

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



### In this Issue:

April 25<sup>th</sup> Equal Pay Day Event at the State Capitol  
Lobby Day 2017 is Scheduled for May 3<sup>rd</sup>  
March for Science  
SEIU Testifies in State Employee Website Hearing  
Saginaw Walk for Warmth Event a Great Success  
Joey Combs Honored as Labor Leader of the Year  
New Steward Named for HSS Cadillac Place  
Report Examines Pensions  
Union Tablets Donated to Science Program  
From the Archives: A Lesson in Labor History from the Reuther Library  
Calendar of Upcoming Union Events for April, 2017

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### April 25<sup>th</sup> Equal Pay Day Event at the State Capitol



A rally will be held on the Capitol steps on Tuesday, April 25, 2017, from 12:30 p.m. to 1:30 p.m. to bring awareness of the pay gap between women and men. The actual Equal Pay Day is April 4<sup>th</sup> but the Legislature is on Easter recess at that time.

Equal Pay Day symbolizes how far into the year a woman must work, on average, to earn as much as a man earned the previous year. (Tuesday is the day on which women's wages catch up to men's wages from the previous week.) Because women earn less, on average, than men, they must

work longer for the same amount of pay. The wage gap is even greater or most women of color.

According to the 2016 Census data, year-round, full-time working women in 2015 earned only 80% of the earnings of year-round, full-time working men.

Red is worn on this day as a symbol of how far women and minorities are "in the red" with their pay. For more information on pay equity, see [www.pay-equity.org](http://www.pay-equity.org).

Advocates will be handing out ¾ of chocolate chip cookies to highlight the inequity and urging passage of a package of House and Senate bills to address the issue. Legislators and others will speak on the Capitol steps. In order to draw attention to this disparity, several

organizations including SEIU 517M will be hosting events at the Capitol and visiting their elected officials.

A workshop will be held prior to the events at the Capitol steps. To register for the workshop or get more information go to [www.pay-equity.org](http://www.pay-equity.org).

## Lobby Day 2017 is Scheduled for May 3rd



The SEIU Local 517M COPE Committee would like you to save Wednesday, May 3, 2017, as the day set aside to speak with our legislators in Lansing. Be sure to request that date off so you can attend this vital and interesting event. The Union will schedule appointments for you to meet with your Senator and Representative. Lunch is provided for you, the legislators, and their staff to discuss issues in a more informal setting. If there are hearings or legislation that is being voted on, you will get a chance to watch the proceedings. It is a great way to be a part of the process that affects all of us – both at home and on the job. May 3rd is closer than you think, so request the time off today!

Register before April 28th at: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/RPGDMGF>

## March for Science

The Michigan March for Science, in cooperation with the March for Science Washington D.C. and more than 500 marches worldwide, invites all scientists, engineers, architects, science educators and those with a love and respect for science to join them in several locations across Michigan as they march in support of science, scientific research, scientific education and evidence-based policies with others world-wide.

This year, the March will be held in 10 Michigan cities on April 22, 2017. Times and locations are below:

**Alpena** - 3:00 - 5:00 p.m. location TBA

**Ann Arbor** - 12:00 - 2:00 p.m. Starts on the Diag at 12, leave the Diag at about 12:45pm. Estimated end time of 2pm, depending on crowd. The exact route will be announced closer to the date. Twitter: @ScienceMarchA2, Email: [MarchForScienceA2@gmail.com](mailto:MarchForScienceA2@gmail.com)

**Detroit** - 1:00 - 4:00 p.m. in Downtown Detroit (Exact March Route TBD but initial gathering location is Hart Plaza). If you are interested in speaking or would like to help organize the event or have any questions you can contact Jodie Weiler at [sciencemarchdet@gmail.com](mailto:sciencemarchdet@gmail.com) or Pat Durack at [durackp@gmail.com](mailto:durackp@gmail.com). You can register for the event at: <http://www.marchforsciencedetroit.com/form-submission>

**Houghton** - 12:00 - 3:00 p.m. at the Houghton Hancock Lift Bridge

**Kalamazoo** - 2:00 - 3:00 p.m. location TBA

**Lansing** - 1:00 - 4:00 p.m. at the Michigan State Capitol, 110 N Capitol Ave, Lansing

**Marquette** - 10:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. location in Marquette TBA

**Midland** - 3:00 - 5:00 p.m. at the Carpenter School, 1407 W Carpenter St, Midland

**Petoskey** - 1:00 - 3:00 p.m. at the corner of State and Howard

**Sault Ste. Marie** - 11:00 a.m. - 1:00 p.m. location TBA

For more information about all the marches, please contact the March for Science Website at: [www.marchforscience.com](http://www.marchforscience.com)

