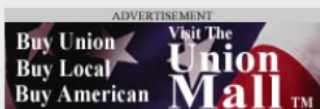


Cuomo's Anti-Hunger Task Force

- A Holiday Message From The Niagara-Orleans AFL-CIO Central Labor Council
- Believe It Or Not: 'Made In The USA' Is Now 'Trendy' In China
- Buffalo United University Professions Union Leader Frederick Floss Named New Fiscal Policy Institute Executive Director
- It's That Time Of Year: Unions & Their Members 'Give Back' To Their Western New York Communities This Holiday Season
- The Newest Member Of The Niagara County Legislature – IBEW Local 237's Mark Grozio – Credits 'Door-To-Door' Effort In Successful Run For Elected Office
- With A Battle Cry Of 'Today It Ends!' – Niagara County's Unions Rally For 'Niagara's Future & Its Children's Future'
- Niagara-Orleans AFL-CIO Labor Council Unites With The Niagara County Coalition Of Public Employees Unions To Send A 'Strong Message' To The Elected Community

More news >>



OrleansCounty, meanwhile, has 430 Full-Time, Union-Represented Public Employees and a Total of 900 County Workers Covered Under its Overall Health Care Plan that Involved the Expertise of Crown Benefits. “We Started Working With Crown Benefits in the Early 2000s. They Were ‘New’ at the Time,” Nesbitt Told Your Regional, On-Line Labor Newspaper Late Last Week. “We Caught Them at the ‘Right Time’ and as it Turned Out – it was a ‘Good Thing.’ We Took Control of Our Plan Designs and We Created a Spreadsheet Where We Knew Exactly What the Cost Was to Make a Change. They Saved Us a lot of Money - About Three Quarters of a Million Dollars - and for Our Size, it was a ‘Good Fit.’”

Asked What Made Him Consider What Was Being Offered as Opposed to Whiting Door - Which According to Briggs, Did Not Embrace What the USW Proposed Via Crown Benefits With *Open Arms*, Nesbitt Jokingly Answered: “You Need to Convince (Management) it was ‘Their’ Idea.”

“We Were Able to Negotiate in a ‘Union Environment’ Where ‘Nobody’s Fooled,” Nesbitt Continued. “(Negotiations) are ‘Give and Take’ and You Have to Offer Something ‘Acceptable.’ It’s Not Selling ‘Garbage.’ It’s the ‘Same Plan’ That Takes Care of ‘My’ Family. This Saved (the County) Money and Still Offered the ‘Best’ for Our Families. While I’ve Seen Reluctance From Some (Area) Employers (on What Crown Benefits Brings to the Table), the More Anyone Succeeds With This, the More Receptive They are to it. And the Service (Orleans County Gets) from Crown’s been Fantastic. Whenever’s There’s a Problem, They Either Get it Taken Care of it - or if it Can’t Be Taken Care of, They Have a Good Explanation of Why Not.”

This Wednesday (March 19th), Crown Benefits is Co-Sponsoring with the Niagara-Orleans AFL-CIO Labor Council an Educational Seminar Entitled: *Understanding Health Care Reform* (Which Will Be Held at Lewiston Fire Hall #2 at 1705 Saunders Settlement Road in Niagara Falls, Beginning at 5:30 p.m. - For More Information Contact Niagara-Orleans AFL-CIO Labor Council/United Way of Greater Niagara Labor Liaison Bill Jakobi at [716-216-4582](tel:716-216-4582) or Via E-Mail at [bill@uwgn.org](mailto:bill@uwgn.org)). The Seminar Will Focus on How Health Care Reform Currently Impacts the Collective Bargaining Process. It Will Also Offer a Number of Potential Strategies for Union Leadership to Consider When Responding to Employers and Their Bargaining Positions Concerning the Ramifications of Health Care Reform.

“It’s an Educational Opportunity for Labor Unions - in a ‘Classroom Setting’ - to Better Understand What’s Going On (in Regards to Health Care) in Contract Negotiations,” Crown Benefits Group Vice President of Sales Tony Tronolone Told WNYLaborToday.com.

“Hopefully They’ll Also Get the Opportunity to Better Understand What Crown Benefits Offers and Who We are,” Added Crown Benefits Chief Executive Officer Stephen Jepson.

Crown Benefits Was Established as and Continues to Administer as the *Broker of Record* - the Alliance of Western New York VEBA Trust (Both the USW’s Briggs and Orleans County’s Nesbitt Both Serve as Chair Members of the Alliance, Which Consists of a Mix of Labor and Management Representatives). Crown Benefits was the *First Trust of its Kind* in the Eight Counties of Western New York to Maintain Autonomy for its Member Clients in Both Plan Design and Rating Methodology, Crown Benefits Officials said.

Crown Benefits Currently Represents 26 Employer Groups With More Than 6,500 Employees and 14,000 Members. Those Public and Private Unions Who’ve Taken Advantage of its Services Run the *Labor Gamut* from the American Federation of State, County & Municipal Employees (AFSCME), the Civil Service Employees Association (CSEA) and its Numerous Units Across the Region (Including North Tonawanda in Niagara County and Chautauqua County in the Southern Tier) to the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW/Local 41), the Office and Professional Employees International Union (OPEIU) and the USW, to Name Just a Few.