UNPRECEDENTED
UNFAIR UNBEARABLE

STATE BUDGET NOT GOOD FOR YOU —— SEE INSIDE...
No real answers on future of juvenile justice

ALBANY — Few areas of the state budget have received more attention or received more misrepresentation of the facts than juvenile justice.

The proposed budget calls for the elimination of 176 beds and elimination of the 12-month notice requirement for closure or significant downsizing currently in law, a decision that all closure decisions are sound policy and give affected communities adequate notice.

Office of Children and Family Services Commissioner Gladys Carrion whose department is at the center of controversy said sex offenders for citizens to “incentivize” good behavior, has offered no specifics on how DCFS will transform its juvenile justice operations into a community based system.

In testimony and questioning before the state Legislature’s fiscal committees, Carrion continued her vague insistence that staff are being adequately trained to deal with clients in a more therapeutic way and sidestepped questions about spikes in the-on-the-job injury among staff, concerns about the adequacy of resources and public safety in community settings.

Services, people, communities take brunt of state budget pain

The pain isn’t shared. It’s not fair and you are the target.

The proposed $132.9 billion New York state budget that takes effect April 1 is too unfair to the community like no other in our state’s history.

Schools and hospitals, care for elderly and people with developmental disabilities. Our communities depend on our ability to ensure that adequate funding is available. We are asking you to do in your community like no other in our state’s history.

Carrion, in testimony about the need met recently and eagerly submitted nearly 100 VOICE/CSEA Monroe County child care providers and a number of other providers from around the state.

Nearly 100 VOICE/CSEA Monroe County child care centers and state associations developed community-based plans for reforming the foster care system and asked that all Labor Department’s proposed budget cuts to child care. They also pledged to “Get on the same page” for Albany on May 14 to meet with hundreds of other providers from around the state.

Save the dates!

• Women’s Conference, April 1 to 3, in Albany;
• Spring Workshop, May 20 to 22 in Niagara Falls;
• Retiree Delegates Meeting, Aug. 18 to 21 in Niagara Falls; and
• Annual Delegates Meeting, Aug. 3 to 7, New York City.

Check www.csealocal1000.org for information about the CSEA Women’s Conference. Registration information and details about other events will be posted on the website as it becomes available.

CSEA members fight back

“I care for people who are mentally ill and attempt to help them stabilize and be able to come back into society. I do everything from A to Z for them — their total care, making sure they get to their doctors appointments, proper medication, attend programs and things of that nature. The job I do is very important because mental health affects everyone. Everyone has someone in their family who is not doing well in that area.” — Herman Williams, Mental Hygiene Therapy Aide, Pilgrim Psychiatric Center

CSEA is advocating for a budget that makes cuts, but does little to provide fairness and that means a budget approach that’s fair for all, provides help for all and delivers for all from inside. The budget plan focuses almost exclusively on dramatic cuts without addressing business tax loopholes, corporate welfare and extending a tax break to the wealthiest New Yorkers.

There’s nothing fair nor shared about this state budget,” said CSEA President Danny Donohue.

Slash and burn

The governor’s plan uses a lot of new phrases, but it’s largely the same old slash-and-burn approach to a budget on an unprecedented scale. It cuts aid to communities, hospitals of Children and Family Services so drastically that it is sure to cause closures and layoffs.

State hospitals alone face more than $167 million in direct cuts, along with other funding cuts that will undermine services people need. State aid for schools is cut by nearly $3 billion at the same time a new property tax cap is likely to be enacted, which will severely limit school budget options and affect programs and jobs.

New York state agency operations that have been slowed since the past two years are facing a 10 percent across-the-board cut along with a demand that labor agreements expire. In New York State, we are proposing additional $450 million in savings or up to 9,800 people will lose their jobs.

CSEA has repeatedly made the case that layoffs will harm economic recovery. When people are put out of work, CSEA believes paychecks won’t be spent in your community, taxes that won’t be paid, services that won’t be delivered and a drain on public assistance and other services.

“CSEA has repeatedly said we are prepared to do our part and work with the administration for a better New York. We are not willing to see the necessary services that CSEA members and our communities in the state used as a bargaining chip to maintain tax breaks for millionaires,” Donohue said.

