

SEIU Local 517M E-Former – July 2016 Edition



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School 3 Percent Retirement Case Victory at Court of Appeals

School employees won a big victory in court. A Court of Appeals panel of three judges ruled in favor of a challenge against a law that took \$550 million from para-professionals, bus drivers, custodians, food service workers and teachers.

For five years, Unions have fought long and hard to force the state to return money that was illegally deducted from school employees' paychecks from 2010 to 2012, when a law mandated that all school employees contribute 3 percent of their salary through an involuntary payroll deduction to fund retiree health care (a benefit that they were not guaranteed to receive).

Now, for the second time, a court has ruled Public Act 75 unconstitutional. But Governor **Rick Snyder** has stated that he intends to appeal the decision to the Michigan Supreme Court. The Governor, through a spokesperson, said the funds that had been collected under a law that the courts had found unconstitutional were still needed to keep the retirement system solvent.

Attorney General **Bill Schuette** has reviewed the case and has chosen not to pursue the appeal and will not provide counsel to the Governor for his appeal.

We are encouraging members to be pro-active and call the Governor and tell him to quit wasting taxpayer resources in the effort to continue attacking school employees.

Governor Snyder: 517-335-7858

SEIU Local 517M Annual Membership Meeting is Friday, July 22nd!

MAKE PLANS NOW . . . to attend the SEIU Local 517M Annual Conference and invite your co-workers! The conference will be held at the **Soaring Eagle Casino & Resort** (*6800 Soaring Eagle Blvd, Mt. Pleasant MI 48858*) on **Friday, July 22, 2016**. Breakfast is at 8:00 a.m. with the Membership Meeting running from 9:00 a.m. and ending at 4:00 p.m. Members may RSVP to **Cindy Wilson** at cwilson@seiu517m.org by sending in the registration form available at: <http://www.seiu517m.org/wp-content/blogs.dir/40/files/2016/06/2016-CONFERENCE-REGIS-FORM.pdf> by **Monday, July 11, 2016**.

This year's agenda includes exciting information from the 2016 International Convention, the annual "Member of the Year" presentation, updates from our AFRAM Caucus, a chance to meet and talk with the leadership of SEIU Local 517M, and an opportunity to be involved in strategic planning for the future of SEIU Local 517M. There are even a few surprises planned! **Come Participate in YOUR Union!**

Human Services Support Unit Steward Election Results

In the recent Human Services Support Steward and Alternate Steward election, the following results were certified by the Election/Tally Committee:

Area 1 - Detroit - Cadillac Place (LARA/UIA) – Stewards **Emanuel Lewis, Roland Whitelow**, Alt. Stewards **Juanita Mayes, Raceine McDonald**
Area 2 - WDA Southern Region - Vets Reps - No Nominations received
Area 3 - MEDC/WDA Statewide - MRS Intv - No Nominations received
Area 4 - Grand Rapids RICC - Steward **Morenike Fisher**
Area 4 - Grand Rapids PRO - Alternate Steward **Mary King**
Area 5 - MEDC/WDA - Agricultural Employment Specialists (Statewide) - No Nominations received
Area 6 - Saginaw PRO - LARA/UIA - No Nominations received
Area 6 - Saginaw RICC - LARA/UIA - No Nominations received
Area 7 - Lansing - PRO (LARA/UIA) - Steward **Sonya Robinson**, Alt. Steward **Cheryl Huff**
Area 7 - Lansing - RICC (LARA/UIA) - No Nominations received
Area 8 - MEDC/WDA Northern Region - Includes Vet Reps and MRS Employment Service Specialists - Steward **Calvitta Collins**
Area 9 - DHS/DDS Members (Detroit) - No Nominations received
Area 10 - DHS/DDS Members - (Kalamazoo) - No Nominations received
Area 11 - DHS/DDS Members - (Lansing) - No Nominations received
Area 12 - All other areas - No Nominations received

Appointments will be made in areas where no nominations were received.

Detroit AFRAM is Running a Shelter Supplies Drive

SEIU AFRAM Detroit – HSS Chapter is having a VIP Drive (Very Important Products) starting July 1 through July 31, 2016. We are looking for donations for women and girls, which include: feminine products, toiletries, towelettes, lotion, deodorant, combs and brushes.

All donations will be delivered during the month of August to the Genesis House, a temporary and/or transitional shelter for women and children. (The Genesis House is a part of the Detroit Rescue Mission Ministries.)

