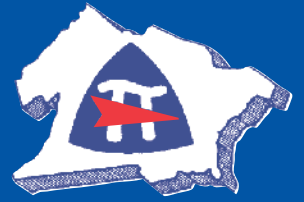


# INTERLOC

UNION COUNTY EDUCATION ASSOCIATION



WINTER 2016-17

## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



**H**appy Holidays and Happy New Year!!! I trust that you had a great holiday. As we embark upon a New

Year, think about something that you want to do differently this year from what you did last year. Think about how you would make that change. I'm always thinking of doing things differently. I think about what works, what doesn't work, and how can I make things better. I look at our Association from where we were to where we are now. We've come a long way and yet there is still more work to be done. However, we cannot do it without **You**. We, as members, need to get more involved not only within our local Association, but also within the county, state, and national Associations. At every level, the Association needs **You**. I know we are all busy, but please find the time to become involved. Stay current with proposed legislation in both the NJ

Legislature and U.S. Congress. Contact your representatives to protect our profession. Finally, take advantage of the many programs and services that are offered to you through the UCEA. We are here to serve **You**.

— Lisa Palin

“The world we have created is a product of our thinking; it cannot be changed without changing our thinking.”

— *Albert Einstein*



### INTERLOC

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# ANGELA LAWLER: NJEA UNION COUNTY EDUCATION SUPPORT PROFESSIONAL OF THE YEAR

The Union County Education Association has selected Angela Lawler of Hillside as the NJEA Union County Education Support Professional of the Year. Angela has served as a secretary to the principal at Hillside High School for fifteen years. UCEA President Lisa Palin says Angela “goes above and beyond not only within her school district but also within the community where she lives. She is also a great advocate for the Hillside EA members.”

As the school secretary, Angela greets every staff member with a smile and a joyful “good morning” or “good evening.” She is often one of the first persons to

arrive at work and one of the last to leave. As the president of her local association, Angela leads by example. She promotes involvement for all school, community, and Association activities by participating herself. Members see her as someone who will be there for them when they face difficult situations. Overall, she serves as an incredible representative of fairness, justice, and reason for the entire local. Angela will be recognized at the NJEA ESP Conference February 3-5, 2017, at the Hilton East Brunswick. The awards ceremony will be held on February 4, 2017. Hope to see you there!



*L-R Michael Boyd, James Frazier, Lisa Palin, Angela Lawler, John Zurka*



## PLAINFIELD EDUCATORS WIN NJEA GRANT TO EXPLORE HERITAGE ASPECTS OF TEXTILE PATTERNS FROM CENTRAL AMERICA

Joanne Barrett and Irene Mitta, two educators from Woodland Elementary School in Plainfield, have been awarded the NJEA Frederick Hipp Foundation Excellence in Education Grant to work with fifth graders and their families on an art project to explore textile patterns and heritage aspects of Central American countries. The grant was one of only 19 awarded by the NJEA, and it was the only one awarded in Union County.

“Linking math and the visual arts is a fantastic way to teach students creativity while improving vital math skills at the same time,” says Superintendent Anna Belin-Pyles. “We are pleased this grant will support our district’s continued commitment to celebrate the cultural heritage of our student population throughout the school year.”

Barrett and Mitta call their project, “Art is Math, Math is Art: Exploring Textile Patterning and Designs of Central America.” Essentially, the endeavor involves students in an intergenerational experience with a focus on the patterns, designs and textiles from Central America. Targeted math skills include patterning, measurement, and geometry. In an after-school club, the fifth graders are working with former students, ages 12-20, and adults from the district’s Picasso Parents group.

Visual arts projects include “molas” (Panama) and textile patterns (Mexico). Students maintain personal arts journals of techniques and patterns created. The project also includes a professional development

component, in which staff members learn how to use specific math skills for printing and patterning.