CSEA is advocating for a budget that makes choices we can live with that finds a balanced approach to address New York’s fiscal challenges. CSEA wants a budget that ensures our most vulnerable people get the care and help they need while we work together to provide our communities even better places to live.

Learn more about what is at stake and what you can do to help throughout this edition. You can get the latest news and developments by staying up to date at www.csealocal1000.org.

Ugly outlook for state operations

There are many bad choices ahead in New York state agency operations and contract negotiations.

Gov. Andrew Cuomo’s proposed budget seeks a 10 percent across-the-board cut in all agencies on top of massive cuts that agencies absorbed over the past two years.

Many agencies are already struggling to operate with skeleton crews and inadequate resources. New York state agency operations and contractual agreements must stabilize and retain workforce capacity and quality. The state budget must provide the funding necessary to keep state agencies running effectively.

Government operations have already been decimated over the past two years. SUNY hospitals alone face up to or up to 9,800 million in labor savings or up to 9,800 people could be laid off. It is not yet clear how those savings might be achieved. State contracts expire April 1 and the administration has not yet responded to CSEA’s request to begin negotiations on successor agreements.

Further complicating the outlook are plans for closing several yet to be determined correctional facilities. The budget proposal calls for a task force to reach agreement on the specific facilities by May 1 — a month after the budget is due. Under the budget proposal, if the task force cannot agree, the commissioner of corrections would have the authority to make the decision.

CSEA has expressed serious concerns about provisions that would grant similar authority to the commissioner of the Department of Health and the commissioner of Mental Health to make similar determinations about the fate of juvenile justice, mental health and developmental disabilities facilities in short notice.

“There are many unanswered questions about this budget and what it means for communities, people and services,” said CSEA President Danny Donohue. “We need some better information and understanding before we can really respond. But CSEA is certainly not going to just accept what’s put in front of us — negotiation requires dialogue.”
A better New York for all

You might have noticed this edition of The Work Force has a single-minded focus — the proposed state budget and the devastating impact it will have on you and your communities. There is no issue.

The cuts and the attack on public services are unprecedented, unfair and unbearable. CSEA believes there can and should be better choices.

First, keeping people working must be a top priority. No politician can create jobs by laying people off. It’s bad for the economy and it destroys lives. Make no mistake, the massive cuts proposed to all areas of the proposed budget will have an avalanche effect on safety, services and other jobs.

Second, New York cannot address a massive deficit with one hand tied behind its back. It’s fiscally irrational to only cut funding while ignoring corporate welfare, business loopholes and cutting taxes for the wealthiest New Yorkers.

Third, New Yorkers need budget choices we can be proud of — for all. It’s not right to prey on the sick, the elderly or students. Education, health care and safety should not be the first places to cut.

The public likes the idea of cutting waste in government. Nothing wrong with that, but public opinion takes a very different turn when people recognize the necessary services and the people they know and rely on are what’s at risk.

It is up to you to help make your family, friends and neighbors understand the human face that’s on the line in this budget.

We need a better New York for all. That means fair for all, help for all and sacrifice from all.

Why is the Triborough Amendment important?

The Triborough Amendment was passed by the New York State Legislature in the early 1980s. It amended the Taylor Law in order to counteract the fact that the employees did not have the right to strike.

Triborough makes the employer continue all terms and conditions of employment, unchanged, until a new contract is negotiated. Since we do not have the right to strike, this forces the employer to negotiate in good faith.

If an employer attempts to change things now, it is an improper practice. Without Triborough, the employer would have zero incentive to negotiate. They would just impose their will.

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If the Triborough Amendment were eliminated, how would it affect you and other CSEA members?

• Your employer could reduce or eliminate pay and benefits in the expired contract.
• Your employer could change your health insurance or stop providing it to you and your family!
• Your employer could take away holidays!
• Your employer could decrease or increase your hours of work!
• Your employer and CSEA couldn’t agree on a new contract, the employer could impose its own “contract” on you and your fellow members!
• Your employer could reduce or eliminate any and all benefits except the minimum wage!
The proposed state health care budget will lead to debilitating cuts to public hospitals, nursing homes and other health facilities. The governor proposed a $2.9 billion cut to Medicaid spending, but the cuts will instead total $5.6 billion when federal matching funds are taken into account.