## SEIU Testifies in State Employee Website Hearing



On Thursday, March 16, 2017, SEIU Local 517M Executive Director Liza Estlund Olson testified before the House Oversight and Ethics Committee on HB 4301 which would require the State to maintain a monthly updated web site which would include state employee FULL names, work title, Department, salary and benefits received. *(Picture courtesy of Karen Murphy, Michigan State Employees Association)*

The legislation was introduced by Rep. Brandt Iden (R-Oshtemo Twp.) as part of "Sunshine" week which focuses on transparency in government. Liza spoke on two specific issues; first, the issue of identity theft and the fact that putting this information on a web site in conjunction with other information available (ie: home ownership from register of deed sites), would allow for identity thieves to build a profile which would allow for bogus banks loans, fake unemployment claims and credit cards. Secondly, she spoke to Rep. Kevin Hertel's (D- St. Clair Shores) amendment requiring contractors who work for the State to be included on the list. If Rep. Iden's true interest is giving taxpayers a true picture of the cost of work done on behalf of Michigan citizens, there are thousands of private sector contractors who work right next to state employees every day and receive their salary from state tax dollars and they should be included on the same list.

We believe this will be voted on quickly in the House and democrats will try again to amend the legislation from the floor. The Senate leadership currently does not include staff names on their web site so it is unclear if the Senate will move on this legislation quickly. Key points for those who are interested in contacting their legislator include:

- We agree with transparency in government but why is it only state employees who have to be transparent? The Legislature is not required to provide names and benefits of their staff unless the Speaker of the House or President of the Senate agree. Currently the House does list staff names the Senate does not.
- Identity theft has become rampant and this will provide FULL names, job titles, department, salary and now benefit information which can be used with other "public" information to file for fake bank loans, credit cards, unemployment benefits and mortgages. This type of data mining can put all state employees at significant increased risk for identity theft.
- This information is already available under FOIA which leaves a paper trail of who wants the information. This web site will mostly be used for prurient interests. Your neighbor or brother-in-law can sit in their bunny slippers at midnight looking up how much "Bob" makes. To what end? It also allows private contractors to data mine to undercut state costs on job bids.

- This can also be a safety concern for those being stalked or bothered by ex-spouses or previous relationships. Now you must explain to your supervisor and those above them something messy in your personal life; have them agree, then have to send over to DTMB and have them know about your personal situation and decide, based on an unknown standard that you are either on or off the list. Very intrusive process.
- Transparency of salaries and benefits should include the 10's of thousands of contractors who work right next to state employees and whose salaries come from taxpayer dollars. When asked, the state should be able to tell Michigan citizens how many private sector employees work for state government. Their salary and benefits are also paid by the taxpayers so we should know who they are and what they make.
- Taxpayers need to demand true transparency and include ALL workers who receive a salary from tax payer dollars. This hides the true/real costs of privatization because taxpayers can't FOIA information about contractors.
- Michigan is ranked 50<sup>th</sup> among the states with regard to government transparency. A significant decrease from our standing under the last administration and legislature.

## Saginaw Walk for Warmth Event a Great Success



The Saginaw County Community Action Committee held another successful Walk for Warmth event on February 18, 2017. This was their 9<sup>th</sup> year of conducting the Walk for the purpose of assisting residents in the City of Saginaw and Saginaw County with their heating bills.

The event was well attended by people of all ages from the entire community. The community came out and walked to help their fellow neighbor with staying warm and had fun doing the walk which was 1 mile long. Walkers from community church groups, local union members, civic groups, community school groups, and Consumer Energy staff and families.



We would like to thank all of the community members who helped make this event a success and look forward to making next year's Walk even better. We are close to making our goal and donations are still being accepted.

Thank you all again for support us in this event.

## New Steward Named for HSS Cadillac Place

Tawana Rogers from the Combined Wage Claim Unit of the Unemployment Insurance Agency became a Steward for the Cadillac Place building effective February 10, 2017. She replaces Ellina Simmons who became Chief Steward in January. Tawana is outspoken and ready to serve her fellow SEIU members.

