Some were excessed for programmatic reasons. Some came from Turnaround or closed schools, some returned from leave, and the rest for a variety of other reasons. In any case, this is a major outstanding issue for us: How to properly assign our trained professionals. Throughout the course of these negotiations, we have been working diligently to try to find a good solution to this issue, which has been created and encouraged by the district.

Finally, on contract negotiations, we have an outstanding issue of how to move our myriad of pay scales and school schedules towards some sort of equitable arrangement. Currently we have nearly 20 teacher work schedules that vary by hours worked per day and days worked per year. Each of the 20 schedules has its own pay scales, and all of the above is the outgrowth of 20+ years of school autonomy and state-imposed (e.g., Turnaround, Level 5) rules and regulations.

Some work schedules range from an additional 50 to 600(!) plus hours, some pay scales for same range from no compensation to $4500 or more. There is no straight line – not even a crooked line – correlation between the amount of pay received and the amount of hours worked. We need to fix this.

Then other major issue facing us in the fall is the November ballot question on whether or not to keep the cap on charter schools. Why do we need to keep the cap by voting NO or 2? A yes vote on the charter initiative would allow the following: (See http://www.charteredschoolsma.com/)

Each year the state could approve up to 12 new charter schools or expand existing charter schools, without the approval of local communities or their school committees.

There is no limit to the number of charter schools that could open in a single community at the same time.

The ballot question could take as much as $100 million more in taxpayer money from Massachusetts public schools every single year.

The ballot language gives priority to charter schools or expansion of existing charter schools where “demonstrated parent demand for additional public school options is greatest” but does not define how this demand will be determined.

If the state receives fewer than 12 charter applications in a single year from “priority” districts, new charter schools could open in any community in the state, regardless of the district’s test scores, waitlist numbers, or the level of community support for charter schools.

See story and more photos on pages 4-5 & 8-11.
On Wednesday, June 1, 2016, four Boston Public School graduates received the Rollins Griffith Memorial Scholarship Award of $1,500.00. Savina Tapia and Fei Ping Zhao of Boston Latin Academy, Poulard Vanessa Silvestre of Boston International High School and Lily Yuan of Boston Latin School were recipients of these prestigious scholarships.

For the past 13 years the Rollins Griffith Teacher Center Board of Directors has selected students who are interested in either becoming educators or pursuing a career in the arts. These scholarships are named in honor of Rollins Griffith, musician, teacher, assistant principal, principal and district superintendent. While assuming the role as Boston’s first African American district superintendent, Mr. Griffith’s passion for education led him to create a teacher center that became a home for teachers who wanted to improve their skills, learn new techniques, share ideas and pursue advanced degrees. For the past 36 years, the Teacher Center has helped hundreds of educators achieve their goals. As a 501C 3, the Boston Teachers Union, AFT Local 66, AFT MA, AFL-CIO

The BTU welcomes letters to the editor from all members. The content of all letters represents the individual member’s opinion. All letters are subject to editing and to review.

**Letters to the Editor**

**Rollins Griffith Teacher Center Scholarship Award Ceremony**

If you would like to support these scholarships, kindly send donations in any amount to: Rollins Griffith Teacher Center of Boston (RGTCO), c/o T. Jelloe, Box 151, North Quincy, MA 02171. Each donor will receive a letter indicating the amount of the donation received since these donations are tax deductible.

If you would like more information about the Teacher Center and/or these scholarships, please call either Ms. Claire Radley, Teacher Associate, at 617-680-1460 or Ms. Maureen T. Jelloe, Director, at 617-212-4705.

**BTU Walkers, Why Do We Walk?**

Each one of us has a story, a reason why the Making Strides walk is important to us. Sharing our story will encourage others to join us and donate. Remember, the dollars we raise enable the American Cancer Society to invest in innovative research, promote education and risk reduction, and provide comprehensive patient support to those who need it most.

Update your personal fundraising page. Have you updated your personal fundraising page on your My Strides Dashboard yet? It’s an easy way to let others know why the Making Strides walk is important to you.

Share your story on social media. Don’t forget to include a photo of yourself or the person you’re walking for, so everyone knows who they’re helping to save from this disease!

Tell friends, family, and coworkers you are walking with us – and more importantly, tell them why you are walking. This is what it feels like to make a difference!

Thank you for all you’re doing. I hope you see you at the Hatch Shell on Sunday morning, October 2, 2016. Keep up the great work.

Brenda!

**Endorsing Better Candidates**

As schools close, budgets dwindle, and students get bare-bones, test-prep-focused instruction, we need leadership from our members, our union, and our elected officials to preserve and elevate public education. Yet, the AFT endorsed Hillary Clinton without discussion or input from its million members, and at the BTU June membership meeting we followed suit.

Given Randi Weingarten’s long-term association with Clinton the endorsement was no surprise, though neither candidate for Democratic nomination for President had given an in-depth policy speech on K-12 education. In response to the AFT’s questions, Clinton offered some platitudes regarding increasing educational opportunity and limiting standardized testing but did not address the extent to which public schools, and the teachers unions that serve them, are under severe threat.

Clinton did acknowledge that, “Charters should be held to the same standards, and to the same level of accountability and transparency to which traditional public schools are held. This includes the requirements of civil rights laws.” Ultimately, whether equitable or not, charters increase the cost of education children in a district by adding another parallel school system - and then take the difference out of the traditional public schools’ budget. As we are seeing with the most recent proposed budget cuts in Boston, this further destabilizes public schools by increasing class size, limiting course selections, decreasing supplies and services, and creating an overall climate of tension and scarcity.

Some charter schools uphold their goal of innovation, though dismantling public schools will be their primary legacy, intended or not.

If the Democrats can take unions’ endorsements for granted because they have unions’ unquestionable backing, then we have no reason to be surprised that the status quo prevails.

Clinton has the support of Democrats for Education Reform (DFER), a hedge fund front promoting the privatization of public education, which represents the neoliberal branch of the party that has influenced the policy of Arne Duncan, Bill Gates and others who have continued to push reforms that threaten public education. She is a former board member of Walmart, a driving force behind privatization, and is funded by the same corporations who are scaring public school budgets for financial gain.

Is it so much to ask that our union put forth our vision, push candidates to adopt it, and support candidates who support us and our vision?

Sincerely,

Riana Good
(Riana Good teaches Spanish at Boston Latin Academy.)
The following steps are listed to register for the following link:

1. Sign up for an appointment either online or over the phone. Online at http://www.talentedge.com/PP/Massachusetts.aspx OR over the phone by calling: 866-349-8130.

2. Give the “Provider ID” for Boston Public Schools by typing the following number as the district provider ID: 03505000.

3. Pay a fee for the BTU and state government agencies to process your fingerprints. Licensed educators pay $55. Non-licensed staffers pay $35.

4. Make an appointment and get a registration Confirmation Number. You will need to bring the registration Confirmation Number with you to your appointment.

