



# THE MANAGER

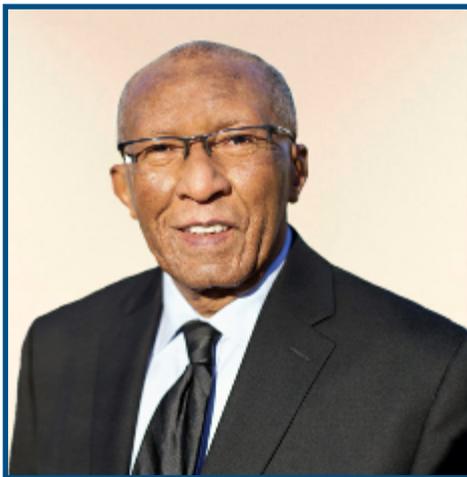
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## DARRELL SIMS TAKES OFFICE AS MEA PRESIDENT

*By Bendix Anderson*



*Newly Elected MEA President  
Darrell L. Sims*

MEA has bold new plans for 2022, according to its new President.

"I feel honored," says Darrell Sims, who became MEA President January 1, 2022. "I am proud to be the MEA's president and advocate for City managers."

Mr. Sims has been preparing for the job since August 4, 2021, when he was nominated unopposed at a meeting of MEA's Election Committee, along with the rest of the Independence in Action slate of candidates for MEA leadership positions. MEA's leaders now include Executive Vice President Edgar Landas, Treasurer Bernard Orlan, Recording Secretary Lisa Yee and Directors-at-Large Pamela Ross-Barnes, Sam Borkow, Peter Kontogiannis and Cesare Lucido.

### **GOALS FOR THE NEW LEADERSHIP**

To advocate for City managers, Mr. Sims plans to increase the number of MEA members, not just make up for members lost because of the

coronavirus pandemic and unionization.

"Our membership drive always continues — we are optimistic about it," says President Sims.

President Sims reached out to Mayor Eric Adams, who also took office January 1. A recent letter invites Mayor Adams to meet with the MEA to discuss potential cooperation. "We want to refresh our position with the new Administration."

MEA is also speaking up for City managers as New York City attempts to implement a new Medicare Advantage Plus healthcare plan created by prior Mayor Bill de Blasio. Many retirees are unenthusiastic — a lawsuit has delayed implementation of the plan. *(See story Page Three)*

MEA also continues to press City Hall to return sick days taken from City managers by the prior Administration to help pay for its Paid Parental Leave (PPL) policy. "We would like to get our two days back," says Sims, who was one of the plaintiffs in MEA's lawsuit against the City over PPL.

### **FORMER PRESIDENT SHELLY SHULMAN "HONORED" TO SERVE**

Shelly Shulman also stepped down as MEA President January 1, finishing a dozen years in the leadership of MEA.

"It's been the greatest honor of my life to be a leader of such a fine organization — other than being a husband and a father," says President Emeritus Shulman, who served four years as MEA president. Before that,

he was MEA vice president for eight years under former MEA President Stu Eber. Mr. Shulman had not sought another term as president at the MEA's nominating meeting in August 2021. Instead, he nominated Darrell Sims for the top job.

Mr. Shulman believes his easy-going manner, flexibility and open-mindedness helped make the MEA a more unified organization. "Many saw me as the 'hippie manager' with my love for music, especially the music of the Grateful Dead," says Mr. Shulman, a proud 'Deadhead.'

"We did it one at a time — by going to the agencies and reaching out to as many managers as possible," says President Emeritus Shulman. On more than one occasion, he personally attempted to call every single MEA member, to ask them to attend MEA chapter meetings and for them to bring managers who were not members to the meetings.

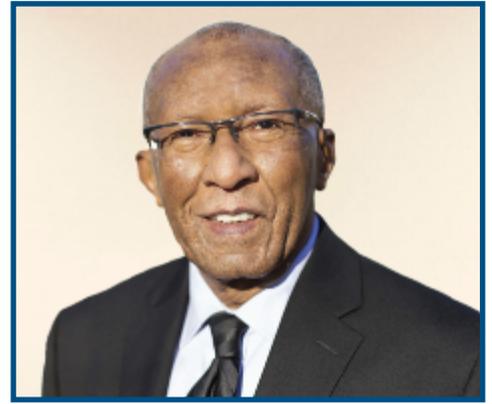


*MEA President Emeritus  
Shelly Shulman*

# IT'S AN HONOR TO SERVE YOU

By Darrell Sims

I hope all is well and that everyone had a wonderful holiday season. I am honored to be New York City Managerial Employees' newly elected President. A 2020 retiree from the Department of Housing Preservation and Development with a thirty-nine-year tenure as an architect and a manager since 1993, I have been a member of MEA for over twenty-five years.