## Joey Combs Honored as Labor Leader of the Year



The African American Leadership Institute celebrated Black History Month by gathering and saluting black leaders from both the past and present at their fourth annual "African American Leadership Awards". The event was held at Lear Corporation World Headquarters in Southfield on Thursday, February 23, 2017. This event recognized and saluted labor leaders, public servants, business leaders, and community leaders for their contributions to the African American community locally, regionally and statewide. Human Services Support Unit President Joey Combs was honored as the Labor Leader of the Year. Congratulations Joey!

## Report Examines Pensions

The National Pension Protection Coalition released the Why Pensions Matter report on March 29, 2017.

This report examines the critical role public pension plans have played in providing retirement security for teachers, firefighters, and other public employees. Michigan's own history demonstrates how public employees are harmed when their retirement security is taken away.

View the report at: [https://protectpensions.org/files/2017/03/MI\\_Why-Pensions-Matter.pdf](https://protectpensions.org/files/2017/03/MI_Why-Pensions-Matter.pdf)

## Union Tablets Donated to Science Program/Opportunity to Mentor Young Girls in Math and Science



SEIU Local 517M recently donated Lenovo tablets to the non-profit Information Technology Empowerment Center (ITEC) for use by children ages 5-13 for software app development. The tablets were used by the Local in the beginning stages of Right to Work to sign up members on electronic dues deduction and are now no longer needed by the Local.

ITEC is a Lansing-based non-profit, collaborative partnership of community, education, business, and government that runs camps and classes for children 5-13 years of age based on the sciences, math and engineering. ITEC prepares Lansing-area students to participate in a global knowledge economy by increasing their technology skills.

Director of Education Shannon Fransen and the kids were very excited to receive the tablets for a more hands-on learning experience.

### 2020 Girls Program

ITEC is interested in partnering with employees to help young girls stay involved in math and the sciences. The 2020 Girls Program will be hosting an event for our members in May to showcase what the girls have created in their 3D Printing Class.

### Summer Camps

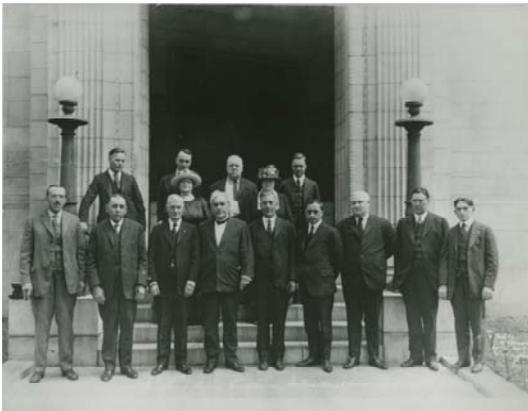
ITEC is holding summer classes math, 3D printing, video game and app design, and more. Click on the link for more information: <http://www.iteclansing.org/>

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

### Elizabeth Grady: SEIU Founder and Trailblazer

By Gavin Strassel, SEIU Archivist

To celebrate SEIU's 96th birthday this April, let's look back at Elizabeth A. Grady, an early champion of women workers and one of SEIU's founders. She was the only woman elected as a national officer at BSEIU's founding convention on April 23, 1921, but got her start in labor as an organizer. By the 1920s she was the President of the Chicago School Janitresses Union Local 7. An aggressive negotiator, she successfully won women janitors a livable wage and protections against unfair replacement with male workers. Tactfully, Grady swayed the hearts and minds of her male colleagues by demonstrating that workplace rights for women meant better working conditions for all workers. Her work reached beyond the building services, and eventually organized locals of school, public, and hospital employees. Her trailblazing work and quest for gender equality in SEIU made her a prominent and respected officer for decades. A scholarship named in her honor was first awarded to another female pioneer in SEIU, Coalition of Labor Union Women co-founder Elinor Glenn, who continued Grady's work by making the union fairer and more equitable for all members.



Elizabeth Grady, top row and second from the right, and her fellow officers at the Building Service Employees International Union's founding convention in 1921. Sworn in as a Trustee, she continued to serve on the International Executive Board for decades.

Elizabeth Grady (pictured right) at the SEIU 10th International Convention on May 1, 1950.



*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 the SEIU collections, please contact Gavin at [strassel@wayne.edu](mailto:strassel@wayne.edu) or visit the @SEIUArchivist Twitterfeed.*

## Calendar of Upcoming Union Events for April, 2017

April 3: Work Zone Safety Week Kickoff Event, Grand Rapids  
April 3: Scientific and Engineering Unit Board Meeting

April 12: Technical Unit Board Meeting  
April 21: SEIU Local 517M Executive Board Meeting  
April 25: Equal Pay Legislative Day at the State Capitol

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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