

At the Ithaca Public Education Initiative (IPEI) Board’s annual meeting on September 16, President Terry Byrnes welcomed four new board members and moderated the election of officers and annual budget approval.

“Thanks to the continued generosity of the community, IPEI will be able to provide over \$250,000 during the 2013-14 school year in support of our students and teachers including \$100,000 in grants awarded in a competitive process through its four grant programs.” All grant application deadlines and forms are accessible at www.ipei.org. IPEI’s budget also includes funds for *Kids Discover the Trail!*; for use by its affiliates (Fine Arts Booster Group and IthacaSTEM Advocates including its associate, the Code Red Robotics Team); and for other IPEI-managed awards and grants.

Nominating Committee Chair David Lee announced that Byrnes would again serve as IPEI’s president. Jennifer Engel and Mary Grainger were elected as vice presidents, Kevin Brew as treasurer, and Ann Caren as secretary.

Susan Piliero, Kat Anderson, Grainger and Caren were re-elected for board terms. They are joined by four new board members: Julie Biehn, Matt Braun, Craig Evans and Connie Patterson. IPEI also introduced new Fine Arts Booster Group liaisons: Janine Eng and Alice Wu, IthacaSTEM liaison Illa Burbank, and PTA Council liaison Lauren Loaicano.

“IPEI welcomes interested community members as volunteers and committee members, too,” stated Executive Director Christine Sanchirico who also stressed the importance of the financial support of individuals, corporations, and foundations.

Biehn moved to Ithaca with her husband, Chris, and her sons who attend South Hill Elementary School. She works part time with Ciaschi, Dietershagen, Little, Mickelson & Company as well as independently with tax preparation, small business consultation, and personal financial budgeting.

Braun is the director of development at the Johnson Museum of Art at Cornell University. He previously served as curator and director of The History Center in Tompkins County. Braun and his wife, Nancy, an early childhood educator, have two daughters; one attends Fall Creek Elementary School and the other is at Boynton Middle School.



Connie Patterson



Craig Evens



Julie Biehn



Matt Braun

Evans is the director of planned giving at Ithaca College, his alma mater. He previously served as a principal and assistant to the superintendent in the ICSD before working as executive director of the Foundation for Orange County Public Schools in Orlando and as a director of development at Syracuse University.

Patterson was born in Ithaca and attended Belle Sherman Elementary School, DeWitt Middle School, and Ithaca High School. She taught for more than 30 years in the ICSD and served one year on the Board of Education. Her husband and both their children attended Ithaca schools. Now retired, she volunteers in the schools as a “Kids on the Block” puppeteer teaching third graders about children with disabilities.



Jennifer Engel, Chris Sanchirico & Terry Byrnes.

IPEI is a community based not-for-profit organization that develops supportive community and private sector relationships with the Ithaca City School District. Founded in 1996, IPEI is committed to connecting school and community through collaboration, engagement, gifts and grants. For more information, see www.ipei.org or contact 256-IPEI (4734) or ipei@ipei.org.