

**HEMPSTEAD  
CLASSROOM TEACHERS ASSOCIATION**

*End of the Year  
&  
Retirement  
Celebration*



Thursday, June 9, 2022  
Chateau Briand, Carle Place



## **PROGRAMME**

**Opening Remarks/Pledge**

*Nicole Brown – HCTA President*

**Greetings**

*Nicole Brown – HCTA President*

**Closing Remarks**

*Danielle Curiel-Gaffney – 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President*

## **2022 Honorees**

*Patricia Crespo*

*Raymond Muñoz*

*Grace Dong-Janeo*

*Monica Nealis*

*Stacey Eason*

*Dr. Wendy Niles*

*Barbara Gortman*

*James Roy*

*Diane Green*

*Joyce Scott*

*Barbara Intrieri*

*Cheryl Washington*

*Loretta Laga*

*Calixte Zinzou*

*Cheryl McCue*

*Sarah Hasberry – TA*

*Sandra Mills*

*Myriam Kai-Sorto - TA*

*Beverly Moore*

*Helene Tolbert -TA*



*Dear Retirees,*

*Tonight, we are gathered to honor and celebrate your arduous and exemplary commitment to the students in our Hempstead Public Schools. When you joined the district, many, many years ago, you brought your gifts: unique talents, knowledge, skills, ideas, and dynamic personalities. You used your gifts to enrich the lives of students, staff, and the Hempstead community. Thank you for sharing your gifts with us. Your contributions and dedication have made an invaluable impact on so many lives and will never be forgotten.*

*You have done so much for others over the years. Now it's your time! It's time for new beginnings. New beginnings are all around us and happening all the time; from transferring to a new school building, to settling a new contract, moving into a new home and watching our children grow up and move out. New beginnings are also saying good-bye to friends and letting go of parts of your life you hold close to your heart. Retirement is another "new beginning" that often comes with mixed emotions; you're happy to finally leave but sad to go. Retirement is one of life's most incredible opportunities to just relax, take new paths, begin new projects, or fulfill wishes and dreams. Whatever you decide to do, be sure to take some time to reflect on your years in Hempstead Schools. Do so with focus on the positive moments: the friendships you forged, the relationships you nurtured, and the innumerable lives you inspired, supported, and transformed. Remember the lessons taught, the adversities conquered, the progress made, and the goals that were achieved. These are the moments that matters most!*

*On behalf of the Executive Board and members of the HCTA, I congratulate you on a job well done. It is our hope and we pray that your days in retirement are filled with good health, laughter, and peace.*

*Special thanks to Sabina and our Social Committee for planning this amazing evening and our guests for celebrating with us tonight. Enjoy and travel home safely.*

*In solidarity,*

*Mark J. B.*



*Hempstead Classroom Teachers Association  
Congratulates Retirees of the  
Hempstead Classroom Teaching Assistant Association*

*HTAA Officers*

*Anita Reynolds – President*

*Tiketa General – 1<sup>st</sup> Vice President*

*Donnie Manuel – 2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President*

*Charmelle Hood – Secretary*

*Lorna Barnes – Treasurer*

*Faye Toliver – Sunshine/Hospitality*

*Honorees*

*Sarah Hasberry*

*Myriam Kai-Sorto*

*Helene Tolbert*



**“WE MAKE A DIFFERENCE”**

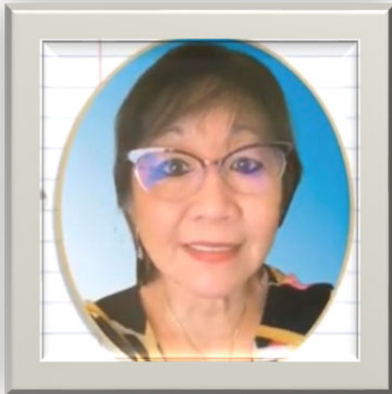


*Patricia Crespo* grew up in Mineola, the middle child of two sisters. Her summers were spent at Bar Beach with neighborhood friends. After graduating high school, she attended secretarial school and moved into NYC where she started working for different airlines...lots of fun traveling! She then moved to Miami, Florida and started working for General Electric and started college. Somehow, she became interested in studying Speech Pathology.

But first, she got married, graduated from Miami-Dade Jr. College, & then University of Miami. Later, she moved back to NY and attended New York University. After graduating NYU, she moved to Panama for three years where she worked with an ENT doctor as well as for Nova University teaching ESL.

