“Vision Zero”
On the Cover
Throughout his career, Police Commissioner William J. Bratton established a reputation as a visionary in the field of law enforcement. Although he and Mayor Bill de Blasio announced a Vision Zero program for traffic enforcement, the commissioner has shown that he has zero vision in other matters, including his placing of active Sgt. Kizzy Adonis on modified assignment for purportedly failing to supervise in the Eric Garner incident.
### CCRB: Different Rules for Different Folks

Although it is too bizarre to be believed, even by the sub-standards of the current mayoral administration, former CCRB Chairman Richard Emery received permission from the NYC Conflict of Interests Board to utilize his personal law firm to sue police officers found guilty of wrongdoing at CCRB hearings. Had the woman who had the joint removed from her mouth by Police Commissioner Bratton opted to sue, one can only wonder how much of a settlement that would have been worth?

Police Commissioner William J. Bratton's reputation as a visionary has been hampered as he serves under beleaguered Mayor Bill de Blasio, whose progressive brand of politics and questionable ethical practices threaten the ideals and foundations of the entire law enforcement community. In one inexplicable decision, Commissioner Bratton placed Sgt. Kizzy Adonis of the 120 Precinct on modified assignment for purportedly failing to supervise in the Eric Garner incident. As a video clearly shows, nothing could be further from the truth. Read more on pages 6-7.

### Women of Influence

The SBA honored seven active or retired female members at its second annual Women of Influence luncheon on March 23. They were recognized for their dedication and determination in their law enforcement duties, as well as their educational accomplishments, charitable endeavors and familial roles.

### In the Line of Duty

The SBA pays homage to four active or former NYPD officers who lost their lives in the performance of their duties. We also recognize all of our brother and sister officers from throughout the United States and Puerto Rico, who were killed by armed adversaries since the last edition of Frontline was published in the fall of 2015.

### The United Federation of Teachers: An Unholy Alliance with Mayor de Blasio

The SBA explores the unholy alliance between the United Federation of Teachers (UFT), the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), and the de Blasio administration, which has resulted in increased health care costs for all active and retired NYC municipal workers. In the end, the results of this triad will be nothing short of catastrophic.

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Dear Sergeants:

Shortly after being sworn in as the 109th mayor of New York in January 2014, Bill de Blasio, as well as his newly appointed police commissioner, William J. Bratton, announced a host of initiatives and promised that the hallmarks of their administrations would be transparency, accountability and accessibility.

The mayor, police commissioner and other city officials initiated a new program called the Vision Zero Initiative, which revolved around increased enforcement of moving violations in order to make the city’s roadways safer for drivers and pedestrians.

This would be accomplished by holding public outreach sessions, improving street designs, increased penalties for dangerous drivers, reduced speed limits, and greater use of enforcement cameras.

“We’ve put a very bold plan before you, and we want the public to know we’re holding ourselves to this standard,” trumpeted the mayor.

Just days later, the mayor’s two-vehicle caravan was clandestinely observed speeding, blowing through stop signs and violating scores of other traffic laws by CBS News.

Despite the obvious hypocrisy, the usually outspoken Commissioner Bratton was uncharacteristically silent.

So much for Vision Zero!

Within a month of the ethically challenged mayor’s appointment, a Brooklyn pastor who was a friend and member of his transition team, was arrested in Brooklyn. It was determined that he had several outstanding warrants after being stopped for a traffic violation.

The mayor personally made a late night call to a high-ranking NYPD official for “clarification” of the events that led to the arrest. What followed was a complete circumvention of department protocol when the pastor was promptly released from custody.

Although the mayor’s reign had just begun, this incident was just a portent of more convoluted shenanigans to come. The mayor’s chief of staff, for example, reportedly did not disclose to him that she resided in New Jersey or that her live-in boyfriend was an ex-convict with an extensive and violent criminal history.

Moreover, she sidestepped the annoying issue of New York City residency requirements by claiming that she was required to live in New Jersey because her teenage son had to be near the doctors who were treating and monitoring him for serious injuries incurred in a car accident.

Despite the son’s persistent “injuries” that enabled his mother to receive the requisite waiver that allowed her to live in the Garden State, her son was duplicitously healthy enough to compete on his high school football team.

In November 2014 he was arrested for criminal trespassing with friends in Upper Manhattan, and despite his purported injuries was charged with aggravated manslaughter and other crimes in February 2016.

Had the mayor chosen to properly vet such an integral member of his administration, he would have learned that besides having an errant son and state and federal tax liens, his chief of staff had also amassed scores of unpaid parking tickets and E-Z Pass bills.

If the mayor was aware of such transgressions and chose to ignore them—which is highly probable—his behavior was both irresponsible and reprehensible.

While the mayor handled all of this drama with his usual aloofness, the police commissioner stayed silent—exhibiting Vision Zero or, depending on one’s perspective, Zero Vision.
When the media firestorm became too intense, the chief of staff went on hiatus. In her case that meant going back to work for her old boss, the Rev. Al Sharpton, until the hoopla died down. She has since returned to the mayoral fold as the first lady’s chief of staff with nary a word from Commissioner Bratton.

Vision Zero? Or Zero Vision?

During Bratton’s first tenure as police commissioner in the 1990s, he had positively transformed the business of law enforcement in New York—and, by extension and example, throughout the country.

Utilizing the lauded Broken Windows theory of policing, he made the enforcement of quality of life crimes the cornerstone of a globally recognized decrease in crime and a fiscal and social resurgence to our beleaguered city.

Commissioner Bratton’s steadfast commitment to those principles resulted in thousands of lives being saved, a fact that is indisputable to even his most vehement detractors.

But that was then—and this is now. To say that times have changed would be a gross understatement. The police are now being ordered to basically ignore quality of life offenses, which in most cases no longer warrant a summons, arrest or even an admonishment.

During one “heralded” incident, Commissioner Bratton and members of his staff were walking to an event at New York Law School when he observed a woman smoking a marijuana cigarette on the street.

The commissioner yanked the joint from the woman’s mouth and deposited it down a sewer. Shortly thereafter, while speaking at the event, he boasted about his actions to much laughter and applause for his enforcement derring-do.

If street level cops had the same luxury of selective enforcement, perhaps Eric Garner would be alive today. The officers involved in the tragic Garner incident were acting upon orders from the highest echelons of the department to remove quality of life offenders from commercial districts in Staten Island.

They were attempting to lawfully arrest Mr. Garner for selling loose cigarettes, which is as minor of a crime as smoking a blunt in public.

What if the woman from whom Bratton removed the joint put up a fuss and engaged the officers in a physical altercation? What if she had been obese and had myriad health issues—as Garner did—and was seriously injured or died? What if she was smoking the marijuana to offset the effects of a debilitating chemotherapy regimen?

Who would have taken the fall for that?

The amount of what-ifs associated with such irresponsible, illogical, even illegal policing is immeasurable.

A Staten Island grand jury carefully listened to testimony and chose not to have the officers involved in the Garner debacle criminally charged. However, Commissioner Bratton still had the temerity to place Sgt. Kizzy Adonis of the 120 Precinct on modified assignment for “failure to supervise” in that incident.

The facts of the case, coupled with clear video evidence, make it apparent that Sgt. Adonis was railroaded and scapegoated in what can only be described as a workplace lynching.

Although Sgt. Adonis was the patrol supervisor that day, just prior to the Garner incident she had been dispatched to the borough command. She chose to respond to the Garner arrest beforehand, and took appropriate police action upon her arrival. She ensured that Mr. Garner could, in fact, breathe and that an ambulance was on the way.

It is hard to imagine what more could have been done. Sgt. Adonis had a clear vision that day as it related to effective supervision.

However, the city, in a foolhardy attempt to avert a political firestorm, opted to pay the Garner family a whopping $6 million settlement, therefore implying a high degree of culpability for all involved.

The fact that Sgt. Adonis is a 12-year department veteran with an exemplary record was not going to get in the way of advancing political ideals, the damned truth be damned. Her name was besmirched and her legacy was forever tarnished for nothing other than political expediency.

In another case that defied logic, Commissioner Bratton modified an anti-crime sergeant in the 47 Precinct for following a reckless driver, but ordering his driver to cease the following after the vehicle had crossed the city line and entered Mt. Vernon.

The vehicle being followed was then involved in a serious accident that occurred in front of Mt. Vernon police personnel. The NYPD officers assisted their Mt. Vernon counterparts in a vehicle extrication. As per GPS records, the total time of NYPD involvement from the first sighting of the reckless vehicle to its crashing into parked cars was 1 minute and 43 seconds, and the NYPD RMP had never exceeded the speed limit during that time.

Modifying this sergeant was a classic case of Vision Zero or Zero Vision at its most myopic and ominous.

I would expect such behavior from the mayor and City Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito, who make no secret of their progressive ideals and disdain for the police. But Commissioner Bratton allowing himself to be the apparatus by which they operate is a betrayal of the highest order to the rank and file of the world’s greatest police department.

The mayor and the speaker are, after all, totally comfortable with decriminalizing scores of offenses. The speaker is even determined to close down Rikers Island and handle the flood of offenders at the “neighborhood level.”

Whatever that means, I don’t know, but heaven help us if the streets are flooded with thousands of offenders who belong in custody. The late Det. Randolph Holder was the latest NYPD member to lose his life because of progressivism at its most perilous.
This charade does not begin and end with the mayor, speaker and police commissioner—who can euphemistically be referred to as the three people in the room. But in this case, there was actually four people in the room.

The other was Richard Emery, a civil rights attorney who has made millions of dollars suing the city, especially the NYPD, over the years. Despite Mr. Emery’s well-documented animus toward the police, and his use of the city coffers as his personal bank, the mayor saw no conflict in appointing him chairman of the Civilian Complaint Review Board.

Mr. Emery even received a waiver from the city Conflict of Interests Board, allowing his personal firm to sue defendants found guilty at CCRB proceedings. I assure you that is not a misprint.

Imagine how much he could have settled for had the woman from whom Commissioner Bratton yanked the joint retained him and sued the department. Besides stealing her property and improperly disposing of evidence, what of the potential emotional turmoil she might have experienced as a result? A conservative estimate suggests that would be worth a high five-figure payout.

Since the New Year began, and through May 2016, eighteen police officers from throughout the country have been shot to death during the performance of their duties. The murders have occurred in Mississippi, North Dakota, Georgia, Maryland, Colorado, Oregon, Ohio, Utah, Virginia, South Carolina, Texas, Indiana and Kansas.

It is nothing short of a miracle that no NYPD officers have been shot and killed during the same time period. However, although the mayor and police commissioner continually tout historic crime decreases, morale has never been lower and those on the frontlines feel as if it is open season on cops.

The mayhem began in early January when PO Sherrod Stuart, 25, of the 40 Precinct was shot and wounded during a wild gun battle in the Bronx. Less than a year earlier, his alleged assailant had been charged with physically attacking a police officer during the processing of his arrest for obstructing governmental administration.

In early February, POs Diara Cruz, 24, and Patrick Espeut, 29, of the Housing Bureau’s PSA 7 were shot and wounded while conducting what some police officials referred to as a “routine” vertical patrol in a Bronx housing project. PO Cruz was struck in her torso underneath her vest, while PO Espeut was grazed in the face.

The vicious and unprovoked shootings of POs Cruz and Espeut occurred at the same time that rookie PO Peter Liang was being tried for manslaughter in Brooklyn. PO Liang had made a tragic error in judgment that resulted in the accidental death of a man who was in a darkened housing project hallway.