“This is an exciting adventure for our district,” says Barrett, who teaches math to fourth and fifth graders. Barrett explains that she first learned about the HIPP Foundation and the opportunities that it presented to educators when she attended the Celebration of Excellence at the 2015 NJEA convention. “Ms. Mitta and I often collaborate on Math/Art projects. Applying for a HIPP Grant allowed us the necessary funding to bring an after school program to Woodland.”

Mitta, a K-5 visual arts teacher, notes, “Art is self-expression both personal and cultural. Art helps children understand the world around them. The more we understand each other’s cultures the more we see our similarities.”

So far the program has been a great success. “The children are engaged and eager to learn,” says Mitta. “The community aspect of the program has been a great success with former students happily returning to the art room each week.”

Barrett adds, “All students are enjoying learning new math and visual arts skills. Parents provide a great support network.”

Barrett and Mitta were honored by the NJEA’s Hipp Foundation at the NJEA Convention in Atlantic City. The teachers and the students will also be recognized by the NJEA’s television show, Classroom Close-Up, in January.



# PLAINFIELD EDUCATORS WIN NJEA GRANT TO EXPLORE HERITAGE ASPECTS OF TEXTILE PATTERNS FROM CENTRAL AMERICA *continued*



(L-R) Plainfield Teachers Joanne Barrett and Irene Mitta



An example of a geometrical design

## UPCOMING WORKSHOPS

<b>Your Social Security</b> <b>January 18</b>	<b>C.A.R.E. Part 2 (Cultural, Language &amp; Economic Differences)</b> <b>February 7</b>	<b>Gangs</b> <b>February 15</b>	<b>C.A.R.E. Part 3 (Unrecognized &amp; Undeveloped Abilities)</b> <b>February 21</b>
<b>C.A.R.E. Workshop Part 4</b> <b>March 8</b>	<b>Pensions</b> <b>April 4</b>	<b>Your Social Security</b> <b>April 6</b>	<b>Apps for All</b> <b>May 23</b>

Registration: A \$10.00 deposit is required; a separate \$10.00 check is required for each workshop. Send a check made out to UCEA, along with Name, District, Home Phone & Work Phone number to the UCEA office. Deposits will be returned to participants at the end of the workshop or if the workshop is canceled within three (3) business days prior to the workshop.

All workshops are held at the UCEA office from 4:30 pm to 6:30 pm. Refreshments are provided. **No one will be admitted after 4:30 pm. NO EXCEPTIONS!**