5. Go to your appointment and bring proper ID. Your ID must contain a photo, your full name, and date of birth.

If you were a BTU member hired in BPS by SY 2013-14: Obtain a receipt from your BTU for the fingerprint fee. The receipts were taken. Keep your receipt and make a copy of it. Mail the copy of your receipt to: BPS Office of Human Capital, 2300 Washington Street, 4th floor, Boston, MA 02119, Attn: Fingerprinting Specialist. BTU members hired by SY 13-14 are eligible for 50% reimbursement. Those BTU members hired after SY 2013-14 are not eligible for the reimbursement.

Is Summer School Treated like the Regular School Year Contractually?

No, it is not. Summer School is not governed by the collective bargaining agreement in the same way the standard school year is. Some time ago the BTU took issue of summer school salary not being retirement worthy to court to demand that this earned income be retirement worthy. Unfortunately, the court ruled against the BTU.

The BTU/BPS contract states, “The School Department shall determine the summer program curriculum, all aspects of operation and administration of the program, including employment in the program, salary, hours, and conditions of work. All full-time participants in the summer program shall be voluntary. Selection of employees shall be as determined by the [School Department].”

How Does a Person With Disabilities Apply for Reasonable Accommodations at Work?

The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) is a federal law that prohibits discrimination against qualified persons with disabilities in education programs and employment practices in accordance with Section 504 of the Rehabilitation Act of 1973 as amended and with the American Disabilities Act (ADA).

A person with disabilities is defined as a person who (1) has a physical or mental impairment which substantially limits one or more major life activities, (2) has a record of such impairment, or (3) is regarded as having such impairment, most of which require reasonable accommodations. Examples of the range of disabilities include:

- Non-ambulatory disabilities – physical impairments requiring use of a wheelchair.
- Semi-ambulatory disabilities – physical impairments causing a person to walk with difficulty (with or without aids).
- Cerebral palsy disabilities – impairments of muscle control to limbs, resulting in faulty coordination;
- Sight disabilities;
- Hearing disabilities;
- Speech impairments;
- Learning disabilities;
- Motor or psychological disorders;
- Disabilities affecting normal mental processes or emotional stability.

Section 504 defines a “Qualified Disabled Person” for employment purposes if they meet legitimate skill experience, education, or other requirements of an employment position, and who can perform the tasks of the position with or without reasonable accommodations. If the individual is qualified by a disability, the employer must consider whether the individual can perform the tasks of the position with reasonable accommodations. The ADA does not apply to individuals with minor, non-chronic conditions of short duration, such as a skin, a broken limb, and the like.

The ADA is a voluntary self-identification form of employees with disabilities. Even if an employee has a disability that is apparent to others, they are under no obligation to participate in this self-identification, and failure to do so will not result in any adverse action. The circular states that any information an employee chooses to provide will be held in strictest confidence and will be known only to BPS professional and does not become part of their regular personnel records.

In addition to this policy, if you believe you have been subjected to discrimination or harassment, you may file a complaint with or either of the following government agencies. Each agency has a short time period for filing a complaint (EEOC-180 days can be extended under state/local laws; MCAD 300 days).

- The Massachusetts Commission Against Discrimination (MCAD); Boston Office; One Ashburton Place, Rm 601, Boston 02108, 617-994-6000.

1. If I Become a National Board Certified Teacher, Do I Get a Raise?

Yes. The BTU-BPS contract states, “All National Board Certified Teachers shall receive an additional $500.00 per year. The amount of four percent of their annual base salary as long as they hold National Board Certification. Such payment will be part of the year six’s annualized amount for retirement purposes. Teachers who successfully complete the certification process of the National Board for Certified Teachers (NBPTS) shall be reimbursed by the BPS for the costs of the application fees. Although not a requirement, successful completion of the NBPTS certification requirements may be considered as a special qualification for Lead Teacher eligibility. Teachers who receive reimbursement for the NBPTS certification process shall commit to remain in the BPS system for at least two years after receipt of such reimbursement.”

Over 100,000 teachers nationwide have attained this “highest mark of professional accomplishment” which according to the NBTC, “… adds much to everyone’s plate, but we all know that BTU members are dedicated to the profession, showcase their talent in the classroom, and demonstrate their dedication to their students and their profession.”

The BTU/BPS contract states, “National Board Certification promotes professional development that cultivates reflective adjustments in practice; identifies effective teachers with demonstrable student growth, and enables staff to adopt a culture of excellence.” There is a NBC Support Program website which will be posted on MyLearningPlan where educators may sign up. The dates & locations will also be publicized in the BTU Bulletin proximate to the sessions occurring.

As a teacher am I entitled to receive my students’ standardized test results? Yes. The contract details, “Beginning in September 1997, and in each subsequent June, all classroom teachers shall be provided with the BPS with data indicating how their students compare on standardized achievement tests with similar students in similar classrooms throughout the school system, including relative gain data where possible. When the statewide assessment tests begin in the 4th, 8th and 10th grades in English, math, history, and science, comparative data on these tests will also be provided to teachers. Also, when the BPS develops criteria test results or other district wide performance assessments, teachers will also be provided with comparative data. Where possible, this data will be provided on a pupil gain basis.”

Of course there is always the other side to the coin in a labor management collective bargaining agreement, better known as the contract when it elabotates, “Where students progress is consistently low, principals and administrators or their designees will discuss personally, test results with each of their teachers and work with teachers to develop appropriate strategies for improving student performance.”

Make sure your administrative office monitors this type of data to you that they also assist collaboratively in supporting you in your efforts to maximize the students’ potential going forward. Document, document, document, document. The collective bargaining agreement also provides that the district-wide (Quality) School Improvement Plan shall include guidelines for assessing & improving the annual academic progress of all students. Each school’s School Site Council & ILT have a role in creating and approving the QISP. All members of the school community must not only be included in this process but hold a copy of the plan to familiarize themselves with the goals and action plan for achieving same in the coming school year. Educators in each category that will be responsible for carrying out these goals. Make sure that these responsibilities are being carried out, not all loaded on the teaching staff alone. It takes a village to raise and educate a child. Together we can!
2016 AFT Biennial Convention in Minneapolis

By Colum Whyte

BTU Holds It Down at Target Field

AFT President Randi Weingarten Rallies the Troops

The convention rolled on the other speakers all spoke to these themes as well. President Weingarten’s introductory plenary remarks included a reassuring and enthusiastic argument for supporting the candidacy of Hillary Clinton (see http://www.aft.org/sites/default/files/16_afterwords_0.pdf for more details). She also paid deference to Senator Bernie Sanders and tasked him for bringing many labor issues to the fore. This fig leaf of party unity was well received by the delegates. All had a memorable experience, as the Indians bested the Twins 6-1. Let’s call it the curse of the “Big Papi”! Regardless the $545 million Target Field, which opened in 2010, is a ballpark not to be missed for baseball fans.

Toward the end of the hour-long opening speech President Weingarten eulogized Philando Castile, who was a beloved worker at a St. Paul school. His tragic killing occurred just eight miles from the convention hall. She made the point that “the disproportionate use of deadly force against black people” must end. She spoke about how the AFT is working to repair damages caused by institutionalized racism. She highlighted work that the AFT is doing to create excellent schools for all students with a concentration on boys of color.

