

# SEIU Local 517M E-Former – April 2010

## State Employees Survive Legislative Attacks



**Executive Vice  
President Phil  
Thompson**

We have just recently witnessed, up close and personal, the importance of our Union staying actively involved in the legislative and political process. By the end of session on March 25<sup>th</sup> in both the Michigan Senate and the Michigan House, we could finally breath a collective sigh of relief over the Michigan Senate's three separate attempts to REJECT our 3% negotiated wage increase.

Each time, by a razor thin three vote margin on a virtual straight party-line vote, our friends in the Senate held strong and protected our increase. This was a clear victory for our collective bargaining process and a clear victory for quality public services. We need to thank Senate Minority leader Mike Prusi for his bold leadership on this issue. We also need special praise and thanks to the only DEM Senators who are eligible to return to the Michigan Senate next year: Gretchen Whitmer, Glen Anderson, John Gleason, and Tupac Hunter. They held fast and strong in the face of tremendous onslaught from the anti-state employee media over the pay raise issue. THANKS TO THEM, SEIU MEMBERS WILL RECEIVE THEIR NEGOTIATED 3% WAGE INCREASE STARTING OCTOBER 1<sup>ST</sup> OF THIS YEAR.

We are proud that our SEIU membership generated almost a thousand letters, faxes and emails in to the legislative offices! We are proud that many of you wrote letters to the editors that were published in newspapers from Detroit to Marquette. We are proud that several of our members took their own personal time to go with us to meet with individual legislators to both explain your personal levels of sacrifice, but more importantly the value of providing a high level of quality public services to Michigan's citizens.

This was politics in action—and it paid off by guaranteeing this 3% wage increase will be in your base pay for the rest of your careers as state employees. Do the math—it represents thousands of dollars in the years to come. NONE OF THIS WOULD HAVE BEEN POSSIBLE WITHOUT THE PROTECTION OF OUR COLLECTIVE BARGAINING AGREEMENTS COUPLED WITH A STRONG AND VIBRANT POLITICAL PROGRAM.

Thanks to all of you that participated on behalf of state employees.

## Hartford Head Start Workers Finish Five Year Battle With Their First Contract

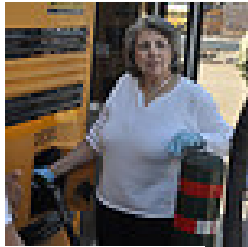
The workers at Hartford Head Start in Detroit have won their battle and ratified their very first contract on Friday, March 12<sup>th</sup>. The vote was 70 YES to 3 NO. The contract allows for a grievance procedure and basic protections. It also will allow for an implementation of a settlement payment under a National Labor Relations Board ruling to settle Unfair Labor Practice charges against the employer.

## Human Services Support Saginaw RICC Member Meeting

A general membership meeting was held on Wednesday, March 17, 2010 in Saginaw at the Saginaw RICC. The meeting was conducted by President Phillip Patrick and Vice President/Grievance Consultant Denise Edwards. The items discussed included: overtime, legislative attack on 3% wage increase, the proposed reform of the retirement system and the letter writing campaign. More of the story at:

[http://www.seiu517m.org/state/hss/HSS\\_Unit\\_Membership\\_Meeting\\_in\\_Saginaw.aspx](http://www.seiu517m.org/state/hss/HSS_Unit_Membership_Meeting_in_Saginaw.aspx)

## Candidates “Walk A Day” In The Shoes Of An SEIU Member



Alma Wheeler  
Smith



Jocelyn Benson



David Leyton



Virg Bernero

Candidates for Governor, Secretary of State worked with SEIU members to get a feeling for how hard it is for workers in the SEIU represented occupations. Candidate for Governor State Representative Senator Alma Wheeler Smith (D- South Lyon) walked a day in several Flint school occupations including food service and transportation. Candidates for Governor Lansing Mayor Virg Bernero, House Speaker Andy Dillon and Secretary of State Candidate Jocelyn Benson all walked with nursing home workers doing jobs in housekeeping, laundry and food preparation. Attorney General Candidate David Leyton walked with a building services worker. The remaining candidates have their walks scheduled for later. Doing a “Walk a Day” is part of the SEIU candidate endorsement process.

## SEIU Holds Member Meet and Greet



Mayor Bernero (lower right corner)  
meets with SEIU members

The SEIU Michigan State Council held its first Member Meet and Greet for candidates running for Governor on Monday, March 29<sup>th</sup> in Detroit. In attendance was Lansing Mayor Virg Bernero, House Speaker Andy Dillon (D-Redford), and State Representative Alma Wheeler Smith (D-South Lyon). Independent candidate Joe Schwartz was scheduled to appear but had to cancel at the last minute. All candidates for Governor were invited to the Meet and Greet. Only the Democratic and Independent candidates chose to participate. This was an opportunity for the candidates to

talk directly to the members about issues and answer questions that they had. **Future Meet and Greets are scheduled for Muskegon on April 12 at the Holiday Inn Muskegon Harbor (939 Third St., Muskegon) and in Saginaw at the Horizons Conference Center (6200 State St., Saginaw) on May 10<sup>th</sup>.** Contact Steve Reck for more information at [sreck@seiu517m.org](mailto:sreck@seiu517m.org).

## Question and Answers Concerning Health Care Reform

In light of our victory in winning health care reform, SEIU International has put together a Question and Answer sheet talking about what the new legislation means to public service members. Review the questions and answers at:

[http://www.seiu517m.org/Q\\_and\\_A\\_on\\_Health\\_Care\\_Reform.aspx](http://www.seiu517m.org/Q_and_A_on_Health_Care_Reform.aspx)

## Hold the Date

The 2010 SEIU Local 517M Golf Outing will be held on Thursday, August 5<sup>th</sup> at Wheatfield Valley Golf Course in Williamston. More information will follow.