When she returned from Panama, she began working at Long Island Developmental Center. She then started working with an agency with their Early Intervention program, most of which were little ones in Hempstead. Through a series of circumstances, she started working for the Hempstead School District. She started at Franklin, although most of her career in Hempstead was at Marshall Pre-K Program under Carolyn Townes-Richards. Mrs. Townes-Richards and the entire Pre-K staff were such a tight-knit family. She also had the pleasure of working at the Middle School, High School, Jackson-Annex, Prospect, and back to Franklin (McNeil).

She will treasure all the wonderful friendships made along the way and really getting to know and love her Hempstead family. She will miss working with little ones but looks forward to this new and wonderful next chapter of her life.



*Ms. Grace Dong-Janeo* has been blessed to serve the Hempstead Public School district as a special education teacher for 40 years, spending those four decades at ABGS Middle School where she has taught each grade level (6-8) and has been a self-contained, Resource Room and Inclusion teacher. Among the many honors Grace has received, during her teaching tenure, was the “2021 Herald Head of the Class Award” which honors the best and brightest teachers on Long Island.

In addition to her teaching duties, Grace took on a wide range of other responsibilities including the National Jr. Honor Society and the Yearbook Club where she mentored and advised students and taught them the importance of supporting their community. Under her guidance students visited and supported the Mary Brennan Inn and local nursing homes and shelters, while also organizing coat and food drives. Grace was also a member of the PTSA, the PTA and an inaugural member of the Community Engagement Team. Grace also makes the annual ABGS MS 8th grade dance a memorable occasion each year because of the way she beautifies the room with her special touch.

As a teacher, Grace was unique in her determination to help kids learn, whether in the classroom or virtually, for her it was all about putting students first. Teaching special needs students was a calling. “I was always drawn to students that needed a little TLC,” she has said, and she always delivered that TLC with passion and caring.

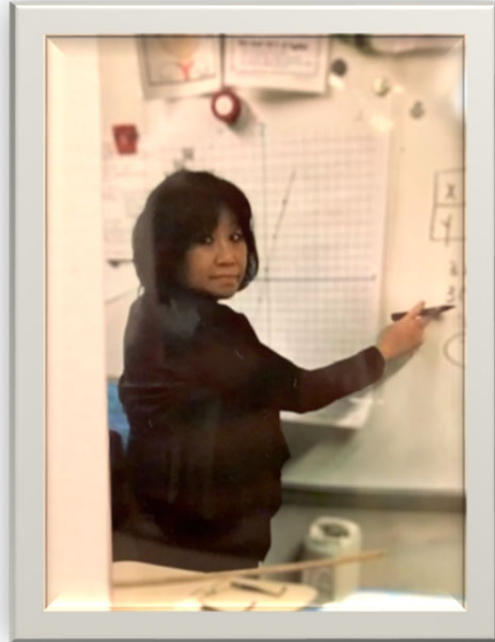
Grace was also a great support of fellow teachers, serving as a Building Union Representative who would always stop what she was doing to answer a colleague’s question; she also served as a Mentor Teacher and as a Special Education lead teacher. Grace advises new teachers, as she was once advised, to “think outside the box and be creative. Challenge yourself and your students to be flexible and work with the resources available.” Grace feels that teachers and staff should work closely together on behalf of the students because no one has all the answers but by working together, there is much to be learned from one another.

Grace says it’s been a pleasure working over the last four decades with the current and former ABGS Middle School staff, several of whom have become close friends.

While educating the Hempstead community’s children for decades, Grace, and Ramon, her husband of 37 years has reared her three wonderful daughters, Julie, Vivian, and Pauline, all of whom have their own successful careers. In her leisure time, Grace enjoys gardening, crafts, cooking and traveling abroad.

Over the years, Grace’s family has graciously shared her with the Hempstead school community where she was able to lay a solid foundation for the hundreds of “special” children who have passed through her classrooms. From this foundation, many of her students have built (and will

continue to build) fulfilling lives with successful accomplishments. Several of her students have returned to share their warm memories of being in “Ms. Dong-Janeo’s class” or working with her on a National Jr. Honor Society fundraiser. These moments remind Grace of why she dedicated her life to being both a classroom teacher as well as a “teacher” of lessons beyond the confines of a classroom.





*Stacey Eason*, born and raised in Lakeview, NY

attended Malverne Public School where he was a standout athlete. In 2008, he was elected to Malverne High School Athletic Hall of Fame. Stacey attended Springfield College where he was a four-year letterman for the football team. He graduated with a B.S. in Business Management with a concentration in Computers. He was his senior class vice president and a member of Omega Psi Phi Fraternity, Inc.