In what amounted to a blatant case of political gamesmanship, Brooklyn District Attorney Kenneth Thompson put PO Liang on trial for manslaughter, even though Liang was conducting a “routine” vertical that was identical to the one being performed by POs Cruz and Espeut when they nearly lost their lives.

Amazingly, the judge would not allow defense attorneys to make any mention of the Bronx shooting to the Brooklyn jury. A clearly remorseful PO Liang, who maintained from the onset that the shooting was a horrific accident, was subsequently convicted of manslaughter.

Talk about Vision Zero? Or Zero Vision?

In late February, two more police officers were shot and wounded by yet another career criminal in Brooklyn North. The gunman had pointed a .357 caliber revolver at a bus driver before leading officers on a mobile chase that ended with POs Andrew Yurkiw and William Reddin being shot.

PO Yurkiw was hit directly in the chest by the high-powered weapon, but was luckily saved by his bullet-resistant vest. Officer Reddin took a bullet to his hip.

It is not just guns that are being used against the police. Police Officer Denisha Pierre of the Brooklyn North Anti-Crime Unit was slashed in the face with a box cutter in February while trying to break up a Brooklyn melee, and a female Manhattan oncology surgeon tried to run over a police officer after refusing to accept a parking ticket.

After being arrested she blathered that she had been “brutalized” by the officers and that it was she—and not the police—who was “a hero.”

Amid all of this violence directed at law enforcement, the instances of NYPD officers firing their weapons are at record lows. In 2015, the same year that several officers were savagely shot to death, the 35,000 member department only fired their weapons in 65 incidents.

In 32 of those incidents, the officers fired at armed adversaries, while in 15 cases they took aim at threatening animals.

Many media pundits and critics love to depict the NYPD as a band of racist and marauding thugs who think nothing of ignoring or stomping on the rights of minority citizens. The reality could not be more different from that perception.

NYPD personnel hail from 106 countries. Fifty-three percent of the class that graduated from the Police Academy in April were people of color. Others included men and women born in countries such as Albania and Israel. The department’s ethnic, cultural and educational divergence could not be more reflective of the city’s population.

Compounding these injustices and reinforcing the distorted truths is the fickle, inept and incompetent City
Council who despicably and audaciously voted themselves a 32 percent pay raise just one day after the shooting of POs Cruz and Espeut.

In and of itself the average $36,000 raise to Council members nearly matched the annual salary of a rookie police officer. Moreover, the raise far exceeds the median household income in many of the Council members’ districts.

It is obvious that the 51-member City Council cartel puts their own interests far above those of other municipal workers, which begs to answer the question of why they think so highly of themselves.

Sometimes it seems as if the only people with clear vision are the men and women who serve on the department’s front lines. Day in and day out, you face the greatest of dangers, with no support from a bureaucracy that either has no historical perspective or the backbone to use the lessons from the past as a tutorial for the present and the future.

Between 2009 and 2013, the five years leading up to the de Blasio administration, only one NYPD officer was shot and killed in the line of duty.

By comparison, in the two and a half years of the new regime, four NYPD officers have already been shot and killed while admirably, faithfully and lawfully performing their duties.

That is a 400 percent increase in police officers being murdered in half of the time.

As hard as it might be, please have a clear vision of who you are and what you do amid the most daunting of circumstances. You are the Good Guys. You always have been—and you always will be. Don’t ever forget that.

Fraternally,

Ed Mullins
President

Who’s in charge?

How can Commissioner Bratton find terrorists when he doesn’t know I’m standing right next to him?

Commissioner Bratton to the media: “In 28 months of promotion ceremonies, I don’t recall ever seeing him (Ed Mullins) at a promotion ceremony, including the dozen or so in which his members were being promoted.”

A few years earlier, Bratton had been undeservedly fired as NYPD Police Commissioner by Mayor Rudolph Giuliani for stealing the spotlight from the fickle mayor.

At the time, Bratton deserved the plaudits he was receiving from the media and the department’s rank and file for his proactive stance against the runaway crime epidemic.

When Bratton was first sworn in as NYPD police commissioner in 1994, he immediately implemented the Broken Windows theory of policing, which adhered to the belief that if you address the little things, namely quality of life offenses, it will create a sense of social order and the big things will take care of themselves.

In the two years he served under Mayor Giuliani, the policy worked well. Crime plummeted in every major category, and New York, which many pundits believed had been on the brink of doom, was completely revitalized.

The rank and file was sad to see Bratton go. Despite being a tough, no-nonsense leader, he seemed to have had the interests of cops at heart and they believed that if times got tough he would have their back.

Bratton went on to become Chief of the Los Angeles Police Department. In January 2014 he returned to New York as the police commissioner under Mayor Bill de Blasio, who got himself elected by lambasting cops and branding them all with the broad brush of prejudice and animus that he claims to detest.

Those of us who were around for Bratton’s first incarnation wondered how he could serve such a mayor. The perceived ideologies of the two could not be more disparate. Or so it seemed?

We would soon find out—and it would prove to be very perplexing.

Although Bratton inherited the so-called ticket-fixing scandal, a judicial fiasco of epic proportions, his firing of Lt. Jennara Cobb was completely unwarranted.

The accusations leveled against so many cops suggested widespread corruption, when the actions of some officers had been a cultural touchstone and accepted practice by officers of all ranks since the inception of the NYPD over 150 years ago.

Lt. Cobb, a 16-year department veteran with a sterling record, was fired after being convicted of the misdemeanor offense of official misconduct for discussing the investigation with other officers.

Despite the fact that no one above the rank of lieutenant was ever implicated in this probe, what made Lt. Cobb’s firing especially galling was the fact that, just weeks after being elected, Mayor de Blasio made a phone call to the NYPD on behalf of a pastor friend of his who was arrested in Brooklyn for traffic infractions and outstanding warrants.

The pastor was soon released with a desk appearance ticket, which flew in the face of NYPD protocol. Little did we know then that the ramifications of this incident would linger and even promulgate in the two and a half years that followed.

In 2014, the same year that Eric Garner died while struggling with police officers trying to lawfully arrest him for selling loose cigarettes—a minor offense few cops would even
Bratton: A STUDY IN CONTRADICTIONS

want to be bothered with—Commissioner Bratton set a new precedent of selective enforcement by removing a joint from the mouth of a public marijuana smoker and depositing it down a sewer.

In a lawful society shouldn’t this action have warranted at least a summons? Isn’t disposing of evidence against department protocol and the Penal Law? Would a police officer get away with a similar action if he removed a bottle of alcohol from a drinker’s hand and threw it in the garbage? Did the commissioner’s actions constitute a progressive definition of warn and admonish?

One can only imagine the ramifications if a police officer had utilized the same selective enforcement and been investigated by CCRB.

When Jack Maple, under Bratton’s leadership, designed Compstat and the stop, question and frisk policy which resulted in such dramatic crime decreases, Bratton touted it at every opportunity.

Under Mayor de Blasio, whose progressive brand of governing has led to disastrous results, SQF is now considered archaic and demeaning. Why was it okay in the 1990s, but not now? Were the facts—and the results—misrepresented then? Or are they being misrepresented now? Here is a look at some of Commissioner Bratton’s comments and reflections:

THEN: FACE 1 1994 to 1996: Commissioner Bratton adopts the Broken Windows community policing strategy of zero tolerance for minor offenses. He later utilizes the same strategy as Chief of Police in Los Angeles with positive results. (PricewaterhouseCoopers LLP, 2012)

NOW: FACE 2 “Zero tolerance implies zealotry. It’s oppressive. And it’s not achievable. You’re never going to be in a position to eliminate all crime.” (Esquire magazine, 2015)

THEN: FACE 1 “The whole thesis of Broken Windows is, if over time you don’t address an issue, over time it will create a larger issue.” (Fox News)

NOW: FACE 2 In 2016 the NYPD changes policy in the way it addresses quality of life offenses, the enforcement of which had been the cornerstone of the Broken Windows theory. A representative for Commissioner Bratton says the new policy of decriminalizing many offenses, was “embraced” because it will reduce crime while keeping more cops on patrol.

Jack Maple would be aghast at this logic, especially after cops recently approached a man for spitting on the subway and learned that he was wanted for murder.

THEN: FACE 1 In 1993, the year prior to Commissioner Bratton’s first tenure as police commissioner, there were more nearly 2,000 murders in the city, which he derided as totally unacceptable and put into place the protocol necessary to bring about the dramatic crime decreases and save countless lives.

NOW: FACE 2 Commissioner Bratton recently describes a 20 percent increase in homicides as “relatively small,” despite the fact that during his first tenure he boasted of the 39 percent drop in crime during the 22 months he held the job. (New York Post, June 2015)

THEN: FACE 1 Commissioner Bratton vigorously defends aggressive, proactive law enforcement to make the city once again habitable—and despite his short tenure he succeeds in that mission the first time around.

NOW: FACE 2 During his second incarnation, under Mayor de Blasio, Commissioner Bratton wants street cops to ask themselves what the public would think before they take action. One of the tips is to “pull back” when, for example, engaging a person with an “edged weapon,” more commonly referred to as a knife or a cutting instrument. Perhaps such comments are fueling the numerous slashings occurring throughout the city?

THEN: FACE 1 “I don’t really talk about throwing people under the bus. If I throw them off the bus, I’m not going to run over them.” (Esquire, 2016)

NOW: FACE 2 There is no doubt that Sgt. Kizzy Adonis would wholeheartedly disagree with that assessment.

Police Commissioner Bratton’s placing of Sgt. Kizzy Adonis on modified assignment was scapegoating and political pandering at its very worst. His decision calls into question his leadership acumen, especially in such a rabid anti-police environment. The SBA has pledged to never give up the fight to clear Sgt. Adonis’s name and restore her hard-earned and well-deserved reputation as an exemplary police officer.
According to its web site, the stated mission and rules for the NYC Civilian Complaint Review Board (CCRB) is to act as an “independent agency” that is “empowered to receive, investigate, hear, make findings, and recommend action on complaints against New York City police officers alleging the use of excessive or unnecessary force, abuse of authority, discourtesy, or the use of offensive language.

“The Board’s investigative staff, composed entirely of civilian employees, conducts investigations in an impartial fashion. The Board forwards its findings to the police commissioner.”

In fulfillment of its stated mission, the Board pledges to, among other things, investigate each allegation “thoroughly or impartially” and to make “objective determinations on the merits of each case.”

While that all sounds legitimate, the grim realities belie those statements on a grand scale. In February it was learned that Richard Emery, the CCRB chairman who was appointed by Mayor de Blasio and is a founding partner of the self-described “boutique” law firm Emery, Celli, Brinckerhoff & Abady, LLP, had received a waiver from the city’s Conflicts of Interest Board to personally represent clients who were cited for misconduct and recommended for discipline by CCRB.

In one case, Emery’s firm was representing a man who was suing an NYPD sergeant and police officer for misconduct.

Incredibly, this was allowed to occur either outwardly or with a wink and a nod from Mayor de Blasio and, by extension, Commissioner Bratton. When the SBA and other unions responded immediately, aggressively and unequivocally, the response by Mr. Emery could not have been more unprofessional or inappropriate.

Rather than explain that he was acting within the scope of ethical protocol, as defined by the rules according to the de Blasio administration, he lashed out at the police in such a thuggish way that—had a police officer expressed similar sentiments to a member of the public—they most certainly would have been cited by CCRB for misconduct.

“I’m not going to deprive the public and people who are abused by police officers of having access to excellent lawyers because some union is squealing like a stuck pig,” railed Mr. Emery.

Although the SBA subsequently initiated legal proceedings that resulted in Mr. Emery’s firm dropping that case, the reaction by Mayor de Blasio was, to put it mildly, extremely blasé.

