

SEIU Local 517M E-Former – September 2015 Edition

Lead, Unite, Fight – Win For the 99%!

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State Employees Begin Negotiations

Contract negotiations for the Human Services Support, Scientific and Engineering, and Technical bargaining units have commenced. The State Employer has given their economic presentation and the three individual bargaining units have all begun unit specific bargaining.

The State has denied our request for coalition bargaining with the other state employee unions (AFSCME, MCO, MSEA, and UAW.) The SEIU 517M three units will bargain collectively for wages and benefits. The current contracts with the State expire on December 31, 2015.



Pictured Left: Scientific and Engineering Unit President **David Berridge** shakes hands with Office of the State Employer Director **Marie Waalkes** at the start of negotiations on August 13, 2015.

Pictured Right: Technical Unit President **Arnie Beller** shakes hands with Office of the State Employer Director Waalkes at the start of negotiations on August 13, 2015.



Pictured Left: Human Services Support Unit President **Joey Combs** shakes hands with LARA Labor Relations Director **Frank Russell** at the start of negotiations on August 13, 2015.

Join Us at the Detroit Labor Day Parade!

Come join your fellow SEIU members and other organized labor for the annual Labor Day Parade in downtown Detroit. The parade will be held on Monday, September 7th and will start at 9:30 a.m. The SEIU staging area is Division 1 at the corner of Michigan and Trumbull.

Immediately following the parade there will be a party for family and friends at SEIU Health Care Michigan located at 2406 Fourth Street, Detroit.

If you or your family members are interested in participating in the Labor Day Parade, please contact the SEIU Detroit Office at 313-456-2911 for more information.

Changing of the Guard in the SEIU 517M Tech Unit



By Arnold Beller, Technical Unit President

For the first time in many years, the Board of Directors of the Technical Unit of SEIU 517M has gone through some major changes. In March, longtime Secretary Treasurer **Mike Mandrick** retired and President **George Heath** nominated and the Board of Directors approved **Tim Gierman** to become our new Secretary-Treasurer and fulfill Mike's term, which ends this October. In June, our Vice President **John Eck** was elected to fill the remaining term of the vacated SEIU 517M Secretary/ Treasurer position. President Heath nominated and the Board of Directors approved **Arnold Beller** as Vice President, to fulfill the remainder of term.

The big news came the first of July when the Tech Unit saw long time President Mr. George Heath run unopposed and winning the SEIU 517M President's Office. We also saw Mr. John Eck run unopposed and win the SEIU 517M Secretary Treasurer position. Congratulations to both gentlemen for their new positions in SEIU 517M. Our loss of their leadership will be a gain for the entire Local.

As for the Tech Unit, our bylaws state that in the absence of the President, the Vice President assumes the duties of President. A Board Meeting was called by phone conference to review the new changes. The Board approved the change of Presidents and I nominated longtime member **Patrick Brower** to replace and fulfill the term of Vice President of the Tech Unit of SEIU 517M, which the Board Approved. Taking my place of Chapter 13 President will be current Chapter Vice President **Roderick Jackson**. Look for a complete list of new Officers of the Tech Board on the SEIU website www.seiu517m.org. I will be asking all the new Board Officers and Chapter Presidents to publish a brief bio to introduce themselves in the next few months.

A little background on me: I am your new President of the Tech Unit, Arnold Beller, better known as "Arnie." I am a Transportation Technician 11 currently working in the Detroit TSC. I have been with MDOT for over 30 years. I have gladly served as a Steward of UTEA/SEIU Tech Unit since 1992. I have been given the privilege to serve as Chief Steward and Chapter President of Chapter 13 since 1998. I was asked to join the Grievance Committee in 1997, and have served on this committee as Vice Chair since 1998. I have been serving on the Tech Unit's Negotiations Committee for the last four contracts, serving as the Chair for the last three. It is my commitment to all of our members to serve you to the best of my abilities. I truly believe that we are "Stronger Together".

If there is anything that I can do for you, please feel free to contact me at **586-634-2653**. I can also be reached by my State email at bellera@michigan.gov.

I look forward to serving you for the next two years. It is one of my goals to get to meet each one of our Tech members in some way or another. I welcome you to contact me and tell me what SEIU 517M can do for you, to let me know what you feel we do well and what you feel we are not doing as well as we could be too. Our Union is here for us. We are the Union. We are here to help and support one another. Please let me help you because at the end of the day, we are "Stronger Together".

Golf Outing Was a Great Success



The SEIU Local 517M annual Golf Outing was held on Friday, August 14th at Wheatfield Valley Golf Course in Williamston. All 54 golfers had a fun day. The team from the Metro Insurance Agency took First Place and Team Crunchy's was runner up. The big winner of the day was the COPE fund, which gained over \$400. Next year's outing is scheduled for August 12, 2016 at Wheatfield Valley. We hope you can come out and join the fun.