During the summers of college and beyond Stacey was a lifeguard for the Freeport Recreation Center. After graduation he enjoyed success in Sales and Management positions. He eventually landed a position with Chemical Bank and after nine years and several mergers he decided to switch careers. He enrolled in Adelphi University and in nine months Stacey received his Master's in Elementary Education.

On September 3rd, 1997, his life as a part of the Hempstead Family began. Little did he know his life would be positively changed forever. Stacey started working with the Prospect family, then his Franklin School (McNeil family), then his David Patterson family, then his ABGS family and now ending with his Jackson Main family.

All these wonderful people along the way have truly become his 2nd Family. If he named everyone it would fill a composition notebook, but he must recognize Principals Sally Thompson, Gerald Tootle, Dr. John Moore and Richard Brown. The role models once called the ROLE Models-Audrey Owens, Stephanie Lockhart-Turner along with Fred Johnson and Candice Collins. Without these awesome friends he would still be trying to figure out this teaching thing. He treated every kid like his own and hopes they feel the love.

Stacey coached football for many years at Malverne and one year for the Hempstead Tigers. He also is a baseball umpire for over 30 years. He is grateful for Hempstead where he met his beautiful wife, Carole. Together they raised four children-Richard, Melissa, Madison and Makayla. With the love and support of his family, especially his mother, Shirley and sister, Dolicia, he has completed 25 years of service. TFL!!!





*Barbara A. Olden Gortman* is a native of Long Island, growing up and graduating from the Roosevelt Public School District. Excelling academically, she graduated a year earlier than her peers, entering college at the age of sixteen. She attended Nassau Community College as a Music Performance major. Here she had the opportunity to perform at their Honor's recital and was inducted into their Phi Theta Kappa Honors Society. She attended Crane School of Music where her passion for both performance and education blossomed. She completed her Bachelor of Music Education degree at Crane and continued her education at Hofstra University. There, she obtained a Master's in

Secondary Education and a minor in Music at the age of twenty beginning her first teaching assignment the following year.

Along life's journey, she's met stellar musicians and administration like the late Durrell Blank (RHS), the late Hillary Hatchett (RHS), and Barbara Kupferberg (NCC) affording her the opportunity to grow musically in every aspect.

Barbara believes in the power of making impactful and meaningful decisions that reflects character and progression. "It is important that we not forget the arts and how they cultivate the mind, body and soul of a person but importantly our students." (Barbara Gortman). She notes that teaching and mentoring students throughout these years have been rewarding and her fondest memories will always be having the opportunity to share knowledge and music.

She shares her expertise of education in the arts for both church and community. Being actively involved in the church holding positions such as director of music where some of her fondest memories were directing the Jackson Memorial Youth choir. She also initiated creative educational programs and workshops for children as well as adults.

Her biggest accomplishments are not only held within classroom and church but simply being a daughter, wife, mom, sister, auntie, friend and newly crowned GiGi(Grandmother). "Thank you to my dear family and friends who travelled along this journey both near and far: Evelyn (Mother), Robert Sr. (Father), Thomas, Timothy, Jaleesa, Rachel, Joshua, Robin, James Sr., Robert Jr. and you too Eve. To God Be the Glory for all the great things He has done thus far and for the many blessings to follow."



*Barbara Intrieri* started her career at Hofstra University as the youngest administrator hired as the Associate Director of Sports Facilities while also teaching classes in the physical education department.

In her 34 years in Hempstead, Barbara taught 3 years at the elementary schools, Hempstead HS for 23 years, 2 years as Funded Programs and Interim Director of Physical Education and Health and finished her Hempstead teaching career at the MS for 6 years before retiring. While working in Hempstead, Barbara conducted many field trips including

skiing & horseback riding & was senior class advisor for several years. She was also able to bring TLC's Meet the Dress to Hempstead for Prom attire. Barbara was very involved in her buildings from coordinating the HS budget for several years to heading the HS Health & Safety team. Intrieri was a part of many committees over the years including: NYS Innovative Initiative Facilitator for Physical Education, District APPR Teacher Stakeholder Trainer, APPR District Master Code Team, Professional Council, Negotiation Team, BOCES PE/Athletic Representative, Technology Committee, Mentor/Mentor Coordinator, District University Health Coordinator with Hofstra working with the Graduate Physician Assistant Program.

She has been an adjunct since leaving Hofstra full time for 39 years. During this time, she has worked with the graduate students to bring a Hofstra/Hempstead Cooperative Games Night to the HS (MS for 2 yrs.). She just conducted her 33rd Hofstra/Hempstead night this April 2022. Barbara has also taken student teachers and observers from both Hofstra and Adelphi Universities over the years into her classes at Hempstead.

