



OCFS Holds 69th Percentile for Market Rates

OCFS issued new market reimbursement rates. To see the rates in your region, visit our website: voicesea.org. The rates will apply to services delivered May 1 and after. The 69th percentile formula uses data on parent fees

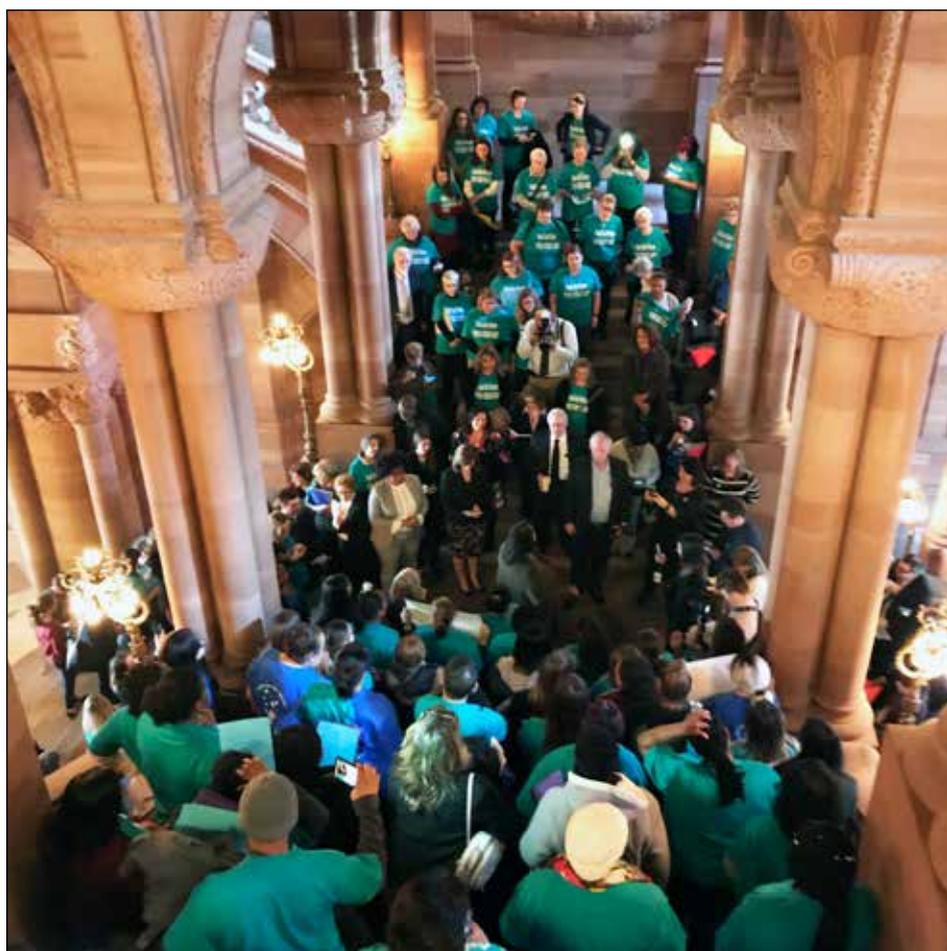
reported by providers in the Market Rate Survey — reflecting what providers charge private pay parents. County DSS agencies must inform you of the rate change and pay the new Market Rates if you did not sign a DSS provider contract.

Our message to legislators and the Governor made a difference. This is the first year since 2014 that the state budget included funding for reimbursement rates. Without \$26 million in new funding for rates, we would have seen decreases. In most categories, rates increased or stayed the same. And the \$26 million is not sufficient to pay us what we deserve and need to

deliver quality programs to working families and the children in our care.

It will take all of us — providers and parents — to make New York State do better for our working families and children in next year's budget.

To find out what you can do, email voicesea.org or call 877-483-2253.



In March, CSEA/VOICE joined child care advocates from around the state on the Million-Dollar Staircase at the State Capitol for a rally to fight proposed cuts to rates sending a clear message the Governor and Legislators: pay us what we deserve and need to deliver quality programs to working families and the children in our care.



CSEA Child Care Local President honored with prestigious early education award

CSEA/VOICE Local 100A President Pam Wells received a high honor from the New York Association for the Education of Young Children (NYAEYC).

Wells recently accepted the 2019 Champion for Children Early Childhood Leader award with warmth and grace in front of

hundreds of other early childhood educators from around the state, including CSEA members, staff and her entire family.