As she lamented the recent police killings in Dallas and Baton Rouge she rallied the crowd around taking steps to end gun violence in the United States. She argued that “working to make the criminal justice system more just and supporting police are not mutually exclusive. This is a matter of ensuring that everyone feels safe – those who wear an oath to protect us and those are sworn to protect. She again rallied the delegation to a standing ovation as she called on the AFT to be a vehicle for justice.

AFT President Randi Weingarten called the convention to order Monday morning, July 18. The AFT represents over 1.6 million workers. Approximately 2,700 delegates attended the convention. Her opening speech drew upon the themes of our 100-year-old “generation to generation” labor fight: economic fairness, increasing political power through organizing and civil rights. As the convention rolled on the other speakers all spoke to these themes as well. President Weingarten’s introductory plenary remarks included a reassuring and enthusiastic argument for supporting the candidacy of Hillary Clinton (see http://www.aft.org/sites/default/files/16_afterwords_0.pdf for more details). She also paid deference to Senator Bernie Sanders and tasked him for bringing many labor issues to the fore. This fig leaf of party unity was well received by most of the delegation.

President Weingarten Calls the BTU to Action

After the first session President Weingarten met with the Boston delegation. She spoke about defeating the November ballot initiative to lift the cap on charter schools in Massachusetts. She spoke about how deomerers and hedge fanders are after public schools in Boston, Lawrence, and New Bedford. Even after an hour long impassioned speech she continued to energize us to take on the tough work ahead. She reminded us that we must all work together as a labor movement and tap into the grass roots organizing of our allies. President Weingarten offered the unwavering support of the AFT and our solidarity fund. She took some questions, offered advice, and inspired us not to give up the fight.

The delegation all arrived early in order to pass through Secret Service security. The endless line took on a party atmosphere as delegates danced, laughed, and sparked collegial conversation. During the AFT’s second plenary session Monday afternoon/evening many talented speakers spoke to the AFT delegation, including Presidential Candidate Hillary Clinton. Earlier speakers included Philadelphia City Councilor Helen Gym, Los Angeles Unified District School Board of Education member George Zimmer, and former Plattsburg, NY Teachers Association President and current Elected School Board member Rod Sherman.

Gym, Zimmer, and Sherman all submitted unique stories, but these stories were unified by one underlying theme: community engagement. Through their powerful anecdotes each highlighted how top down policy is not only ineffective, but how grassroots, ground level organizing is the solution to help offset the unprecedented poverty and inequality that impact so many of our students, families, and communities. I was particularly pleased that Philadelphia and Los Angeles, personified in the spirits of Gym and Zimmer, are fighting back against the crushing deformation and neo-liberal privatization of their school districts.

Senators Al Franken and Amy Klobuchar of Minnesota were tasked with getting the crowd geared up for the evening’s keynote speaker, Hillary Clinton. Former professional funny man Senator Franken argued against over-testing while speaking about how ESSA will help foster a more well rounded education, especially in the arts. He also spoke about the recent police killings in Dallas and Baton Rouge, and New Bedford. Even after an hour long impassioned speech he continued to energize us to take on the tough work ahead. She reminded us that we must all work together as a labor movement and tap into the grass roots organizing of our allies. President Weingarten offered the unwavering support of the AFT and our solidarity fund. She took some questions, offered advice, and inspired us not to give up the fight.

The delegation all arrived early in order to pass through Secret Service security. The endless line took on a party atmosphere as delegates danced, laughed, and sparked collegial conversation. During the AFT’s second plenary session Monday afternoon/evening many talented speakers spoke to the AFT delegation, including Presidential Candidate Hillary Clinton. Earlier speakers included Philadelphia City Councilor Helen Gym, Los Angeles Unified District School Board of Education member George Zimmer, and former Plattsburg, NY Teachers Association President and current Elected School Board member Rod Sherman.

Helen Gym, George Zimmer, and Rod Sherman

Helen Gym, Zimmer, and Sherman all submitted unique stories, but these stories were unified by one underlying theme: community engagement. Through their powerful anecdotes each highlighted how top down policy is not only ineffective, but how grassroots, ground level organizing is the solution to help offset the unprecedented poverty and inequality that impact so many of our students, families, and communities. I was particularly pleased that Philadelphia and Los Angeles, personified in the spirits of Gym and Zimmer, are fighting back against the crushing deformation and neo-liberal privatization of their school districts.

Senators Al Franken and Amy Klobuchar of Minnesota were tasked with getting the crowd geared up for the evening’s keynote speaker, Hillary Clinton. Former professional funny man Senator Franken argued against over-testing while speaking about how ESSA will help foster a more well rounded education, especially in the arts. He also spoke about the recent police killings in Dallas and Baton Rouge, and New Bedford. Even after an hour long impassioned speech he continued to energize us to take on the tough work ahead. She reminded us that we must all work together as a labor movement and tap into the grass roots organizing of our allies. President Weingarten offered the unwavering support of the AFT and our solidarity fund. She took some questions, offered advice, and inspired us not to give up the fight.

Hillary Clinton Delivers Speech to AFT Delegation

Toward the end of the hour-long opening speech President Weingarten eulogized Philando Castile, who was a beloved worker at a St. Paul school. His tragic killing occurred just eight miles from the convention hall. She made the point that “the disproportionate use of deadly force against black people” must end. She spoke about how the AFT is working to repair damages caused by institutionalized racism. She highlighted work that the AFT is doing to create excellent schools for all students with a concentration on boys of color.

As she lamented the recent police killings in Dallas and Baton Rouge she rallied the crowd around taking steps to end gun violence in the United States. She argued that “working to make the criminal justice system more just and supporting police are not mutually exclusive. This is a matter of ensuring that everyone feels safe - those who wear an oath to protect us and those are sworn to protect.” She again rallied the delegation to a standing ovation as she called on the AFT to be a vehicle for justice.
Finally, Hillary Clinton took the stage to a standing wave of blue shirts and Hillary signs. Earlier in the day she spoke to the NAACP in Cincinnati. (See http://www.nytimes.com/2016/07/19/us/politics/hillary-clinton-naacp-convention.html?_r=0, for details.) Before speaking she met with the family of Philando Castile backstage at the Convention Center. The speech was well received. However some members of the BMM (By Any Means Necessary) caucus briefly attempted to disrupt the speech before being drowned out by the crowd and Sergeants-at-Arms.

Here is a transcript of Hillary’s speech in Minneapolis at the AFT Convention taken from her campaign website:

“Hello! Hello! AFT! My goodness, I was listening in the back and I heard Randi at the end of her remarks say, ‘And I’ve known her for 25 years.’ Wow, it’s been fun, hasn’t it? Gone by fast.