Barbara was also the Athlete/Event Consultant for the Women's Sports Foundation for over 20 years coordinating the program for conferences in 10 different states. She coordinated all athlete schedules for their Annual Awards Dinner at the Waldorf Astoria, athlete clinics at Chelsea Piers & National Girls and Woman's in Sports Day coordinating athlete visits to the Senate & White House in Washington DC for many years & accompany Olympic athletes to the White House. While at the WSF, Barbara was able to bring several Champion experiences to Hempstead over the years, including Robin Roberts and Olympian Liz Masakayan. Barbara always included our students in WSF events whenever possible, from getting a \$25,000 table donated at the annual Waldorf Awards Dinner for students, including them in the Olympic athlete clinics each year at Chelsea Piers & conducting Champion athlete interviews. Hempstead students modeled alongside Olympic athletes for a fashion show & were present with Venus Williams for her Reebok signing to name a few. For the last 5 years, she has been able to secure spots for several of our students to attend, on scholarship, the Julie Foudy Leadership Academy in New Jersey for skill & leadership training in Soccer with Olympian & World Cup Champion Julie Foudy & Basketball with Olympian Tamika Catchings. Barbara plans to continue to provide opportunities for our students when possible. In retirement, I am enjoying family & friends while golfing, hiking, biking, and reading, etc.



*Ms. Beverly Moore* is TIGER STRONG! This is me, one who is truly a Hempstead Tiger. I am a Brooklynite who entered the town of Hempstead in 1970, where I attended Franklin Elementary School from 1970-1972.

Between 1972-1974, I attended A.B. G.S. Middle School, which used to be the original Hempstead High School. Yes, this is true, the school was unfortunately, burned down where the parents in the community fought hard to have the old high school rebuilt for the middle school students to attend. While constructing a state-of-the-art high school for every student; we had the opportunity to learn how to swim, to be automotive technicians, to know how to cook, sew and so much more.

I entered Hempstead High school in 1974 and graduated in 1978. As far as The Class of 1978, there was no half stepping with our class. We were third Academically nationwide and number one Athletically as well. The Class of 1978 entered HHS with 458 students and when I graduated, 455 of us made it successfully to attend college or join the military.

No one gave us grades, we earned it with pride in knowing that we were the “EYE OF THE TIGER.” Most importantly, the expectation levels were high; the parents were supportive within the school system to make sure that we had the very best. We were taught not to get over, but to be overcomers. Each of us had to maintain an 80 average and above. We knew that our education was the passport to our future.

Once, I graduated from HHS, I decided to further my studies in Education. As a teenager, I was inspired by many educators in my life. However, there was one individual who shone the most & had an impact on me, when it came to pushing the students with tough love. Never allowing the words, “I can’t” enter our vocabulary; but yes, you can accomplish anything in life once you put your mind to it.

That individual was Laura Moore, a Teacher Assistant at A.B.G.S. Middle for over twenty years. My mother, one who illuminated the students’ hearts in education, and inspired them to know that they were somebody and could accomplish anything in life. This woman’s actions provided me with a framework into yearning the realm of being a true educator. So, I had decided to major in Elementary Education at a Historically Black College, Bowie State University- where I received my bachelor’s degree and graduated in 1983.

As an educator, learning never stopped with me. I decided to further my knowledge at C.W. Post college and majored in Special Education. So why Special Education, my response is, “Why Not?” During my studies, I made a decision that Special Education was not a “LIFETIME SENTENCE.” I graduated from the C. W. Post College in 1988.

My job as a Special Education teacher is to prepare the students to be ready to face multifaceted challenges and obstacles. Most importantly, to let them know that this world can be cruel. However, their job is to face those challenges with intelligence, articulation, common sense, and knowledge.

Believe it or not, my education did not stop there. I moved onward to pursue my knowledge in Administration at the College of New Rochelle, where I graduated in 2000. There, I learned what it was to be a true administrator. The values and the expectations within this field of administration taught me to never forget where I came from, and to know that everyone has a voice to be heard. For a school to run productively, it begins with the maintenance on up. There are different frameworks that holds the building together. Most importantly, everyone is a key holder within a school.

Learning keeps me motivated and my brain is always waiting for new information. So, I decided to pursue my Doctorate Degree in Leadership and Education. Let's just say, I wanted to be the first in my family on both sides to have a Doctorate Degree. My interest was at St. John's University where my journey began. I started my journey in 2006 and attending St. John's in Oakdale was amazing. Before a moment, within a blink of an eye my journey stopped.

