

# SBA Update

## From The President's Desk

**Dear Fellow Sergeants,**

Just after midnight on June 13, a Detective from the Manhattan North Homicide Squad was shot in the foot at a Woodbridge, New Jersey, hotel while attempting to capture a man wanted for a June 7 shooting in East Harlem. Also shot and wounded was a New Jersey Police Officer. The gunman was mortally wounded by police.

We extend our deepest gratitude and appreciation to the New Jersey State Police and the Edison and Woodbridge Township Police Departments for their tremendous assistance in this matter.

Just 10 days earlier, in the early morning hours of June 3, two Police Officers from the 115 Precinct were shot and wounded while investigating a robbery pattern. PO Christopher Abreu, a 5-year NYPD veteran, was shot in the leg, while PO Richard Yarusso, a 2 ½-year Department veteran, was struck by a bullet in his vest and grazed in the stomach.

The gunman, who was shot and wounded, was taken into custody. It has been determined that he entered the United States illegally and is a suspect in several snatch and grab robberies in Queens.

It is a miracle that none of the brave officers in these two incidents were not more seriously wounded or killed. Please keep

them all in your thoughts and prayers as they recover from their injuries.

We had the pleasure and privilege of presenting 21 scholarships to the children and dependents of active and Lifetime members at the Delegate meeting on May 23. This is one of the highlights of the year because the pride and respect in both the students and their parents or guardians is so clear to see.

Throughout the year, there are numerous fundraisers that allow us to present these hard-earned and well-deserved scholarships, as well as provide resources for the Widows and Children's Fund.

Among them is the annual Golf Outing, which was held this year on May 22 at the Pelham Bay and Split Rock Golf Course in the Bronx. There was a huge turnout of active and retired members, and an enjoyable time was had by all. A big thank you to all the participants, as well as the many sponsors who helped make this event an unmitigated success.

As we look forward to summer, let us not forget SDS Erik Duran, who was in court in the Bronx on May 14 for absurd criminal charges brought about by the New York State Attorney's Office.



SDS Duran is a 14-year NYPD veteran who was indicted for Manslaughter, Assault, and Criminally Negligent Homicide for actions that occurred in August 2023, while trying to prevent a drug suspect from fleeing the scene of an arrest on a motor scooter.

We vow to do everything within our power to ensure that SDS Duran is cleared of these scurrilous charges and his sterling reputation is restored. Thank you very much to the legions of NYPD and law enforcement personnel who have attended his court proceedings. Your support during this challenging ordeal is incredibly important, greatly appreciated, and never taken for granted.

In a unanimous decision on May 21, the State Supreme Court Appellate Division upheld a trial court finding that switching retired municipal workers, including NYPD members, to a cost-saving private plan and stripping them of their Medigap coverage would break guarantees that had been implemented many years ago.

“The City has made clear, consistent, unambiguous representations—oral and written—over the course of more than 50 years, that the NYC municipal worker retirees would have the option of receiving health care in the form of traditional Medicare with a City-paid supplemental plan,” wrote the four-justice panel.

“Consequently, the City cannot now mandate the proposed change eliminating that choice.”

This is **GREAT** news for all retirees and provides proof that when litigants are unified and organized and on the right side of a controversial issue, justice will prevail.

Please do not forget that the annual SBA Family Picnic will be held from 1200 to 1700 hours on Friday, June 28, at Nansen Park in Staten Island. This is a wonderful yearly event, where there are lots of activities for children while old friends and colleagues can re-connect. We hope to see you there.

In the meantime, best wishes for a happy and healthy summer. Please remain vigilant and know that the SBA is always here for you.