“Under Chairman Emery, the CCRB is working more effectively for community members and police officers alike, driving average case processing times and backlogs down dramatically,” said a mayoral spokesperson.

“Chairman Emery has already apologized for his unfortunate language and the law firm involved has made it clear it will not represent any client who files a claim that is substantiated by the CCRB during the time Mr. Emery remains its Chair.”

That is all well and good, but there were still more questions than answers related to this case.

On the web site for Mr. Emery’s personal law firm, which was founded in 1998, it states that “we come from a tradition of success” and “we solve problems creatively” because, among other factors, “our lawyers begin each case with a blank slate.”

In the case involving the NYPD sergeant, where CCRB had already sent its findings to Commissioner Bratton, there was certainly no blank slate. It was as if...
the firm was beginning a 100-yard dash with a 10-yard advantage.

That Mr. Emery was allowed to engage in such outrageous conduct is beyond shocking, by both the standards of the state where former political titans Sheldon Silver and Dean Skelos are headed to prison on corruption charges, and the city, where Mayor de Blasio's wealthy donors regularly cash in their chips.

From a strictly NYPD standpoint, Commissioner Bratton's silence on this issue is resoundingly deafening.

Mayor de Blasio did not have a problem with him speaking about cops in such a disgusting manner, but accepted his resignation when Mr. Emery's misogynistic views was revealed.

While we were obviously pleased that Mr. Emery has left a job for which he was clearly unqualified, we are still troubled that Bishop Mitchell Taylor remains on the CCRB Board.

On August 20, 2014, the SBA demanded his resignation following his involvement in a violent melee in Long Island City against honest construction workers. He instigated the brawl, and his post-fight efforts to blame “the Queensbridge coming out of me” as an excuse was an insult to all law-abiding residents of the Queensbridge Houses. It also called into question his partiality in judging the actions of police officers.

Moreover, Bishop Taylor and Mr. Emery are presently being sued for sexually harassing female CCRB employees. Apparently there was a culture of devaluing women at CCRB under Emery’s tenure. One would be naïve to think that culture will not be eradicated until Bishop Taylor is removed.

CCRB attorney Mina Malik has been named as Mr. Emery’s successor. SBA President Ed Mullins describes her as professional in demeanor and qualified for her position. While the SBA might not always agree with her on some issues, she certainly did not deserve the manner in which she and the other female staffs at CCRB had been treated during the Emery administration.

Let’s take a psychoanalytic view of Mr. Emery’s egregious comments when he referred to police unions as pigs, as well as a later incident where he described female colleagues in graphically and anatomically vile terms.

Sigmund Freud, who is generally regarded as the father of psychology, believed that the psyche is made up of three parts: the id, the ego and the superego. The id is comprised of biological instincts, while the ego is the process in which people learn to satisfy those instincts in socially acceptable ways.

The superego operates on moral principle and motivates how people behave in social and private settings. It is, in essence, a person’s moral compass, their acknowledgement of right and wrong. An intact superego regulates adult behavior in positive ways.

It could be argued that the inappropriate comments by Bishop Taylor and Mr. Emery were the result of the superego run amok. Perhaps they were enraged that their integrity was challenged despite the fact that their actions, as well as those of the mayor, coupled with the inactions of Commissioner Bratton, were morally and ethically indefensible.

When police officers use any kind of racial, ethnic or generic slur, the hammer comes down hard—as it should. It has nothing to do with political correctness, and all to do with common decency, sensitivity and professionalism.

Calling people derogatory names or picking fights with others within any frame of reference is a psychological projection that should disallow the perpetrators from having anything to do with the assessment, regulation or enforcement of police protocol now or in the future.

Psychological projection such as the victim blaming in this case is most commonly found in neurotic, psychotic and narcissistic personalities—certainly not the type of people that should be judging the actions of police officers who are often forced to make split-second decisions that can have life-changing consequences for many people, including the officers themselves.

Despite Mr. Emery’s obvious disdain for the law enforcement community, one would think that someone as presumptively learned as he is would be able to keep his id in check through his superego and not project his disdain of others through such a bullying and vile misuse of language.

By doing so, he showed that he is not fit to hold his position at CCRB or any position that requires a person to be of high moral character and rectitude. That said, we are glad to see him go.

All of the psycho-babble aside, NYPD officers are still forced to work within an ever-intensifying dangerous climate, where shots are fired at them both literally and figuratively on a daily basis.

The bullets fired on the streets might harm or kill them, but the shots that come from within—from the likes of Mr. Emery, Mayor de Blasio and City Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito—coupled with the lack of support from Commissioner Bratton - are damaging in their own ways.

You need not look beyond the travesty of justice that occurred with Sgt. Kizzy Adonis to realize that. In a classic case of scapegoating and political pandering, she was placed on modified assignment for her purported role in the Eric Garner case.

Sgt. Adonis’s hard-earned and well-deserved reputation that was generated over 12 years of exemplary duty in one of the city’s most dangerous precincts was destroyed in one fell swoop by Commissioner Bratton.

He spoke loudly and clearly in denigrating Sgt. Adonis—despite clear video evidence that she fulfilled her duties at the scene of the Garner incident.

Yet he remained strangely silent as Mr. Emery, aided and abetted by his unholy alliance with Mayor de Blasio, put any ideals of justice aside for his own personal profit and at the expense of dutiful and diligent police officers.

What little credibility CCRB had is gone. Let’s hope that Ms. Malik can display the leadership acumen that such a critical and sensitive position requires.
Eventually, a majority of Senators and Representatives (69 Senators and 272 Representatives) co-sponsored the legislation. Despite this overwhelming, bipartisan support, partisan gridlock on unrelated issues prevented Congress from acting before the Zadroga Act expired on October 1, 2015.

With the WTCHP and the VCF on life support, the SBA redoubled its efforts and worked to attach the Zadroga Reauthorization Act to any “must pass” legislative vehicle that Congress had to act on before the end of the year.

To jumpstart this campaign, SBA Vice President Bob Ganley made repeated trips to Washington, D.C. to help lobby Congress. On December 18, these efforts paid off in a flurry of last-minute activity as Congress incorporated the reauthorization language into the Fiscal Year 2016 “omnibus” spending and tax extenders bill.

As enacted into law, the WTCHP was effectively made permanent and the VCF was renewed for five years.

“The Hill,” a top political news website, listed reauthorization of the Zadroga Act as one the “10 top lobbying victories of 2015” and credited the SBA as one of the “Winners” responsible for this remarkable legislative success.

Bills Honoring Detectives Rafael Ramos & Wenjian Liu

The SBA and its Washington Representatives also secured the passage of two bills honoring Dets. Rafael Ramos and Wenjian Liu. The “Slain Officer Family Support Act” encouraged continued financial support for the detectives’ families by ensuring that all financial donations made to them were fully tax deductible.

The “Rafael Ramos and Wenjian Liu National Blue Alert Act of 2015” established a nationwide “Blue Alert” system—similar to AMBER Alerts for missing children—to disseminate information when a law enforcement officer is killed or seriously injured or a credible threat is made against police.

The SBA and its Washington Representatives worked to refashion the bill in their honor.
Specifically, the SBA succeeded in getting the bill’s sponsors to rename it in honor of Dets. Ramos and Liu and to expand the measure to ensure that Blue Alerts could be issued for threats against police officers, like the ones made on social media by their killer.

After these changes were made, the SBA worked with the bill’s champions, Representative Dave Reichert (R-WA) and Senators Ben Cardin (D-MD) and Lindsey Graham (R-NC), to pass it and have it signed into law in the presence of the Ramos and Liu families.

The SBA and its Washington Representatives also helped shepherd an important change to federal tax law through Congress—the “Don’t Tax Our Fallen Public Safety Heroes Act.” This law ensures that federal death benefits paid to the families of officers killed in the line of duty are never subject to federal or state income tax.

Working with Representative Erik Paulsen (R-MN), the SBA helped to secure broad support for this legislation, which unanimously passed the House. Then, working with Senators Kelly Ayotte (R-NH) and Jeanne Shaheen (D-NH), the SBA helped to secure a second unanimous vote on this bill in the Senate, and the President quickly signed it into law.

**The SBA’s 2016 Legislative Priorities**

While it is still early in 2016, the partisan gridlock and divide in Washington is already quite pronounced because of the upcoming presidential elections and the divisive debate over the nomination of Judge Merrick Garland to replace Antonin Scalia on the Supreme Court.

The legislative environment is further complicated by the reality that Congress will be in session far fewer days than usual because of the national party conventions and the general election in November. Despite this challenging environment, the SBA is continuing to engage with leaders in Washington on issues that are important to SBA members and the law enforcement community.

SBA President Ed Mullins came to Washington in March and met with key leaders on homeland security and law enforcement issues to discuss and advance the SBA’s legislative priorities. He also had several meetings on the emerging issues involving criminals and terrorists “going dark” through the use of encrypted devices and applications.

President Mullins explained how digital evidence is a part of nearly every criminal investigation today—and how critical access to such information is for law enforcement. During these meetings President Mullins expressed concern about the lack of cooperation law enforcement receives from some technology firms, such as Apple.

He also let Congress know that various bills related to encryption and the concerns of privacy advocates needed to be revised to reflect the concerns of law enforcement. The SBA is actively engaged with several national law enforcement groups to prevent such bills from becoming law unless they are materially revised to address our concerns.

While in Washington, President Mullins also urged the introduction of legislation repealing restrictions President Obama imposed in 2015 on state and local law enforcement agencies’ access to lifesaving surplus federal equipment.

President Mullins wrote to President Obama last December, urging him to reconsider these restrictions. The restrictions were part of a series of White House initiatives justified as necessary to “build and maintain” trust between law enforcement and the communities they serve in the aftermath of the events in Ferguson, Missouri.

These restrictions preclude police departments from obtaining through federal agencies or with federal funds equipment such as armored vehicles and large caliber weapons and ammunition.

Other items—including tactical vehicles, breaching apparatuses, Kevlar helmets, and riot shields—can only be obtained from federal surplus or with federal funds if departments meet onerous preconditions and are willing to undertake costly ongoing reporting and training mandates.

Since President Mullins’ visit, bills have been introduced in both houses of Congress to rescind these restrictions, but they face staunch opposition from anti-police activists and their allies.

During National Police Week in May, thousands of police officers descended on the nation’s capital to honor those who made the ultimate sacrifice in the line of duty.

In the weeks leading up to Police Week, the SBA pushed Congress to honor fallen officers with more than words by advancing SBA legislative priorities that honor and protect law enforcement and help police safeguard the communities they serve.

In addition to the legislation mentioned above, the SBA and its allies are urging Congress to advance bills to:

- Provide a U.S. Capitol-flown flag to the families of fallen officers.
- Reauthorize the Bulletproof Vest Grant Program that helps the NYPD purchase body armor.
- Make it easier for the children of fallen officers to obtain federal Pell Grants for college.
- Reform the federal Public Safety Officers Benefits Program to ensure that death and disability benefits are promptly paid.
- Designate the 9/11 Memorial as a national memorial eligible for federal grants.
- Enhance federal penalties for criminals who target police officers.

Rest assured, however, even though Police Week has ended, the SBA and its Washington Representatives will continue their tireless efforts to advance the interests of SBA members and the law enforcement community.
The SBA held its second annual Women of Influence luncheon in Brooklyn on March 23. Seven active or retired female sergeants were recognized for their many notable achievements related to law enforcement duties, educational accomplishments, personal milestones, altruistic endeavors and familial roles.