The budget also cuts funding for the Roswell Park Cancer Institute by $7.8 million – a 10 percent cut that will be devastating to the center’s patients. At press time, no other specific cuts to health care have been announced, as the governor has named a Medicaid Redesign Team to find ways to cut spending in accordance with the governor’s budget. If the team is unable to make the cuts, it will allow the state’s health commissioner to unilaterally cut costs.

Millions of New Yorkers rely on public hospitals and nursing homes to provide them with quality health care, and the governor’s budget takes away that safety net. The size of the governor’s proposed cuts will force hospitals and nursing homes to close, reducing health care access and devastating local economies that rely on these facilities for jobs. Under the governor’s budget, New Yorkers will have to travel farther and wait longer for care. This is not sharing the pain. This is causing more.

— Janice Gavin

State’s health care budget a sick reality

Editor’s note: SUNY medical centers in Stony Brook, Brooklyn and Syracuse face a combined loss of more than $150 million in state’s health commissioner make the cuts, the budget allows according with the governor’s proposed state budget. If the team is unable to make the cuts, it will allow the state’s health commissioner to unilaterally cut costs.

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— Janice Gavin

SUNY hospital workers concerned about budget impact on health care, staffing

While hospital management is downplaying the cuts and that no jobs or programs are going to be removed, the reality is that there’s a shadow work force of temporary workers, a control local school boards,” said Suffolk Educational Local President Maria Navarro.

“The costs for health care and fuel for school buses rise and we won’t support it whether Albany has set an artificial ceiling on what schools can spend. A number of ideas have been proposed but many people are still trying to find a solution that works for all. I applaud the work that many local school boards are doing to help homeowners who are in financial distress,” said said Board of Education President Bill Ricciolo.

“The residents of Newburgh are a key part of the regional economy? As the tax cap debate escalates, one question come to mind: How is Long Island going to attract new jobs and businesses and ensure a bright future for its young people if a tax cap severely hampers the ability of school districts to create the trained workforce needed to support a revitalized regional economy?”

— Rich Impagliazzo

Top reasons to oppose property tax caps

1. Tax caps WILL NOT lower anyone’s taxes. They may just not rise as fast.

2. Tax caps WILL NOT ensure that residents’ individual tax bills won’t go up more than a small amount each year.

3. Tax caps WILL NOT help anyone who can’t afford their current property taxes.

4. Tax caps WILL make the local revenue system more regressive.

5. Tax caps WILL NOT change the main drivers behind higher property taxes.

Property tax cap threatens quality of schools, communities

CSEA members working for Long Island’s school districts are taxpayers who live and work in their respective communities, they face double jeopardy. They are also represented by a CSEA local, whose job is to ensure that the promise of education for our children is preserved.

For the past 30 years, the state has removed the tools that allow for the growth of the property tax cap debate. As the tax cap debate escalates, one question come to mind: How is Long Island going to attract new jobs and businesses and ensure a bright future for its young people if a tax cap severely hampers the ability of school districts to create the trained workforce needed to support a revitalized regional economy?”

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Top 10 reasons to oppose property tax caps

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5. Tax caps WILL NOT change the main drivers behind higher property taxes.

6. Tax caps WILL NOT change the demand or need for local services.

7. Tax caps WILL impair public safety.

8. Tax caps WILL impair the quality of K-12 education.

9. Tax caps WILL lead to deteriorating streets and roads.

10. Tax caps WILL NOT SOLVE THE PROBLEM OF HIGH PROPERTY TAXES. THEY WILL COMPLICATE THE QUALITY OF LIFE IN NEW YORK.
CSEA members fight back against attacks
Pride in work, concern over cuts

**Pride in work, concern over cuts**

“Now more than ever, it’s important for every one of us to become involved in the fight. CSEA is only as strong as its members. The governor’s proposed budget will impact each and every one of us. We must be participates; we cannot be spectators.”

— Justin Lelonek, Department of Social Services, Erie County Unit and Next Wave member

“A better New York for all — Fair for all • Help for all • Sacrifice from all

“T”his budget will destroy so much of the state. As a parent, I am angry. My kids are in school. They have already lost so much in their school – the teachers, the aides. I also worry about what will happen to the people I care for at work. You can’t just put them out on the streets.”