Fraternally,



Vincent J. Vallelong  
President  
Sergeants Benevolent Association





**A Publication of the  
NYC Sergeants Benevolent Association**

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They respond to all CCRB hearings and shootings involving Sergeants, regardless of the time of the day



**New Delegates**

25 Precinct: Joshua Faranda  
60 Precinct: Antonios Spiris  
90 Precinct: Alvaro Tobon  
110 Precinct: Rhett Barrett  
Operations: James McKenna

**SBA Family Picnic**

**When:** Friday, June 28, 2024

**Time:** 1200 to 1700 hours

**Where:** Nansen Park  
3441 Victory Blvd  
Staten Island, NY 10314

**SBA Delegate Meeting will be held prior to the picnic  
from 1100 to 1200 hours**



# Delegate Meeting

The May delegate meeting was held on Thursday, May 23, 2024, at Antun's in Queens. It was our pleasure to present college scholarships in the amount of \$2,500 to the children and dependents of active and Lifetime members.

Congratulations to the following members and their family members on this hard-earned and well-deserved educational accomplishment:

Member	Recipient	College
Alonzo, Paul (Ret.)	Kate	Wisconsin
Apostolatos, Gregory (Ret.)	Melina	Michigan
Berkel, Cristobel (Ret.)	Adam	Rutgers
Bernstein, Cindy (Ret.)	Hailey	University of Maryland
Catalano, Steven (Ret.)	Anthony	NJ Institute of Technology
Chen, Jinchun	Christina	NYU
Clark, Frank (Ret.)	Cassidy	Hamilton
Clark, William (Ret.)	Thomas	University of Central Florida
Conway, Thomas (Ret.)	Owen	Notre Dame
Deonarinesingh, Dexter	Christin Paredes	Stony Brook

Member	Recipient	College
Li, Li	Tiffany	Stony Brook
Madouros, Georgia (Ret.)	Harry Kartsonis	North Carolina State
Marone, Dominic (Ret.)	Peter	Boston
Muller, Christopher (Ret.)	Christopher	University of Central Florida
Ramjattan, Sudesh (Ret.)	Madison	University of Central Florida
Rodriguez, Jose (Ret.)	Michael	South Carolina
Smith, Catherine	Andrea	Amherst
Welsh, Joseph (Ret.)	Dylan	Quinnipiac
White, Merle (Ret.)	Caroline	Boston
Yee, Edward (Ret.)	Brian	SUNY Buffalo

### Recipient of the \$500 Bomat Scholarship

Bernstein, Cindy (Ret.)	Gabrielle	University of Maryland
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# News & Newsmakers

## The Buscemi Family

On the morning of September 11, 2001, Gina Buscemi was in the sixth grade when the teacher announced that something terrible had happened in New York City and the class was sent home early. In her youthful naivete, she remembers thinking her father must be there.

She could not yet relate to the enormous magnitude of the terrorist attack on the World Trade Center, but she swelled with pride at the thought of her father being on the scene of such a newsworthy event.

As Gina grew older, the pride she felt toward her father only grew in leaps and bounds. SSA James Buscemi, a longtime member of the Emergency Service Unit, served the NYPD from

July 1983 until February 2017. He performed countless acts of heroism and was part of a FEMA response team to the Oklahoma City bombing that killed 168 people in 1995.

During her teenage years, Gina, now 33, wavered between becoming an attorney or a police officer. She opted for a law enforcement career while attending St. John's University where she majored in Criminal Justice.

She was appointed to the NYPD in July 2014 and assigned to the Midtown South Precinct. When she was promoted to Sergeant on May 31, the occasion was special for more than the obvious reasons.

Her husband, Joshua Rios, who was appointed to the NYPD in January 2008, was promoted from Lieutenant to Captain at the same ceremony, and Gina was assigned her father's Sergeant's shield, No. 378.

"I'm very proud to wear the same shield that my father wore for more than 20 years," she said. "It is important to keep up the family legacy. It was a very emotional moment for the family."

James Buscemi, 70, the father of four children, was immensely proud to see his only daughter wear his old shield.

"It's very special," he said. "I'm very proud of her and I'm proud of my son-in-law."



