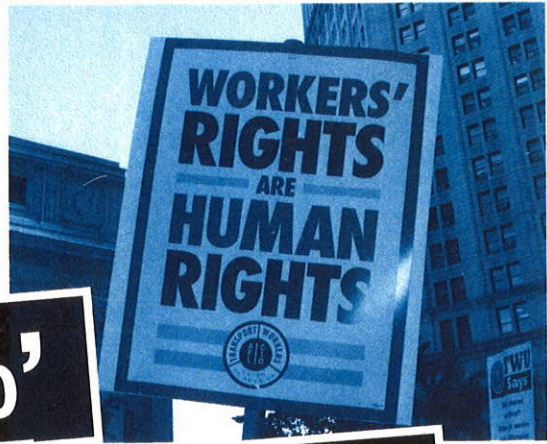




Amalgamated Transit Union

# 1181 On The Move

Fall 2011



## 'We are the 99%' Occupy Wall Street

**"It's time that we protected our rights and exercised our power."**

— Local 1181 President Michael Cordiello.



**O**n Wednesday, October 5, Local 1181 joined the Occupy Wall Street movement in a massive march from Foley Square to Zuccotti Park at Liberty Street and Broadway in lower Manhattan.

Chanting, "Bankers get bailed out, workers get sold out," 1181 joined tens of thousands of people to protest against the power of the super-rich 1% who are controlling our country's economy and political system.

"The rich are getting richer and the middle class is left paying for everything," says 1181 organizer Renee Jean Louis, who joined the protest along with Carmen Acevedo, Tony Livia, John Deloatch and Dominick Agate.

"It was clear from the crowd that this is a movement of a cross-section of our society: young, old, teachers, healthcare workers, you name it, they were there, she continues."

"We are the 99%," says Local 1181 President Michael Cordiello. "It's time that we protected our rights and exercised our power."





## President's Report

### We are the 99%!

It is with great union pride and pleasure that I report that we have successfully secured and protected our 1,100 members at United Bus and its sister companies after the company filed for bankruptcy over the summer. Under my guidance, the Local's Executive Board and the hard work of our attorneys, we were able to negotiate a deal with the Board of Ed, the bankruptcy court judge and Reliant bus company, the new owner, to win protection of our members' jobs, the collective bargaining agreement, and the millions of dollars in back wages, pension and welfare benefits (see page 6).

But the fight never ends. In August, the New York City Department of Education (DOE) cut 394 runs, resulting in the furloughing of 800 of our members. Fortunately by the time school started, at least 200 went back to work. Then, in October, approximately 700 in total were back to work. The remaining 100 will be first hired in this industry as work comes back. This is because of the Employee Protection Provision (EPP), the lifeblood of this union in the City of New York (see page 5).

Meanwhile, a week before the October picks, the NYC DOE notified us that they intended to put the United members now working at Reliant on the master seniority pick list along with the 550 runs that they service. I objected. I told them that those jobs were secured over the summer according to the EPP and I insisted that they not be put on the list. After three days of maintaining our position, those members were not put on the list and displaced, thus avoiding major disruption to them, their families and the NYC school bus system.

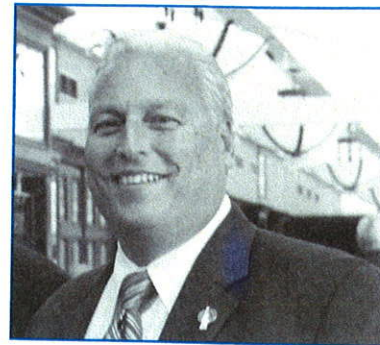
On Long Island, First Student is challenging longstanding practices in our contract. As we approach new negotiations with them, I have made it clear that we will not tolerate these union busting practices. We will be vigilant in our efforts to protect our members.

Our fight to maintain good union jobs is now being backed by millions of people worldwide who are participating in the Occupy Wall Street (OWS) movement. I am proud to tell you that we at Local 1181 are in complete support of this movement. While the media likes to portray the protestors as a bunch of young kids with no real agenda, I find it quite clear what their message is. It's a message heard around the world, and it started with the Arab Spring.

The message is: we need jobs, we need no cost education, and we need the rich to pay their fair share. We the 99% need to have our voices heard. Those who do not believe the movement is valid, I say, look around you. You are the 99%, you are not in the 1%. We ask that you visit Zuccotti Park and support the OWS movement in any way you can.

