Approaching – and Hitting – the Quarter-century Mark

If you want to win the race, keeping the same crew for the duration is always a good strategy. With that in mind, NYSIR took a moment earlier this year to recognize the men and women whose longevity with both the reciprocal and its management company has helped steer The Good Ship NYSIR to long-term success.

“It’s unusual,” says NYSIR President William Furlong, "for an insurer that’s only 27 years old to have so many employees with 20 and 25 years' experience still working for the organization, and we’re fortunate – and thankful – to be able to capitalize on the tradition of excellence they bring to NYSIR.”

Robert Lulley, Executive Vice President of Wright Public Entity, agrees, adding that their tenure with the company can be interpreted as a measure of dedication to the idea of a public school insurance reciprocal, too. “I’m sure these folks would tell you that, while they still enjoy working for NYSIR and Wright, they’re here because they continue to believe..."

Continued on page 3.

NYSIR’s New Executive Director
Lulley named to top position

It could happen to you
An off-campus incident comes back to school

L-R: (STANDING TOP ROW) FRED BLACK, STEVE KEARNS, TERRY GREENE, RICHARD CALAME (STANDING SECOND ROW) RON FALCONE, JIM HU, RICHARD HSIA, PAUL WEINSTEIN, BOB BAMBINO (SEATED) MARY DESANTIS, MICHELE ALAIMO, TERRY MURNAANE, JANET WARD
(NOT PICTURED) BRETT CARRUTHERS, SUSAN CIERVO-BOYLE
INTRODUCING NYSIR’S NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

Robert W. Lulley, Jr., currently Executive Vice President of Wright Public Entity, has been selected to become the fifth Executive Director of the New York Schools Insurance Reciprocal (NYSIR).

Chosen from a field of candidates by the NYSIR Board of Governors, Lulley will assume his new role beginning January 1.

In the wake of a 17-year career with Wright, NYSIR’s management company, Lulley offers extensive experience with the reciprocal, having supported its board and executive directors as the leader of a Wright division that, since NYSIR’s inception, has provided the public school insurer with claims management, marketing, risk management and underwriting services.

He fills a position that has been open since April of 2015, the duties of which have been overseen in the interim by Acting Executive Director Thomas Austin.

THE NYSIR CONNECTION

“The board is excited to be working with a professional who not only demonstrates insurance expertise, but who is intimately familiar with NYSIR’s mission, values and organizational needs,” noted NYSIR President William Furlong. “During his career he has served in various leadership roles at Wright. As President of the NYSIR Division, Bob helped NYSIR successfully grow its subscriber and premium bases and add new coverages and services for member districts and BOCES. As NYSIR’s new executive director, Bob will help strengthen the 28-year business relationship between Wright and NYSIR well into the future.”

Lulley’s 30-year insurance career included stops at Aetna Life and Casualty and Capital Mutual Insurance before he came to Wright. “It’s a privilege to have been chosen by the NYSIR board to lead the organization as its executive director,” said Lulley. “Over the years I’ve gotten to know not just the operational ins and outs of the reciprocal, but the people who run it – school superintendents and business officials from across the state, as well as the talented administrators at NYSIR’s Uniondale headquarters – so I know just how committed they are.

“I look forward with great anticipation to supporting them in their mission to serve New York’s school districts and BOCES at the highest levels.”
NYSIR’S NEW EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR, CONTINUED

According to Douglas Hayden, President of Wright Public Entity, John Peppard, currently Regional Manager of Marketing and Subscriber Support for NYSIR member school districts in Rockland, Putnam, Westchester, Nassau and Suffolk counties, has been appointed to replace Lulley. Peppard will become Senior Vice President and Manager of Wright’s NYSIR program.

ADDITIONAL THANKS

Furlong also offered appreciation to Austin, “whose willingness to guide NYSIR’s operations during our extensive search was a mark of true professionalism. The board is in his debt.” Austin will continue on in his earlier role as Assistant Executive Director when Lulley assumes his new title.

THE QUARTER-CENTURY MARK, CONTINUED

in the intrinsic value of the reciprocal.”

Adding his thanks for the decades-long contributions of employees, Acting NYSIR Executive Director Tom Austin reminded that their longevity on the job also reflects NYSIR’s commitment to its mission and founding principles, which include attentive claims management, continuously evolving coverage, stability of pricing and long-term relationships with schools based on trust and exceptional service.

CELEBRATING 25 YEARS OF SERVICE:

- ROBERT BAMBITNO, Executive Vice President, Wright
- RICHARD CALAME, Senior Vice President and Director of Claims, Wright
- TERENCE GREENE, Director of Accounting and Finance, NYSIR
- PAUL WEINSTEIN, Vice President and Director of Marketing and Subscriber Support, Wright.

I’m sure these folks would tell you that, while they still enjoy working for NYSIR and Wright, they’re here because they continue to believe in the intrinsic value of the reciprocal.

