



GCEA Update

A Publication of the Gloucester County Education Association

www.gceanj.org

OCTOBER 2010

IMPORTANT GCEA EVENTS TO REMEMBER:

October:

27-28 Phone Bank

November:

1-2 Phone Bank

4-5 NJEA Convention

9 Exec. Comm.

16 Rep Council

17 ESP Dinner /
Nicolosi's

30 Using Social Net-
working to Organize
wkshp

December:

8 Education Comm

14 Exec. Comm.

“Rights and benefits we now enjoy didn't happen at a meeting or in a building. They happened because our members organized!”

Barbara Keshishian, NJEA President at the GCEA Fall Focus, Oct 7, 2010

President's Message

Welcome back to another exciting, fun-filled year! We are off to a rousing start, once again. Hopefully, everyone had a relaxing summer where you had some time to enjoy your families, travel, and re-charge your batteries.

I know that you have been paying attention to all the news that is coming out of Trenton. Nothing the Governor and this Legislature does surprises me anymore. There is no question that the political climate has changed. The Democratically controlled Legislature has joined forces with this Republican Governor to create new laws that hurt our public school employees and our public schools. This is in spite of telling us that they are our “friends”. It's time we reminded them of what a ‘friend’ really is. In my definition, friends talk to each other, they don't talk about each other in the newspapers, and they don't do things they know will hurt their friend.

On September 30, during the Senate voting session, one Senator— and only one, Dick Cody— stood up in the chamber and said that it is time to stop blaming the NJEA and the teachers for everything that is wrong in New Jersey. We need to encourage our Legislators to do the same thing.

Now is the time to remember that we have fought too long and too hard to earn the rights we deserve to allow our ‘friends’ to destroy them. Now is the time to organize. Now is the time to fight back as if your career depends on it—because it does.

Sue

GCEA Holds Candidate Interviews

The Gloucester County Education Association, along with representatives from NJEA staff, Gloucester County College, Gloucester County Special Services School District and the GCEA Government Relations Committee interviewed the candidates for the Board of Chosen Freeholders in this November's elections.

The Freeholders play a vital role in education here in Gloucester County, especially



“The Freeholders play a vital role in education here in Gloucester County”

in the three districts for which they directly impact funding and administration— GCC, GCSSSD, and GCIT. Interviews were held separately with the Republican candidates on September 20 and

the Democratic candidates on September 22. The conversations lasted approximately one hour and focused on their views and visions for public education in the county. They also completed a questionnaire prior to the meeting.

We have published a summary of their positions on pages 3-4 of this newsletter. Please take the time to carefully read them and remember to vote on November 2.

Check Out the GCEA Website

Want to hear about the latest job the Governor has taken at you?

Need to earn professional development credits by attending a workshop?

Can't remember when the GCEA Overnight is taking place?

Log on to

www.gceanj.org

for all the latest news.

The site has been redesigned and updated to make it easier and faster.

Contact Information

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NEWS FLASH! NEWS FLASH! NEWS FLASH!

The NJEA Delegate Assembly approved a one year pilot program to provide the following services for the 2010-2011 school year to NJEA members in transition—those who were employed at the end of the 2009-2010 school year and whose positions have been eliminated due to economic reasons/reductions in force (RIF) but who have NOT been rehired or who have not obtained a position that is eligible for full active membership:

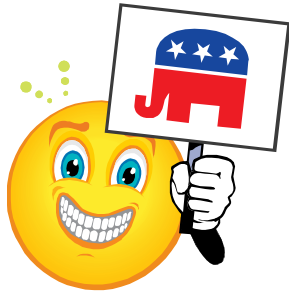
- Representation in matters affecting their recall/rehiring
- Receipt of monthly publications
- Access to Member Benefits
- Opportunity to attend the NJEA Convention
- Access to members only section on website
- Access to NJEA conferences and workshops

GCEA ESP Committee Announces Honorees

Congratulations to Susan Francis, this year's recipient of the Gloucester County Educational Support Professional of the Year! Mrs. Francis is Secretary to the Principal at the High School in Deptford Township and an extremely active member of the Deptford Education Association. Her professionalism, dedication, skills, and work ethic make her an invaluable asset to her school, community, and Association. She has served as a member-at-large for the district's secretaries; has volunteered to help with local, general, and Association elections; has spent hundreds of hours working on the negotiations team and currently serves as the DEA Secretary. Susan is an outstanding example for all ESP's and is well-deserving of this honor. Mrs. Francis's nomination packet has been sent to NJEA where she will now be considered for the NJEA ESP of the Year.