We will continue to fight for what is fair. We also continue to be grateful for all that we have. My brothers and sisters, on behalf of everyone at Local 1181, I wish you and your families a safe, wonderful holiday.

*Michael Cordiello*



Michael Cordiello  
President, Local 1181, ATU

**“We the 99% need to have our voices heard. Those who do not believe the movement is valid, I say, look around you. You are the 99%, you are not in the 1%. We ask that you support the OWS movement any way you can.”**



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Local 1181**  
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# 1181 To Cuomo: "Sign The Lock Box Bill!"

## Protect Transportation Funds

New York State government has a giant loophole that allows elected officials to grab public funds below the radar.

As a result, the constant flow of commuter fares to the MTA is unprotected, and is often tapped when some official or agency is looking for immediate cash. It's one reason the transit system is always hurting. That's why Local 1181 supports the Lock Box Bill, which would keep transit revenues in the transit system.

The MTA is in big trouble, facing a stiffer payout on its already huge debt. The credit agency Fitch Ratings downgraded the MTA's debt rating from A+ to A. The downgrade means more MTA funds will go straight to paying off debt, which will translate into fare hikes and service cuts.

This puts a fire under Albany to respond to union efforts to get the

**The bill would "lock up" MTA revenues to prevent their use to pay for other budgetary items.**

transit giant's finances under control. The MTA Labor Coalition, including Local 1181, supports the Transit Lock Box Bill (A. 6766/S.4257) introduced by Brooklyn's State Senator Martin Golden and State Assemblyman Jim Brennan. The bill would "lock up" MTA revenues to prevent their use to pay for other budgetary items.

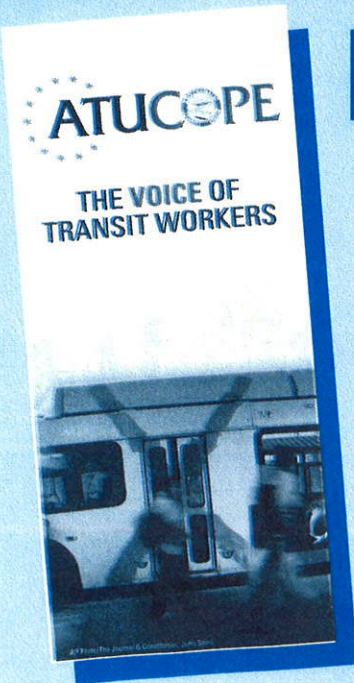
The Lock Box Bill waits on Governor Cuomo's desk for signing. It would restrict his ability to dip into MTA revenue streams, but with the

transit system hurting this badly, the public can't afford that nasty habit much longer. As months pass, the Governor is less and less likely to sign the bill and make sure services and jobs are protected, rather than cut in order to divert funds away from the transit system we all rely on.

Long-term debt, Fitch says, "is expected to finance a significant portion of the 2010-2014 capital program. To the extent that forecasted financial performance is not met, the MTA may be forced to scale back debt financing to fund a portion of the program.... Deferred maintenance or a decrease in system reliability would be potential credit concerns."

More debt payouts, more sacrifice and expense for riders... which would then louse up the credit rating even more... more pain for the riding public.

## Join ATU-COPE



By participating in ATU-COPE, you can have a direct impact on the political process — from guiding policies on transit funding and other issues that directly affect you to helping elect the public officials who make the decisions.

Starting this year, ATU-COPE launched a unique matching program, to help ATU Locals launch progressive, grassroots, issue-oriented campaigns, such as the EPP and "lock box" bills now on New York Governor Cuomo's desk.

In an effort to further encourage locals to increase their ATU-COPE levels, until the end of this year, ATU International is match-

ing your COPE contribution dollar for dollar.

ATU-COPE will also be returning to each local division every dollar contributed above their 2010 contribution level for the purpose of conducting grassroots campaigns in their community targeted at restoring transit service that has been cut in recent years and other progressive efforts aimed at protecting our members', their families and transportation funding.

COPE is not only about supporting pro-transit and pro-labor candidates; it is also about mobilizing our membership to fight back in the streets. When your shop steward asks for your help, do the right thing. Join the COPE program and make our voices heard in Albany!