## GRATITUDE TO FRIENDS, COLLEAGUES AND MENTORS

There are many people who are my friends, colleagues and mentors that have been special to me along my journey to becoming President of the MEA. I would like to take this opportunity to acknowledge a few of them. I express gratitude to my HPD Executive Board partner, John Andrezzi; former Executive Director, Linda Barnes; President Emeritus William Dworkin; President Emeritus Stuart Eber; late President Stephen Ferrer; the late Joel Fishelson; Warren Lewis; Willie Maye; the HPD Chapter Director who recruited me to join MEA, the late Joseph Taffaro; late President Georgia Williams; MEA Members; Executive Board Directors; Committee Members; and the TIP Toastmasters. I appreciate the opportunity and pleasure of meeting, interacting and working with all during my tenure with the New York City Managerial Employees Association.

I look forward to representing the MEA as our new Mayor with his Administration address present and future challenges for civil service managers of The City of New York. It will not be easy, however, if we work together and remain united there are no limits on our aspirations and goals. I wish everyone a Safe, Healthy, Peaceful and Happy New Year that is full of achievable hopes and dreams.

Having served as chapter director, assistant chapter director, and director at large under two slates; I plan to use my experience as well as the advice and experience from the Executive Board and MEA members to provide leadership for this organization.

With the pandemic and all of the adversities we have faced in the past two years, we have many reasons for which to express gratitude including just being alive. However, there will be many challenges ahead as we step into tomorrow — a new year full of hope, energy, and progress towards a better future.

First, I would like to convey MEA's and my appreciation to our immediate-past President, Shelly Shulman for his commitment and leadership to the MEA as President and Executive Vice President for the past twelve years. In addition, we would like to extend our appreciation to immediate-past MEA Officers for their many years of dedication and unwavering service to the MEA. Those Officers are: Clara Guity-Bess, Recording Secretary; and Carol David and Marie Delus, Director(s) at Large.

## INDEPENDENCE IN ACTION TEAM (IAT)

At this time, I am proud to introduce my Team, the Independence in Action Team (IAT) slate which was elected in August,

2021. They are: Edgar Landas, Executive Vice President; Bernard Orlan, Treasurer; Lisa Yee, Recording Secretary; and Sam Borkow, Peter Kontogiannis, Cesare Lucido, and Pamela Ross-Barnes, Director(s) at Large. Each expresses his or her honor and commitment to fulfilling their responsibilities.

It is my desire to provide leadership in conjunction with the Executive Board of Directors, Committees, and our Executive Director to address topics such as compensation, career development, and human resources / personnel issues that affect and adversely impact managers throughout their careers.

Recently, I wrote to Mayor-elect Adams requesting a meeting to discuss many of the MEA's ongoing points of focus and long-term goals. We will also focus on more immediate concerns regarding the following topics as they develop during the early months of the new City Administration, including Refinement of Covid-19 Vaccine Mandate for NYC Employees in Office Environments, NYC Medicare Advantage Plus Plan, NYC City Council Report on Disparity in Salaries Among Women and Minorities in NYC Civil Service Employment as well as Managerial Salary Raises and New York City's Budget.

# NEW RETIREE HEALTH PLAN DELAYED UNTIL APRIL

## NEW HEALTHCARE PLAN WOULD BRING BIG CHANGES FOR RETIREES

By Vanessa DeSantis



*MEA Retiree Chapter Director  
Adrienne Leaf*

Hundreds of thousands of retired New York City employees are still worried about the City's plan to change their healthcare to a Medicare Advantage Plus plan — even after a New York State Supreme Court judge delayed the implementation of the plan till April 1, 2022.