Please drop off your donations to Stephanie Teamer in the SEIU Local 517M union office located on the 11th floor, Suite 564 in the Cadillac Place, or other drop off locations include the Lansing and Saginaw SEIU Local 517M offices, or to one of the AFRAM members listed: **Maria Gilson, Antonia Brown, Janice Cosey, Raceine McDonald, Meagan Miner, Ellina Simmons**. For more information, go to www.DRMM.org.

Spots Remain for the SEIU Local 517M Golf Outing on August 12th



There are still spots remaining for the annual SEIU Local 517M golf outing being held on Friday, August 12, 2016 at the Wheatfield Valley Golf Course in Williamston. The 4-person scramble will start with registration at 8:00 a.m. and shotgun start at 9:00 a.m. Registration cost is \$240 per foursome. The registration form and information is available at: <http://www.seiu517m.org/wp-content/blogs.dir/40/files/2016/03/Golf-outing-flyer.pdf>

SEIU Goes to Washington

Matt Gamble, member and representative on the S&E Board of Directors, traveled to Washington DC to represent SEIU and participate in the annual CESO conference in April. The Council of Engineers & Scientists Organizations (CESO) is an organization of member unions which represent employees in professional and technical fields. CESO's purpose is to be an effective advocate for issues affecting the engineering and scientific communities, and to serve as a forum for unions representing professional & technical employees. CESO promotes collective bargaining for professionals, federal funding for preservation of research & development (R&D) and technology, limits on contracting out work and privatization, funding for Infrastructure, and opposes government intrusion into collective bargaining process

Dave Berridge, President of the S&E Unit, and **Rod Jackson**, member and representative on the Tech Unit Board of Directors, traveled to Washington DC to represent SEIU and participate in the annual NASHTU conference in May. NASHTU, the National Association of State Highway and Transportation Unions, has grown into a coalition of 38 unions and affiliates from 20 states and the District of Columbia representing hundreds of thousands of state and locally employed public transportation workers throughout the United States.

The annual conference demonstrated that outsourcing for engineering, technical, and other transportation services is a problem in nearly every state. By coming together and sharing strategies and perspectives, NASHTU helps each member union be more successful in its fight to limit wasteful, overpriced outsourcing.



Dave and Rod meet with staff representatives of Senators **Debbie Stabenow** and **Gary Peters** and Representative **Brenda Lawrence**. They also attended a legislative reception attended by many members of Congress, particularly those involved in transportation funding and legislation. (Pictured L-R: Rod Jackson, Representative Elizabeth Esty, Connecticut, member of the Transportation and Infrastructure Committee, Dave Berridge.

The United State of Women

The first-ever White House Summit on The United State of Women was held in Washington DC on June 15, 2016. **Joey Combs**, President of HSS Division attended on behalf of the Local and was a nominated Change Maker.

The White House Council on Women and Girls was created 7.5 years ago by President Obama with a simple task: to empower women's voices so that their priorities are considered in every policy, every program, supported legislation, and every agency of the Administration. The convening of the Summit allowed 5,000 women to come together to celebrate the progress that has been made and to begin to collectively focus on the future, and all that we must still do together to achieve true gender equality for women.

The topics covered at the Summit ranged from outlawing health insurance discrimination, nationwide workplace policies that are family-friendly such as affordable childcare and paid family leave, to the raising of the minimum wage, and a global effort to make sure every girl has the chance to attend school and achieve her dreams. The generations before us made this progress possible because of the work they did. From the abolitionists (they fought for the right to be free), to the suffragists (they picketed for the right to vote, and those who marched for a woman's right to choose.) We all stand on their shoulders. The Summit brought together leading activists, academics, journalists, public officials, and business leaders. These are change makers who are all dedicated to making a better world.

Guest speakers included President **Barack Obama**, Vice- President **Joe Biden**, First Lady **Michelle Obama**, **Oprah Winfrey**, Secretary of Labor **Tom Perez**, **Warren Buffet**, and SEIU International President **Mary Kay Henry**. *Excerpts taken from the Program Booklet.

<http://www.theunitedstateofwomen.org/>

SEIU Legislative / Policy Conference in DC

SEIU extended an invitation to our Local to participate in the International Union's 3rd Annual



State & Local Legislative / Policy Conference in Washington, D.C. As the Local's representative, **Amy Davis-Comstock** (speaking left) attended the conference from June 22nd – 23rd. This conference follows the International Convention which was held in Detroit in May 2016. The conference started out with compelling videos from the 2016 Convention. After the videos, attendees received framing comments from **Gerry Hudson**, our newly-elected Secretary-Treasurer. He gave the history behind the 3 core strategies that were adopted by SEIU at the convention: 1. Creating

New Forms of Worker Power; 2. Building a Wider Movement; 3. Innovating to Strengthen and Transform Our Union.