# Pensions Increased!

At a time when pensions are being cut across the country, Local 1181 members and retirees have benefited from pension increases twice in the last two years. This is possible because of the solidarity of our members at the bargaining table and the proper administration of pension funds.

- Existing Retirees who had earned at least 10 years credited service and went from active status to Retiree status are entitled to a \$20.00 increase per month.
- Drivers and Matrons who retired as of July 1, 2011, with 25 years of service, are eligible to receive a \$40 increase per month in pension payments. This amount is calculated proportionally up or down depending on if you had more or less years of service from the base of 25 years.
- Surviving spouses of 1181 members who had 25 years of service can receive a \$20 increase.
- Retirees with any questions should check with Local 1181 Employees Pension Fund to determine whether your pension is affected by recent adjustments. For more information call: 718-845-5600. The Fund webpage is <https://atu1181.org/npfund.asp>.

## Other Fund News

Two letters are going out from the 1181 Fund office with important information:

- (1) Dependents will receive continued coverage until they are 26 years old. Members will receive a form which must be filled out and returned to the Fund office by January 1, 2012.
- (2) Another form is going out to retirees covered by Medicare with a Prescription Premium Paid Program. Members and spouses on Medicare may be entitled to a \$25 monthly reimbursement. Fill out the form and return it to the Pension Fund office. The Medicare member and Medicare spouse would be entitled to this \$25 monthly reimbursement if they each have a Premium Based Program.

## Around the Union

**GVC II** – ParaTransit three-year contract with raises ratified.

**MTA Bus** – Contract negotiations are moving slowly. Last session was Sept. 7. 26 MTA unions have not reached new agreements and may have to go into interest arbitration.

**TransCare** – over 300 ParaTransit members – contract negotiations continue.

**Maggies Para Transit** – contract negotiations continue.

**Selby – Pre-K** – Contract negotiations continue. There is agreement on important issues.

**Royal Coach Lines** – negotiations in wage re-opener going to arbitration on 11/21/11.

**MV Para Transit** – contract negotiations continue.

**Elmont School District** – 1181 Negotiating Committee has requested information from employer.

### Objections to Elections Dismissed

At the October 25 membership meeting, members unanimously approved the Executive Board's unanimous decision to accept the report of the Financial Secretary dismissing all objections to the June officer elections.



# State, City, Not “Down” With EPPs

## Budget Shortfall is Excuse for Not Extending Seniority Rights to Pre-K

Some 30 years ago, Local 1181 members who had enough of being jerked around by the New York City Board of Education and their bus contractors took matters into their own hands.

They walked off the job in a huge wildcat strike. They demanded, among other things, that their seniority rights be protected in their contracts. After negotiations with ATU and State Supreme Court Judge Milton Mollen, contractors and the Board of Education gave in, and the legally binding Employee Protection Provisions (EPP) were established.

As a result, drivers, matrons and mechanics in the New York City school bus industry have protection for their seniority rights. It’s part of the City’s written legal arrangement with school bus contractors.

But now, Governor Andrew Cuomo and Mayor Michael Bloomberg have taken steps to curtail EPPs. It’s all in the name of cost-saving, but it’s a big threat to drivers’, escorts’, mechanics’ livelihoods.

In September, after the New York State Senate and State Assembly passed Bill 3127-A, it was sent to Governor Cuomo to sign.

This bill would authorize the City to award contracts for transportation of pre-kindergarten and early intervention children, as it now does for grades K through 12. The bill also



**“Cuomo and Bloomberg believe it is better if school bus companies do not hire experienced drivers, matrons and mechanics and instead hire less experienced employees and pay them less.”**

to control costs and ensure the best quality service.”

An EPP is a contractual guarantee that “employees of private bus companies who lose their jobs as a result of the loss of the contract by a previous contractor must be given priority in hiring according to seniority by any replacement contractor.”

Local 1181 has worked for decades to ensure that State elected officials include EPPs in DOE contracts.

Seniority rights offer job security, and they also make it hard to replace experienced workers with less qualified workers.

The hundreds of drivers and escorts transporting pre-K and Early Intervention kids deserve the same seniority rights as other ATU members. The Governor and the Mayor will be hearing this message until they get it. Putting jobs, and lives, in jeopardy is no solution to the government’s financial problems.

require that every contract would include EPPs to maintain hiring, retaining and promoting from a pool of experienced, qualified employees.