Justice Frank called the original deadline of October 31, 2021, “irrational” and “arbitrary.” It was also hugely unpopular among many City retirees, who felt rushed to decide on a new plan they knew little about that seemed fraught with unaccommodating and even costly tradeoffs. Many still want more time to learn about the plan before deciding whether to spend their own money to opt out of it.

“The MEA's Retiree's Chapter has been working with other retiree organizations to inform our members of what is happening,” said Adrienne Leaf, Director of the MEA's Retiree Chapter. “We are lobbying for

more choices and less costs to our members and are working to raise public support for the retiree position.”

MEA officers like Ms. Leaf, Stu Eber, President Emeritus of the MEA, and Executive Director Alice Wong continue to gather the most up-to-date information on what converting retirees to Medicare Advantage Plus would involve and attend Court hearings on the lawsuit.

Most of the 600 members of MEA's Retiree Chapter currently receive Medicare. The plan covers about 80% of the cost of doctor visits as well as hospital costs and prescription drugs. To pay for medical costs not covered by Medicare, the City also provides retirees with a choice of several “Medigap” or Medicare Part C plans free of charge.

“There are currently several other Medicare Part C plans supported by the City for retirees,” said Ms. Leaf. “But once Medicare Advantage is implemented, those plans will no longer be available.”

The new plan cuts out the City's role in healthcare assistance in the interest in saving the City money, according to Eber. If the plan is implemented, all 240,000 Retired City employees and their spouses will receive healthcare coverage through a new Medicare Advantage Plus plan.

The healthcare plan was hatched back in 2014 by former Mayor Bill de Blasio and the Municipal Labor Committee —

an organization that helps unions collectively bargain with the City. The plan is projected to save the City \$3.1 billion a year in healthcare costs in exchange for raises for union employees, said Eber.

Many retirees are skeptical of the care they will receive with the new Medicare Advantage Plus plan. Some Retired city workers point out that they will have to get many procedures authorized by their insurer, instead of having them covered automatically, as the current plan works now.

The City's decision to convert to a Medicare Advantage plan came as a complete surprise to retirees. The City has offered to let retirees “opt out” of Medicare Advantage, keep their enrollment in regular Medicare, and pay out of their own pockets to continue GHI Senior Care, which is currently provided free of charge to retirees.

“The underlying issue the court has not dealt with yet is whether or not the City can in fact say that whether you want to maintain your GHI senior care you have to pay for it. Is it legal for the City to do that now?” said Eber. “The Plaintiffs maintain that that is not legal — that the City can't change the benefit after retirees have begun receiving it.”

Members should stay apprised of this issue by checking in often on the MEA website and going to the online bulletin so that they can stay up to date with the lawsuit.



**Congratulations to the  
Newly-Appointed 2022 Committee Members.  
Thank You for Being Active Members  
and Working to Enhance the MEA.**

**COMPENSATION, BENEFITS & PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT COMMITTEE**

- Katy Diaz-Espinal (DOI) ● Michael Eitingon (SCA, Retired)
- Cesare Lucido (Housing Authority, Retired) ● Andrew Mandell (HRA)
- *Tina Ramsey, Chairperson* (DCAS) ● Pamela Ross-Barnes (HRA)
- Monique Scales (DOE) ● Matthew Weber (Health & Hospitals, Retired)
- Cassandra White-Hemphill (DHS)

**FINANCIAL SERVICES SEMINAR SERIES-SUB COMMITTEE**

- Sam Borkow (HRA, Retired) ● *Tina Ramsey, Chairperson* (DCAS)

**EVENTS/FUNDRAISING COMMITTEE**

- Marie Delus (Mayoral Office)
- Evelyn Dresler (Comptroller's Office, Retired)
- *Cesare Lucido, Chairperson* (Housing Authority, Retired)
- Pamela Ross-Barnes (HRA) ● Lisette Saravia (DOE)

**ORGANIZATION COMMITTEE**

- Eric Ambrose (ACS, Retired) ● Sam Borkow (HRA, Retired)
- Elaine Deschamp (Mayoral Office) ● Stuart Eber (HRA, Retired)
- *Edgar Landas, Chairperson* (Mayoral Office, Retired)
- Adrienne Leaf (HRA, Retired)
- Shelly Shulman (Health & Hospitals, Retired)
- Lisa Yee (HPD, Retired)