

SEIU Local 517M

Michigan Public Employees

SEIU Local 517M E-Former – May 2017 Edition



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Make Your Voice Heard and Join Us Wednesday May 3rd for Lobby Day!



The SEIU Local 517M COPE Committee invites you to join with them and your fellow members on Wednesday, May 3, 2017, as a day set aside to speak with our legislators in Lansing. There are many issues which affect you and your job such as pension protection, privatization, and retiree health care, and the legislature needs to hear from you on those issues.

The Union will schedule appointments for you to meet with your Senator and Representative. Lunch will be provided, and legislators and their staff will join us 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. **You must use vacation time to attend!**

There is still time to join us. Registration closes **today** so register at:
<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/RPGDMGF>

Alert: Public School Pension System Could Be Closed!



It appears that the House has given up on a tax cut and is now joining with Senate leaders to push for closure of the Michigan Public School Employees Retirement System (MPSERS). The House and Senate are looking to cut more than \$250 million from the governor's recommended budget to pay down costs associated with

closing down MPSERS. This would close the current hybrid retirement benefit option and place all new employees into a 401(k)-style defined contribution plan.

No bills have been introduced at this time but one Senator joked that they may try to set a new record in speed of passage once the bill is introduced. If this passes the municipal pensions are next.

We have also learned that Business Leaders of Michigan and the Reason Foundation have hired lobbyists and are making the rounds in support of MPSERS closure. They are apparently using the analogy that closing MPSERS is akin to "capping the leaking oil well."

Contact your legislator and tell them why this is a disastrous proposition.

Why closing MPSERS is a disastrous move

1. The House and Senate are slashing funding for education and senior programs to gut school employee pensions. Those pensions were already significantly reduced in 2012.
2. The 401(k)-style plan that is being pushed has already been demonstrated to be woefully inadequate for the State of Michigan employees who were shifted into it in 1997. Studies show that the average retirement benefit for state employees was cut by a third and we are approaching a time when state workers will be unable fund a secure retirement with their reduced plans. We should not follow this same path for school employees.
3. There are few enough benefits for those in education. Forcing new employees into a risky, market-driven retirement plan will not help in attracting new employees Who will want to become a teacher when the pay is low and there are no benefits to make up for that?
4. The current hybrid plan available to new teachers is fully funded at 100 percent. Why close it?
5. Closing a pension system requires the acceleration of payments on its unfunded liabilities. Legislators are cutting hundreds of millions of dollars in funding for roads, food assistance and senior programs just to pay for a massive cut in school pension benefits. This is the last thing Michigan needs, especially since school pension benefits were already greatly reduced just a few years ago

Westland Library Employees Join SEIU Local 517M!



In April, library employees working at the William P. Faust Library in Westland (Wayne County) voted to join SEIU Local 517M. The mail-in ballot election was conducted by the Michigan Employment Relations Commission in April. The employees voted overwhelmingly to join the union during a time when they witnessed 5 of their coworker librarians being terminated during a \$3 million expansion project. The 5 librarians were the employees who had collected all of the union "Show of Interest" cards that are used to file a petition for an election to take place.

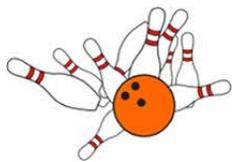
The new bargaining unit will consist of 42 employees. This new unit will be assigned to our School and Local Government Region 3. Now, the work begins to form the union structure, elect officers, appoint committees and bargain the first contract from scratch. SEIU 517M is very pleased to welcome the newest union group into the fold. Welcome!

Big Changes Are Happening at SEIU 517M and We Need Your Help!

Some exciting things are coming to SEIU Local 517M this summer! We have entered into an agreement with a new database vendor called MemberClicks. Their database solution will allow for more membership interaction through enhancements which include dedicated "members only" sections on the webpage, individual unit webpages and enhanced accessibility of member information for staff.

These new enhancements come with new member volunteer opportunities. We are looking for members who are interested in becoming Communication Liaisons for their units. This position would work with the Local's communications staff to help develop content for the "Did You Know" emails that are sent to the members and the content for your unit's individual webpage. There will be training provided for the Communication Liaisons. It is our goal to have at least 1 person in each unit trained by this Fall. If you are interested in becoming your unit's Communications Liaison or for further information about the position, please contact Dave Corrie at corried@seiu517m.org.

South Haven Bowling Fundraiser on May 19th



The South Haven Schools SEIU Members are sponsoring a bowling fundraiser for the "Blessing in a Backpack" organization. This organization provides weekend meals for South Haven Schools students. The event will be held Friday, May 19th from 6:00 pm – 8:00 pm at Lakeside Lanes (09921 Blue Star Hwy., South Haven). Tickets to bowl are \$7 each and may be obtained by calling Michele at 269-767-4825.

Save the Date for The August 11th Scholarship Golf Outing



The Annual SEIU Local 517M Scholarship Golf Outing will be held on Friday, August 11, 2017 at Wheatfield Valley Gold Course in Williamston. Registration will begin at 8:00 a.m. with a shotgun start at 9:00 a.m.

This year the outing format is changing! We are excited to announce that the outing will be the major fundraising component of a new scholarship program being established at SEIU Local 517M to help further the education of members and their children.

Please mark this day on your calendar and plan to be with us for a day of fun golf, good friends, and a great cause!

Contact Dave Corrie at (517) 267-2090, or e-mail at corried@seiu517m.org for any questions.

More details on costs and donation levels will be forthcoming in the near future.

Human Services Support Unit is “Springing” Into Action

Do you have cabin fever from the Winter? Are you ready to get out and mingle with your fellow members? Well, the Human Services Support leadership has come up with numerous opportunities for you to receive information and shake those “Winter Blues”! Below is a listing of upcoming activities you can participate in during the month of May.