Well, I’m thrilled to be here, and it is only fitting that AFT is celebrating your centennial right here in Minnesota, a state with a proud tradition of public service and great public education. I am thrilled that former Vice President Walter Mondale is here with us. He was one of my earliest inspirations, and I am always grateful for his life of service. And I also want to say a word about Governor Wendell Anderson. My thoughts and prayers are with his family, and the countless people whose lives he touched. Minnesota has a great tradition of electing terrific public servants. And I am so proud to be here with this state’s dynamic duo. You got a preview, a taste of the combination that Amy and Al represent, but I can tell you that the two senators from Minnesota are among the greatest that Minnesotans has ever sent to Washington, and among the greatest to have ever served in the United States Senate. And I just said exactly what they told me to say. I’ve known Al a long time. He handed me this slip of paper on the way in. But believe me, I consider them both great friends and I’m so excited about having at least one of them in the Senate. I’m so excited about seeing him be joined by Senator Amy Klobuchar. And I mean that.

I am here because I am here because I love education. I am here because I know education is crucial to keeping our communities safe, and these murders threaten the painful, essential work we have to do as a nation. And for many of the people in this room, that work includes explaining these incidents to our children. Something you’ve had to do, too, and I know this pain. I have no idea what it’s like, you know, or who it is.

And thank you for being one of the essential partners in everything we’ve got to do to move our country in the right direction. And I want to talk today about the reforms that you need to see in the Ken campaign finance system. I will stand with you and propose a constitutional amendment to overturn Citizens United. Thank you. Thank you for fighting to defend and improve the Affordable Care Act — and I will work with you to keep pushing for universal health care coverage. Most of all, thank you for a century of fighting for fairness and opportunity — the teachers, paraprofessionals, school-related personnel, the nurses, and public service employees of AFT.

I know that you have some of the hardest, most important jobs in the world. And I want to say right from the outset that I’m with you. When I am president, you will have a partner in the White House and you will always have a seat at the table. Because just like you, I’m up every day and I ask, how can we do better for America’s kids? I am committed to making sure every child in this country receives a world-class education with good schools and good teachers, no matter what zip code they live in. And I know that starts with supporting parents to be their child’s first teachers. And expanding access to high-quality childcare and universal preschool for every single child.

So yes, we are going to do everything possible to work with schools across America. I’ve been in a lot of those meetings. I used to have what I called the Chelsea test. Now, I’ve got the Chelsea test. And that test is pretty simple. Would I want my daughter, and now my granddaughter, and now my grandson, to go to school here? I’ll tell you right now, I would walk a lot of miles to get my kids to school here. And maybe, boy, would I be happy — would I be happy to have the most important child in the world to me attend here. But I’ve also learned a lot from those teachers. I’ve learned from those teachers who are crammed into schools with hundreds of kids and investing in training and support for our educators, because when we invest in our teachers, we invest in our future. And that’s what we also have to do in a stronger economy. Some of you may know that these issues aren’t new to me. My first job out of law school was working for the Children’s Defense Fund. I went door to door in New Bedford, Massachusetts, talking with families whose kids had disabilities that made it hard or impossible for them to go to school. Our work helped convince Congress to guarantee access to education for all students. And years later, when my husband was governor of Arkansas, he put me in charge of working to improve our schools, and we held hearings in every county and we came up with a plan to reform the Arkansas Education System and get access to more resources and to get teachers the raises they deserved, which was the highest increase of any state in the country at that time.

And believe me, if you see, along with my personal experience, I carry these lessons. If we work together, we can give schools and educators the resources you need to succeed. My plan to strengthen public education comes down to T.C.L.C. teaching, learning, respect, and compensation. More investment in our educators than ever before. Some of you heard the impassioned plea from the police chief in Dallas when he said our society is asking your generation to do this while the police died and get no so many profits. Well, it’s true of our teachers and our educators as well.

We look to you to fill in gaps that we, as a country, have neglected, like helping those students who are English-language learners, kids with disabilities and thrive. And we ask you to help right wrongs, from poverty and homelessness to the legacies of racial inequality that make it so hard for so many of us and you don’t give you enough in return. As president, I will launch a national campaign to modernize and elevate the profession of teaching. I want all educators, at every stage of your careers, to know you’ll be able to keep learning, improving and innovating. And we also need to be serious about raising wages for teachers and support staff. Anyone who works full-time in America should be able to earn a living wage without taking second and third jobs just to get by.

And the last thing a teacher needs when you’re just starting out is a mountain of student loan debt. And I know that future students won’t have to borrow a dime to attend public colleges or universities. For families making less than $125,000 a year, we will eliminate tuition at public colleges altogether, and for all single parents who already have student debt, you will be able to refinance your student loans so you never have to pay more than you’re already paying. And if you go into public service, which includes teaching, any remaining debt will be forgiven after ten years.

Now, we need to make college more affordable, but we can’t cut costs at the expense of educators. We need to support unions. And I will fight back against attacks on working families in America, and I will defend your right to organize and bargain collectively, and we will not stand for attempts to privatize retirement plans.

So to every single AFT member, I say thank you. And we’re going to give you the support you need to continue to help right wrongs, from poverty and homelessness to the legacies of racial inequality that make it so hard for so many of us. And I want to say right from the outset that I’m with you. When I am president, you will have a partner in the White House and you will always have a seat at the table. Because just like you, I’m up every day and I ask, how can we do better for America’s kids? I am committed to making sure every child in this country receives a world-class education with good schools and good teachers, no matter what zip code they live in. And I know that starts with supporting parents to be their child’s first teachers. And expanding access to high-quality childcare and universal preschool for every single child.

And we are going to work with schools across America. I’ve been in a lot of those meetings. I used to have what I called the Chelsea test. Now, I’ve got the Chelsea test. And that test is pretty simple. Would I want my daughter, and now my granddaughter, and now my grandson, to go to school here? I’ll tell you right now, I would walk a lot of miles to get my kids to school here. And maybe, boy, would I be happy — would I be happy to have the most important child in the world to me attend here. But I’ve also learned a lot from those teachers. I’ve learned from those teachers who are crammed into schools with hundreds of kids and investing in training and support for our educators, because when we invest in our teachers, we invest in our future. And that’s what we also have to do in a stronger economy. Some of you may know that these issues aren’t new to me. My first job out of law school was working for the Children’s Defense Fund. I went door to door in New Bedford, Massachusetts, talking with families whose kids had disabilities that made it hard or impossible for them to go to school. Our work helped convince Congress to guarantee access to education for all students. And years later, when my husband was governor of Arkansas, he put me in charge of working to improve our schools, and we held hearings in every county and we came up with a plan to reform the Arkansas Education System and get access to more resources and to get teachers the raises they deserved, which was the highest increase of any state in the country at that time.

And believe me, if you see, along with my personal experience, I carry these lessons. If we work together, we can give schools and educators the resources you need to succeed. My plan to strengthen public education comes down to T.C.L.C. teaching, learning, respect, and compensation. More investment in our educators than ever before. Some of you heard the impassioned plea from the police chief in Dallas when he said our society is asking your generation to do this while the police died and get no so many profits. Well, it’s true of our teachers and our educators as well.