My mentor, the individual who inspired me to pursue my interest in education transitioned. This changed my life and my interest within the Doctorate program which slowly diminished. Until one day, when I looked back at one of her quotes, "The Word Can't Is Not in Your Vocabulary." So, as of this year of 2020, I have decided to return to St. John's to complete my Doctorate Degree.

In pursuit of your dreams never give up because your education is the passport to your future.

Mom and Dad, both you encouraged me to work hard, to always have pride in myself, to never settle for less. Most importantly, to put God first and that the sky is the limit. Thank you for Everything. I Love you both immensely. You will always be within my heart. RIP.

As a single parent you both have encouraged me to strive for excellence. In doing so I want you both to strive for you dreams. Never allow anyone to block them because you are God's creation. Thank you to my sisters who believed in me.





*Raymond Muñoz* was born in the South Bronx on March 1, 1956, to Puerto Rican parents.

He later moved to Deer Park and graduated from Deer Park High School.

Raymond received his bachelor's degree from SUNY Oneonta in 1978.

He began his 21-year business career that included Delicatessens, a bagel shop, video store and a Beer and Soda Distributorship.

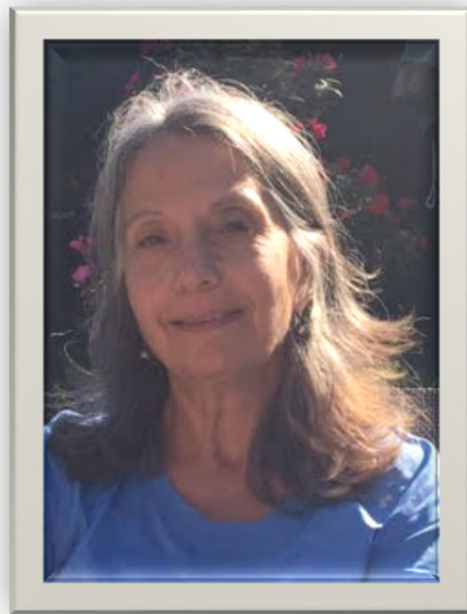
Then he sold everything in 2000 to pursue his career in education.

Raymond received a master's degrees in ENL and Administration from Adelphi and Touro College respectively.

The 16 years at Franklin School and 4 years at ABGS rounded his 20-year career at Hempstead.

Raymond is married 40 years this September (and yes to the same woman!). His family includes 4 kids, and 9 grandchildren.

Raymond will move to Myrtle Beach upon retirement.



*Monica Nealis* taught 6th grade at IS 78 in Mill Basin, Brooklyn and ABGS Middle School in Hempstead. She and Dan have been together for 43 years, married for 39 of those years. Monica has two sons, Keith and Justin and a beautiful one-year-old grandson, Leonardo. She loves biking, hiking, reading, traveling, and spending time with her family. The part Monica loved about teaching was the challenge of taking complex ideas and simplifying them for others to understand. Also, teaching has taught me a lot about myself and that life is actually not as complex as we make it out to be.



### *Dr. Wendy Niles*

Funny how time flies when you are having fun! I can't believe that it has been 27 years since I first stepped foot into my Special Ed class at P.S. 140 in Jamaica, Queens. I am the first child of Rupert and Elaine Niles, immigrants from Aruba and St. Eustatius, islands in the Dutch West Indies. From the very start, my parents always stated that their children had to accomplish more than they ever did. That meant, in our home, it was a given that you did your best in school, nothing else would do. A good education represented stability. I can hear my father now, "No one can ever take your education away from you." "Get as much education as you can so that you will always have the means to buy a loaf of bread and keep a roof over your head." As children, my sister and I knew that we had three major responsibilities: we had to keep our bedroom clean, our uniforms neat, and we had to study and do our best in school. Our teachers received the highest respect. In many ways we loved them just as much as our own parents. Times have certainly changed since then. In 2022, teaching and learning has many challenges. As a matter of fact, life has many challenges. For these reasons, my decision to retire became crystal clear a year ago.

Over a career that has spanned 27 years, I have been a General Ed., Special Ed., and Reading Teacher as well as a Staff Developer. After a failed attempt at Nursing School, I finally obtained my Bachelor of Science degree in Special Education/ N-6 Elementary Education from York College, a Master's of Science from Adelphi University in Literacy, an Advanced Certificate in Administration and Supervision from C.W. Post University and a Doctorate Degree in Administration and Leadership from St. John's University. As hard as it is to believe, I am a few steps away from obtaining a TESOL certificate. Even as a retired doctor, my father's advice still

holds true; education and learning will always be held in the highest esteem in The Niles household.