Labor Made Products for Your Labor Day Barbecue

Here is a list of some union-made products to consider purchasing for your Labor Day outing:

Meat & Buns & Bread & Beans: Arnold, Ball Park franks, Earthgrains bread, Entenmann's, Hebrew National franks, Nature's Harvest bread, Oroweat bread and buns, Oscar Meyer & Boar's Head hot dogs, Oroweat buns (hot dogs and burgers), Stroehmann bread and buns, Sara Lee buns (hot dogs and burgers), Burnham and Morrill (baked beans)

Cheese: Alta Dena, Kraft Foods, Horizon

Condiments: Claussen (pickles and relish), French's mustard, Heinz ketchup, Morton Salt, Vlasic (relish and sauerkraut)

Soft Drinks: A&W Root Beer, Canada Dry, Coca Cola, Orange Crush, 7-Up, Pepsi, RC Cola

Juice: Minute Maid, Snapple, Tropicana, V8, Welch's

Coffee/Tea: Folgers, Maxwell House, Millstone Coffee, Swiss Miss hot chocolate, Tender Leaf tea

Bottled Water: Alhambra water, Crystal Springs, Pocono Springs, Poland Spring, Sierra Springs

Beer: Beck's, Budweiser and Bud Light, Coors Light, Labatt, Miller, Molson, Red Stripe, Rolling Rock, Sam Adams, Shock Top, [See more Union Beers.](#)

Snacks: Bugles, Cheetos, Cheez-It, Frito-Lay Rold Gold Pretzels, Oreo cookies

Chips 'n' Dip: Doritos, Lay's, Tostitos chips, salsas, and dips

Grills, Coolers, & Cups: Rubbermaid coolers, Solo cups, plates & bowls, Weber Grills - Genesis, Summit, and Q series

Make More Money... Join a Union!

There are many benefits of joining a union, but one of the biggest advantages is that joining a union could increase the amount of money you earn in a lifetime. If you are not a union member, you are leaving hundreds of thousands of dollars in lifetime earnings on the table for the CEOs or State to slip into their pockets.

The Century Foundation released a new report on the advantages of organizing the workforce and the importance of joining a union. The basic function of unions is to encourage workers to assert their power and stake in the workforce through collective bargaining to fight for fair wages, better benefits, and safe working conditions. The report shows that the difference between lifetime earnings for union workers and nonunion workers is staggering.

From the report:

According to published reports from the Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS), median earnings for a two-income, nonunion family are \$400 a week less than that of a union family. Over a lifetime, that adds up to more than a half million dollars in foregone wealth.

Even when one accounts for characteristics that can affect earnings other than unionization, such as education, experience, occupation, hours worked, marital status, having children, state of residence, and (unfortunately) sex, race, and citizenship—the gap between union and nonunion workers remains nearly as large. Among private-sector workers who are otherwise similar, union members have per hour earnings that are 27.6 percent greater, on average, than those of nonunion workers.

Lifetime cost of NOT joining a union by occupation:

- In the Life, Physical, and Social Sciences job category, you will make \$1,507,000 less in your lifetime if you are nonunion.
- In the Construction job category, you will make \$1,082,000 less in your lifetime if you are nonunion.
- In the Social Services job category, you will make \$767,000 less in your lifetime if you are nonunion.
- In the Transportation job category, you will make \$687,000 less in your lifetime if you are nonunion.
- In the Food Service job category, you will make \$262,000 less in your lifetime if you are nonunion.

The Century Foundation report documents why joining a labor union is one of the best financial decisions a worker can make to boost individual and family wealth.

To read the full report, visit <http://apps.tcf.org/virtual-labor-organizing>

COPE - Another Voice We Can Have



By Amy Davis-Comstock, COPE Committee Chair

Since June our union has been bargaining for large and small contracts. As members, many of us feel that is the essential function of our union. I have heard it said that the union is "our voice in the workplace." Defending our rights, ensuring that the contract is followed, and fighting for pay and benefits. The union is one voice that speaks for all of us.

Our COPE fund is the same thing: our voice to hold elected officials accountable, to speak with a unified voice about elections from schools boards to the state of Michigan, to federal elections. As working people we need to have a strong, unified voice in politics.

Contributing to COPE is how we have a strong voice. The COPE committee needs members from across the state. If you interested in attending meetings, call **Amy Davis-Comstock** at (989) 992-6841.

August Text Contest Winners

Congratulations to the winners of the August E-Former text contest. The five winners chosen at random were:

David Cogger
Ronald Kulwicki
April Lazzaro
Marla Marsh
Kimberly Zebrowski

September Text Contest

Our monthly text contest allows five winners to receive \$20 gift cards. **To enter, text "517M" to 30644 to take a quiz about the E-Former.**

This month's question: Who replaced Arnold Beller as Chapter 13 President?

- A) Patrick Brower
- B) Roderick Jackson
- C) Tim Gierman
- D) George Heath

Text the correct answer to enter the contest. The contest is an opt-in contest, meaning that we will only text you if you like to participate.

Calendar of Upcoming Union Events for September, 2015

September 2: Chapter 19 meeting, Warren

September 17: Technical Unit Board Meeting

September 23: Scientific and Engineering Unit Member Education Program *Workplace Bullying*

For more information on the above events, consult our on-line calendar at:

<http://www.seiu517m.org/events/month/>

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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