Sgt. Gina Buscemi & her husband, Capt. Joshua Rios, with their 2 daughters on promotion day

Photo: Brigitte Stelzer/NY Post/With permission

It was a very emotional moment when newly promoted Sgt. Gina Buscemi received her father's old shield, No. 378

Photo: Brigitte Stelzer/NY Post/With permission



For as long as she can remember, Sgt. Gina Buscemi viewed her father as her hero

Photo: Buscemi family photo





# Legislative Update

The following budget bills and proposed laws are of concern to all NYPD personnel. Over the next few weeks, the Governor, Senate, and Assembly will negotiate the following proposals to come to an

agreement on a final bill, which would then be voted on. Some of the information contained in this update will change between this writing and the end of the state legislative session.

The following three proposals were part of one-house Senate and Assembly bills, which were introduced in March, one of which was enacted as part of the final budget

## Reduce the Tier 3a 5-year Final Average Salary calculations from 5 years to 3 years:

This proposal was enacted in the final budget and will reduce the 5-year Final Average Salary calculations from 5 years to 3 years for Tier 3a members. (S8305-B Part JJ)

## Increases retirees' allowable earnings (211 waiver rules):

This bill will increase retirees' allowable earnings from \$35,000 to \$50,000 if they return to public employment. (S8305-B Part PP)

## 20-year full pension benefit for police officer members of the NYPD:

This would restore the normal service requirement for full retirement to 20 years. (A8805-B Part CC)

The following stand-alone bills are moving in committees

### NYPD Tier 2 (Fix): Not enacted

This bill will provide parity among all the Tier 2 members of the NYPD Police Pension Fund in the calculation of their salary bases. It will provide the same benefit to Tier 2 members hired after the year 2000 as provided to those members hired prior to 2000.

S6290-A—Senator Scarcella-Spanton (in Civil Service & Pensions Committee)

A6403-A—Assemblywoman Pheffer-Amato (in Governmental Employees Committee)

### NYPD Sergeants' Pension Increase: Not enacted

This proposal would amend the Administrative Code of the City of New York to provide that NYPD Sergeants who have served 15 years in rank shall have their pensions calculated as if they were a Sergeant Commander Detective Squad or Sergeant Special Assignment.

A10487—Assemblywoman Pheffer-Amato

S\_\_\_\_\_ Senator Scarcella-Spanton

### Amend NYPD Tier 3 Ordinary Disability:

This bill would remove the requirement that a Tier 3 NYPD police officer member who applies for an ordinary disability will not be subject to the 5-year vested requirement, and not have to qualify for Social Security disability to receive the ordinary disability benefit.

S8764-A—Senator Jackson (in Civil Service & Pensions Committee)

A9515-A—Assemblywoman Pheffer-Amato (in Governmental Employees Committee)

### 18 Months in Detective Status for Certain Sergeants and Lieutenants:

This bill would increase the salary of Sergeants and Lieutenants assigned to the Detective Bureau in excess of 18 months.

S5504—Senator Scarcella-Spanton (in Senate Cities Committee)

A7659—Assemblyman Fall (in Governmental Employees Committee)

### Increases Number of Years of Military Service Eligible to Purchase from 3 to 4 Years:

Currently, members who were honorably discharged from military service can purchase up to three years of such service time to count towards their police pension. This bill, which has current fiscal notes, would allow the ability to purchase an additional year of military service to apply toward their service credit.

S5618-B—Senator Thomas (in Civil Service & Pensions Committee)

A5936-B—Assemblywoman Sillitti (in Governmental Employees Committee)

### Binding Arbitration Extender:

Extends provisions related to binding arbitration for police, which expires June 30, 2024. This bill would extend the expiration date of the provisions for an additional five years, until July 1, 2029.