She was honored for making a difference through her family child care program and her steadfast leadership for the family child care profession through her union.

CSEA/VOICE Local 100A President Pam Wells' entire family came to see her accept this prestigious award. Second from left is Lina Palmer, a CSEA/VOICE member who nominated Wells for the award.

¿Preguntas? Quiere esta edición en español? Llámenos gratis al (877) 483-CSEA (2732).

Education Expert Ron Shuali's 5-hour training: complete success despite blinding snow

Let's set the scene. Picture a blizzard, with practically zero visibility and surprise, a significant amount of snow — and Ron Shuali, a 15-year veteran educator was set to impart his hilariously-delivered wisdom on more than 80 providers.



Shuali

Organizers from our union wondered how many people would come due to the awful weather.

Shuali, best-selling author of 'Breaking the Bullying Circle' and 'Building the 21st Century Child,' is not only a top motivational speaker and presenter with expertise in the preschool through middle school age groups, but is also a comedian.

So it's no surprise that providers would think, 'Exactly! What blizzard?'

More than 60 family child care providers had that thought and arrived after trekking through the snow, poised to learn.

"He's not some boring speaker. He's so funny! He gets to the point, but drops a little sarcasm in, too, and makes it fun," Christine Yozzo,

a CSEA/VOICE member from Utica, said. "Like when he stopped, hit a piano keyboard and began to play, interrupting us all chatting and started singing, 'If you're happy and you know it, clap your hands,' he got all of our attention."

In the midst of Shuali's entertaining approach were some important lessons for providers.

"We were singing and dancing and then he stopped and simply said, 'pattern interrupt,'" Yozzo said. "He not only taught us, but demonstrated how to re-direct attention to the teacher or presenter. I use this in my program now."

Attendees reported the class seemed like it flew by, though the class lasted well over two hours.

"[Shuali] thinks out of the box. It's exciting; it's not your typical class. He has us think challenges through in a really practical way and then he gives you tools and strategies to expand your thinking," said Yozzo. "He teaches you how

to make your day running your program fun and easier, and how to engage with the children who really need it. For example, he taught us ways to help children decompress by using his Yogarati technique. The kids love it!"

Providers and assistants are both welcome to register for Shuali's class, which will be offered several more times this spring and summer. Sessions are scheduled for Jamestown on May 11; Buffalo on June 1 and Syracuse on June 15. If you would like to register, visit voicesea.org/events.

"I think all providers should go to Ron's training even if you have all your hours in, you should consider it. It's well worth traveling for it, too, even if you have to drive a few hours," Yozzo said. "It's FREE for CSEA members and assistants. He teaches things you could never even think are useful, but they become a part of your everyday work with the kids."

Union helps provider turn program around

ROCHESTER — Yomally Ramirez found herself in a hard spot one day when a bogus child protective services (CPS) complaint was lodged against her in March 2018.

To investigate, CPS came out with licensing in tow and gave her numerous violations. Ramirez had amassed 14 recordkeeping and paperwork violations in three months, and she knew she needed help or her program could be shut down.

The CPS complaint was in fact bogus and determined to be unfounded, but it was still a threat to Ramirez' program if she didn't get her paperwork straightened out.

Ramirez is well known in her community in Rochester as having a great program with fantastic education and care for children. She knew she had to do something.

Luckily, she has a union. CSEA/VOICE Monroe Chapter Representative Nancy Cordero answered the call.

Cordero, a CSEA/VOICE veteran and a group family child care provider for more than 15 years, called Early Learning and Care Representative (ELC) Bonnie Caldwell, a trainer and a family child care expert on 'Getting Organized and Recordkeeping.'

Ramirez completed that training, and Cordero worked hand-in-hand digging in deep into Ramirez' office to help her make the necessary changes she needed to get back on track.

"I ran my daycare for many years and I never had a violation before this," Ramirez said. "I would have never known how to fix it all if not for Nancy helping me."

"Yomally had to pay \$2,000 and that was just for paperwork violations. There were real consequences to not being organized," said Cordero.

Cordero spent many hours with Ramirez at her program going through everything. She stressed the importance of logging daily health checks, keeping accurate visitor sign-in sheets, creating parent and employee handbooks and child files, including medical records.

"For example, Yomally thought of UPK kids as going to school, so she had UPK categorized as school aged," Cordero said.