— Maria Johnson, Buffalo Psychiatric Center Local

“Do not forget to fight back

“T”hey make us angry to see all the attacks on us. For years, no one wanted our jobs. We supervise clients with mental illness and chemical addictions to make sure they are not relapsing and starting to use again. It’s a job no one wanted, yet new jobs like mine are under attack. We have worked hard to negotiate contracts with fair wages and benefits. But we just aren’t pulling in the huge salaries and gold-plated benefits we’re hearing about in the media. We're the closest thing to family. We take them out in the community to programs and jobs that give them a purpose. Back in the era of Willowbrook, you had people wandering the streets. Now, they are in community homes, treated like family. Everybody seems to think we make these big salaries, but we don’t. Overtime only happens when we’re short on stuff.”

— Gerard Kent, therapy aide, Taconic DDSO

Help counter media misinformation

There’s a lot of misinformation in the public mind today — much of it perpetuated by the media. CSEA needs your help to get out the facts about who you are and what you do.

* State the facts directly, simply and accurately.
* Letters to the editor should be short, to the point and timely.
* Challenge misinformation and ignorant opinion on news blogs online.
* The facts directly, simply and accurately.
* Don’t get into an argument — people are entitled to their opinions even if they’re wrong.

Write a letter to the editor of your local newspaper, challenging biased or misleading stories about the work you do, your salary and benefits. Be proud of who you are and write about your commitment to making your community a better place.

A good example of how to respond...

“Most of the cuts are in direct care positions. We take care of kids, some who don’t get routine medical care, so the school nurse plays a major role. We are forced to do more with less. We will see a reduction in staff and the medical supplies we use. All while the highest earners in the state are not impacted.”

— Betty Eagan, nurse, Saratoga Springs School District

“I am very proud of what we do, keeping the roads clear and safe for the traveling public. My family, friends and co-workers have to travel the roads that we maintain, and we feel the responsibility to do a great job and take a lot of pride in our work. You can’t cut back on what we do. With the busy lives we all lead, and people always on the go, it’s really important that we’re out there and continue to be there for the traveling public.”

— Kevin Thompson, bridge maintenance assistant, Jefferson Residence, Bridge Department, state Department of Transportation. Thompson was just coming off of his sixth day in a row of 12-hour shifts plowing snow in Watertown, one of the snowiest cities in New York.

Don’t forget to fight back on Facebook and Twitter!

“B”etter New York for All — State’s budget makes people angry, too. I also worry about what will happen to the people we care for after a child was sent home with symptoms of typhoid. These first responders from top to bottom after a child was sent home..."

— Steve Borkofsky, Custodian, Deer Park School District

“T”his is a better New York for all. To fight back, CSEA is only as strong as its members. Be a participant; we cannot be spectators.”

— Justin Lelonek, Department of Social Services, Erie County Unit and Next Wave member

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Don’t forget to fight back on Facebook and Twitter!

* CSEA’s website at www.csealocal1000.org has many resources to give you talking points about issues and point you towards other resources to give you the facts.
* Many items on CSEA’s website can be shared through Facebook and Twitter accounts.

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A good example of how to respond...

“The majority of the jobs performed by state employees now collecting their pension were positions that most ‘white collar’ workers would shun. They are the guys who carry away your smelly garbage in the middle of July. They are the guys who spend all night plowing snow. They are the guys who brave the bitter cold repairing a water main break so that you can take your hot shower before you climb into your nice warm bed.”

— Lokust.com blog from “Proud Wife” of a retired Village of Irvington employee, responding to an article proposing scrapping the state pension system.
**Support PEOPLE now more than ever!**

**Highmount —** Hit by multiple rounds of state budget cuts, workers at Belleayre Mountain are fighting back. CSEA activists Pat McVitty, left, and Jeff Tubbs are part of a group of CSEA members fighting to restore several dozen permanent job titles at the state-run ski area.

“**The jobs are the same as before, just with lower wages and less job security.**”

CSEA activists Pat McVitty, left, and Jeff Tubbs are part of a group of CSEA members fighting to restore several dozen permanent job titles at the state-run ski area.