We look to you to fill in gaps that we, as a country, have neglected, like helping those students who are English-language learners, kids with disabilities and thrive. And we ask you to help right wrongs, from poverty and homelessness to the legacies of racial inequality that make it so hard for so many of us and you don’t give you enough in return. As president, I will launch a national campaign to modernize and elevate the profession of teaching. I want all educators,
BTU Members Celebrate the End-of-the-School-Year with a Grand Party!

Friday, June 10, 2016
Photos by Michael J. Maguire

Gilberto Rivera of the Edison K-8 takes center stage with his band, RumbaNaMa.
On Saturday, June 11, 2016, the BTU held its 46th Annual Scholarship Banquet at which we awarded close to $70,000 in $1,000 scholarships to wonderful and deserving dependents of BTU members as well as grand-dependents of RTC members. In addition, we award scholarships to our wonderful and deserving graduating seniors in the BPS. Thanks go to our BTU and RTC scholarship committees, which spend hundreds of hours vetting our awardees. Great credit belongs to Denise Henderson, Marcia Fitzpatrick and Susan Lambert for working at the brunch. Thanks, too, go to our Building Reps who chose the graduating seniors for our BPS awards. Congratulations go to all.

The BTU Congratulates the 2016 Scholarship Recipients

2016 BTU Scholarship Recipients

Another Course to College
Amanda Singh
Boston Day/Evening Academy
Welsely Melo
Boston Green Academy
Amarilice O’Garro
Boston International
Gheorgi Dog Rez
Ali Al Bidari
Boston Latin Academy
Bryan Ferrer
Mandy Wong
Boston Latin School
Stephen Rezendes
Antonia Rocchio
Brighton High
Davidson Andrade
Rednaub Daberry
Burke High
Elizangela Amado
Yuri Carvalho
Community Academy of Science and Health
Va’Dayya Dew-Christmas
Josheph Massollen
Charlestown High
Ashley Aguilar
Lorena Paulino De La Cruz
Dorchester Academy
Zachary Jean Baptiste
Anthony Joseph
East Boston High
Jade Demato
James Magnasco
Excel High
Amanda Ogasaw
Santiago Sema
Fenway High
Karissa Barbara
Sandra Sanzago
Greater Egleston
Joy Young
Kennedy Academy
Johhine Fernandes
Amana Reeves
Madison Park HS
Iallah Audery
Cicilia Pires

McKinley S.E.A.
Nancy Huang
New Mission High
Melanie Orellana
Soyrin Wilcox
John D. O’Bryant
Kasuk Luaseandra King
Abdulrahman Mahmud Abdullahi
Snowden International
Cesar Tepada
Elizabeth Yepes
Tech Boston Academy
Farah Noorand
Christopher Rodriguez Martinez
West Roxbury
Hermine Francois
Princess Okekuchevu
English High – John P.
Doherty Scholarships
Ronne Batata
Rosely Romero
Philip P. Perrone
Scholarships (Madison Park)
Exekia Moreno
Aikos Stewart
Kathleen Lowney Scholarships
Ryan Ashford
Hannah Helfler
Lyndsay Patiquin
Samuel Wong
Catherine Gillis Scholarships
Ellah Bonnet
Aolfe Mannion
Mitchell Porter
Nathan Tran-Thanh
Leonora Connors Scholarships
Molly Gallivan
Lenaga Mills
Jeffrey Parziale
Daniaa Piton
Angela Rossi
Carol Howley Scholarships
Amel Hassam
Gianna Mulhern
Xiomara Nunez
George McGrimley Scholarship
Amber Leary
R.T.C. Helen Gallagher Scholarship
Maria Ferzoco
R.T.C. Scholarship
Karina Ferzoco
Cole Shevanny

The BTU Scholarship Awards are prepared for distribution at the annual Scholarship Brunch to honor the recipients.
in every major industry. But you know the majority of our schools don’t offer computer science. That’s partly because there’s a shortage of computer science teachers, it’s partly because our educators don’t have the time or resources to learn how to integrate digital tools into their curriculum. And we can do something about that. And on top of it, more than 70 percent of teachers assign homework that requires broadband access, but more than 5 million children don’t have it. We just can’t make a digital divide a huge problem in the lives of 5 million kids. And we can do something about that.

As president, I will be your partner to take on these challenges. We’re going to make sure every child in America has the opportunity to learn computer science. We’re going to make sure every child in America is going to school hungry or exhausted from a long night in a shelter. Too many of our public school students are living in poverty. For the first time ever, it’s a majority: 51 percent. That’s on all of us. But you see students coming to school hungry or exhausted from a long night in a shelter. So many kids have the weight of the world on their little shoulders. And we need to tackle all the problems holding our kids back. And we need to do it together.

I’ve had so many meetings and conversations with teachers, it just breaks my heart, as they tell me about kids who come to school in the dead of winter, no coat on their back. Come to school unable to even look in their teacher’s face because of what just happened at home or on the way to school. Go home from school dodging gangs trying to recruit them. That’s a stain on all of us. Let’s create more community schools. More partnerships between schools, social services, and nonprofit organizations. Let’s pledge that we’re going to give children who need it the mental health services that they deserve.

And you should not have to be from a wealthy family to join a soccer team or have access to extracurricular activities that can develop your confidence and your feeling that you are an important person in the world in the eyes of those who are looking at you. So we’re going to work together. There is no choice. From the community level all the way to the White House. That’s just one of the many reasons why this election is so important. I’ll tell you what. If I weren’t running against him, I would ask Rand to invite me here so I could nail against him.

Because it’s no surprise, my friends, that Donald Trump has a very different take on all of this. He has said that America is young on education. This is coming from someone who wants to give millionaires a free trillion dollar tax cut over the next decade. At least. I’d like to hear him explain that to parents in Detroit, where students are trying to learn in crumbling, rodent infested classrooms. He wants to, and I quote, ‘largely eliminate the Department of Education.’ But he says maybe he’ll leave some tentacles out there, whatever that means.

Now look, that agency may not always get it right, but it provides support for vital programs, from pre-K to Pell grants, and crucial resources to help low income students, students with disabilities, and English-language learners. So Donald Trump would leave our most vulnerable students to fend for themselves. If you want to know what kind of president Donald Trump will be, just look at who he’s chosen as his running mate. A Tea Party politician who has worked to undermine the rights of women, workers, LGBT Americans, and immigrants.

Mike Pence is one of the most extreme vice presidential picks in a generation. And he’s one of the most hostile publicans in America when it comes to public education. As governor of Indiana, he cut millions from higher education while he was giving huge tax cuts to corporations. He turned away millions of federal dollars that could have expanded access to preschool for low income children, and slashed funding for schools that served Indiana’s most vulnerable students. Neither Mike Pence nor Donald Trump should be anywhere near our children’s education.

And one more thing. Parents and educators across America are already worried about what they’re calling the Trump effect, with bullying and harassment on the rise in our schools. Last week, a mother in Wisconsin wrote me a letter saying that her adopted son had turned to her and said, if Trump becomes president, he’s going to make me go back to Ethiopia. That’s the kind of fear Donald Trump is creating in the heart of a 10 year old boy. What do our children think when he calls women pigs, or mocks a reporter with a disability? Or when he talks about banning one and a half billion Muslims from entering our country?