My time in Hempstead has been filled with both high and low points. I thank God every day, that the good memories outweigh the bad ones. I have a special place in my heart for the students in Hempstead. One 30-year-old, former student recently told me, that she always knew that when she grew up, we would be good girlfriends. This, mind you, was when she was in my 3rd grade class at M.G. Rhodes School. Yes, she was right. We have maintained our friendship all these years. As a matter of fact, the entire family adopted her 3rd grade teacher! These are the types of bonds that are made in this community. I want to say thank you to all of my colleagues that I have had the pleasure to work with over these last 24 years. So many of you have become lifelong friends and I can't wait to continue this journey with you. I want to acknowledge two people, in particular, who made my journey in Hempstead unforgettable. Arthur Spitzli and Gertrude Hargrove will forever hold a special place in my heart.

Finally, I want to thank Father God for making it possible that this accomplishment has become a reality. Always remember, when you and God are in agreement, everything falls into place!

This is not the end, but the beginning of the next chapter in my book of life. Who knows...maybe I will go back to school and get that nursing degree after all!!



## *Joyce Scott*

When you love what you do, you will never work a day. I have had the pleasure of educating students for 33 years. I started when NYC DOE put out a call for teachers in 1988. I became a 7th grade English Language Arts teacher. In 1992, three weeks before my daughter was born, I took a position as a library media specialist. I taught in East New York from 1988 until I came to Hempstead in 1996.

Hempstead afforded me the opportunity to take on many roles: library media specialist, Business teacher, lead Business teacher, Academy leader, senior class advisor, curriculum writer, Director of youth employment, and a few others.

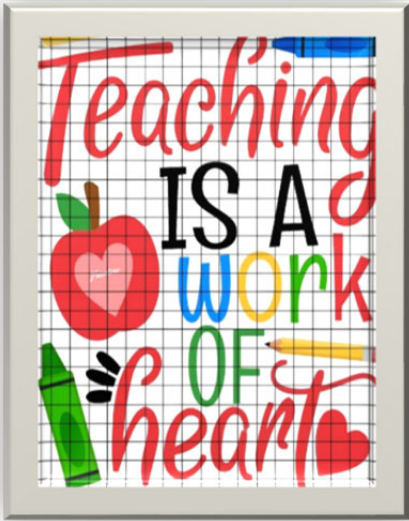
One of the most important roles for me, was the 1 Million Sprint Project Grant liaison. Through this grant approximately 800 students and staff members were able to receive free of charge mobile phones with Internet access for four years. This was most advantageous for them during the Pandemic.

As a military child, you don't hold on to many things. For me, it is easy to move from one place or thing to the next. I briefly became a public library director in 2008. I could never get Hempstead School district out of my system, so when I had the opportunity to return in 2012, I returned and stayed until my retirement.

I have received many blessings from educating students here. I was able to raise my children, purchase a home, and obtain several advanced certifications and degrees. The greatest blessing that I received were the many friends I gained. Thank you all for celebrating with me during the good times and holding me up during my difficult times.

In January, I decided to retire to finish my doctoral degree, enjoy my family, and travel.

Live, love, laugh...the best is yet to come!!



*Cheryl Washington* born and raised in Brooklyn, New York as the baby child of five, was always determined to go to college and have a career. Graduating from Baruch College with a BBA in Marketing Management, I immediately knew that I wanted to continue my education, however, I wanted a better job to continue paying for my education on my own. One day, I went to visit the public school that I attended as a child and began reminiscing with the Assistant Principal, who was my 6th grade teacher. He later suggested that I interview for a 2nd grade class that was available. I immediately, replied, "No thank you!" Then I thought about it, because I wanted to begin utilizing my degree to earn more money to pay for my Master's degree. With that said, I had a quick

change of mind and I began inquiring more about the position and my former teacher said, "Let me introduce you to the principal." When I met her, she proceeded with the interview and said that since my teacher was introducing me, she informed me that she ran a tight ship and that her staff worked very hard to ensure student achievement. I started teaching a week later in 1985 and loved it ever since. I committed 10 years to educating children in my community and 26 years to educating our children in Hempstead. Thirty-six years of raising, caring, educating, guiding, loving and encouraging children. The principal being impressed with my work ethics and the ability to engage the students with creative activities in my first year, she assigned me the gifted and talented grade 3 the following year and you would have thought that she gave me a brand new Corvette. I was the envy of my colleagues and I didn't at first understand why I was experiencing the lack of morning pleasantries. The following year after completing one of my Master's degrees in Reading at Adelphi University, the Principal offered me a Reading Specialist position and I gladly accepted the position. During my tenure, I taught and worked in close proximity with the principal for ten years in my beloved community and was inspired to pursue an additional Master's of Science in Supervisory Administration at the College of St. Rose. After dedicating ten years to teaching in the same community I grew up in, I transferred to Hempstead Public School District. My Supervisory Administration degree afforded me the opportunity to supervise English Language Arts and Reading teachers on the middle school level for 3 years, which again was a very rewarding experience. The pursuit of education continues when I enrolled in a Doctorate program at North Central University and completed 21 credits before taking a break to care for my dad.