S8746—Senator Jackson (in Civil Service & Pensions Committee)

A9516—Assemblywoman Pheffer-Amato—Passed in the NYS Assembly

**The following stand-alone bills are moving in committees (continued)**

<b>Line of Duty COLA:</b>	This would extend a law which has been extended each year since 1977, providing survivors of members killed in the line of duty a cost-of-living increase. The current law expires June 30, 2024, and this would extend the law until June 30, 2025. We are awaiting fiscal notes and a bill number in both houses. Senator Gounardes, who has sponsored the bill for several years now, has requested a fiscal note. The Assembly has not yet assigned a sponsor, as last year's sponsor resigned. We have been lobbying to have the bill assigned to Assemblywoman Pheffer-Amato, as she chairs the Governmental Employees Committee, and are hopeful that the bill is assigned to her.
<b>Crime of False Accusation Against Police Officers:</b>	This bill would provide that criminal charges can be brought against persons who falsely accuse police officers of wrongdoing. A2069—Assemblyman Stern (in Codes Committee) S9048—Senator Scarcella-Spanton (in Codes Committee)
<b>Protection of Retiree Health Benefits:</b>	This bill would protect retiree health benefits from being reduced, post-retirement, retroactive to November 1, 2021. S8388-A—Senator Harckham (in Civil Service & Pensions Committee) A7866-A—Assemblywoman Zebrowski (in Governmental Employees Committee)
<b>Eliminate Social Security Offset for Certain NYPD and Certain Other Uniformed Services Members:</b>	This bill, which includes a 2024 fiscal note, would eliminate the Tier 3 Social Security offset against pensions for certain members of the NYPD and certain others. S5792-A—Senator Jackson (in Finance Committee) A5798-A—Assemblywoman Pheffer-Amato (Governmental Employees Committee)
<b>Eliminate NYPD Social Security Offset:</b>	This bill, which includes a 2024 fiscal note, would eliminate the Tier 3 Social Security offset against pensions for members of the NYPD Police Pension Fund. S6481-A—Senator Skoufis (in Civil Service & Pensions Committee) A6344-A—Assemblywoman Pheffer-Amato (in Governmental Employees Committee)
<b>Congestion Pricing Within a Defined Area of Manhattan:</b>	This bill would eliminate congestion tolling fees for first responders within the defined congestion pricing area of Manhattan. S5509—Senator Scarcella-Spanton (in Transportation Committee) A3341—Assemblywoman Pheffer-Amato (in Corporations & Pensions Committee)
<b>Tier 6 Military Buyback Contribution Reduced from 6% to 3%:</b>	This would restore the 3% contributions to purchase eligible military time for all members. Currently, Tier 6 members must contribute 6%. This will equalize the benefit for Tier 6 members with Tier 1, 2, and 5 members who contribute 3%. S7540—Senator Scarcella-Spanton (in Civil Service & Pensions Committee) A7343—Assemblywoman Pheffer-Amato (in Governmental Employees Committee)
<b>Additional Credit for All Eligible Veterans for Promotion:</b>	This would include all honorably discharged veterans, regardless of whether they served in certain conflicts, to be eligible to receive additional Civil Service credits for hiring and promotions. Current law applies to only those who served in certain conflicts. This would require a constitutional amendment. S3280—Senator Gounardes (in Judiciary Committee) A3752—Assemblywoman Pheffer -Amato (in Judiciary Committee)
<b>Provides Testimonial Privilege to Critical Incident Peer Team Counselors:</b>	This bill would provide confidentiality privilege between an officer who seeks counseling from another officer who is certified as a trained counselor who meets all the requirements promulgated by the NYS Division of Criminal Justice Services. S6709-A—Senator Skoufis (in Judiciary Committee) A1310-B—Assemblywoman Sillitti (in Judiciary Committee)

# In Memoriam

The SBA pays respects to the following retired members who have passed away. We thank them for their exemplary service and extend our condolences to their family, friends, and former colleagues.