SBA President Ed Mullins spoke of the days as recently as the 1980s, when women were not so welcomed into what had been a predominantly male vocation. “Women didn’t have it easy, but they persevered and they have come a long way and deserve to be recognized for their immense contributions,” said Mullins. “This ceremony is to show them how much we appreciate the good work that they do.”

Mullins had special praise for Sgt. Kizzy Adonis of the 120 Precinct, who was placed on modified assignment by Commissioner Bratton for “failure to supervise” in the Eric Garner incident.

“Picking her as the scapegoat was sinful,” asserted Mullins. “Sgt. Adonis fulfilled her duties as a supervisor. Commissioner Bratton’s actions was political pandering at its very worst. It defied logic, common sense and any semblance of integrity.”

The recipients were recommended for this honor by friends, family members and colleagues. Anyone wishing to nominate an active or retired female sergeant should contact SBA Recording Secretary Vincent Vallelong at 212-226-2180 or by e-mail at: vvallelong@sbanyc.org.

THE 2016 HONOREES ARE:

SGT. KIZZY ADONIS

Sgt. Adonis was appointed to the NYPD in 2002, and promoted to sergeant in 2014. Her entire career as a police officer was spent at the 75 Precinct. As a patrol and training officer, she earned a well-deserved reputation for excellence.

After being promoted to sergeant, she was assigned to the 120 Precinct, and was the patrol supervisor on the day of the Eric Garner incident.

Although Sgt. Adonis had been dispatched back to the borough for an administrative duty, she chose to first respond to the scene of the Garner arrest in order to support and supervise her officers.

Prior to her arrival, the struggle had already begun after Mr. Garner refused to be handcuffed and resisted a lawful arrest. When Sgt. Adonis arrived, she can be clearly seen on video taking appropriate supervisory action and ensuring that, despite Mr. Garner’s proclamations to the contrary, he could breathe.

Sgt. Adonis called for an ambulance, checked on Mr. Garner’s well-being several times, and waited for the arrival of the EMTs.

Although a Staten Island grand jury found no criminal wrongdoing by any of the officers, Sgt. Adonis was inexplicably placed on modified assignment for what Commissioner Bratton called “failure to supervise.”

While announcing the award, SBA Vice President Bob Ganley reassured Sgt. Adonis of the union’s steadfast commitment to her.

“Kizzy, we’re behind you,” he said. “You will not be forgotten.”

SGT. QUATISHA EPPS, TRANSIT DISTRICT 12

Sgt. Epps, a Bronx native and cancer survivor who has served the NYPD for ten years, regularly performs outreach with at-risk youth and community groups on issues related to health, self-esteem, dating abuse and domestic violence.

She is also the manager of the NYPD men’s basketball team, and gives monthly instruction at the Police Academy in leadership development, self-improve-
Sgt. Perkins is currently working with the department’s Risk Management Bureau to develop the curriculum necessary to bring NYPD training into federal compliance.

Sgt. Perkins, a proud parent of two boys, has served as a Cub Scout den leader and was recently elevated to Cub Master, where her scouts participate in an array of altruistic endeavors under her leadership.

She resides on the Rockaway Peninsula and her home was devastated by Hurricane Sandy. Nonetheless, Sgt. Perkins did not miss one single day of work during the crisis.

Sgt. Perkins was nominated for this honor by Sgt. Aaron Lai of the Police Academy.

SGT. DAISY RICOTTA, PATROL BOROUGH QUEENS NORTH

Sgt. Ricotta is one of five children, born and raised by a single mother in East New York, Brooklyn. She was appointed to the NYPD in 1996, and promoted to sergeant in 2004.

Sgt. Ricotta, who cites her mother, a public school teacher, as her role model, exhibited leadership qualities early on in the NYPD.

She is a proficient supervisor, whose insight and efficiency has enabled her to be a successful SNEU and Conditions Supervisor. She is currently the Planning Sergeant in PBQN.

In April 2014, Sgt. Martin became the lone female inductee in the inaugural NYC Golden Gloves Hall of Fame ceremony, which was held at Barclays Center. She was recommended for this honor by SBA Marshal Joseph Quinn.

SGT. HEATHER PERKINS, POLICE ACADEMY

Sgt. Perkins began her police career as a cadet and was appointed to the NYPD in 2000 and promoted to sergeant in 2008. While assigned to the Transit Bureau, she served as an anti-crime supervisor, school unit sergeant, Assistant Integrity Control Officer and graffiti coordinator.

Moving to the Police Academy was a seamless transition. She has a passion for teaching both students and in-service personnel.

Sgt. Perkins was selected last year to help formulate and teach the Police Commissioner’s 20K Initiative. One colleague described her as “the best of the best that the Training Bureau has to offer.”
In that capacity, Sgt. Ricotta develops plans for major sporting events, including Major League Baseball, the U.S. Open, presidential visits, numerous festivals, parades and road races, and large scale disaster drills. Sgt. Ricotta is married to SBA Director Joe Ricotta, who recommended her for this honor. They have a 7-year-old son named Steven.

RETIRED SGT. SUZANNE SELKOWITZ-REEK

While serving the department from 1984 to 2004, retired Sgt. Selkowitz-Reek was assigned to numerous commands in Queens, as well as the Street Crime Unit and the Narcotics Bureau.

Throughout her police career she was involved in many volunteer activities, but took that to another level upon her retirement.

Sgt. Selkowitz-Reek began taking children from the Ronald McDonald House on community outings. As the mother of a son on the autism spectrum, she became president of the Nassau/Suffolk chapter of the Autism Society of America.

Sgt. Selkowitz-Reek’s fundraising has raised over $1 million. This has enabled her to sponsor more than 100 free events per year for families with children on the autism spectrum, donate nearly 200 iPads with programs for non-verbal children that enables them to communicate, and provide over $38,000 worth of gift cards to families in crisis.

Sgt. Selkowitz-Reek was nominated for this award by Sgt. Julie Guthoff of the Quality Assurance Division.

SGT. NICOLE TIRADO

Sgt. Tirado was appointed to the NYPD in 2002, and promoted to sergeant in 2008. She is currently the Major Case supervisor in the Manhattan North Narcotics Division (MNND).

As a police officer on the 44 Precinct SNEU team, Sgt. Tirado amassed 250 arrests. As the SNEU team supervisor in the 30 Precinct, her tenacity resulted in her team achieving tremendous success that resulted in strong reviews from her supervisors.

When initially assigned to MNND, Sgt. Tirado’s team regularly led the city in the number of arrests made, search warrants executed, and confidential informants being cultivated.

During her entire career, Sgt. Tirado has performed in enforcement and investigative capacities, and has proven to be a great mentor to younger officers, especially undercovers, many of whom she has trained to make their initial drug purchases.

Sgt. Tirado was recommended for this honor by Sgt. Dominick DeSieri of MNND, who says when you tell little girls they can be or do anything in life, all they have to do is look at Sgt. Tirado to realize that is true.
IN THE LINE OF DUTY

DETECTIVE RANDOLPH HOLDER

On the evening of October 20, 2015, then PO Randolph Holder, 33, of the Housing Bureau’s Police Service Area 5, responded to a report of gunshots in the confines of the 23 Precinct. One of the suspects had just robbed a bicycle at gunpoint.

PO Holder and another officer encountered a fleeing suspect on a pedestrian overpass near East 120 Street and the FDR Drive. During an exchange of gunfire, PO Holder, a five year department veteran, was fatally wounded. His assailant was shot several times, but his injuries were not life-threatening.

PO Holder, who was posthumously promoted to the rank of detective first grade, was a third generation police officer. His father, Randolph Holder Sr., and grandfather had both served as police officers in their native Guyana where Det. Holder was born.

The man accused of his murder is a career criminal with a long rap sheet that included over two dozen arrests. Despite his extensive criminal history, a judge inexplicably released him into a drug diversion program after a recent arrest.

When confronted about such a tragic decision, the judge stated he did not have a crystal ball.

While still a recruit in 2010, Det. Holder submitted a letter to the department explaining his motivations for becoming a police officer.

He spoke about migrating to the United States from his native country in 2002. His first real job, he said, was working as a security officer with many retired NYPD members.

“That’s when I decided I could be a role model and make a difference in my community and in New York City,” he wrote.

His final paragraph read, “In December 2010, I will graduate from the NYPD Academy to become a police officer in the greatest police department in the world.”

Det. Holder’s fiancée, Mary Muhammad, said there were no words that articulate her feelings of grief and loss.

“I have worn the shoes, and I have walked many miles in them,” she explained. “To simply wear the uniform of an officer is an act of courage.”

DETECTIVE JOSEPH LEMM

On December 21, 2015, Det. Joseph Lemm, 45, of Bronx Warrants, a Technical Sergeant in the Air National Guard who was deployed in Afghanistan was one of six soldiers killed by a suicide bomber who drove a motorcycle into their patrol.

Det. Lemm, who hailed from a farming community in Nebraska, moved to New York in 2000 in order to join the NYPD. His large stature and can-do attitude earned him the well-deserved nickname of Superman from his colleagues.

In 2006 he was nominated for a New York Post Liberty Medal for his police actions after chasing down a suspect in a fatal stabbing.

Although he had been on his third overseas deployment at the time of his death, Det. Lemm was an extremely active police officer. He had made 427 arrests and received numerous department awards, including five commendations.

His survivors include his wife Christine, teenage daughter Brook, and son Ryan, 4, who could be seen heartbreakingly saluting his father’s casket during services at St. Patrick’s Cathedral.
SGT. DONALD CONNIFF
On January 2, 1998, Sgt. Donald “Scotty” Conniiff, then 32, was assigned to the 9 Precinct Anti-Crime Unit. He was en route to a mayoral inauguration detail when the vehicle he was in was hit by an alleged drunken driver who blew a red light.

Sgt. Conniiff was thrown from the vehicle and incurred brain injuries that rendered him unable to care for himself for the rest of his life. He passed away from those line of duty injuries at the age of 50 on December 12, 2015.

Sgt. Conniiff, a Staten Island native, was appointed to the NYPD in May 1992 and promoted to sergeant in May 1996.

His late father, Daniel Conniiff, retired from the NYPD as a sergeant assigned to the Property Clerk in 1983 and passed away in February 2010.

PO DAVID HOFER, EULESS, TX POLICE DEPARTMENT
On the afternoon of March 1, 2015, PO David Hofer, 29, of the Euless Police Department in Texas was ambushed and killed while responding to a report of suspicious activity in a public park. The gunmen was mortally wounded by PO Hofer’s partner.

PO Hofer had been a member of the Euless PD for two years. Prior to that he had served the NYPD for five years, where he was assigned to the 9 Precinct.

PO Hofer was born in Switzerland and raised in Brooklyn and downtown Manhattan. He was a graduate of New York University.

His survivors include his fiancée, Marta Danylyk, and his parents Sonja and Helmut.

ALL GAVE SOME, SOME GAVE ALL
Thirty-two law enforcement officers have been shot and killed in the performance of their duties in the United States and Puerto Rico since the last edition of Frontline was published in September 2015. We pay tribute to them by honoring their memories on these pages. Please keep all of our brother and sister officers in your thoughts and prayers during these very challenging and dangerous times.
The United Federation of Teachers:
An Unholy Alliance with the de Blasio Administration

Why Your Health Care Costs Are Going Up

Health Care for New York City employees and retirees is quickly coming to an end. As you know, for decades NYC employees received lower salaries than their counterparts in private industry and other governmental jobs in exchange for a promise of free health care benefits for the rest of their lives.

Although we have yet to see premiums assessed for our health care costs, we have seen the implementation of higher and higher co-payments at almost every level of health care service.

