

## SEIU Local 517M E-Former - August 2014 Edition

*Lead, Unite, Fight – Win For the 99%!*

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### SEIU Local 517M Annual Meeting - "Driving Our Future – 517M v2.0"



The 2014 Annual Membership Meeting entitled "Driving Our Future – 517M version 2.0" was a huge success. The meeting was held at the Kellogg Hotel and Conference Center in East Lansing, on Friday, July 25, 2014.

Participants were treated to several special guest speakers including our International President **Mary Kay Henry**, candidate for Governor **Mark Schauer**, State Senator **Gretchen Whitmer**, MSU Trustee **Dianne Byrum**, Ingham County Register of Deeds **Curtis Hertel Jr.**, State Representative **Sarah Roberts**, and **Sue Browne** of the BlueGreen Alliance.

Participants learned what was happening at the International and Local Union levels, the various campaigns being carried out and how they could be involved. There was also training and discussion on various local topics such as contract negotiation, healthcare, and membership sign-ups.

Our first annual "5K Run with the President" saw **Dave Levett** win the Men's Division while **Carol Ruhf** won the Ladies Division.

More photos can be found at: <https://www.flickr.com/photos/54989632@N05/>

### Annual Conference 2014 – the President's View



By Bill Ruhf, SEIU Local 517M President

It was a time to plug in and get refueled – and did we ever. My special thanks to our International President **Mary Kay Henry** for starting us off and setting the tone for “Driving Our Future”. It was her message that we need to “stay strong and fight back”. The voice of labor must remain strong and vibrant. It is a source of hope and now more than ever we need that in our lives. Sen. **Gretchen Whitmer** was inspirational in urging us to play an active role and to drive our future in that regard. Gubernatorial candidate **Mark Schauer** spoke at lunch with the same passion and our need to make a difference. Rep. **Sarah Roberts** said it simply... “Vote and Win”. In the breakout session our own member put the task to us with no reservation. The question, “What are you prepared to do?” We must not complain if we are not being part of the solution. I ask of you to have simple conversations with family, friends, and co-workers. Labor is important and its voice must not vanish from this earth. It must remain a vital, positive influence on family. We are indeed driving our own future. I urge you to stay the course and we will win. Have a safe and fun-filled August. Working for a better tomorrow. See who’s driving their future at: <http://www.seiu517m.org/files/2014/07/driving-bus-pic-collage.pdf>

## Saginaw SEIU Members “Light Up The City” With Gubernatorial Candidate Mark Schauer



On July 23<sup>rd</sup>, SEIU member leaders in Saginaw hosted a second encore “Light Up the City” event featuring **Mark Schauer**, candidate for governor. SEIU leaders turned out over 100 members, local elected officials and other community labor activists. With a packed SEIU union hall, Mark Schauer made it clear whose side he was on. He vowed to invest in our schools and roads. He would repeal the Snyder tax on seniors and will always stand with union workers. Repealing right to work would be a priority to him.

Mark Schauer's visit included a tour of Saginaw's neighborhood surrounding our SEIU hall with members and Community Police officer **Nate Voelker**. Schauer supports bringing back investment in community police programs instead of having state police "on loan" patrolling our communities.

## Saginaw MPAC Candidate Interviews



On July 21<sup>st</sup>, the Saginaw Member Political Action Committee (MPAC) hosted a candidate interview for the 32<sup>nd</sup> Senate District seat. This senate district was redrawn and encompasses all of Saginaw County and portions of Genesee County. MPAC members reached out to all three candidates, **Ken Horn** (R), **Stacey Erwin Oakes** (D) and **Garnett Lewis** (D) (pictured left) with Oakes and Lewis responding and participating in the interviews.



Both Stacey Erwin Oakes (pictured left) and Garnett Lewis submitted our SEIU Values & Visions statements and both gave compelling presentations as to why our SEIU endorsement was important to them. Because the candidates were equally receptive to our positions, it proved to be a hard decision for our committee to rate one better than the other. The committee has recommended that we wait till after the August primary to endorse.

## Department of Transportation Reorganization



By George Heath, President  
Technical Unit

Fellow SEIU 517M members those of you that work for, or come in contact with MDOT already know we are in for another round of reorganization. Starting last year, the Governor has ordered that all departments have the same basic footprint of coverage area. Although in the long run this may work well, one has to wonder where the money is going to come from to get this done. We are in a situation where the Legislators are off for the summer doing campaigning, with only one day of actual session scheduled for August. During this time we have a financial crisis for our roads, our infrastructure, the very lifeblood of the state economy is waiting for financing. While we wait for the politicians to decide how to best cover the cost of road repairs and improvements, we now need to think about reorganization, and the costs we may incur both personal, and financial.

This reorganization will without a doubt have an effect on our members. We will run headfirst into issues of reassignments across region lines, seniority, travel expense issues, and possibly moving expense problems. Your Union leaders made up of staff, and elected officials from the Technical, and Scientific and Engineering Units have asked for a Labor/Management Meeting to discuss the impact on our members. In the spirit of harmony by working together, it may have been a great idea for management to discuss this ahead of time, but as is normally the case, management failed to make any overtures with the union to make a seamless transition instead of a disruptive situation.

Stay tuned folks this may be as bumpy of a ride for some as going for a Sunday drive on a Michigan road.

## The Governor's Agenda vs My Agenda



By John Eck, Executive Board Member  
SEIU Local 517M

Click the link to read the differences between "My Agenda" and the Governor's. <http://www.seiu517m.org/2014/07/30/whats-on-your-agenda/>

## Seeking Member Organizers!

The Union has a PAID opportunity for 5 members to do important member outreach work this September-October. Click for more details: <http://www.seiu517m.org/2014/07/30/september-2014-lost-time-member-organizer-program/>

## Notice of SEIU Local 517M Bylaw Change

The SEIU Local 517M Executive Board voted to accept proposed changes to the SEIU Local 517M Bylaws at their July 24, 2014 meeting. This action allows for member review of the proposed changes before they are voted on by the Executive Board.

In accordance with Article XII, Section 3 of the SEIU Local 517M Constitution, this will serve as the 30 day notice to the membership of the proposed changes. The Executive Board will be voting on these changes at their October 10, 2014 meeting.

The changes consist of the adding of a new section to Article IV. New language is in bold.

ARTICLE IV: Executive Board Representation

**Section 2: In the event that a mid-term Executive Board member vacancy is to be filled pursuant to Article V, Section 9(D) of the SEIU Local 517M Constitution, the Unit or Region population census derived from Article IV, Section 1 of the SEIU Local 517M Bylaws, in place at the time of the most recent union-wide election, shall be the formula applied to determine the number of eligible unit or region seats on the Executive Board.**

Comments or questions concerning this change can be directed to President **Bill Ruhf** at [bruhf@seiu517m.org](mailto:bruhf@seiu517m.org).

## Lawsuit Activity

Still no date for the start of oral arguments at the Supreme Court in the State Employee or School Employee Pension lawsuits or the Right To Work Applicability cases. There is still activity on these cases as briefs continue to be filed by parties both for and against in each case.

## Montrose Custodians Ratify a New Three Year Agreement

The SEIU represented Custodians working at Montrose Schools ratified a new three year contract on July 16<sup>th</sup>. The contract will run until June 30, 2017. There are wage and benefit changes, and other contractual provisions including a clause dealing with changes in the legal status of certain provisions.

## In Common

What do Kayla, Britney and Leah all have in common? They are all going to college with some help from SEIU. See next month's E-Former for the rest of the story...

*The monthly subscription for the E-Former is included in your membership dues payment and is intended for members in good standing of SEIU Local 517M.*



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