

retiree wrapup

By Edward Hysyk and Neal Frumkin



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2020 Upheavals Can't Stop Retirees Association

Greetings to retirees and your families. Your Retirees Association sends our best wishes to all of you and our hopes that you are safe and in good health in this time of three great upheavals. First, we have the COVID-19 health crisis; next, the massive reaction to the killing of George Floyd; and now, the specter of a city/state budget crisis at least as bad as the one we faced in the mid 1970s.

I want to inform you of the passing on June 29 of Oliver Gray, DC 37's longtime Associate Director. Oliver was dedicated to our union and its members. He was a true unionist and a tried and true friend to our Association. To quote a line from an Edward Arlington Robinson poem, "He was a gentleman from sole to crown." Oliver will be greatly missed but never forgotten! May he rest in peace.

Since our office has been closed for several months, your annual dues checks are secure in the office waiting to be processed and we will deposit them as soon as we are allowed back into the building. Rest assured that COVID-19 will not lapse your membership in the Association. We also want to thank all of you who are on dues checkoff because you have kept us afloat. We want to encourage our members to utilize this form of dues payment. Who can predict when the next crisis will come?

If you need forms to process your request for the 2019 Medicare Part B Differential or the 2019 IRMAA, please contact the office at 212.815.1793 and leave a message with the spelling of your name and your complete address including zip code. You can also contact us by email at retassn@dc37.net.

Under the CARES ACT, you do not have to take a Required Minimum Distribution (RMD) for calendar year 2020 from a 457 Plan, 401(k), 401 (a) Plan, or a NYCE IRA Plan. This waiver applies to the 2020 RMD and 2019 RMD (grace period RMD) that must be paid by April 1, 2020. The NYC Deferred Compensation Plan has already sent out the necessary form to members.

Emblem Health (GHI Senior Care) has sent out new Emblem Health (medical) and Empire Blue Shield (hospital) member ID cards. Please begin using these new member ID cards starting July 1, 2020. Please note that these cards have new identification numbers and you must share this information with all of your health care providers.

Starting Sept. 1, 2020, we have good news to share with our retired members. The Delta Dental Plan will be offered by the DC 37 Health and Security Plan for all active and retired members. (Information about this plan will be sent to the members in early August.) This is a zero co-pay plan when using a participating dentist and the number of participating dentists will be dramatically increased. This will be welcome news to our out-of-state retirees residing in Florida, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, and other states. It will also be good news to those of us living in the NYC metropolitan area. The dental center at 115 Chambers St. has been closed for renovations and these renovations have been delayed by the COVID-19 crisis. However, when it reopens, the center will have an increased capacity (+50%) to service more patients.

The Municipal Labor Committee is in talks regarding the looming state/city budget crisis. The city and so-called "good government groups" have

long wanted to decrease the benefits we were promised upon retirement. These benefits represent our contractual deferrals to pay for our pensions and health benefits.

These benefits were earned by each of us through years of service. Actives (we call them retirees in training) and retirees need to unite around protecting the benefits we enjoy today and tomorrow. I know that retirees are fond of saying that their benefits are protected by law (the NYS Constitution); however, they miss the main point that our pensions are protected but it is not an "ironclad type of protection" and our HEALTH benefits HAVE NO PROTECTION.

To keep the city afloat until it can economically recover will take a massive amount of cash — several billions — from the federal government. Our best bet is to capture the PRESIDENCY and the Senate in the November election. We earned our pension and benefits the old fashion way — by working to protect them through organizing and fighting. Therefore, sisters and brothers, "Let's Stay United. VOTE and WORK TO GET OUT THE VOTE IN 2020.

Visit the
New DC 37
Retirees Website



The DC 37 Retirees Association has a new website to keep members informed.

For news, benefit updates, and information on how to reach us, please visit:

www.dc37retireesassociation.org