Once again, thanks to the egregious actions of the Municipal Labor Committee (MLC) and the deceitful tactics and influence of the United Federation of Teachers (UFT), co-pays for NYC employees are once again increasing.

Against the only opposing vote by the SBA, the MLC voted unanimously to increase co-pays for all active and retired non-Medicare NYC employees. These benefit changes are no doubt a result of behind-the-scenes collaborations between the UFT and representatives of Mayor de Blasio’s pay-to-play tactics.

These co-pay increases range from 25 percent to 300 percent and will have a devastating effect on our neediest members.

These plan modifications were introduced in January 2014 as part of the 2009 contract negotiations. This is when the UFT conspired with the mayor’s Office of Labor Relations to use the health benefits of 150 NYC labor unions—comprising approximately 500,000 active and retired NYC employees and their families—as a bargaining chip to enhance their own negotiating position for the exclusive benefits of the UFT.

Never before has there been a single union contract so laden with obligations placed upon such a significant number of non-participants. What is most disturbing is how all of the remaining sheep sat idly by just waiting for their slaughter.

Since early 2013, the UFT had been avoiding any meaningful negotiations with Mayor Michael Bloomberg’s administration; foregoing talks to update their current collective bargaining agreement which had expired in October 2009. These delays created a gridlock that ultimately left the UFT in a self-imposed contract limbo.

A byproduct from such an overdue contract was fiscally punishing cash-flow shortfalls, which began to create a political eruption and opposition from the UFT membership. This also created a delay with other city unions unable to commence negotiations on expired contracts since the city wanted to close prior rounds before opening a new round of contract talks.

In reality the delay had nothing to do with closing final rounds, but rather boxing everyone into future health care savings for the city.

While the UFT/Bloomberg battles continued, ongoing negotiations were also being undertaken between the MLC and the NYC Office of Labor Relations (OLR) over health benefit costs for active and retired members and the creation of employer savings initiatives.

The UFT, which historically exerted a disproportionate amount of influence on this group, introduced their antagonism into these discussions. They also solicited support for their cause, even though all but a handful of unions already had approved agreements. They guided and established a “drag your feet” philosophy and a mantra pronouncing that cutting member benefits or increased cost-sharing would be a shameful act, meaning there was no economic reason to negotiate.

On January 27, 2013, then Public Advocate Bill de Blasio announced his candidacy for mayor of New York. The thought of having a “liberal-on-steroids” mayor after almost 12 years of the authoritarian Bloomberg, seemed like a dream come true for the UFT, so they put their full support behind the progressive candidate in September 2013.

As we know all too well, de Blasio won the election and in January 2014 was sworn in as mayor.

Almost immediately the UFT entered into negotiations with the city. Throughout the talks a major stumbling point was retroactive payments to members, as the new mayor demanded they be funded through givebacks. The UFT began to search for ways to fund those costs without bearing them exclusively.

The strategy was simple. The UFT would clandestinely forge a spirit of collaboration and cooperation with Mayor de Blasio, and unilaterally negotiate away large swathes of MLC control and resources. This would, in essence, deliver the mayor a wish list of items required to dramatically transform employer-sponsored health care.

In simple terms, the mantra was, “Let all active and retired NYC employees pay for UFT raises and retroactive monies.”

Three weeks later, the nine-year contract was announced. The teachers union was the first municipal union to get a new contract under the new administration, an agreement spanning November 2009 to October 2018 that set the pattern of 10 percent increases spread over eight years for all municipal unions.
The following are language excerpts from the UFT Memorandum of Agreement defining the scope of damage inflicted by the UFT on active and retired NYC employees:

The UFT and the City/DOE agree the UFT will exercise its best efforts to have the MLC agree to the following:

Fiscal Year 2015—$400 million in savings on a citywide basis in health care costs in the NYC health-care program.

Fiscal year 2016—$700 million in savings

Fiscal year 2017—$1 billion in savings

Fiscal year 2018—$1.3 billion in savings

For every fiscal year thereafter, the savings on a citywide basis in health care costs shall continue on a recurring basis.

The parties agree that the above savings to be achieved on a citywide basis are a material term of this agreement. In the event the MLC does not agree to the above citywide targets, the arbitrator shall determine the UFT’s proportional share of the savings target and, absent an agreement by these parties, shall implement the process for the satisfaction of these savings targets.

Effective July 1, 2014, the Stabilization Fund, [the health care reserve account], shall convey $1 billion to the City of New York to be used in support of the pro rata funding of this agreement [to support the UFT Agreement].

In addition to all this damage, the last item on the mayor’s wish list was enthusiastically granted by the UFT by their partially watering down the 30 year old method for calculating the NYC employer premium payments and bringing us closer to payroll/pension deductions for premiums.

While we at the SBA were not surprised by the actions of the UFT leadership, we were alarmed to discover the involvement of the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), a national organization run by former UFT President Randi Weingarten.

On March 9, 2014, Mayor de Blasio met for lunch with Weingarten and current UFT President Michael Mulgrew. The manipulations of this triad culminated the following month, on April 9th, when the AFT, the national teachers union, gave a $350,000 donation to the Campaign for One New York, an organization that promotes Mayor de Blasio’s progressive agenda.

Ironically, Campaign for One New York and the UFT along with several other organizations are now under federal investigation by U.S Attorney Preet Bharara.

As quickly as the mayor’s vehicle for channeling money was created, it was closed down while under a cloud as detailed in a Wall Street Journal article:

Political Organization Tied to NYC Mayor Bill de Blasio Is Closing—The Campaign for One New York has come under scrutiny for its donors and spending

—Wall Street Journal, March 17, 2016

The group has paid for the Mayor’s consultants, national political travel, polling and advertising. It has raised almost $5 million since Mr. de Blasio, a Democrat, was elected in the fall of 2013.

Ethics groups have asked for investigations because the group takes unlimited contributions from real-estate executives, lobbyists, labor unions and others with business in front of the city. Several groups have given $100,000 or more, including the United Federation of Teachers and 1199 SEIU, a prominent health-care labor union. The group also has come under criticism because it pays consultants whose clients have business with the city and accepts donations from lobbyists who want help from Mr. de Blasio.

‘We believe the mayor’s direct involvement with the Campaign for One New York raises troubling questions regarding the legality of his conduct under New York City’s conflict of interest and campaign finance laws,’ Common Cause said in a February letter to the city’s Campaign Finance Board. This is the same “Campaign for One New York” that is currently under federal investigation for campaign finance violations.

On April 27, 2016, the U.S. Attorney for the Southern District of New York and the New York County District Attorney’s Office issued subpoenas to members of the mayor’s inner circle and the UFT for “willful and flagrant” violations of federal and state campaign finance laws.

Stay tuned!
Phil Caruso was first elected president of the NYC Patrolmen’s Benevolent Association (PBA) in 1980. He and his fellow candidates called themselves “The Fighting Team.”

The media initially described Caruso as being “soft-voiced” because his style was not to rant, but to mediate and conciliate. However, anyone who underestimated his passion for the job would have made a gross error in judgment.

During the turbulent 1980s, when crack cocaine emerged as a social scourge, police officers were being injured and killed in numbers not seen since Prohibition, and a lack of leadership prevailed at One Police Plaza, Caruso proved his mettle under the direst of circumstances.

He regularly sparred with the Rev. Al Sharpton, who was making a name for himself as a racial arsonist, and took on Police Commissioner Ben Ward for his plan to regularly transfer officers after a corruption scandal. Police officers staged a six-day citywide work slowdown and on several occasions threatened a march on City Hall. Only the intervention of the late Mayor Ed Koch, with whom Caruso had a constructive relationship, prevented that from happening.

“Calling Phil a consummate politician does a disservice to his legacy,” said SBA President Ed Mullins, who began his union career as a PBA delegate in the 13 Precinct in the 1980s.

“Phil and his Vice President, Richie O’Neill, really had their hands on the pulse of the membership and the city itself. They were born leaders, and they led by example.”

Mullins attributes much of his current success to the lessons he learned while observing and listening to Caruso and O’Neill.

“They really opened my eyes to the political nuances that are part of the job; from the point of negotiating contracts to standing up for what’s right against the power elite,” said Mullins.

“Being around Phil and Richie was more integral to my success than any labor classes I’ve ever taken.”

In many ways the 1980s were similar to the 2010s. There was a corruption case, fatal shootings by police that led to widespread demonstrations, and charges that the NYPD was insensitive to the needs of people of color.

Caruso called the legions of police critics “political mercenaries” and had no compunction about going head to head with them.

“I think they’re looking for someone to do battle with someone who they perceive to be their major opponent right now,” Caruso said in 1987. “And apparently it’s me, because I’ve taken a very firm stand, a very positive stand, in terms of protecting the constitutional and contractual rights of police officers.”

Caruso maintained that while many of the activists demanded more minority officers in certain precincts, they still attacked them with vigor when those officers took necessary and appropriate but ultimately aggressive police actions.

He also expressed frustration at what he saw as a detachment by Commissioner Ward, and the lack of any positive line of communication between the two of them.

Mullins sees the same thing occurring today with Commissioner Bratton, as he serves at the behest of Mayor de Blasio whose disdain for law enforcement is well-chronicled.

“Phil stood up when he saw what he perceived as injustices being heaped upon the rank and file,” said Mullins. “In his heart and mind, he knew that was the right thing to do.”

Caruso, now 81, is the son of a mason who was born and raised in Brooklyn. He served in the U.S. Army and worked as a telephone installer prior to joining the NYPD in 1958. While on patrol for many years, he earned undergraduate and advanced degrees from Pace University in industrial and labor relations.

He served as PBA president from 1980 until his retirement in 1995, and is still considered one of the most popular and accessible union leaders in NYPD history.

For many years Caruso, the married father of two daughters, was urged to run for public office, but always maintained that he was, at his core, a cop.

“I have no political aspirations,” he said in the late 1980s. “I love what I’m doing. I’ve always been a police officer first and foremost.”

Although Caruso has been retired for over two decades, he and O’Neill, who passed away in November 2014, left an indelible impression on Mullins.

“It is because of them that I will never waiver in my commitment to the SBA,” said Mullins. “It is why I feel so strongly about hardworking members like Sgt. Kizzy Adonis, who was maligned in a clear case of political gamesmanship. If I have to take a particularly hard stance or make a difficult decision, I often ask myself what Phil or Richie would do or say.”
WALGREENS JOURNEYS TO THE DARK SIDE

The strategic business alliance between drug manufacturer Valeant and Walgreens, which calls itself “America’s pharmacy,” is at best questionable and at worst scandalous. The fact that such an iconic pharmacy would betray its identity and compromise its principles by affiliating itself with such a contemptible company leaves one to wonder if there is any integrity left in corporate America.

Valeant Pharmaceuticals has already proven themselves to be an extraordinarily deceitful organization in an industry whose participants typically operate in an unprincipled manner.

Valeant is the unscrupulous manufacturer responsible for the 2015 price increases of 525 percent and 212 percent respectively for Isuprel and Nitropress, after they acquired the two heart drugs from Marathon Pharmaceuticals.

This occurred after Marathon, which had acquired the drugs from another company in 2013 and had already quintupled their prices. This predatory behavior is common in the pharmaceutical business, as reflected in another newsworthy case involving Turing Pharmaceuticals. Turing was responsible for jacking up the price for Daraprim, which had been on the market for 62 years, from $13.50 per pill to $750 overnight.