What do our kids take away from his racist attack against a federal judge, or when he encourages his supporters to punch protesters in the face? You wouldn’t tolerate that kind of behavior in your home or in your classroom. How can we stand for it from someone running to be president of the United States?

Well, we know America’s a bighearted, fair-minded country, and that with your help, we’re going to continue to stress to our kids this is one nation, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all. Not just for people who look a certain way, or worship a certain way. We’re stronger when every child has the chance to live up to his or her full potential. And public education gives our kids that chance. So that’s why I’m counting on you. I’m counting on the AFT. I’m counting on the American public to make sure as many people as possible get registered to vote, get educated, and get mobilized.

Today, I announced a nationwide effort by my campaign to get more than three million Americans to register and commit to vote in November. We would love your help. Please go to HillaryClinton.com/vote to get involved. And then let’s keep going. Let’s keep making our case, working for better schools, more resources, more support, to give all of our kids the chance that they deserve.

With your help, we’re going to make sure we get to work on that agenda together, because we’re going to make sure we don’t turn our country over to Donald Trump. Let’s go win in November. Thank you all very, very much.”

Monday’s second session adjourned soon after Hillary’s speech. The next sessions on Tuesday-Thursday included the passing of committee vetted amendments resolutions and special orders of business. In addition to the pressing union business at hand the delegation was treated to an array of many thought provoking and motivational speakers whose speeches highlighted the themes of race and equity.

**Speakers Call for Racial Justice**

Representative Keith Ellison, who represents Minneapolis, praised the AFT for its historical support of the civil rights movement.

**Representative Ellison, who is the first Muslim elected to a Congressional seat, also praised the work that teachers and other school support staff, including Philando Castile accomplished every day in our schools. He explained to rousing applause that “black lives have not mattered, so it’s important for people to assert that they matter as much as everyone else. It’s not an insult to others. It’s a call to extend compassion to the entire human family, to make sure everyone counts, including black people. We have to stand together.”**

President of Birmingham AFT Richard Franklin spoke to the delegation about being racially profiled more times than he can remember. He made the case that “it doesn’t matter whether they’re police officers or whether they’re African-American males, we cannot stand for these senseless murders.”

The delegation also heard from Rashad Robinson, who is the founder of the organization “Color of Change.”


Rashad called on the delegation to “imagine the power of our unity, civil rights organizations and unions, as both possible and necessary to achieve.” In between speakers the AFT passed a resolution for a modest increase in union dues.

Together, we can stand together as one.”

The delegation also heard from Rashad Robinson, who is the founder of the organization “Color of Change.”


Rashad called on the delegation to “imagine the power of our unity, civil rights organizations and unions, as both possible and necessary to achieve.” In between speakers the AFT passed a resolution for a modest increase in union dues.

The delegation also heard from Rashad Robinson, who is the founder of the organization “Color of Change.”


Rashad called on the delegation to “imagine the power of our unity, civil rights organizations and unions, as both possible and necessary to achieve.” In between speakers the AFT passed a resolution for a modest increase in union dues.

The delegation also heard from Rashad Robinson, who is the founder of the organization “Color of Change.”


Rashad called on the delegation to “imagine the power of our unity, civil rights organizations and unions, as both possible and necessary to achieve.” In between speakers the AFT passed a resolution for a modest increase in union dues.

The delegation also heard from Rashad Robinson, who is the founder of the organization “Color of Change.”


Rashad called on the delegation to “imagine the power of our unity, civil rights organizations and unions, as both possible and necessary to achieve.” In between speakers the AFT passed a resolution for a modest increase in union dues.

The delegation also heard from Rashad Robinson, who is the founder of the organization “Color of Change.”


Rashad called on the delegation to “imagine the power of our unity, civil rights organizations and unions, as both possible and necessary to achieve.” In between speakers the AFT passed a resolution for a modest increase in union dues.

The delegation also heard from Rashad Robinson, who is the founder of the organization “Color of Change.”


Rashad called on the delegation to “imagine the power of our unity, civil rights organizations and unions, as both possible and necessary to achieve.” In between speakers the AFT passed a resolution for a modest increase in union dues.

The delegation also heard from Rashad Robinson, who is the founder of the organization “Color of Change.”


Rashad called on the delegation to “imagine the power of our unity, civil rights organizations and unions, as both possible and necessary to achieve.” In between speakers the AFT passed a resolution for a modest increase in union dues.

The delegation also heard from Rashad Robinson, who is the founder of the organization “Color of Change.”


Rashad called on the delegation to “imagine the power of our unity, civil right
Resolutions, Amendments and Special Orders of Business Including the Endorsement of Hillary Clinton for POTUS

The first resolutions, amendments, and special orders of business were passed on Convention Tuesday. Committee members attended long meetings in order to iron out the vision and semantics of all business before the floor that was timely presented through the proper channels, following protocol. Once on the floor business must be presented, seconded, debated, and voted on.

During the passing of one order of business debate ensued about the semantics, or wording. Here James "Timo" Philip of the Boston Teachers Union Executive Board offers a suggestion that the order of business be sent back to committee.

Another BTU member, President Richard Stutman – who is also an AFT Vice President, spoke up in support of an amendment. President Stutman argued about how a modest dues increase, with a focus on crisis relief, is needed so our local and state affiliates can battle harmful legislation.

The main event Tuesday was the special order of business to endorse Hillary Clinton as President of the United States. Michael Mulgrew, President of UFT Local 2 out of NYC and AFT VP, rose to bring the special order of business to the floor.

Before the question could be called the delegation heard from Yvette Felarca of the ultra-radical and militant BAMN organization (see here https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/BAMN). In the spirit of democracy President Weingarten suspended Roberts Rules of Order so that Ms. Felarca could speak, although the question had already been called, seconded, and motion to end debate had passed. Another BAMN member, Nicole Conaway, was later at the convention recognized at a microphone several times as union business was being conducted. At one point she was ruled out of order. Both were widely recognized as a disruptive influence at the convention. Regardless, President Weingarten called for ALL to respect delegates’ rights to be heard, including Felarca and Conaway, who were at times booed because of their tactics of disruption.

The microphone booths lit up around the room as executive vice presidents and ranking delegates eloquently spoke in favor of the special order of business.

The question was finally voted on and the AFT overwhelmingly endorsed Hillary Clinton for POTUS.

Other notable speakers on Convention Tuesday included Minnesota Governor Mark Dayton, who was a former teacher and UFT member under Al Shanker, and Leo Gerard, President of the United Steelworkers Union.

Other speakers included Erin Covell, president of the Massena Federation of Teachers, who worked alongside steelworkers in the New York’s North Country, to keep a plant from closing; AROS (Alliance to Reclaim Our Schools) director Keron Blair, and Alex Caputo-Pearl, President of UTLA.