Ever since I was of working age, I have simultaneously worked 2-3 jobs at a time. While teaching elementary children in my community, I was also teaching adults, English as a second language, basic education and how to get a General Equivalency Diploma with the Adult Education Department, in my community. I taught for the Adult Education Program for 19 years in addition to teaching on the collegial level on the weekends for various colleges with the CITE

program. I have been teaching on the collegial level for over 20 years now as I continue to contribute to the dichotomy of education. More importantly, continuing to multiply the foundation of edifying young minds by teaching our future educators about instructional strategies that address the diverse learning styles. It is undoubtedly a fact that I absolutely love what I do, despite the lack of support.

All things considered, one thing some people don't know is that there is a higher being that recognizes the service that educators provide and acknowledges it with appreciation by grace, mercy and blessings. Equally important, I know that I am truly blessed and highly favored with the opportunity to educate children.



*Calixte Zinzou* was born in Porto Novo, the capital of the Republic of Benin. He is the seventeenth child of the family. After completing his high school education, he went to Russia to study engineering in the field of railroad construction and returned home. His brother who lives in the United States of America invited him to join him. On August 12, 1988, he arrived in America and completed his master's degree in Mathematics at Saint John's University in 1990.

He started as a substitute teacher in New York City public schools and then landed a permanent job. He worked in the city for eight years before coming to Hempstead High School. He came to Hempstead because Mrs. Joan

Dreckett called him one day and told him that they needed five math teachers there.

The day Calixte came was a busy day for him. He met Ms. Bell, had an interview with her, and demonstrated a lesson. She then sent him to her supervisor who spoke to him and sent him to the personnel office. He got the job before three o'clock. Calixte landed in the math department that operates as a family. He had the support that he needed to succeed. He was able to work here for twenty-two years and doesn't regret coming to Hempstead.

When he was studying at Saint John's University, he had the chance to meet a lovely student, Jacqueline Muzac, who became his wife. God blessed them with three children who were able to complete their education. The first is a mechanical engineer and the last two, twins, graduated from medical school on June 12, 2022,

Calixte has a lot of free time ahead of him. He does not need permission to travel anymore and will do it when he wants and when the conditions are better.

Calixte would like to thank his wife and children who supported him. He would like to thank Hempstead Union Free School District for giving him the opportunity to work here. Thanks to Ms. Bell, who hired him and thank you to all the math department teachers who have worked with him since September 2000 and all the administrative members who have supported and guided him throughout his journey.

LOVE YOU ALL!!



*Sarah Hasberry* was born and raised on Long Island. She attended Hempstead Public Schools for grades 1-8 at the Franklin Elementary School and then Long Beach High School. Finally, Sarah achieved her Associates Degree from the State University of Farmingdale.

Sarah is one of five children and is blessed with her own daughter, Shareem; a son-in-law, Kofi; and grandsons, Omari and Jaden.

Sarah enjoys singing, encouraging children to sing, and word search puzzles.

Sarah lives by the motto: "Love and you will be loved. Care and you will be cared for. Give and it will be given to you"

***"Thank you for all of the motivation, dedication, and encouragement you've given throughout the years to the children of Hempstead. Enjoy your retirement!!***

***In solidarity,***

***Anita Reynolds, HTAA President***



## *Myriam Kai-Sorto*

Myriam was born in El Salvador where she completed high school. She immigrated to the United States in 1977. Here, she trained at the Women Services as a clerk typist. Myriam gives credit to Mrs. Cherry Linton for helping her to apply to Old Westbury College from where she graduated in 1989 with two bachelor degrees in psychology and modern languages. Myriam later graduated from C.W. Post University in 2003 with two Master's degrees in Spanish Education and TESOL.

Myriam started working in the Hempstead School district in 1997 as a permanent substitute and then as Teaching Assistant in 2009. Myriam carries with her the good memories of all the people she has worked with and whom have touched her life.