These types of actions, which have become the standard in the drug industry, have triggered a federal investigation and congressional hearings. I don’t expect the misconduct to be addressed as pharmaceutical manufacturers have funneled hundreds of millions of dollars in campaign contributions to the very politicians ranting about these violations.

In November 2015, Optum Rx, our claims administrator, reported discovery of gross billing improprieties concerning Valeant products purchased through Philidor Rx, a Valeant business partner.

An online article in “Bloomberg Business” described the deceitful practices that were employed to facilitate the deal.

Philidor Said to Modify Prescriptions to Boost Valeant Sales

Bloomberg Business—October 29, 2015

“A specialty pharmacy that fills prescriptions for Valeant Pharmaceuticals International Inc. altered doctors’ orders to wring more reimbursements out of insurers, according to former employees and an internal document. Workers at the mail-order pharmacy, Philidor RX Services LLC, were given written instructions to change codes on prescriptions in some cases so it would appear that physicians required or patients desired Valeant’s brand-name drugs—not less expensive generic versions—be dispensed, the former employees said.”

This is the same Philidor Rx, who, along with Valeant, then came under federal and congressional scrutiny pressuring Valeant to terminate this lucrative business association. It is in this void, where Walgreens is stepping in to apparently take over where Philidor Rx left off. These are the shoes Walgreens is looking to fill, which is extremely troubling.

The existence of such a business pact is a direct threat to consumers and plans like your SBA drug plan. It is crucial that this threat is brought to the attention of plan participants by outlining the tactics that will be used to snare doctors, manipulate patients, exploit health plans, and extort every penny possible out of third party pharmaceutical providers like your SBA plan.

The way the industry is currently designed, doctors operate in scandal-laden relationships with pharmaceutical manufacturers. Medical providers prescribing habits are highly influenced through detailing (visits by pharmaceutical representatives), sampling (filling up physician sample closets with over-inflated brand name drug samples), and Continuing Medical Education (CME) courses.

The pharmacist serves the role of decipherer by simplifying the processing of prescribed medications and claims within the boundaries of an individual plan formulary. If there is a conflict, they assist in the adjudication of the claim. They do this in the patient’s interest as they are earning a dispensing fee and a product profit.

By creating an environment where the pharmacist now becomes a servant and marketer for a specific drug manufacturer’s product line, we eliminate their objectivity and the only counter balance to industry forces has therefore been neutralized. Please note that under the English medical system (National Health Service), the pharmacists, who can change prescriptions without physician approval, are inaccessible to pharmaceutical representatives so as to defend against this influence and corruption.

WHAT CAN WE EXPECT?

I predict that Walgreens pharmacists will be routinely calling doctors to switch patients to Valeant brand products and promote the use of Valeant related co-pay cards aggressively to all.

The purpose of these co-pay cards is to desensitize users on actual drug costs. By doing so, they allow for
immeasurable price increases for brand name drugs. In the days before co-pay cards, Medco, a pharmacy benefit manager (PBM) owned by Merck, was alleged to be re-writing member prescriptions from both brand and generics to more expensive Merck manufactured products.

As history repeats itself, Valeant’s use of Walgreen pharmacists to shill and encourage prescription revisions is certainly achievable in this environment.

I expect to see Walgreen pharmacists and pharmacy techs being routinely visited by the very same drug representatives who visit the doctors. These Valeant employees will cross train pharmacists and pharmacy techs as Valeant promoters and facilitators, effectively drilling these front line drug distributors on the superiority of the Valeant product line.

A blitzkrieg of pharmacy robo-calls, refill reminders, and promotional mailings all steering towards Valeant products is coming soon. In the past large pharmacy chains have received compensation. An example of this is the Albertson’s lawsuit related to the large chain receiving $2 per letter or $10 per phone call to patients to remind them to refill their prescriptions.

Imagine when Valeant ups the ante. We are not talking about what was once “project work” for one product, we are talking about systemic coordinated cooperation and mutually beneficial activities that will be conducted along a whole product line.

This will occur with the express purpose of expanding prescription utilization to ever increasing priced goods and therefore substantially enriching both parties.

Imagine a pharmacy providing discount coupons for non-drug products sold within the store, tied directly to the consumer’s pharmaceutical drug spending habits. Here’s how this marketing initiative might work:

Bring us $500 worth of Valeant product prescriptions a month and you receive a 25 percent off coupon applicable to all goods in the Walgreens store.

This sounds like a win-win for the patient whose Walgreens-provided co-pay card will cover 100 percent of the member’s out-of-pocket component of the cost. This threshold can painlessly be reached with a simple acne cream whose retail price is now reaching $500 a tube, and will certainly create a nightmare for payers trying to safeguard funds from crushing cost surges.

Even worse, imagine a pharmacist getting paid a salary premium for increased claims switched. Talk about incentive and inspiration!

Visualize physicians being lectured and schooled by drug representatives on phone call protocols in preparation for the onslaught of calls from Walgreens pharmacists looking to expedite the processing of expensive Valeant brand products in lieu of similar generics as they are submitted at the pharmacy counter.

Imagine pharmacy techs using the coached story lines and pharmacy-rep prepared “talking points” validating patient prescription changes to doctors. No one can guess, at this time, how cooperative the physicians will be promoting Valeant-brand medication and you must go to Walgreens.

NOT FAR FROM THE TRUTH?

Currently, “code words” are communicated to patients through direct to consumer marketing ads, so they can narrate requisite information to the physicians, describing symptoms, thus defining an illness that calls for the specific marketed brand drug to be prescribed. At the same time, physicians have also been prepared at sampling and detailing sessions or during CME courses, to identify these key phrases so they can readily identify the target illness and know to prescribe the promoted drug.

WHERE TO NEXT?

Obama Care is forcing the consolidation of individual medical practices into larger physician groups or Affordable Care Organizations (ACO). I foresee these groups being compensated to direct patients to Walgreens.

Consider a doctor telling patients, “I want you on this Valeant-brand medication and you must go to Walgreens to avoid being hassled by your insurance company. Walgreens know how to push this claim through.”

With Medicare and Medicaid being the largest payers, this action will have the dire effect of causing increased costs to both. First and third party payers, like the SBA fund, are particularly vulnerable if no action is taken and this conduct is allowed to continue unabated.

As often happens in business, if other manufacturers and pharmacies mirror these types of arrangements, the first victims are going to be the payers. In the end, however, the consumers will be the real sufferers as reflected in ever-increasing insurance premiums and higher government Medicaid and Medicare costs. The financial stability of third party payers like the SBA fund will certainly be compromised.

Keep in mind that although out-of-pocket expenses, in some cases, are capped under the Affordable Care Act (ACA), health plans can request documentation verifying “actual” out-of-pocket costs being incurred by consumers. This action will subject patients to experience the full maximum out-of-pocket costs by paying for unnecessary medications in lieu of equally effective less costly treatments.

As you can see, we at the SBA are concerned and, as always, we believe in being vigilant by staying ahead of the curve. Our response is currently under review. It could very well end in the exclusion of Walgreens and their newly acquired Rite-Aid pharmacies from our network.
Dishonesty and opportunism pay off in the short run, but one day you have to pay the piper and what a miserable day it is.

The graph clearly shows how the ramifications of Valeant's greed and malfeasance led to condemnation by its expected allies—namely the federal government and Wall Street. The company's behavior was so blatantly nefarious, the stock price took a dramatic downturn in the space of just one year.

### Change in Social Status

Members are responsible to notify the SBA Health & Welfare Fund office immediately if there is a change in social status, as well as provide legal documentation of the change. Once a divorce is finalized or a domestic partnership is terminated, former spouses or domestic partners are no longer eligible for benefits. Failure to notify the SBA Health & Welfare Fund office immediately will leave members responsible for all expenses incurred by their former spouses or domestic partners.

### Reauthorization of the James Zadroga 9/11 Health & Compensation Act of 2010

On December 18, 2015, the President signed into law a bill reauthorizing the James Zadroga 9/11 Health and Compensation Act of 2010. We would like to take this opportunity to advise the SBA membership regarding two key benefits extended by this reauthorization.

First, the WTC Health Program has been funded through 2090 and provides free health screening and care for first responders and survivors. Secondly, the September 11th Victim Compensation Fund (VCF) has been fully funded and extended for five years, through December 18, 2020.

The reauthorization has divided VCF claimants into two categories: Group A and Group B.

The VCF has advised that all registration deadlines remain in effect.

The deadlines include:

- October 3, 2013, for individuals diagnosed with a non-cancer WTC condition prior to the October 3, 2011.
- October 12, 2014, for individuals diagnosed with a WTC cancer prior to October 12, 2012.
- October 21, 2015, for individuals diagnosed with prostate cancer prior to October 21, 2013.
- April 4, 2016, for individuals diagnosed with a WTC “rare cancer” prior to April 4, 2014, and two years from any subsequent diagnosis of a WTC condition.
- In all cases, the registration period will close on December 18, 2020.

Members are encouraged to register and be monitored by the WTC Health Program.

You can register online at: www.cdc.gov/wtc. Please remain vigilant in attending all health screenings. There is a limited period following a diagnosis of a new WTC condition to be compensable. Barrett’s esophagus, sleep apnea and most cancers remain eligible for two years from diagnosis.

Please contact SBA attorneys immediately upon any such diagnosis. The law firm of Ungaro & Cifuni is available as SBA Disability Counsel to represent both active and retired members with their VCF claims, WTC reclassifications and Social Security disabilities and can assist members with injury reports and other pension or personal injury issues.

BIG PHARMA: FRIENDS OR FOES

I recently spoke with the spouse of a retired member about a co-payment experienced at her pharmacy. The co-pay was for a brand medication the plan participant had taken for almost 2 years, and had increased from zero to $47. The plan participant believed there must have been a mistake, or she was being purposely overcharged by the pharmacy.

When a member relates to me they have zero-co-pay for a brand name drug at a retail pharmacy, it is not hard for me to determine what has taken place. Unfortunately, it was not an innocent computer glitch that could be easily corrected with a keystroke.

Instead, it was the result of much more sinister forces at work.

After all, this is a medication that retails for more than $500 for a 30 day prescription. While the SBA ascribes to the belief that all member pharmacy claims should have a zero co-pay, the real world of prescription drug sales, which operates in similar fashion to a drug cartel, eliminates the possibilities of such positive outcomes.

In the past I have described some of the practices used by pharmaceutical companies to push and promote their expensive brand name drugs. The first link in the collaborative chain are medical doctors whose endorsements are so crucial.

Their deceit includes direct to consumer marketing whose purpose is to drive patients and consumers to the provider’s office, where a robust supply of free drug samples, co-pay cards, discount coupons and an accommodating physician is waiting. The first link in the collaborative chain are medical doctors whose endorsements are so crucial.

In many cases a pharmaceutical representative has already primed the doctor with free meals, offers of financially rewarding promotional speaking assignments, money-making consulting opportunities or invitations to educational junkets in faraway places.

The pharmaceutical industry also knows how to desensitize you, the patient, to the exorbitant prices they demand for their products. They tacitly but effectively obtain your assistance in compelling your third party payer, such as union health plans or drug carriers, to pay the usurious rates they demand for their products.

In the case of our member’s spouse, the pharmaceutical manufacturers used a combination of underhanded techniques to reach their goals. They first brought the provider on board through a series of winks and nods from their drug representatives during a strategic office visit.

After the gifts were distributed and the free meals were digested, the physician or a member of their staff opened the inner sanctum—the sample closet—which is the primary target of the drug representative. A generous supply of drug samples, co-pay cards and discount coupons and instructions were ceremoniously deposited therein.