The Governor vetoed it after Mayor Bloomberg, who had first backed the bill, shifted his position and asked for a Cuomo veto. Why?

Cuomo and Bloomberg believe it is better if school bus companies do not hire experienced drivers, matrons and mechanics and instead hire less experienced employees and pay them less.

### What EPPs Protect

In his veto message, Governor Cuomo wrote that EPPs “increase costs and discourage competition. To mandate that DOE include EPPs in its contracts would undermine its ability



# Members' Back Pay, Benefits & Pensions Protected after United Fails

**T**he buses and routes of USA United are under new ownership.

The Department of Education contracts and buses owned by USA United Fleet, USA United Transit, USA United Bus Express, Tom Tom Escorts, and related bus companies, were purchased by MV Transportation in late August, after United filed for bankruptcy.

Reliant Transportation, a subsidiary of MV Transportation, took on United's fleet and DOE contracts. That's over 500 routes. MV is a nationwide company that operates Access-a-Ride services in Harlem, Staten Island and Brooklyn for the MTA.

Local 1181 agreed to the sale only after an agreement was reached that Reliant will employ the Local 1181

**“Local 1181 agreed to the sale only after an agreement was reached that Reliant will employ the Local 1181 members who worked for United and that millions of dollars owed by United to the members, Local 1181, the Local 1181 Funds, and the Credit Union will be paid.”**

members who worked for United and that millions of dollars owed by United to the members, Local 1181, the Local 1181 Funds, and the Credit Union will be paid.

“Our members had to be protected,” says 1181 President Michael Cordiello. “We will get our members their money.” The Local and the

Funds negotiated an agreement whereby the money owed will be paid from money held by the DOE, or, if those funds are insufficient to cover the debts, by MV. United's drivers and matrons were hired to their old positions by Reliant.

With only a few weeks between the sale and the start of the school year, the Executive Board, shop stewards and members made haste to ensure that union drivers' and matrons' jobs were secure. The switch to new ownership went without major incident, thanks to the professionalism of experienced union members.

The Local will stay on the case to make sure that payroll glitches are corrected and all members are paid properly. Reliant has promised that members' patience will be satisfied.

## Walk for a Cure

On October 16, 2011 Local 1181 proudly sponsored a group of 33 people in the American Cancer Society Making Strides against Breast Cancer Walk at Flushing Meadows Corona Park. With our help a group led by Andrea Zito, accounting supervisor in our Fund office, we were able to raise a total of \$1,267.00. We thank all of the people who came out and did the 3 mile walk. These people included the following:

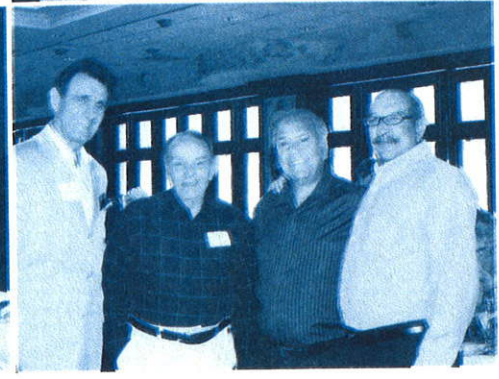
Andrea Zito, Nicole Bongiorno, Marget Di Fano, Sean McGinley, Maureen Jackala, Margaret Lamonica, Sally Pun, Anna Virgona, Jessica Scala, Joann Forster, Henry Forster, Rebecca Zito, Maria Trombettas, Sal Sarra, Amy Gartland, Crystal Shavon Smith, Stephanie Pineiro, Diana Ramirez, Patricia Riviera, Carmela Torres, Nicole Rose, Gunther Mejia, Ambrina Aslam, Alishab Aslam, Kimberly McGuinness, Stephanie McGuinness, Kathy Curtin, Josephina Mejia and Suwani Echavarria.





## Retirees: the Foundation of Our Union

Local 1181 retirees turned out big time at a recent lunch held to honor them for the important role they play in building and maintaining a strong union. Medco and Blue Cross/Blue Shield were there to answer questions and take care of the needs of our retirees.