The two-day agenda included several panels with Political Directors, State Council Directors, and Legislative Directors from different states sharing ideas of their best practices. Some workers represented by unions in other states face similar situations and threats as the workers in Michigan. It was inspiring to hear ideas of ways to accomplish our union's strategies despite the obstacles. Some of the best information was exchanged in small groups when attendees were able to share stories and examine more deeply what would work in different situations.

The conference ended with planning toward winning for all workers beyond the 2016 elections. Since states have different circumstances, the general discussions centered around developing programs to achieve the goals and strategies from the 2016 Convention.

Technical Unit Recognized for Community Work



The Technical bargaining unit of state employees was recently recognized by the National AFRAM Caucus of SEIU at the 2016 International Convention for their efforts in helping SEIU members in Flint with a large donation. The plaque (being held by Technical Unit President Arnie Beller) reads: "In appreciation of SEIU Local 517M Tech Unit. For its generous donation to the SEIU members of Flint, Michigan during the Flint water crisis. The caring support and contributions that have been made will make a difference in the lives of SEIU members in Flint."

Jan Goodwin Farewell



Jan Goodwin has been a proud SEIU member for 18 plus years with Local 517M through Wayland Union Schools. She is very appreciative of the benefits of union representation, and has a rich history within her family.

Jan's father, **Russell Shoemaker**, was in UAW Local 206 for 42 years at Kelvinator in Grand Rapids. Jan's mother, **Viola Shoemaker**, was in three unions while working at General Motors, Wayland Schools (bus driver), and the U.S. Post Office – 30 years total. Father-in-law, **Wayne Goodwin**, retired with 60 years at IBEW Local 876.

Jan served as President of her unit for 15 years, working as a Teacher Aide/Paraprofessional. She also served on the School and Local Government Region 2 Board for 13 years and held the position of Secretary for most of that time, and Vice President/Treasurer in recent years. Jan was a member of the Region 2 Grievance Committee to determine if cases had contractual merit to proceed to arbitration. At the local level, Jan was proud to serve on the SEIU Local 517M Executive Board in Lansing assisting in the decisions affecting members. Jan was also appointed as the Ethics Liaison for 517M through the SEIU International Union an important role for maintaining integrity and accountability of 517M leadership on behalf of the membership.

"It has been my great honor to be part of the SEIU 517M family," said Goodwin. "We have made a positive difference in the lives of our members. I have had the privilege to meet and work with wonderful individuals across the state. It is with gratitude and thankfulness that I retire from active service... Thanks you SEIU 517M!" We hope to keep Jan active in our retiree program.

State Employees, Your Bargaining Survey is Coming Soon!

State negotiations for wages and benefits for the remaining 2 years of the contract will commence this summer. A survey will be sent out in the coming weeks to get your feedback on

those priorities that you would like your bargaining teams to address. So watch your email for the link to the survey!

From The Archives: A Lesson in Labor History from the Reuther Library

SEIU and America's Pastime

By Gavin Strassel, SEIU Archivist

As we enter July and the dog days of summer, many of us begin to turn our focus to the sport of baseball. Nothing beats taking in a game at the ballpark, an experience SEIU helped make possible over the years. With a long history of representing various classifications of ballpark employees, SEIU members have done everything from hawking peanuts to ensuring the stadiums' cleanliness. Please enjoy these images featuring SEIU and America's pastime, all from the SEIU Photograph Collection at the Walter P. Reuther Library.



Contract signing between BSEIU Local 399 and the Los Angeles Dodgers in 1965.



Ushers at Ebbets Field, Local 176 members, resting before a Dodgers-Cardinals game in April, 1950.



Employees for the Milwaukee Brewers, members of Local 150, pose with the team's mascots, Bernie and Bonnie Brewer. Circa 1970s.



A guard and member of Local 176 at Yankee Stadium watches over fans, 1982.



Beer vendors of Local 236 in the “beer room” at Wrigley Field in Chicago. May 19, 1953.



Gavin Strassel is the SEIU Archivist at the Walter P. Reuther Library of Labor and Urban Affairs at Wayne State University, the official repository for SEIU and the largest labor archives in North America. If you are interested in performing research with the SEIU collections, please contact Gavin at strassel@wayne.edu.

To learn more about SEIU and Michigan labor history click here:
<http://reuther.wayne.edu/index.php>

Calendar of Upcoming Union Events for July, 2016

July 21: SEIU Local 517M Executive Board Meeting, Mt. Pleasant

July 22: SEIU Local 517M Annual Leadership Conference, Mt. Pleasant

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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