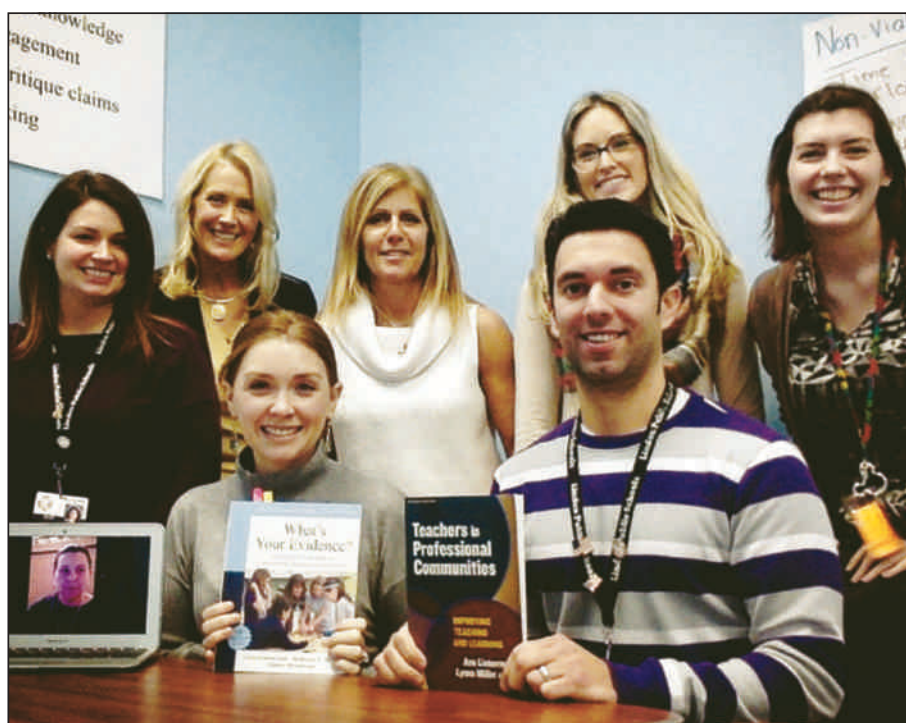


## LINDEN EDUCATORS WIN NEA LEARNING & LEADERSHIP GRANT FOR ELEMENTARY SCIENCE VENTURE

The NEA Foundation recently named Linden educators Cynthia Apalinski, an elementary science specialist, and Aubrey Dollard, a third-grade classroom teacher, as recipients of a \$5,000 Learning & Leadership Grant for the purpose of leading a study group of third through fifth grade teachers. The project is entitled “Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) Elementary Professional Community.” The other group members—Erin Callahan, Lisa Capanna, Amy Maloney, Jordan Naso, Shannon Spaziani, and Peter Spoganetz—will be provided with the tools necessary to successfully support elementary students in the use of evidence to construct scientific explanations and to engage in argumentation as they begin implementing the New Jersey Student Learning Standards for Science. In addition, the group will develop their capacity to engage as a professional learning community that deepens their practice in support of student learning. Specifically, co-facilitators Apalinski and Dollard will

lead the group in book and video study, lesson design and implementation, and reflective practice. Over the course of the learning, Apalinski and Dollard will design the study group sessions based on the group’s needs and feedback from its members. Initially, the group will review and synthesize findings from current research and development about professional learning communities. Next, the group members will support each other as they identify ways to support students in the construction of arguments based on evidence. Throughout the project, group members will examine their own practices, implement change rooted in research, and reflect on their progress together.

Notably, NEA’s Learning & Leadership Grants are provided to individuals to fund participation in high-quality professional experiences, such as summer institutes, conferences, or action research. Grants are also available to fund collegial study, action research, lesson plan development, or mentoring experiences for faculty or staff.



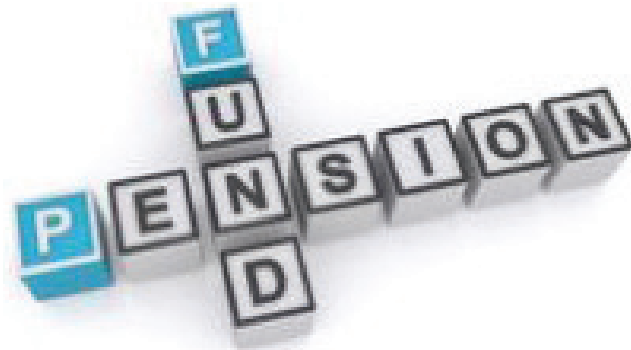


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UCEA website has a new address:  
<http://unioncountyea.org>

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## **PENSION UPDATE**

Thanks to intensive lobbying efforts by NJEA and other public employee unions, Governor Chris Christie signed into law S2810/A4, a bill that mandates the state to make its required pension contributions each fiscal year on a quarterly basis. NJEA and the other public employee unions have advocated for quarterly payments for several years. In fact, in 2014 and 2015, similar bills were vetoed by Christie. The passage of this law, which takes effect on July 1, 2017, represents a significant victory for Association members. The payment of state funding on a quarterly basis allows for the generation of compounded investment returns and prohibits pension funding from being used to cover budget shortfalls. Unquestionably, the passage of the new law is due to the persistence and hard work of pension activists who have advocated on behalf of NJEA members and other union members who are part of the state-administered retirement systems.