

## SEIU Local 517M E-Former – January 2017 Edition



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### **SEIU Members Dodge Bad Bills in Lame Duck**

Members of SEIU Local 517M dodged many bad bills in the Lame Duck session of the Legislature in December. Through our advocacy efforts, we were able to stop bills that would have made it harder to conduct union business on work time, cut pension benefits for members, prohibit your free speech by fining you for picketing of any kind, and the list goes on.

As the new legislature takes office in January we will remain vigilant to protect the rights of our members and ensure that quality public services are maintained for the citizens of Michigan.

### **State Employee Contracts Approved by the Civil Service Commission**

The contracts for the three state units represented by SEIU Local 517M were approved by the Civil Service Commission at their December 14, 2016 meeting.

The economic provisions of the wage and healthcare benefit reopener will commence beginning October 1, 2017 when bargaining unit members will receive a 3 percent raise and a 2 percent raise on October 1, 2018.

### **Member Retires After 51 Years of State Service**

SEIU Local 517M is proud to recognize the accomplishments of Balaram K. Singh. B.K. as he is known, started with the Department of Transportation in 1965 while pursuing a Master's degree at Michigan State. He has been there ever since.



He has become an expert in structural culverts. He was instrumental in the I-696 project in developing innovative drainage solutions. He has helped reduce costs and create nationally accepted standards. BK is a charter member of the MDOT Joint Pipe Operations Committee and has had many technical and professional journal articles published. BK has been featured in various editions of the MPES/SEIU Local 517M newsletters over the years for his accomplishments. Just an example of how a professional, dedicated state workforce can be a benefit to society.

He was just recently presented with the Frank J. Heger Award on December 6, 2016 from the American Society of Testing and Materials for his achievements.

BK has also been active in his union over the years having served as an Executive Board member. He was presented with a Certificate of Appreciation for his work with the Local.

BK's retirement was featured in an article in the Lansing State Journal. You can view the article here: <http://www.lansingstatejournal.com/story/opinion/columnists/judy-putnam/2016/12/14/putnam-no-2-longevity-state-engineer-retires-after-515-years/95376958/>

We wish BK well in the next phase of his life.

## Grand Haven School Members Make the Holidays Brighter



SEIU Local 517M members in the Grand Haven School District worked with community partners this year for their annual Holiday Family Adoption program. Three families within the Grand Haven School District were chosen and they were able to be supported with a meal, stocking of goodies and gifts galore of things that they asked for. One of the families is suffering from the recent loss of their mother/wife, and the husband was so beyond overwhelmed with everything he just cried. It's humbling to know that we are able to be there and support those in need within our community. Pictured is Grand Haven

Schools Unit President Dennis Hussey and Grand Haven Schools Secretarial Unit President Carrie Miel.

## State Employee Board Member Retires

Scientific and Engineering unit member Steve Haskell retired in December from the Department of Human Services Laboratory. Steve, a microbiologist, started at the Public Health Laboratory in 1994.



Steve has been active in his union and has served in various union offices including the SEIU Local 517M Executive Board, the Scientific and Engineering Unit Board and as a member of the Bargaining Team. He was presented with a plaque for his years of service to the Local by current Scientific and Engineering Unit Board Member Tonya Heyer.

We wish Steve the best of luck and many enjoyable rounds of golf in retirement!

## Calendar of Upcoming Union Events for January, 2017

January 13: Human Services Support Unit Member Meeting

January 27: SEIU Local 517M Executive Board Meeting in Lansing

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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