During our lunch break in between sessions Sybrina Fulton, mother of Trayvon Martin, received the AFT’s 2016 Bayard Rustin Human Rights Award at the Human Rights Luncheon. BTU Executive Board Member Brenda Chaney and Ms. Fulton posed for a “selfie” after the luncheon.

LGBTQ activist Pat Crispino, who is on the board of the AFL-CIO’s Pride at Work Program, acknowledged that the AFT “has held at its core these three things: fairness, democracy and economic opportunity – no matter your creed, color, citizenship, sexual orientation or sexual identity.”

Crispino called on the delegation to continue to fight for the rights and dignity that all human deserve while confronting the discrimination and hate still prevalent in this country.

The microphone booths lit up around the room as executive vice presidents and ranking delegates eloquently spoke in favor of the special order of business.

continued on page 10
Also, during the break the Progressive Caucus met in the convention hall in order to discuss Wednesday’s AFT election and other business.

The Black Caucus also met, represented well by members of the BTU.

During the second plenary session a march leaving from outside of the Convention Center was held demanding justice for Philando Castile. Many delegates chose to participate in the march. Twenty-one protestors were arrested for blocking an intersection after being told to vacate. Here are some photographs of the event:

Inside the Convention Center a delegate rose to inform the delegation about another police officer killed in Kansas City, Missouri, Kansas City Police Captain Robert B. Melton. The delegation took a moment of silence as the agony that our nation is experiencing became very palpable.

Among the resolutions passed on Convention Tuesday was Resolution 2: Building a National Movement for the Public Schools ALL Our Students Deserve with the Alliance to Reclaim Our Schools and Through ESSA Reauthorization. The resolution was a merger between resolution 2 - sponsored by members of the BTU, and resolution 5 - sponsored by members of the CTU (Chicago Teachers Union). Jessica Tang, BTU’s Director of Organizing, brought the resolution to the floor and spoke on the importance of organizing and partnering with the Alliance to Reclaim Our Schools.

Resolution 10

Resolution 28: Against Deportation

Resolution 29: School Safety and Educational Opportunity for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer and Questioning (LGBTQ) Students

Resolution 1: Taking Action on the Promise of the Every Student Succeeds Act

Resolution 2: Building a National Movement for the Public Schools ALL Our Students Deserve with the Alliance to Reclaim Our Schools and Through ESSA Reauthorization

Resolution 6: Introduce Exploratory Career and Technical Education (CTE) Courses in the Middle School Grades, and Restore and Expand CTE in All High Schools

After a long day of union business, delegates relaxed, toured Minneapolis, and prepared for the next plenary sessions Wednesday morning.

On Convention Wednesday AFT’s Centenary theme of “Generation to Generation” came front and center as a distinguished panel of Union Legends took the stage to craft a story of our 100-year-old Union. Panelists included Nat LaCour, former United Teachers of New Orleans President and AFT Executive Vice President and Secretary-Treasurer; biographer Richard Kahlenberg who wrote a biography of Al Shanker; Jennie Shanker, daughter of Al Shanker; Francine Lawrence, former President of the Toledo Federation of Teachers and former AFT Executive Vice President, Secretary-Treasurer Lorretta Johnson; and former AFT President Edward McElroy.

However, one speaker stole the show. Ninety-eight year old Beatrice Lumpkin, who has been involved in the Labor Movement for 83 years, framed her awe inspiring speech around three main ideas: peace, unity, and struggle. She called for an end to violence both in the U.S. and overseas. She amazed the crowd to a standing ovation by stating, “How can we say that all lives matter, unless we make sure that black lives matter?” The veteran organizer continued to show off her organizing skills as she called the membership to action. “They’re trying to take away our safety net - trying to raise the Social Security age and take away our right to organize. But we’re not going to let them take those things away.”

AFT President Randi Weingarten explicitly recognized the hard work of the Committee that worked on this Resolution, including the Boston Teachers Union. After the night’s session AROS ran a panel discussion and workshop. President Weingarten spoke at the event.

Another memorable guest after the “Generation to Generation” speakers was stunningly fashionable Baltimore Mayor Stephanie Rawlings-Blake. Mayor Rawlings-Blake, who humorously bantered on stage with Baltimore native Lorretta Johnson, spoke to the power of community engagement. She related an anecdote about how union and community activists worked together to better the working and learning conditions in Baltimore schools – the vast majority of which were rated in poor condition.

BTU President Richard Stutman later spoke on the merits of the resolution.
Founders of the Badass Teachers Association spoke to the delegation about policy changes made through collaboration with AFT. Janny Brice-Hyde, founder of BATs, spoke to the crowd about the epidemic of stress related illnesses that plague our profession. She spoke about how teachers of color, teachers with disabilities, and LBGTQ teachers are the most likely to leave the profession due to stress. She urged delegates not to turn a blind eye to our Sisters and Brothers in need. She made the point that if our teachers are suffering under these working conditions, how do you think our students are doing?

UFT President Michael Mulgrew spoke about engaging new members. He reminded us to help our fellow Union Brothers and Sisters, and to welcome our new members into the fold by answering their questions, offering advice, and telling our stories. Mulgrew also spoke about how an RNC official claimed that Melania Trump did not plagiarize FLOTUS Michelle Obama, but rather was inspired by a “My Little Pony” character. Mulgrew urged the delegation to take out their phones and participate in a #ApologizeToMyLittlePony hashtag on twitter. He ended his appearance by leading the 2,000+ audience in singing “Happy Birthday” to CTU president Karen Lewis.

The festive atmosphere culminated in Lorretta Johnson igniting a “Workplace Leaders” dance party throughout the convention hall as delegates jammed out to a retrofitted version of “Uptown Funk.”

Here is a list of Resolutions passed on Wednesday, July 20 in order of adoption:

Resolution 42 Attack Economic Inequality
Resolution 45 Oppose Trans-Pacific Partnership
Resolution 46 Achieving Tax Fairness by Cracking Down on Offshore Tax Havens
Resolution 15 Putting an End to Out-of-Control Prescription Drug Prices
Resolution 14 Reining in Abusive Medical Billing Practices and Crippling Debt
Resolution 13 Fighting Back Against Consolidation in Healthcare
Resolution 57 ¡Si Se Puede!: Improving Outcomes for Latino Children and Youth and Addressing the Needs of the Latinx Community
Resolution 59 Lobby to Remove the Congressional Block on Funding for Gun Violence Research
Resolution 62 Overtum Citizens United Decision
Resolution 19 The Fight Against Student Loan Debt and for Public Investment in Higher Education
Resolution 21 Legislative Initiative to Rectify Unfair and Detrimental Employment Practices in Higher Education
Resolution 25 End Garnishment of Social Security to Pay Student Loan Debt
Resolution 78 Championing Professional Standards in the Midst of a Changing Healthcare System
Resolution 79 Petition the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) for a Workplace Violence Prevention Standard for All Healthcare Workers
Resolution 80 Sepsis Awareness and Education
Resolution 34 Push Back: Defeating the Global Movement to Privatize Education and Public Services
Resolution 35 Immigration and Islamophobia
Resolution 37 Hand in Hand

The delegation also voted on Wednesday.