The committee is also pleased to announce the names of four other nominees for this prestigious award. They are Dotty Grieb from Gloucester County Special Services School Association, Marilyn Goetz, a member of the Clearview Education Association, Maureen Heck from West Deptford Education Association, and Yvonne Knorr, Harrison Township Education Association.

Congratulations to all nominees and a special thanks to the local associations who took the time to nominate them.



Republican Candidates for Gloucester County Board of Chosen Freeholders

Larry Wallace:

Larry Wallace, a former candidate for Freeholder in 2008, grew up in Deptford Township and currently resides in Woolwich and is a lifelong resident of Gloucester County. He is active in the Knights of Columbus and as a parishioner at Holy Name of Jesus Parish. Mr. Wallace has coached soccer, is a community activist, and has volunteered for many charitable causes. He is married to his wife, Debi, since 1996, has two daughters and a son that passed away in 1999 from brain cancer.

Vincent Nestore:

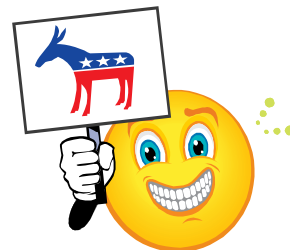
Vincent Nestore was a star soccer player for Deptford High School from 1978-81 and was selected to the South Jersey Coaches Association Hall of Fame for his athletic achievements. Mr. Nestore graduated from Glassboro State college in 1990 and has been a teacher and varsity soccer coach at Delsea Regional High School since then. He was married to his wife, Mary Ann in 2001. this is Mr. Nestore's first political campaign.

Positions on Educational Issues:

"We believe that the Freeholders' role in education is the most important task facing the Board of Chosen Freeholders. Not only does education count for over 11% of the county budget, the Freeholders are responsible for the education of thousands of young people who deserve the highest quality education through GCIT, the County College and the Special Services School. While we are fiscally responsible and will always look for innovative ways to save the taxpayers' money, we believe providing a quality education to the students of our county schools is the priority.

First and foremost we are dead set against any attempts to implement a "countywide" school district as was attempted by Freeholder Director Sweeney a few years ago. This model has not worked in states where it has been implemented. New Jersey consistently ranks high in educating students and our districts have become models for the state and nation. Why would anyone change such a strong model? Could our educational system use tweaking? Yes. But it's not necessary to dissolve the districts and remove local autonomy to do so. We do believe that there are numerous opportunities around the county to consolidate into several K-12 districts. Often situations occur where there are 2 towns, each with a K-6 district and one, regional 7-12 district. This means 3 districts for towns when one would serve both communities just fine. More importantly than the obvious money savings are the opportunities for a continuity regarding curriculum, professional development, and other areas that ultimately benefit students."

Democratic Candidates for Gloucester County Board of Chosen Freeholder



Robert Zimmerman:

Robert Zimmerman is a lifelong resident of Gloucester County and a graduate of Gloucester County College, Rowan University, and holds a Master's Degree from Fairleigh Dickinson University. Mr. Zimmerman is currently the Captain of Police in Pitman and serves on the Mantua Township Governing Body as a councilman. He also served five years on the Mantua Township Board of Education where he was vice-president and president. He is married with two daughters and resides in Mantua.

Heather Simmons:

Heather Simmons, a resident of Glassboro, has lived in Gloucester County for 17 years. She holds a BA in International Relations and Politics and a MA in Public Relations from Rowan University. Ms. Simmons began her public relations career at GCC in 1991 where she served 13 years in public relations, marketing, and alumni relations. She is now the owner of Heather Simmons Communications. Heather is married to Jeff Silvestri and has two step children, Mackenzie and Anthony.

Positions on Educational Issues:

“We believe that GCC, GCIT, and the Special Services Schools are the finest educational facilities in New Jersey. We do believe that the county Freeholders play a role in that excellence through their vision for what services a college, vocational school, and special services schools should be providing.

The Freeholders role in the educational institutions is that of lobbying the state government for its fair share of state funding, to help invest in capital improvements of the physical facilities, and to appoint board members who share a vision of breaking down barriers for our students and allowing them to excel while being responsible to the taxpayers and tuition payers.

Regionalization and consolidation is a fact of life in the public sector. All agencies are struggling with balancing services and costs. Consolidations and regionalized shared services are key tools that can help maintain high quality education system while keeping it affordable. Gloucester County is a proven leader in this area at the school level and the county/municipal sector.

We are advocates of this trend; however, it must be done in a practical and prudent manner. Consolidation for the sake of consolidation is not acceptable if it does not produce efficiencies or if it provides inferior services.”