These co-pay cards and discount coupons, which I like to call “free passes,” are designed to be delivered directly to the providers. It frees the providers (doctors) from accountability and the potential criticism that is associated with prescribing a brand name medication when an equally effective generic is available.

It also serves to make the patient unaware and therefore unresponsive to exorbitant costs or pricing trends experienced by their pharmaceutical plan administrators. In this case our member’s spouse was issued a co-pay coupon, which magically made her co-pay disappear.

The member’s spouse is led to believe that the benevolent pharmaceutical manufacturer is giving these medications away for free, while nothing could be further from the truth.

In reality, the manufacturers have actually “bought” the cooperation of retail pharmacists by offering them generous compensation in the form of a secondary dispensing fee to endorse these tools.

We have been told of many instances where the retail pharmacist “pulls out of his bag of tricks,” a discount card from a prior customer just to be entitled to receive a proverbial bite of the apple. The supplemental dispensing fee revenues.

Regrettably, and nefariously, the real problem develops over time. By inadvertently allowing pharmaceutical manufacturers the opportunity to extract unlimited and ever increasing amounts of funds from welfare funds or insurance plans, this leads to always increasing premiums which results in financial volatility to payers, which in our case is the SBA pharmaceutical plan.

The number-one strategy deployed nationwide to contend with runaway costs or diminishing reserves is to increase co-pays, deductibles and premiums, all of which result in hardships for the plan participants.

In the long run, these strategies by the manufacturer only serve to enhance stockholder equity and executive compensation while leaving the patients and payers the victims of a scam of Bernie Madoff proportions.

Our member’s spouse experienced the reality that all good things, particularly those that interfere with drug profits, always come to an end. The manufacturers basically “hooked” her on a drug regimen, and then lowered the boom once she was firmly committed to its use.

The manufacturers expertly weaned our member off of the “price support,” which resulted in her eventually being responsible for 100 percent of the required co-pay. If there had been no pharmacy plan available, the patient would literally have been left out in the cold.

This injustice is done every day to patients across our country. I didn’t say around the world because only in the USA is such corporate behavior tolerated by the government and encouraged and supported by the medical community.
This is done totally by design—especially with products whose prices over time will continue to inflate at such alarming rates that all deferred revenues will be regained in very short order by squeezing reliant patients.

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What is crucial to note is that from 2013 to 2014, the subsidies were flowing. However, once the member’s spouse was well-established and comfortable with the medication, she was personally exposed to the relentless price increases.

In plans where there are maximum allowable benefits (caps), participants pay a percentage of the drug costs or those that operate within have a tiered structure, where third-tiered brand claims cost a premium, which eventually becomes extremely pricey to the user.

Making this particular case even sleazier is the fact that the product our member’s spouse was using was actually a long-term available generic medication that was re-introduced into the pharmaceutical market as a new brand name product.

This medication, which is readily available as a generic product at a deeply discounted price, was re-created through shocking and questionable business associations, coupled with the failure of oversight by such federal watchdogs as the Federal Drug Administration (FDA) and the Federal Trade Commission (FTC).

The manufacturer that produces this pharmaceutical product works in alliance with a patent holder of a brand name drug. Once the life span of the patent exclusivity is over—meaning generic forms of the drug must now become available—the company breathes new life into the product by “re-creating” and marketing the same item as a new product under a new name.

Here is an excerpt from the stated mission statement of one sales and marketing company:

**Our mission is to acquire and commercialize under-promoted, under-utilized pharmaceutical products and those in late stage clinical development. Using a combination of revitalized promotion, product reformulation or the introduction of meaningful brand line extensions, we make new therapeutic options available to healthcare providers and patients. We have current or past business relationships with some of the most noted companies in the worldwide pharmaceutical industry. These include Pfizer, GlaxoSmithKline (GSK), and AstraZeneca.**

Sadly, the government agencies, whose functions are to protect us by scrutinizing or disallowing such unsavory business practices, have been severely negligent by not banning such blatantly egregious business practices.

We have to also draw the dissimilarity between Patient Assistance Programs available to qualified individuals and the Co-payment Off-Set Card Programs currently being marketed by pharmaceutical manufacturers to all:

**Patient Assistance Programs**
- Uninsured or Need Based
- Free or Low Cost Medicine
- Patient Specific Dispensing Processed Through Manufacturer Representative
- 4.5 Million RXs per Year

**Co-payment Offset Cards**
- Commercially Insured
- Low or no Out-of Pocket Cost (However must have primary payer)
- Normal Dispensing Channels Processed Through Normal Retail Pharmacy
- $100–$125 million Rx per Year

**CO-PAY CARDS AND MEDICARE PART D**

It is important to realize that the use of drug coupons and co-pay cards by Medicare Part D beneficiaries is a violation of federal anti-kickback statutes. Plans like ours are validated annually as being “Actuarially Equivalent” to the template benefits provided under Medicare Part D guidelines. We are federally subsidized pursuant to the Medicare Modernization Act of 2003, and our plan is provided in lieu of an independent or insurance company run Medicare Part D plan.

Regulators historically have viewed the sponsorship of a beneficiary’s cost sharing amount as a prohibited inducement that could support physicians and beneficiaries use of expensive brand name drugs when a less expensive and equally effective generic or other alternative is available.

In September 2014, the Department of Health and Human Services, Office of the Inspector General (OEI), wrote the following:

*Cost sharing promotes prudent prescribing and purchasing choices by physicians and patients based on the true cost of the drugs and price competition in the pharmaceutical market. While co-payment coupons provide immediate financial benefit to beneficiaries, they ultimately can harm both Federal health care programs and their beneficiaries.*

The battle between manufacturers and payers boils down to a fundamental issue: Are manufacturers’ efforts to subsidize consumers’ out-of-pocket costs via drug coupons and co-pay cards benevolence and providing a consumer good or a means to promote new drug starts, preserve patents and deliver bought hyper-revenues?

The next time your doctor hands you a co-pay card or a discount coupon ask yourself why are they doing this and if this practice is really in your best interests.
VIAGRA & ITS GENERIC EQUIVALENT

The SBAs goal is to ensure that our members have the best and latest information concerning prescription drugs. Over the past dozen years we have taken great pride in exposing the notorious and elaborate marketing scams that pharmaceutical manufacturers have perpetrated on the public.

From the purple pill Nexium to the $800 toenail fungus medication Jublia, the goal of brand pharmaceutical manufacturers has been to maximize their profits at the expense of the trusting public.

We have just uncovered another sinister example of pharmaceutical industry greed. This time it concerns Viagra, which has a generic equivalent everywhere in the world except the United States.

By keeping Viagra as a brand drug, its manufacturer, Pfizer, has been able to demand an ever increasing price that is currently between $40 and $50 per pill. Since Viagra is not covered under the SBA plan, this is a prohibitive cost that our members are required to pay out of their own pockets.

There is good news, but Pfizer is doing everything to keep that information from you.

Pfizer originally patented a drug called Sildenafil under two different names: Viagra and Revatio. They had the exact same ingredients, but Revatio was only produced at 20 mg and used solely for the treatment of cardiovascular disease.

Viagra was produced at incremental strengths of 25, 50 and 100 mgs and marketed only for erectile dysfunction.

The only difference in the products was the brand names and the fact that Viagra came in three different strengths, while Revatio could only be obtained at one strength. The active ingredients in both products is exactly the same, but because of the strengths and the expressed purpose of the products—cardiovascular disease vs. erectile dysfunction—they were technically different products.

The patent for Sildenafil (Revatio) expired in 2012. Generic versions of this low-dose form have been available from several manufacturers in the United States since early 2013.

As for Viagra, Pfizer has initiated numerous court battles to retain the patent because of the astronomical profits it generates. The pharmaceutical giant has worked long and hard to keep an iron grip on one of its most profitable products.

While the battle over Viagra rages, the legitimacy of Sildenafil (Revatio), the alternative product, has been verified by one of the most trustworthy and reliable organizations in the country, Consumers Union (CU), the highly trusted, independent publisher of Consumer Reports magazine and ConsumerReports.org.

Consumer Reports recently came out with a report supporting the use of an equivalent dosage of generic Sildenafil 20 mg in lieu of the costly Viagra pills. The article raises several timely and topical questions, such as why not wait for the brand Viagra to become available in generic form in the United States?

http://www.consumerreports.org/drugs/yes-there-is-a-way-to-get-generic-viagra/

A March 9, 2016, announcement has brought Sildenafil (Viagra) to the forefront of the news cycle. “First Generic Version of Viagra Clears FDA,” trumpeted a headline announcing the upcoming availability of generic Viagra in the United States.

However, lobbyists at Pfizer are still able to exploit, manipulate and forestall the manufacture of generic Sildenafil in greater increments than 20 mg until at least December 2017.

Although generic Viagra will be produced by Teva Pharmaceuticals in 25, 50 and 100 mg strengths after December 2017, Teva has managed to find a way to gouge customers. By lobbying for and receiving 180 days of market exclusivity, they will still remain the lone producer of the generic product for six months.

What this means to the consumer (you) is that the cost of generic Viagra will only be lowered by about 20 to 25 percent from the inflated brand name price per unit until the 180 days of exclusivity are up. Thereafter, in June 2018, multi-manufacturers of the generic product will result in significant decreases in price.

The Answer

The SBA has always put the member’s well-being at the forefront of our policies and decisions. We have uncovered an opportunity to leverage the SBA Pharmaceutical Plan, making available generic Sildenafil (Revatio) 20 mg tabs at a profoundly discounted price.

Members can now utilize a corresponding number of pills to obtain their required dosage for this popular product. An example would be five 20 mg tablets of Sildenafil to equal one 100 mg unit of Viagra.

By providing this medication through Optum Rx Mail Order, members will no longer be subjected to the present-day exploitative charges.

Members must prepare the mail order form and forward a prescription from their physician. The quantities must be adjusted to match the corresponding dosages for Viagra (25, 50 or 100 mgs).

We will allow a maximum quantity of 90 pills per 90 day mail script, which will be processed within plan guidelines. This tactic has been enthusiastically endorsed by our medical advisors.

Ask your doctor if Sildenafil 20 mg in the appropriate dosage(s) is right for you.
OVER THE COUNTER COLD SORE MEDICATION PROGRAM

NEW BENEFIT AT NO OUT OF POCKET COST

The Health & Welfare Fund is pleased to announce another improvement to our Prescription Benefit Plan. It has come to our attention that over the past several months, the drug manufacturers are up to their old tricks. They are creating new brand medications to replace generic medications that have been the proven method of treatment for years. One can ask why they would do this, but we all know the reason is to increase their bottom line. The SBA Health & Welfare Fund has continually fought this assault on the financial stability of the fund, and will continue to do so. The area of concern now is cold sore medications.

Effective immediately Abreva® cream, a highly effective, reliable over the counter cream for the treatment of cold sores, will be available to SBA members at no cost. This to counter the new generation of brand treatments that can cost as much as 30 times more than Abreva® cream with no measureable increase in effectiveness. We have consulted with our experts, practicing physicians and clinical pharmacists, who have recommended that we eliminate coverage on these costly brand alternatives and cover Abreva® cream or oral antiviral agents as a recommended course of treatment.

Cold Sores (Herpes Simplex Labialis) Medication

Abreva® cream is the only non-prescription cold sore medicine approved by the FDA to shorten healing time. It can speed up healing of the sores and decrease symptoms (such as tingling, pain, burning, itching). It works by blocking the virus that causes the cold sores (herpes simplex) from entering the healthy skin cells and growing in number. It does that by getting to the source of the cold sore. Quite simply, Abreva® cream shortens healing time like a prescription, but without one. When used early, it can knock out your cold sore in 2½ days.