ROBERT LULLEY
EXECUTIVE VICE PRESIDENT
OF WRIGHT PUBLIC ENTITY

CELEBRATING 20+ YEARS OF SERVICE:

- MICHELE ALAIMO, Client Services Representative, Wright
- FRED BLACK, Vice President of Underwriting, Wright
- BRETT CARRUTHERS, Dir. of Risk Management Services, Wright
- SUSAN CIERVO-BOYLE, Senior Loss Control Representative, Wright
- MARY DESANTIS, Client Services Representative, Wright
- RONALD FALCONE, Senior Vice President of Claims, Wright
- RICHARD HSIA, Attorney, Wright
- JIM HU, Acting Operations Officer and Director of IT and Infrastructure, NYSIR
- STEVE KEARNS, Senior Underwriter, Wright
- TERRY MURNAKE, Auto Claim Supervisor, Wright
- JANET WARD, Manager, Client Services Unit, Wright
**NYSIR recently welcomed several new members** to its Board of Governors: Kim Brumley, Tom McDaid, Gregory Carlson and Richard Cunningham.

Brumley represents the Northern Capital Region and sits on the Finance Committee. She joined the NYSIR board in August along with Tom McDaid, who represents the Nassau Region and sits on the Planning and Development Committee. Cunningham and Carlson's board seats were approved in October. Cunningham also represents the Nassau Region and sits on the Operations Committee, while Carlson sits on the Planning and Development Committee and represents the Southern Westchester Region.

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**Richard Cunningham**

Richard Cunningham is Assistant Superintendent for Business at Plainview-Old Bethpage School District.

**HOW DID YOU GET INTO THIS FIELD?**
I found my way into the business office in a rather unconventional way. While I was serving as an assistant principal in the Kings Park School District, I mentioned to my superintendent that I saw myself being an assistant superintendent for business someday. While I saw that happening after being a long-time school principal, I was directed to the business office as the administrator for finance and administrative services within a year.

**WHAT'S ONE THING YOU WOULD LIKE PEOPLE TO KNOW ABOUT NYSIR?**
NYSIR gives excellent advice and is always ready to support your district. I have found that the organization’s Board of Governors has been able to navigate the needs and financial resources of all NYSIR's member districts from across the state.

**WHAT HAS YOUR EXPERIENCE AS A NYSIR SUBSCRIBER BEEN LIKE?**
Our district Senior Loss Control Specialist, Robert Blaisdell, has helped me minimize the potential for loss and protect the district with his suggestions.

**MOTTO TO LIVE BY:**
Number one – Ski the line you're most comfortable with. Number two – Expect a miracle.

**FAVORITE WINTER ACTIVITY:**
Skiing.

**IN MY FREE TIME I CAN BE FOUND...**
Playing bass in my band, Martini Garden.

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**Kim Brumley**

Kim Brumley is Business Manager for Amsterdam City School District.

**HOW DID YOU GET INTO THIS FIELD?**
I started my career as a cost accountant. I entered into the public sector world and have enjoyed it ever since.

**WHAT'S ONE THING YOU WOULD LIKE PEOPLE TO KNOW ABOUT NYSIR?**
It's a great asset to my school district with regard to risk management and containing cost.

**WHAT HAS YOUR EXPERIENCE AS A NYSIR SUBSCRIBER BEEN LIKE?**
Our district Senior Loss Control Specialist, Robert Blaisdell, has helped me minimize the potential for loss and protect the district with his suggestions.

**MOTTO TO LIVE BY:**
If you do not have anything nice to say, do not say anything at all.

**FAVORITE WINTER ACTIVITY:**
Counting the days before I can golf.

**IN MY FREE TIME I CAN BE FOUND...**
Golfing.
Gregory Ehret Carlson

Gregory Ehret Carlson is Assistant Superintendent for Business and Management Services, District Clerk, Deputy Treasurer, Registrar, Property Control Manager and Trustee of the Byram Hills Teachers Association Benefit Fund for Byram Hills Central School District in Armonk.

- **CAREER REVIEW:** I'm completing my 25th year in public education and have been employed at Byram Hills for the past 18 years. My career has focused on not-for-profit organizations, an interest that started first at an independent school, then in healthcare, followed by public schools. **WHAT SHOULD PEOPLE KNOW ABOUT NYSIR:** NYSIR is a highly structured, well-organized, complex insurance organization that's supported by high-caliber professionals and led by an extraordinary Board of Governors. NYSIR's success is a function of all those factors. **MOTTO TO LIVE BY:** Work hard, play hard. **FAVORITE WINTER ACTIVITY:** My favorite winter activity and passion is alpine skiing. Every weekend (plus holidays and snow days) from mid-November through early April you'll find me at Ski Butternut in Great Barrington, MA. I've been a ski instructor there for 18 years. In my role as a trainer, I teach instructors how to be more effective teachers and better skiers. **INTERESTING FACT:** My middle name is Ehret, which was my father’s first name and my oldest son’s middle name. It came from a German immigrant, George Ehret, who in 1866 established the Hell Gate Brewery in New York City. The Hell Gate Brewery evolved into the largest brewery in the United States, and George Ehret had the distinction of being the wealthiest man in America.

Thomas McDaid

Tom McDaid is Assistant Superintendent for Business and Operations at North Merrick UFSD.