May 4: Brown Bag Lunch Hour Dance/Exercise Activity in Cadillac Place, Room L-150

May 10: DHHS Member Meeting in Cadillac Place

May 12: Lansing RICC Lunch Hour Salsa Dance Activity

May 18: Bingo in Cadillac Place, Room L-150

May 22: Saginaw RICC Member Meeting

May 25: Member Meeting in Cadillac Place for all non-DHHS members

May 31: Bingo at the Grand Rapids RICC

For more information or to register for any of the above activities, please contact the HSS Unit office at 313-456-2911.

SEIU AFRAM Report

The HSS Chapter of AFRAM collected women’s toiletries during the month of March. Items collected included deodorant, shampoo, toothbrush, toothpaste, lotion, and other feminine hygiene products. Items collected were donated to the Genesis House, a women’s shelter, which is a part of Detroit Rescue Mission Ministries.

SEIU 517M Members Attend AFRAM National Leadership Conference

9 members of AFRAM from the State of Michigan participated in SEIU AFRAM National Leadership Conference. The event was held Friday, April 21st through Sunday, April 23rd in New Orleans, Louisiana. 2017 marked the 20th year of AFRAM’s existence so there was plenty of excitement. Topics included structural racism, right to work, the fight for \$15, and other pressing issues that the union is addressing in our fight. Guest speakers included SEIU President Mary Kay Henry, SEIU Executive Vice President Valerie Long, and SEIU Secretary/Treasurer Gerry Hudson.

National AFRAM nominations and elections were also held during the conference. Members who attended were from Saginaw, Detroit, and Battle Creek. There were delegates from California, Washington DC, New York, Florida, and a host of other states. We had a great time in New Orleans and we look forward to the next one in 2 years!

Annual Meeting Save the Date

MAKE PLANS NOW . . . to attend the SEIU Local 517M Annual Conference and invite your co-workers! The conference will be held at **The Henry** (*Fairlane Plaza, 300 Town Center Drive, Dearborn*) on **Friday, July 21, 2017**. Breakfast is at 8:00 a.m. with the Membership Meeting running from 9:00 a.m. and ending at 4:00 p.m. More information and a link to the registration form will be in the June E-Former.

This year’s agenda includes exciting information from elected leaders, staff and guest speakers, the annual “Member of the Year” presentations, updates from our various Caucus’ and

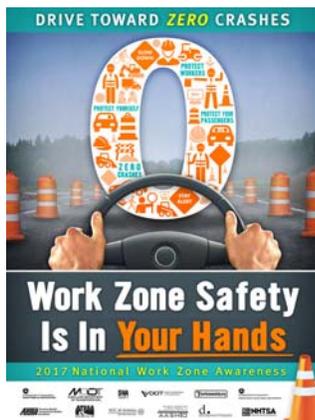
Committees, a chance to meet and talk with the leadership of SEIU Local 517M, and an opportunity to be involved in the future of SEIU Local 517M. There are even a few surprises planned! **Come Participate in YOUR Union!**

Work Zone Safety Week Kick-Off Event



This year's Work Zone Safety Week campaign kicked off on Monday, April 3rd at the MDOT Grand Region Maintenance Facility. SEIU 517M members were on hand showing our union pride, and our community spirit to have a safe summer construction season and drive toward zero crashes from distracted drivers. SEIU Local 517M is partnering with the Michigan Department of Transportation, the Federal Highway Administration, the Michigan State Police, and several other groups to promote safety in Work Zones. This year's slogan is

"Work Zone Safety is in Your Hands!"



SEIU Local 517M President George Heath was one of the featured speakers along with representatives from other sponsoring organizations.

There is a Public Service Announcement video that was produced featuring a MDOT worker who was injured in a construction zone. Watch it here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Zxzc-wDL2do>



April 25th Equal Pay Day Event at the State Capitol

Activists from around Michigan descended on the State Capitol on Tuesday, April 25th to bring awareness to the pay inequity between women and men in the workplace.

They also voiced support for House Bills 4509-4520 that would, among other things, create a commission on pay equity within the Department of Civil Rights; allow employees to request wage information for similarly situated employees; amend the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act to include equal compensation for work of comparable value; establish penalties for equal pay non-compliance; require employers to post and inform employees about equal pay laws; expand the prohibition of wage discrimination by amending the Workforce Opportunity Wage Act; and allow remedies for wage discrimination under the Elliott-Larsen Civil Rights Act.

Here are some statistics:

- According to the Department of Labor, on average, women make \$.78 for every dollar that a man earns.
- The gap between men's and women's earnings is even greater for African-American and Hispanic women, who earn \$.64 and \$.57 to each dollar earned by a man, respectively.
- Pay equity matters not just to women, but to their families and our state's economy as a whole.
- Nearly 476,000 households are headed by women.
- About 33% of those households fall below the poverty level.

To get more information and flyers with statistics, please visit our webpage at:

<http://www.seiu517m.org/2017/04/27/april-25th-equal-pay-day-event-at-the-state-capitol/>

Calendar of Upcoming Union Events for May, 2017

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May 4: Human Services Support Brown Bag Dance/Exercise Activity in Cadillac Place

May 10: Human Services Support DHHS Member Meeting in Cadillac Place

May 12: Human Services Support Lansing RICC Salsa Dance Activity

May 18: Human Services Support Cadillac Place Bingo Activity

May 19: SEIU Local 517M Executive Board Meeting

May 22: Human Services Support Unit Saginaw RICC Member Meeting

May 25: Human Services Support Member Meeting in Cadillac Place for all non-DHHS members

May 31: Human Services Support Grand Rapids RICC Bingo Activity

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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