That’s why CSEA members are fighting, said Jeff Tubbs, a general mechanic at Belleayre for the last 16 years. “In this area, there is nothing else,” he said.

**Busting the Myths about public service**

In case you haven’t noticed it, you are under attack. Public employees, government services, pensions, and public employee unions are all being lumped together by the conservative right as a convenient excuse for the nation’s financial collapse and subsequent reduction in services.

For CSEA members, the union is responding with a series of workshops on how to respond to attacks on the public sector when they happen to you. More than 100 CSEA Long Island Region officers and activists recently learned how to fight back against persistent attacks on public workers through the new workshop “Busting the Myths about Public Service” focuses members’ attention on the attacks on public workers by some media outlets and elected officials, specifically their campaign to increase resentment of public workers by falsely depicting them as part of a privileged class that is not affected by current economic conditions. These attacks include falsehoods such as, “public workers earn too much money and enjoy excessive benefits,” “the pensions of public workers are bankrupting counties and states” and “public workers have too much influence in politics.”

“**We must create a new framework and present a positive portrait of public workers like school bus drivers, social service caseworkers and health care providers as part of the overall solution to the problems at hand.**”

**Actions our members must take**

- **Every attack needs a response.**
  - Our members need to flood news blogs with statements in support of government, co-workers and those who need government support.
  - Dissect each attack and provide every member with an answer.
  - Inventory groups in communities that may be allies and connect to form coalitions.
  - Meet the media head on in every community.
  - Respond to local attacks on specific services with facts and alternative vision.

Western Regional Labor Relations Specialist Penny Gleason, center, leads Dave Dunaj of the Hudson Valley Region and Wendy Ainsworth from the Western Region Judiciary Local through a “courageous conversation” exercise at a recent state budget training. Just one of several workshops CSEA will be conducting for members and activists in the upcoming weeks.

**CSEA members not accept the premise of these opinions and instead structure their responses in a calm and reasoned fashion to facilitate a more complete examination of the issues.**

“We must create a new framework and present a positive portrait of public workers like school bus drivers, social service caseworkers and health care providers as part of the overall solution to the problems at hand,” said Smith.

**BUSTING THE MYTHS**

• Respond to local attacks on specific services with facts and alternative vision.

• Meet the media head on in every community.

• Dissect each attack and provide every member with an answer.

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• Meet the media head on in every community.

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**Our members need to flood news blogs with statements in support of government, co-workers and those who need government support.**

**CSEA members not accept the premise of these opinions and instead structure their responses in a calm and reasoned fashion to facilitate a more complete examination of the issues.**

“We must create a new framework and present a positive portrait of public workers like school bus drivers, social service caseworkers and health care providers as part of the overall solution to the problems at hand,” said Smith. "We have to offer an alternative vision that meets with the values people already have and connects to existing beliefs.”

— Rich Impagliazzo

**The “Busting Myths” workshop will be held in every region. Check the CSEA website at www.csealocals.org for dates and locations about workshop in your area.**

Jessica Ladlee

**Busting the Myths about public service**
ALBANY — Thanks to employee innovation, the New York State Board of Law Examiners is a lean, green, efficiency machine. The office creates and manages applications thousands of dollars in paper and postage. Operations are so finely tuned that states that administer far fewer exams have much higher staffing levels.

“Why should we pay someone $150 an hour? We can do the work ourselves.”

Paperless In 2008, applications went electronic. Where staff previously entered data, now it’s up to the applicants. Terry Nugent, a senior court analyst, recalls her first day on the job 29 years ago. “I typed the same letter 19 times,” she said. “I started looking for ways to help.”

Eliminating costly consultants and better utilizing the talent and ideas of existing employees could help government run more efficiently. 

Worker innovation, efficiency saves the state money

Terry Nugent, shown here on the job, now does much of her work electronically, helping the state save money and trees. “I said ‘bye, bye,’ ” said Nugent. “If it doesn’t help us or we didn’t use it, it went away.”

“...the talent and ideas of existing employees could...”

Richard Streichert, shown here working on a server, is among the court workers who have helped the state save thousands of dollars through the use of technology.