## Recently Retired with a Division 1181 Pension

The following members of Local 1181 retired in recent months after working for NYC contractors. The Executive Board of Local 1181 thanks them for their years of service and activism in the union. We hope that their involvement in the union will continue. Retirees are a vital part of our union. We wish them long, healthy and happy retirements.

Josette Allard  
Jessie Lee Allen  
Victor E Aviles  
Marie Barone  
James Barreca  
Cynthia Bernard  
Deperes Blaise  
Carmella Bottalico  
Joyce Boyd  
Concetta Ciaccia  
Antoine Cineus  
Jennie Cintron  
Cora Chinnici

Rita Cracolici  
Mercedes Cruz Ramacho  
Grace D'agostino  
Velmar Daniels  
Dianna Dantone  
Joanne Deloughry  
Alvin Edwards  
Rose Marie Eigner  
Deborah Esposito  
Lyusik Feldman  
Dorothy Francis  
Marie R Francois  
Davey Gordon

Robert Giambalvo  
Leroy Gurley  
Laura Horne  
Easter Jones  
Jacqueline Joseph  
Julia La Bella  
Annie Lennon  
Daisy Lightbody  
Mikhail Loshakov  
Lindell Lyttle  
Catherine Marchetti  
Samuel Mays  
Eileen Meoli

Richard Moore  
Paul Noia  
Elijah Norman  
Georgina Ocasio  
Eloir Pardieu  
William Petrie  
Rosanna Phillips  
Jean Pierre Paul  
Anna Powers  
Annette Powers  
Rosemary Rella  
Virginia Rice  
Ermithe Rimpel

Vanessa Robinson  
Daniel Romero  
Edwin Schaeffer  
Garry Shpatserman  
Dolores Sobrino  
Ella Stubbs  
Jean Sume  
Frank Trimboli  
Karen Triano  
Philomene Toussaint  
Francine Vicari  
Brenda Wright

## Recently Deceased

Local 1181 recently lost the following members. The thoughts and prayers of the Local go out to their families

James Campolo      *Varsity*  
Theresa Guisto      *1181 Staff*  
Marian Moriarty      *Varsity*  
Joseph Lo Cicero      *Grandpa's*  
Sylvester Woodard      *Pro-Trans*  
Karl Dorcely      *Amboy*  
Keith Prescott      *Maggies*  
Josephine Casale      *Varsity*  
Anthony Vacchiano      *Varsity*  
Courtney Brammer      *Hoyt*

George Horos Jr.      *Varsity*  
Anna Pollara      *Varsity*  
Gladys Okeson      *Pioneer*  
Isabell Tillman      *Amboy*  
Miriam Graff      *Varsity*  
Kenneth Doyle      *Amboy*  
Charles Abruzzo      *United*  
Hannelore Flood      *Pioneer*  
Bernard Friedman      *Varsity*  
Bartholomew Massi      *Ste-Vin*

Fred Loftin      *First Student*  
Ruth (Mickey) Russo      *Amboy*  
Jerome Stein      *We Trans*  
Mindaugis Bacey      *Lonero*  
Dennis Robinson      *Varsity*  
Adele Farber      *Flagship*  
Margaret Aiello      *Varsity*  
Ernest Navarra      *Varsity*  
Leo Myrick      *Varsity*  
Joseph Connor      *Lonero*





**Amalgamated Transit Union Local 1181**  
 101-49 Woodhaven Boulevard  
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 know!**

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 the mailer panel above to:

1181 On The Move  
 101-49 Woodhaven Boulevard  
 Ozone Park, NY 11416

Name \_\_\_\_\_

New Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_

Zip Code \_\_\_\_\_



## IT'S A MUST

### CHECK YOUR BUS

Remember to pre and post-trip your bus. Always check your bus after your riders exit. Leaving children unattended is a continuing problem, with big consequences. Drivers and escorts who leave kids alone face sever discipline. It only takes a few seconds. Check your bus after every run!



## Long Island Wins!

Long Island members recently won a string of arbitration victories protecting jobs, awarding back pay that employers wrongfully withheld, and restoring vacation and sick days.

"A lot of the work we do is invisible to our members and the public," says Local 1181 President Michael Cordiello. "But those members who get written up for false infractions, suspended for the wrong reasons, or whose rights are trampled on in any way, know that we are there for them when they need union representation. And as for riders, we are there to look out for their safety and security as well. That's what we do, day in and day out: protect all of our members and the public."