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VP Nicole Villa



VP Patricia Davidson



VP Joe Mangini



Treasurer Ronald Rini



Inside this issue:

- Editorial 2
- Retirement 3
- NYSUT 4

# VSTA E-Newsletter

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Winter 2020

## VSTA Local 1633

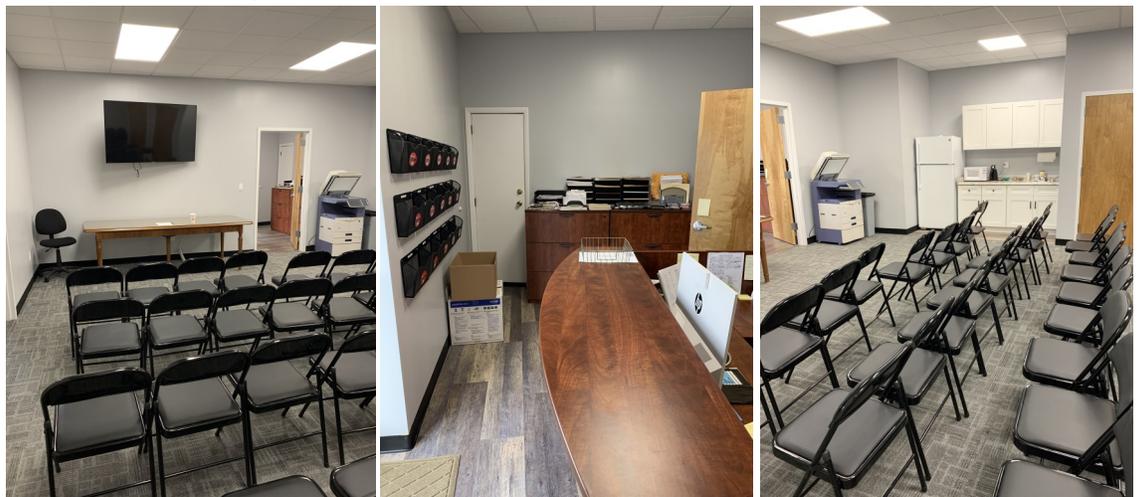
### Occupies New Space!

The VSTA office is new and improved and boasting a *newer* location! A few years back, the VSTA office and staff moved from the old Valley Stream location to Franklin Square. The headquarters remain in the same building, but are now located on the first floor at 738 B Franklin Ave, Franklin Square—the “B” stands for the *back* of the building.

Below are some photos of the exciting new space. Filled with plenty of work space and chairs to hold meetings, conference tables as well as newer technology, Local 1633 is ready for anything!

Please also note the NEW email address as well:

[vsta1633@optonline.net](mailto:vsta1633@optonline.net).



# Valley Stream Teachers' Association

Valley Stream, New York - Local 1633

[www.vsteachers.org](http://www.vsteachers.org)

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*Vice President - Communication*

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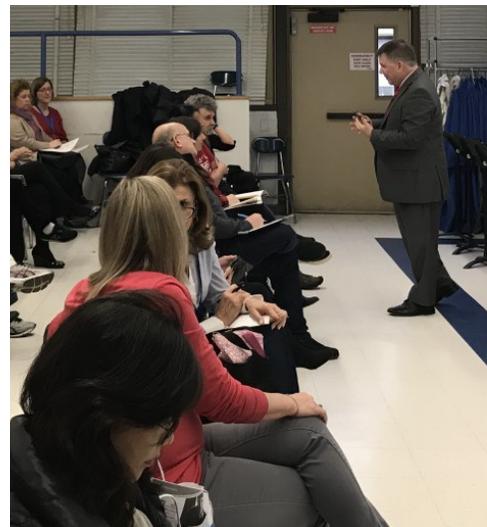
## Where Is Our Picketing, Rat-Duty Crew?

For the last few mornings, on my way to work, I've seen union workers crowded around the entrance to a local Town of Hempstead park, donning their neon green safety hoodies and standing next to the iconic blow-up rat. I've seen many a scene such as this over the years, and I always beep in solidarity. That's the thing with unions—we recognize and support one another, even if it's only a beep. But it makes me wonder...where's our picketing "rat crew"? Do younger union generations even fully embrace and understand the significance of these crews? I've known since I was a teenager... Two of my seven brothers are union carpenters. Each year they are responsible to picket or stand by that inflatable rat when local jobs are *choosing* not to use union workers. But as I passed the crew these last few mornings I really wondered if our union members are willing to be as vocal, as intolerant, as bold...

The union generation of yesteryear is becoming just that, a thing of the past. Not to bore us with a history lesson, but even though we like to gripe about our jobs from time to time, it is the unions that gave us the rights we now, occasionally, take for granted as educators. As we continue through this contract negotiation, we must be reminded of the rat-crew. We need to support each other, after all, we are the union. We get to choose what we fight to protect and what will continue to help us remain strong and protected. We wear red in solidarity, much like that beep and fist pump from my moving vehicle. Don't forget who we are and how far we've come! *We are still the metaphorical rat-crew!*

# Retirement Seminar

This year's Retirement Seminar was held at Central on January 14th and was a great way to kick off the New Year! It was well attended and NYSTRS representative, Rob Gross presented to the crowd. President, Rich Adams, spoke about the ever popular retirement topic of Health Care, as well as the 457 retirement plan. Vice President, Noele Villa gave an overview of the Welfare Fund benefits. Overall the meeting was a success and gave many VSTA members who are approaching retirement age, even more to look forward to!



**STAY INFORMED!**

Be on the lookout for next year's proposed calendar and contract negotiation updates!

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