Richard Streichert, shown here working on a server, is among the court workers who have helped the state save thousands of dollars through the use of technology.

“...aid at Kingsboro Psychiatric Center. ‘I don’t think people should...”

“Avoiding consultants and making critical accommodations and...”

“...a green, efficiency machine...”

Eliminating the 12-month election cycle for the state Office of Mental Health facilities...

“Avoiding consultants and making critical accommodations and...”

“...to staff the office and everyone else is in the field. ‘It’s a team effort,’ said Nugent.

Summary of January 2013 CSEA Board of Directors meeting

ALBANY — CSEA’s statewide Board of Directors met on Jan. 20.

Eliminating the 12-month election cycle for the state Office of Mental Health facilities...

“...by (competition for office)...”

“It went electronic. Where work previously handled...”

“...is a perennial problem...”

Assault raises concerns over mental health safety, staffing levels...
New York state’s corporate welfare problem

Billions of dollars, in the form of special tax breaks, credits and exemptions and other provisions are being funneled to millionaires, individual corporations or local governments, the majority of which is not being funneled to millionaires, and other provisions are costing us billions of dollars “off budget” from our governments and local governments.

A recent report from the Fiscal Policy Institute (FPI) titled, “The Growing Budget Burden of New York’s Tax Expenditures,” shows this type of “back-door” spending is what’s called an “old budget” form of spending, costing us billions of dollars each year while remaining off the radar during state budget and county budget planning. FPI reports that all together, New York state and its local governments, and local independent development agencies provide about $2 billion annually in various tax expenditures.”

Here’s the cost is close to equaling the amount of the projected state budget deficit for 2011. There are also found millions of dollars in credits are given with “no guarantee that the jobs promised actually materialize” and no real return on investment is seen to benefit our communities. “So little accountability is there that there is not even a public report about whether promised performance targets are met,” the report states.

Find the full report on the FPI website at www.csealocal1008.org.

— Jill Asencio

Show us the money

• We lose approximately $5 billion each year of state revenue to corporate welfare.

• There is no regular evaluation of how taxpayers get in return for these massive tax breaks.

• Many businesses also receive cash grants from economic development agencies and enjoy tax code skewed in their favor.

• Experts say tax expenditures are designed to “favor a particular industry, activity or class or persons.”

Access NYSHIP Online

CSEA-represented employees enrolled under the New York State Health Insurance Program (NYSHIP) can access NYSHIP Online for health benefits information.

NYSHIP online can be accessed on the Employee Benefits Division homepage of the New York State Department of Civil Service at https://www2.cs.state.ny.us/NewYorkCityBenefits.html. Complete the electronic form and follow the prompts to NYSHIP Online.

NYSHIP Online is a complete resource for your health insurance plan, including up-to-date publications, option transfer and a plan comparison tool with summaries for the Empire Plan and NYSHIP HMOS. You’ll also find links to select Empire Plan carrier websites, which include the most current list of providers. You can search by location, specialty or name. Announcements, an event calendar, prescription drug information and handy contact information are only a click or two away.

On your first visit, you will be asked what group and plan benefits you plan to have. Thereafter, you will not be prompted to enter this information if you have your cookies enabled. Cookies are simple text files stored on your web browser that provide a way to identify and distinguish the users of this site.

If enabled, cookies will customize your visit to the site and group-specific pages will then display each time you visit unless you select “Change Your Group” on a toolbar near the top of the left of the page.

Deadline for 2010 Empire Plan claims is April 30

Enrollies can call the Empire Plan at 1-877-NYSHIP (1-877-697-4747) to get information on how to get or get claims form. As a reminder, when using the Empire Plan’s toll-free telephone number, please pay extra attention to the claims form offered by the automated system.

For more information filled at non-participating pharmacies or at participating pharmacies without using your New York Government Employee Benefit Card.

Enrollies can call the Empire Plan at 1-877-7NYSHIP (1-877-769-7447) with questions or to get claim forms. As a reminder, when using the Empire Plan’s toll-free telephone number, please pay extra attention to the claims form offered by the automated system.

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Medco Health Solutions

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On the line every day.

We’re family, friends and neighbors doing the work that matters.
SMART | DYNAMIC | CARING | DEDICATED

People working together to make a better New York for all.