## Rosario Bunone

Appointed: 4/30/1965  
Retired: 1/31/1980  
Date of passing: 5/31/2024  
Last Command: 17 Precinct

## Roosevelt Capers

Appointed: 6/30/1969  
Retired: 10/31/1999  
Date of passing: 5/6/2024  
Last Command: DB QNHM

## John Conroy

Appointed: 10/24/1969  
Retired: 1/31/1987  
Date of passing: 6/6/2024  
Last Command: ESU

## Anthony Cuciniello

Appointed: 6/29/1961  
Retired: 7/10/1977  
Date of passing: 5/7/2024  
Last Command: 66 Precinct

## Michael Forbell

Appointed: 2/6/1961  
Retired: 7/26/1981  
Date of passing: 4/30/2024  
Last Command: PBMS

## Richard Gurniak

Appointed: 7/11/1988  
Retired: 11/28/2019  
Date of passing: 4/20/2024  
Last Command: PSA 6

## Robert Harrison

Appointed: 9/18/1959  
Retired: 11/8/1980  
Date of passing: 4/11/2024  
Last Command: 79 Precinct

## Arthur Hayes

Appointed: 2/1/1955  
Retired: 12/5/1974  
Date of passing: 5/14/2024  
Last Command: Central Park Precinct

## Robert Lane

Appointed: 1/1/1955  
Retired: 4/17/1977  
Date of passing: 6/5/2024  
Last Command: 5 Precinct

## Frank Magnani

Appointed: 11/2/1961  
Retired: 7/3/1982  
Date of passing: 5/28/2024  
Last Command: 1 Precinct

## John McCormack

Appointed: 2/9/1968  
Retired: 2/15/1992  
Date of passing: 5/2/2024  
Last Command: FTS

## Paul Mennella

Appointed: 10/25/1968  
Retired: 7/31/1985  
Date of passing: 5/8/2024  
Last Command: Manhattan Central Booking

## Edward Monks

Appointed: 4/17/1964  
Retired: 1/8/2000  
Date of passing: 5/6/2024  
Last Command: 43 Squad

## Gregory Moore

Appointed: 1/27/1982  
Retired: 9/30/2002  
Date of passing: 4/4/2024  
Last Command: 113 Precinct

## Loretta Paskor

Appointed: 7/16/1948  
Retired: 6/1/1976  
Date of passing: 6/2/2024  
Last Command: 94 Precinct

## Charles Pearson

Appointed: 10/25/1968  
Retired: 11/2/1991  
Date of passing: 5/17/2024  
Last Command: 123 Precinct

## Brian Reilly

Appointed: 4/30/1965  
Retired: 11/10/1985  
Date of passing: 4/13/2024  
Last Command: 28 Precinct

## Howard Sassman

Appointed: 6/20/1967  
Retired: July 6, 1987  
Date of passing: 5/14/2024  
Last Command: 105 Precinct

## Michael Schnepf

Appointed: 1/3/1983  
Retired: 3/31/2005  
Date of passing: 4/20/2024  
Last Command: PBBN

## Leonard Schnitzer

Appointed: 5/11/1959  
Retired: 5/13/1979  
Date of passing: 6/8/2024  
Last Command: 114 Precinct

## Clarence Washington

Appointed: 11/1/1955  
Retired: 11/10/1978  
Date of passing: 4/21/2024  
Last Command: 20 Precinct

## Leonard Ziegler

Appointed: 6/20/1966  
Retired: 7/31/1981  
Date of passing: 4/23/2024  
Last Command: 81 Precinct

**DOOMSTRIKER LEMC**  
3rd Annual Memorial Ride  
Sergeant Paul Tuozzola  
\$30/Riders  
\$10/Passengers  
\$20/Non-Riders  
Registration 0900@  
208 Route 109 Farmingdale NY  
Food, Drinks, Music, Raffles, 50/50 Vendors  
Rain Date TBD  
July 14th, 2024  
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