

IN THE SPOTLIGHT

GREGORY FLOYD, PRESIDENT, CITY EMPLOYEES UNION LOCAL 237, TEAMSTERS – THE LARGEST LOCAL IN THE 1.4 MILLION-MEMBER INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF TEAMSTERS (IBT)

Council for Unity's Board of Directors is a strong, diverse, committed group of leaders. The Council strategically attracts key leaders from public and private, corporate, academic, and criminal justice arenas who have the passion and perspective required to help Council realize its mission. We are honored to recognize Gregory Floyd as one of these individuals and to introduce him to you. Greg is an enthusiastic and key member of the Board. When reading about his more-than 20-year association with the Teamsters, you find strong leadership qualities and unprecedented accomplishments.

As President of Local 237, Greg represents a diverse group of over 24,000 New York City and Long Island public employees working in a variety of occupational areas. Significant to the Council for Unity are the more than 4,000 school safety agents the union represents. In our interview with Greg, he affirmed that in joining Council's Board he hoped to make a difference. He acknowledged that school safety agents are frequently confronted with violence in the schools - and its collateral impact, adding that almost every time there is a violent incident in a school, gangs are involved. School safety agents witness this reality and struggle with it every day. Greg emphasized that aggressive steps must be taken to reduce the violence and the ingrained causes of it, and to address the failure of city officials to recognize that violence is growing. Floyd says this issue affects all of us - our local economies, communities and our quality of life.

"I want to shed light on the problems and seek solid solutions. The rate of incarceration of our kids and increasing drop-out rates for high school students must be a top concern for our communities. As parents and communities we need to intervene earlier to help kids who are failing and struggling - both in school academically and socially. This is not an easy task", said Greg, citing the evolution of multiple generations of fatherless families. "Many parents, because of this generational phenomenon, lack the needed skills to help their children in today's environment. Council for Unity helps provide critical support to kids, parents, families, schools and communities."

Since joining Council and participating in numerous initiatives, Greg has promoted our programs wherever he can - and he confirms that they work in most, if not all cases. He has seen how Council gets to kids who have been neglected and has literally saved lives. For his leadership and commitment he was awarded Council for Unity 2007 Champions for Children Award at the National Arts Club.

Greg's commitment to improving the quality of life for our kids, families and communities extends beyond his support for the Council for Unity. Greg's new initiative in partnership with the National Union of American Families (NUAF), is a powerful example of his commitment and creativity.

Excerpt from "State of the Unions: Floyd Puts Teamsters, and Himself, on the Move", City Hall, Andrew J. Hawkins, May 12, 2008

Gregory Floyd, president of the Teamsters Union Local 237, has a new plan for getting elected officials to listen to the concerns of his members. In April, Greg helped launch what he calls a groundbreaking new initiative to educate members and their families in the basics of civic involvement. The idea, he said, is to empower union members with the right tools to better understand the city agencies that affect the fundamental quality of their lives and to help union members and their families to better hold lawmakers more accountable for their decisions. The broad community project would also serve to make communities safer by erasing a lot of the divisions that exist between neighbors. "Can you imagine if you knew who your neighbor was?" he said. "There would be no fear, crime would go down and quality of life would go up."

Listening to and spending time with Gregory Floyd one is reminded of the words of the late Sen. Robert Kennedy:

"It is from numberless diverse acts of courage and belief that human history is shaped. Each time a man stands up for an ideal, or acts to improve the lot of others, or strikes out against injustice, he sends forth a tiny ripple of hope."