

LI People ON THE MOVE



Jacqueline Williams of Freeport has been hired as program coordinator of **YouthBuild Long Island**, a signature program of United Way of Long Island in Hempstead. She was a clerk at HempsteadWorks in Hempstead.



Patricia Unz of Merrick, an associate attorney at **Guercio & Guercio** in Farmingdale, has been promoted to partner.



Gregory Gillen of Port Washington, an associate attorney at **Guercio & Guercio** in Farmingdale, has been promoted to partner.



Susan Santoro of Manhattan, an attorney and co-owner of Oceanville Mason Supply in Oceanside, has been elected vice president of the board of directors of **Literacy Nassau** in Wantagh.

Send submissions and color headshots to **peopleonthemove@newsday.com**

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NYS UNION MEMBERSHIP FALLS FOR 2ND YEAR

BY JAMES T. MADORE
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Unions in New York State lost 140,000 members last year, the second decline in as many years, new federal data shows.

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics reported on Wednesday the ranks of private-sector and government-worker unions in the state totaled 1.73 million in 2019, down 7.5% from a year earlier.

The bureau did not release data for Long Island and the state's other nine regions. However, local labor experts and union activists said there are about 250,000 members in Nassau and Suffolk counties.

The statewide drop in union membership between 2018 and last year coincided with a decline of 1.8% in the number of people employed, from 8.40 million to 8.25 million.

Bureau regional economist Bruce Bergman said a number of factors are behind the declines. "The population is declining and is getting older," he said. "These figures are for wage-and-salary employees and don't include the number of people who are self-employed, which is a growing area of the economy."

Union membership in the state has fluctuated a lot since 2013. Last year's decline followed a 145,000-member drop in 2018 and an increase of 75,000 in 2017. Union membership dropped by 96,000 in 2016, increased by 58,000 in 2015, dropped by 6,000 in 2014 and in-



Statewide, unions in 2019 lost 140,000 members, down 7.5% from 2018, federal data show.

UNION MEMBERSHIP IN NYS: 10-YEAR CHANGE

2010
1.96 million

(24.2% of all workers)

2019
1.73 million

(21% of all workers)

SOURCE: U.S. BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS

creased by 145,000 in 2013.

New York was the second-most unionized state in the country last year, after Hawaii.

In New York, 21% of workers belong to unions, compared with 23.5% in Hawaii. In both states, the largest concentration is in government.

The least unionized state was South Carolina, where only 2.2% of workers are union members.

Mario Cilento, president of the state AFL-CIO, an umbrella group of unions, said it's difficult to sign up new members because of employers' opposition.

"Corporations continue to ramp up efforts to block union organizing, which is why we need crucial reforms at the national level to protect working men and women and their right to form unions," he said, adding public opinion polls show support for organized labor at a 50-year high of 64%.

The labor statistics bureau reported that an additional

145,000 New Yorkers who are not union members are still represented by unions in the workplace.

Nationwide, the bureau found the annual earnings of union members in 2018 were \$10,556 higher, on average, than the earnings of nonunion workers.

Union members accounted for 10.3% of all workers in the country last year, the lowest rate since this set of records began in 1983.

The data comes from a monthly survey of 60,000 households about employment status and earnings of people age 16 and over, called the Current Population Survey, conducted by the U.S. Census Bureau.

Georgia company buys LI wholesale nursery

A national landscaping supply company in Georgia has bought The Garden Dept., a 44-year-old wholesale nursery and horticultural distributor headquartered in Coram.

SiteOne Landscape Supply Inc., based in Roswell, Georgia, bought the Long Island business for an undisclosed sum, The Garden Dept. said.

"This is a great opportunity for my staff, and the combination of the two companies opens the brand up to endless possibilities for our clients in the Long Island market," Garden Dept. owner Don Caroleo, whose grandfather Don Caroleo Sr. founded the business in 1976, said in a



Don Caroleo, owner of The Garden Dept., based in Coram.

statement Tuesday.

The Garden Dept. provides landscaping and hardscaping products to commercial and residential customers. The company opened a wholesale

distribution center in Dix Hills in 2011. In 2018, its distribution center opened in Speonk.

All three of The Garden Dept.'s locations will remain open, Caroleo said. "There

will be absolutely no material changes to the company," Caroleo said.

The company did not respond to an inquiry about how many employees it has.

SiteOne Landscape Supply, a publicly traded company, acquired 10 companies last year, and The Garden Dept. is its third acquisition of 2020.

"The Garden Dept. is an excellent fit with SiteOne as they significantly strengthen our market leading nursery and landscape supply position in the Long Island market," Doug Black, chairman and CEO of SiteOne Landscape Supply, said in a statement last week. — TORY N. PARRISH