
Save the Date

Celebration Bash
May 16, 2013

BOCES Spring Prom
May 17, 2013

Personnel Personals

If you know of someone we need to acknowledge here, please contact one of the editors. Thanks.

Sunshine Chairperson
If you know of someone who could use a little cheering up, our sympathy, or a get well card, please contact:
Abby Fischer
4 Wicken Square, Albany, NY 12205
518-852-0958
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Please contact Lisa Mink, Membership Chair, with any change in address that you have. You can reach her at lmink8@hotmail.com. In doing so, you will be assured of receiving all that correspondence that the Association will send you including your newsletter, the TRIAD.