Note: This medication does not cure herpes and does not prevent passing the infection to someone else. It does not prevent a future occurrence.

To be eligible to participate in the program, members and their dependents must meet all of the following conditions:

a. Have been diagnosed by a licensed medical provider with a cold sore.

b. Possess a legal prescription from a licensed medical provider for Abreva® cream.

c. Present to your local retail pharmacist a legal prescription for Abreva® cream, along with your SBA Pharmaceutical Plan ID card.

This over the counter product will be available at no out of pocket cost to members or plan participants.
Proud to Be an SBA Member & Friend

Papal Visit

The NYPD was on high alert during the visit of Pope Francis to New York in late September 2015. Among those detailed to the event was Sgt. Chris Gulinello of the 19 Precinct. He was assigned to protect the Vatican Nunciature, where the Pope resided during his visit.

He and POs Mike Delmerico and Rob Guglielmo also escorted the empty Pope Mobile from the residence to a transition tent where the Pope would meet it for the procession to St. Patrick’s Cathedral.

Theodore Roosevelt Awards

On October 29, 2015, Sgts. Newell Laird of the 79 Detective Squad and Paul Montana of the 121 Precinct were among five recipients of the Theodore Roosevelt Award for overcoming extreme medical hardships and returning to active duty.

The award is given annually in honor of Teddy Roosevelt, who overcame several childhood medical conditions and physical challenges to become President of the NYC Police Commission, the precursor to today’s police commissioner, Assistant Secretary of the Navy, Governor of New York, and President of the United States.

Sgt. Laird was diagnosed with tonsil and throat cancer in December 2013, and Sgt. Montana was diagnosed with thyroid cancer in July 2014. After grueling medical treatments, Sgt. Laird returned to duty in August 2014 and Sgt. Montana resumed duties in October 2014.

A Proper Burial

SBA President Ed Mullins presents the American flag to Andreas and Zoe Becker, the grandchildren of deceased Sgt. James H. Bunn, who served the NYPD from May 1959 to July 1987 and passed away in February 2010.

After Sgt. Bunn’s death, his son let his body remain in the morgue so he could continue to collect pension and Social Security benefits. Sgt. Bunn was eventually anonymously buried in a potter’s field in New Jersey.

After the son was criminally charged by the Queens County District Attorney’s Office, the SBA purchased an appropriate gravestone, which was unveiled during a celebration of Sgt. Bunn’s life on November 12, 2015.

Among those in attendance were many SBA board officers, as well as prosecutors involved in the case.

“He was a great guy, always so nice and supportive,” said Zoe Becker. “He was a generous and kind person.”

“He always gave me advice and wisdom,” said Andreas Becker. “He loved the police department and he loved politics and he got me interested in talk radio. We always talked about the news. He was very open-minded and always encouraged my sister and me to have open minds and look at all sides of a story.”

“I worked with Jim in the mid-1970s in a plainclothes unit,” said retired Det. Jack Freck, the current Vice President of the NYC Detective Investigators Association. “He was very active, always the first guy through a door. Crime was crazy back then, but he always looked out for his men. He was a good man.”
Sgt. Kenneth Krug
Sgt. Kenneth Krug, who retired from the 107 Precinct after 21 years of service in 2002, was in the right place at the right time in December 2015.

He was working as a security guard at an upscale watch store at the Roosevelt Field mall on Long Island when an armed man attempted to hold up the location during the busy holiday shopping season.

As Krug engaged in what Nassau County Police Commissioner Thomas Krumpter described as a “life and death struggle” with the gunman, a shot was fired that struck but did not seriously injure a passerby.

Sgt. Krug strategically grabbed the slide of the robber’s automatic weapon to cause a jam, which prevented any other injuries. He was assisted in the apprehension of the suspect by off-duty NYPD Inspector Kenneth Lehr and two mall security guards.

Sgt. Cara Mulham
In early January 2016, Sgt. Cara Mulham and PO Artem Makaryan of the 61 Precinct responded to a residence where a woman was in active labor with no time to spare.

After assisting the mother into an ambulance, Sgt. Mulham, a nursing school graduate who has yet to take her board exams, realized the birth was imminent and volunteered to accompany EMTs Trudy Bermudez and Robert Lapre to the hospital.

After traveling just a few blocks, it was necessary to pull over where Sgt. Mulham and the EMTS successfully delivered a healthy baby boy who they later learned was named Edgar.

Sgt. Fidel Rosario
In September 2013, Sgt. Fidel Rosario and PO Nelson Mangual were on routine patrol in the 42 Precinct when they turned on to Lyman Place, observed a crowd, and heard a woman screaming that her baby was dying.

Sgt. Rosario immediately took the 19-month-old baby from the hysterical mother and began chest compressions as PO Mangual raced to Lincoln Hospital.

Shortly before their arrival at the hospital, the officers and the mother were thrilled when the baby started breathing—and wailing.

“During the entire ride the mother kept asking if her baby was going to die,” recounted Sgt. Rosario, “I was determined to make sure that didn’t happen.”
Sgt. John Dorst
SBA Sergeant-at-Arms John Dorst (center) was honored along with Lt. Richard Hutter, School Safety Uniform Task Force, and PO Vincent Dejose by the NYS Supreme Court Officers Association for saving the life of a court officer in 2015.

The injured officer, who was wearing a white T-shirt and his uniform cargo pants, had stumbled and fallen after having a heart attack during a lunch break stroll.

The officer was not in possession of identification, but the heroic trio deduced that he was most likely a court officer. After rendering possibly lifesaving medical assistance, they clarified his duty status and made the proper notifications at his place of employment.

Sgt. Anthony Egan
As a longtime member of the United States Marine Corps, Sgt. Anthony Egan has trained U.S. and foreign military personnel for combat deployment on several continents. He is also an adventurer who trekked to the top of Mount Kilimanjaro in Africa a few years ago.

While assigned to the 67 Precinct in December 2015, he made an unusual rescue when he spotted a rooster crossing the road near Flatbush and Snyder Avenues in Brooklyn.

Seeing how malnourished the rooster appeared, Sgt. Egan picked it up and a bond quickly developed. He nicknamed the bird Justice after bringing it to the precinct and placing it in a makeshift kennel.

He had considered taking it home, but then opted to contact an upstate farm sanctuary that gladly took the rooster in and, at last report, was doing just fine.

Several months prior to the rescue of the rooster, Sgt. Egan celebrated the U.S. Women’s World Cup soccer victory in July by donning an eagle mask and proudly holding an American flag (inset).

Semper Fi.

Undisclosed Police Files
Active Lt. Bernard Whalen, longtime New York Post reporter Philip Messing, and SBA Communications Director Robert Mladinich, a retired detective, collaborated on a coffee table book called “Undisclosed Files of the Police: Cases from the Archives of the NYPD from 1831 to the Present.” The 320-page chronological tour covers events of great local and international magnitude, including the murders of socialites and mobsters, misbehaving celebrities, daring heists, bombings, kidnappings, terrorist acts and scores of other headline grabbers. The book is packed with photos, many of which are long forgotten or never seen before.

“Undisclosed Files of the Police” is being published by Black Dog & Leventhal and will be available in October 2016. It is currently available for pre-order at Amazon.com.
Birth Announcements

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In Memoriam

The SBA pays respects to the following members who have passed away. Notifications were received between September 2015 and May 2016. Any omissions will be published in the next issue.

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SBA ART CALENDAR CONTEST

The winners of the 2016 Art Calendar Contest were selected once again by renowned artist Nick J. Napolitano, who currently oversees production on comics and books as Vice President of Manufacturing Administration for DC Entertainment.

The 13 winners received Apple iPads that were generously donated by the Federal Drug Agents Foundation. The SBA extends heartfelt thanks to Dennis J. Schnur, the organization’s Chairman of the Board. The 13 runner-ups received Apple gift cards, courtesy of our many sponsors.

Winners
Kindergarten: SKYLER MADDOX HUNTER, son of Sgt. Thomas Hunter, Chief of Department
1st Grade: SOPHIE O’BRIEN, daughter of Sgt. Michael O’Brien, 47 Precinct
2nd Grade: SAMUEL HAUG, son of Sgt. Scott Haug, 73 Precinct
3rd Grade: BRIANNA FOOTE, daughter of Sgt. Joshua Foote, Firearms & Tactics
4th Grade: MORGAN JONES, son of Sgt. Kevin Jones, Transit District 3
5th Grade: BENJAMIN CASELLA, son of Sgt. Greg Casella, CTTF
6th Grade: ASHLYNNE XAVIER, daughter of retired Sgt. David Xavier
7th Grade: GABRIELLA ARICA, daughter of Sgt. Hugo Arica, 108 Precinct
8th Grade: SAMANTHA BARBERA, daughter of retired Sgt. Jack Barbera
9th Grade: LAUREN RODRIGUEZ, daughter of Sgt. Norely Castano, Transit District 34
10th Grade: LUCIA ARAYA, daughter of Sgt. Richard Araya, Brooklyn North Warrants
11th Grade: AMELIA PENNA, daughter of retired Sgt. Ralph Pena
12th Grade: TARIK JAAWANI, son of retired Sgt. Lisa Jaawani

Runner-ups
Kindergarten: ALEXIS VAUTRINOT, daughter of Sgt. Ryan Vautrinot, 72 Precinct
1st Grade: ANNA CUESTA, daughter of retired Sgt. James Cuesta
2nd Grade: JOSEPH STRANO JR., son of Sgt. Joseph Strano, SRG 5
3rd Grade: BENJAMIN HAUG, son of Sgt. Scott Haug, 73 Precinct
4th Grade: ARIANNA FISHER, daughter of retired Sgt. Keith Fisher
5th Grade: LILLY AVEZZANO, daughter of Sgt. Robert Avezzano, QAD
6th Grade: JONAS PEREZ, son of Sgt. Omar Perez, 43 Precinct
7th Grade: JENNA NICHOLS, daughter of retired Sgt. Scott Nicholls
8th Grade: KEVIN TIERNEY, son of Sgt. Dennis Tierney, 43 Precinct
9th Grade: MARY TYRRELL, daughter of retired Sgt. Mary Mulroy
10th Grade: MAGGIE ROACH, daughter of retired Sgt. Peggy Roach
11th Grade: ANNE MARCHELLO, daughter of Sgt. Phil Marchello, 102 Precinct
12th Grade: VALERIE RODRIGUEZ, daughter of Sgt. Norley Castano, Transit District 34
Sergeants Benevolent Association
35 Worth Street
New York, NY 10013

Edward D. Mullins, President
Robert Ganley, Vice President
Paul Capotosto, Treasurer

Vincent Vallelong, Recording Secretary
Gary DeRosa, Financial Secretary
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Sergeants Benevolent Association

A NYC Police Sergeant—
The Toughest Job in the World

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Bill Craven, PSA 1/Housing Bureau
James Gatto, Highway 5/Staten Island
Edward Geary, 44 Precinct/Bronx
Donald Kipp, 103 Precinct/Queens South

Vincent Guida, City-Wide Secretary
John Dorst, Sergeant-at-Arms
Joseph Quinn, Marshal

Timothy Kornbluth, 79 Precinct/Brooklyn North
Peter McCormack, Bronx DA Squad/Det. Bureau
Reginald McGraw, TD 30/Transit Bureau
Michael Peruggia, EMD/HQ/Police Academy

Joseph Ricotta, Auto Crime/OCCB
Edmund Small, 70 Precinct/Brooklyn South
Arthur Smarsch, PBMS/Manhattan South
Cliff Thieleke, PBMN/Manhattan North