- **HOW DID YOU GET INTO THIS FIELD?** Prior to coming to North Merrick, I served as assistant superintendent of business and human resources at Locust Valley UFSD and as business administrator at Malverne UFSD. Before that, I was a trial attorney and argued twice before the New York State Appellate Court. As an experienced lawyer and business leader, I have a broad knowledge of legal issues, school administration, fiscal management, insurance and risk management. **WHAT'S ONE THING YOU WOULD LIKE PEOPLE TO KNOW ABOUT NYSIR?** I'm very excited to have been chosen by NYSIR subscribers in Nassau County to represent the region on the board, and I'm looking forward to using my school, business and legal background for the success of NYSIR. **WHAT'S YOUR EXPERIENCE AS A NYSIR SUBSCRIBER BEEN LIKE?** Very positive! **MOTTO TO LIVE BY:** It's about how hard you can get hit and keep moving forward. **FAVORITE WINTER ACTIVITY:** Spending time with my family. **AN INTERESTING FACT ABOUT YOURSELF:** I played Division 2 basketball at Adelphi. **AS I WAS GROWING UP, I ALWAYS WANTED TO BE...** Shortstop for the Yankees. **IN MY FREE TIME I CAN BE FOUND...** Spending time with family and attending sporting events.
Education. It’s a complicated enterprise. Faculty. Staff. Students. Supplies. Transportation. Buildings and grounds. With seemingly a thousand things demanding attention all at once, risk management is bound to slip to the bottom of the list every once in a while, right? Here’s why it shouldn’t, and why it’s important to remember…

It Could Happen to You.

Ever found yourself convinced that your school district’s implication in a lawsuit would simply HAVE to be nullified by the common-sense facts of the case? As revealed by this real-life court decision from the files of NYSIR’s Claims Department, if you think a jury can’t help but see it your way… think again.

As the result of a fight that began with an instance of bullying, a student at a middle school insured by NYSIR was hospitalized several years ago with fractures to his ankle. The altercation began on a bus ride home from school, when the victim was verbally harassed by another student. The physical confrontation, however, took place only after both boys had gotten off the bus and it had pulled away.

Because of the extent of the victim’s injuries, his parents sued the school district and two other defendants for monetary damages, claiming in part that the district was negligent in the operation of the bus, and in assuring that students riding it were properly supervised.

The boy’s parents also claimed the middle school in particular had failed to recognize that the assailant had engaged in other incidents of bullying at the school, and had allowed the harassment and intimidation to continue.

HERE’S THE TWIST

The bus wasn’t owned by the district; it was a city bus. And the assault didn’t occur anywhere near the school. It happened on a city sidewalk.

WHO’S IN CHARGE HERE?

In a non-contractual agreement with a municipal bus company, the district purchased transit cards that students and their families could buy at discounted rates and use to get back and forth to school. As part of the deal, the bus company supplied monitors to control student activity, but in this case the...
monitor had gotten off at a stop just prior to the spot where the fight occurred.

LET’S RECAP.

The bullying occurred on a bus that didn’t belong to the school district, and the actual fight took place on a city sidewalk, not school property – facts that might reasonably be expected to put the altercation, and the claim, outside what’s generally called the district’s “sphere of influence.” Or would they?

After learning about the fight and the victim’s hospitalization, middle school officials began an investigation into the incident that involved not only statements from other students familiar with the victim and the assailant, but testimony by the injured student to the school board. Based on that information, the student who initiated the attack was expelled from school. That might seem like an appropriate outcome under the circumstances, but in fact the expulsion may have backfired and put the district in a compromising position.

HOW?

Emphasizing during trial that the incident had occurred outside the district’s reasonable sphere of influence, counsel for the district also argued that school officials had no specific notice of developments that might put one of its students in jeopardy. Lawyers for the victim’s parents countered, however, that the school’s eventual expulsion of the student who committed the assault effectively amounted to evidence that the school had, indeed, been aware of his history of bullying and harassment. The actual assault was, in essence, the last straw.

The jury ruled on behalf of the plaintiffs, deciding that the district was indeed responsible for monitoring students on a city bus, and that the school could be held liable for foreseeable injuries.

LESSONS LEARNED?

No matter how clearly you see the evidence lining up on your side, the view from the jury box can be quite different. What may seem like common sense isn't always common… and that can lead to a bad result on a good case.
“Thunder,” noted Mark Twain, “is good. Thunder is impressive. But it is the lightning that does the work.”

But like any downpour, it’s followed by a rainbow – in this case a synopsis of NYSIR’s partnerships with education groups and associations, its collaborative approach to risk management, its financial strength and its focus on best practices, all of which combine to help NYSIR subscriber districts and BOCES minimize damages caused by severe weather.

It’s an interesting six minutes, and visitors to NYSIR’s homepage – members and non-members alike – are invited to get their feet wet.

Subscribers get both when they click on Lessons From the Storm Front, a colorful new primer on the dangers of catastrophic weather events, and the latest addition to nysir.org.

The video delivers a short summary of damaging rain, hail, wind and snow events that have befallen NYSIR members over the past decade, inundating viewers with their own short storm of eye-opening wind speeds, storm tallies, rainfall amounts and property loss figures.