Here are the election results:

PRESIDENT
Weingarten, Randi (98%)

SECRETARY-TREASURER
Johnson, Lorretta

EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT
Ricker, Mary Cathryn

VICE PRESIDENTS
Abrams, Shelvy
Young Armstrong, Mary
Bowen, Barbara
Campbell, Christine
Capo, Zephyr
Caputo-Pearl, Alex
Carlito, Don
Carter, Larry
Chavez, Kathy
Copper, Melissa
DeJesus, Evelyn
English, Marietta
Feaver, Eric
Flynn, Francis
Fortino, Catalina
Gray, David
Hecker, David
Hochadel, Ian
Ingram, Fedrick
Jordan, Jerry
Kirsch, Ted
Kowal, Frederick
Lewis, Karen
Magee, Karen
Mallaro, Louis
McCall, Joanne
McDonald, John
Messner, Martin
Montgomery, Dan
Mulgrew, Michael
Newbold, Ruby
Owley, Candice
Pallotta, Andrew
Pechthalt, Joshua
Pecorale, Paul
Quilloke, David
Roooney, Stephen
Specht, Denise
Spence, Wayne
Stoebl, Tim
Stutman, Richard
Tweomy, Ann
Urbanski, Adam

Wednesday night AFTMA hosted a buffet dinner. Tom Gosnell, President of AFTMA spoke about the upcoming charter cap fight and introduced AFT President Randi Weingarten. President Weingarten delivered a speech outlining AFT’s solidarity with Massachusetts’ locals as we wage battle against the “deformers.” She spoke of the importance of being innovative and taking a lead role in education reform that makes sense. She highlighted the work of Edwards Middle School as a model of how we can take a lead in reforming our schools the right way. She praised the important work that SOPS (Save Our Public Schools) is doing and pledged her support. She also spoke of the upcoming Presidential election in November. Before she left President Weingarten snapped a “selfie” with the MA delegation.

AFT-COPE also sponsored an event Wednesday night. The reprieve from a long day of delegate work continued—with food, music, conversation, and dancing.

One more session remained on Thursday morning. Election results were posted and officers were installed. Eighteen more resolutions were passed with lightning alacrity and a few more speakers presented. The convention ended with “Solidarity Forever.” The first 100 years are in the books, here’s to 100 more!

For more information about the convention and information about the AFT visit http://www.aft.org/event/aft-convention-2016

http://www.aft.org/sites/default/files/conv16_afterwords_day3.pdf
http://www.aft.org/sites/default/files/conv16_afterwords_day7.pdf
http://www.aft.org/sites/default/files/conv16_afterwords_day5.pdf
The 2016 BTU Secondary High School Representatives of the Year was awarded to Ms. Karen “Kiki” McCarthy of Snowden International School at Copley. Kiki has effectively worked in a dynamic partnership with the fellow co-BTU Rep navigating the challenges faced interfacing with five different headmasters during the last seven school years. The BTU prior to last SY alone, they filed four separate grievances against the sitting headmaster, winning all of them including one that saved jobs from being cut at the school. They fought for reacquiring the hiring process at Snowden to be in compliance with the approved procedures, putting a stop to the district’s improper filling of positions. Kiki has participated in waging budget as well as changes to policy battles as a woman warrior for equity at Snowden. Kiki was trained in becoming a School Site Council Team Facilitator, able to observe, troubleshoot and assist in the facilitation of SSC team meetings throughout the district. As a proud alum of Snowden International High, Ms. McCarthy has carried the torch in maintaining its mission with high professional standards in a child centered, compassionate manner. Her ferociously upholding of standards in her straight talking, direct manner while caring deeply for her students, her colleagues, and her union have resulted in universal respect and love for her. Students have thrown her congratulatory parties with handmade cards demonstrating their recognition of their respect and caring for her as well. Her no-nonsense approach in important conversations coupled with her commitment to improving communication, processes, teaching, and union representation have been the hallmark of her activism which assisted for her as well. Her leadership, commitment, and dedication in her work have made her an exceptional representative for snowden.

Ms. McCarthy has taken on this role in a dynamic partnership with her fellow co-BTU Representative. The two have worked tirelessly to improve conditions for teachers, students, and the school. Their efforts have involved a wide range of issues, from budget battles to policy changes. They have successfully navigated the challenges faced in interfacing with five different headmasters during the last seven school years. In addition to their work on behalf of the school, they have also been involved in fighting for the rights of paraprofessionals and other union members. Their dedication and commitment to improving conditions for all members of the school community has made them an exceptional representatives for their school.

The 2016 Secondary Education Building Rep of the Year is Ms. Denise Berkley, teacher of Art at the Higginson-Lewis School. Denise has taught in a variety of schools in her BPS career including The Fenway High School, The Edwards Middle School, and Hyde Park Comprehensive High School. She also taught at the Charlestown High School and was an effective BTU Building Representative there.

When Denise was excessed the year before last, she was placed in a “Suitable Professional Capacity” (SPC) position as an Art teacher at the Higginson-Lewis School. It is difficult for any teacher to be placed in a new and challenging school under these circumstances but particularly so as a "specialty" SPC teacher. Denise rose to the occasion and seeing the need, ran successfully to become a BTU Rep there. Denise participated as one of the SPC teachers included in a front-page Boston Herald article articulating concerns facing SPC teachers in BPS. Standing up for herself and others, Denise represented her colleagues at her school despite her precarious placement as an SPC teacher. She was then hired into an Art position at the Higginson-Lewis this past SY and ran for and became a BTU Rep there again. Both the administration and her fellow union brothers and sisters valued her service to the school community and upon participation at meetings with school administrators in order to give support to colleagues.

Kathryn Papadeas: S. Greenwood K-8. Ms. Papadeas is a strong and passionate BTU Building Rep. During the year she organized the staff around issues at the S. Greenwood. As a dual language school many of the staff had concerns about the effectiveness of the dual language program. Ms. Papadeas was able to organize the staff and present the issues to BPS leadership. The presentations were well prepared, professional, and effective.

Vanessa Lascano of the McKinley Middle has dedicated countless hours of her own time to help not only paraprofessionals but anyone in the school who needs it. Vanessa is a fifteen-year veteran, a Building Rep at the McKinley, and also a Regional Building Rep. She even sits in on meetings with school administrators in order to give support to colleagues.

The 2016 BTU Secondary High School Representatives of the Year was awarded to Ms. Nancy Zimbalist of Kilmer K-8. Ms. Zimbalist has a long history of being an effective advocate for the staff at the Kilmer K-8. However, this year Nancy distinguished herself by being an exemplary union leader. Ms. Zimbalist was instrumental in bringing the staff together to address concerns about the school’s culture. She was instrumental in bringing the issues to the table and brainstorming ideas to create a healthier school culture.

The 2016 Building Reps of the Year Awards were presented by Michael McLaughlin, Elementary Education Field Rep, Carren Carew, Secondary Education Field Rep, and Josefina Lascano, Paraprofessional Field Rep.

Photos by
Michael J. Maguire