For weeks, Cordero was right there for each step, not only fixing errors but helping Ramirez create handbooks and teaching her strategies to ensure she could easily keep it up after she left.

"She has a wonderful program. She just needed guidance on the business aspect of running a Group Family Child Care," said Cordero. "Her licensor came out recently and saw how organized she was and that she was using the automated Child Care Time and Attendance (CCTA) system and she said just by seeing that she knew already that I [the union] was there."

"I love using CCTA. Everything is easier," Cordero said. "It tells you



Nancy Cordero, Monroe Chapter Representative, standing, shows Yomally Ramirez, sitting, in the office of her Rochester Group Family Child Care, efficient, organized ways to handle the business aspect of family child care.

notice decision, parents fee, whether you are going to get paid for child or not. The amount you'll get paid. You save a ton of time. I know now exactly when cases are up for renewal and get information about cases in real time and then I can print it right out and out and keep it on file as I'm supposed to," Cordero said all providers who are not using the system should to learn how to do so. She stressed the need to read and understand the regulations.

"If you have questions, don't hesitate to call your licensor. If you feel you can't call your licensor, then call your union," she said.

Ramirez is sharing all she learned and paying it forward assisting other union providers in need. She joined the CSEA/VOICE Monroe DSS Team to ensure providers in her community stay connected to new or changing regulations and ensure more Rochester providers learn what an amazing tool CCTA is.

"It's my passion to be able to mentor other providers and to help them get back on track to make sure that they are running their businesses according to the rules and regulations," said Cordero. "It gets my blood moving knowing I can jump in to help and make a difference to get the provider back on track so they can have more time to give quality

care for the children in their care.

"Imagine going from 'your world is ending' to 'you are back on your feet,'" said Ramirez. "I was moved to tears when I heard my licensor

say to me, 'Welcome back.' I knew that I was back on track and fully compliant. Because of the help from my union, I have confidence in what I'm doing now, and I can easily keep it up."

Since the change, Ramirez has had six inspections and not one violation. Her program is fully compliant, and her office is in tip-top shape and she can focus on what she loves — teaching children.

"Because of the help from my union, I have confidence in what I'm doing now, and I can easily keep it up."

Thank you all from Denise Dowell

In January, I got an important job promotion — to Grandma! This spring, I am leaving CSEA and moving to Florida to take my work back to its roots to be a full-time child care provider for my daughter's growing family. I thank you all for sharing in our journey through challenges to success to build a strong union for family child care providers.

There is still so much work to be done. I am pleased to introduce you to Anneliese Sheahan, who is CSEA's new Early Learning and Care Director. Anneliese has more than 15 years experience in family child care and nearly as many as a family child care union activist and staff representative in Wisconsin and Oregon. She looks forward to working with our members and ELC team to grow our union and continue the good work we do.

In the coming months, Anneliese will be at CSEA/VOICE meetings, events, and on the doors with our team. Please join me in welcoming Anneliese to New York.

Solidarity Forever,

Denise Dowell



Dowell



Sheahan



CSEA/VOICE Local 100A also sponsored a Professional Development training given by national family child care expert Sharon Woodward at the New York Association for the Education of Young Children (NYAEC) Conference held in April. The training is called 'Professionalize and Protect.' "The idea that we have power in child care is important to me," Woodward said. "Unless you have strategies to empower and protect yourself and the union is included in your empowerment, then you will not be protected. I am going to give you those strategies today."

Professional Development Programs available

Professional Development is a big part of our successful contract negotiations allowing us to offer incredible development opportunities for child care providers across New York State at reduced and even no cost to providers. Here are some great programs currently offered:

- **Professional Development Program**
Get state approved training to meet enrollment/registration/licensing requirement **AT NO COST TO YOU.**
- **CDA Scholarship Program**
Earn your Childhood Development Associate Credential!
- **Tuition Assistance Program**
Get help with college tuition!
- **CPR/First Aid classes**
Available at No Cost to you!

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Dear Provider,

Nobody is in a better position to influence our world than you; working with the children of our communities every day. You are among the most valued members of our communities and on this day, we recognize you. It is a great pleasure to thank you on behalf of all of CSEA for the hard work you do to make our world a better place.

We wish you the best Provider Appreciation Day from the bottom of our hearts.

In solidarity,

CSEA President Danny Donohue



Read the letter from OCFS at voiccecsea.org