Myriam has been married to Luis for 31 years and is blessed with three children: Leonel, Carolina, and Karina.

***“Myriam, your retirement is a celebration not just for all the years put in the classroom but for every child you helped along the way. For many years you’ve devoted yourself to educating children at the Hempstead Public Schools. Your dedication to improving young lives has been inspiring. You will always be remembered as a caring and energetic teaching assistant. Farewell and Good Luck! Job well done.”***

***In solidarity,***

***Anita Reynolds, HTAA President***



***Helene Tolbert*** began her career in October 1990 when she entered the Franklin Avenue School where Mrs. Sally Thompson was principal. Thanks to Mrs. M. Cooper for recommending me to Mr. Tootle and then being interviewed by Mrs. Diane Brown, the doors to the Hempstead Union Free District opened to her.

Her time at Franklin School, now the Joseph Mc Neil School lasted for ten years. While there her duties entailed working with teachers and with students, lunch duty, covering classes, building representative, school bookstore staff overseer and a union representative for HTTA under Mrs. Minnie Wheeler.

The next sixteen years were spent at ABGS Middle under many administrators. Once again, she took part serving the teachers and students, AIS after school program, Saturday School, and Summer School as well as making sure all received their overtime pay. (Prepared paperwork, got sheets signed, sealed, and delivered to the district front office.)

Finally, she kept her promise to Mr. Rush to complete her time at David Paterson and she's SO glad that she did! Ending her career on the elementary school level allowed her to assist in shaping the younger children's life skills.

Time has passed by too quickly and yes; she would do it again. Thank you all.

***Helene, there is no point to count the years. They are not important. Important are the things you have done in educating students of Hempstead Public Schools as a teaching assistant. I wish you pleasant days and a prosperous retirement. Job well done!***

***In solidarity,***

***Anita Reynolds, HTAA President***



**HEMPSTEAD CLASSROOM TEACHERS ASSOCIATION Local #18035**

**175 Fulton Avenue, Suite 501, Hempstead, NY 11550**

**Website: [Hempsteadteachers.org](http://Hempsteadteachers.org)**

**Office Manager:** Mrs. Cheryl Goodridge, Former HCTA Vice President  
President of the Hempstead Educators Retiree Association (HERA)

## **Executive Board**

### **Officers**

Nicole Brown, President	Rhodes Academy
Danielle Curiel-Gaffney, 1 <sup>st</sup> Vice President	Special Education Department
Joelle Day, 2 <sup>nd</sup> Vice President	Hempstead High School
Veronica Jimenez, Recording Secretary	Special Education Department
Monifa Salako, Treasurer	Prospect School

### **Building Representatives**

**Prospect Kindergarten School**  
Renee Mavrofidis (Kindergarten)

**Front Street Elementary**  
Tomasina Minneci (Grade 5)

**Joseph A. McNeil School**  
Deshawn Lewter (AIS)

**David Paterson Elementary**  
Lisa Ann Byers (Speech)

**Special Education Department**  
Sabina Perchekly

**Rhodes Academy**  
Desiree Randall (Grade 3)  
Laurie Hamilton (Pre-K)

**Alverta B. Gray Schultz MS**  
Maria Cady (Media Specialist)  
Stephanie Dubose (English)  
Warren Knecht (Math)

**Hempstead High School**  
Beatriz Caban (ENL)  
Jean-Lou Hogu (ENL)  
Betsy Leibur (Science)  
Linton Thomas (English)

### **Committee Chairpersons**

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Erika George, Community Outreach Chairperson	Rhodes Academy
Desiree Maurice, Health & Safety Chair for Elementary Schools	Rhodes Academy
Pamela Green, Health & Safety Chair for Secondary Schools	Front Street School
Maria Cady, Graduate Course Coordinator	ABGS Middle School
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Daphne Pradella, Scholarship Chairperson	Hempstead High School
Sabina Perchekly, Social Committee Chairperson	Special Education Dept.
Wendy Oyeboode, Parliamentarian	ABGS Middle School
Mike Levine, Communications	Joseph A. McNeil School



## **HEMPSTEAD PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

### **Board of Education**

Olga Young – President

Victor Pratt – Vice President

Lamont Johnson – Trustee

Patricia McNeil – Trustee

Randy Stith – Trustee

Patricia Wright, District Clerk

### **Central Administration**

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Acting Superintendent of Schools

Dr. Rodney Gilmore

Associate Superintendent for Human Resources

James Clark

Assistant Superintendent for Strategic Initiatives

Gary Rush

Assistant Superintendent for Curriculum

Djuana Wilson

Assistant Superintendent for Special Education



