



E-Former

The Official Electronic Newsletter of SEIU Local 517M

February 2019

In This Issue

- Page 1 - Governor Whitmer Meets With Members
- Page 2 - 2019 Leadership Academy Application Deadline is February 4th
- Page 2 - 2019 SEIU Local 517M Scholarship Applications Now Available
- Page 3 - Ribbon Cutting of New Saginaw Unemployment Office
- Page 3 - Executive Director Leaves SEIU for State Position
- Page 4 - Lobby Day Set for April 10th
- Page 4 - Save the Date for the SEIU Scholarship Golf Outing
- Page 4 - New Student Debt Member Benefit is Coming Soon!
- Page 4 - Calendar of Upcoming Events - February, 2019

Governor Whitmer Meets With Members

Within her first two weeks in office, Michigan Governor Gretchen Whitmer has been visiting state employees in their workplaces. This tour has been morale boosting and fact-finding as well.

On Thursday, January 17th Governor Whitmer paid a visit to SEIU 517M members working at the Unemployment Insurance Agency Local Office in Detroit.

Governor Whitmer met with staff to express her appreciation and support for their efforts in helping claimants. Some of these claimants were affected by the partial federal government shutdown.



L-R: Governor Whitmer, Shelia Robinson and HSS President Janice Cosey.



L-R: SEIU 517M Local President Joey Combs, Ebony Lawrence, and Governor Whitmer.

2019 Leadership Academy Application Deadline is February 4th

The 2019 Leadership Academy applications are available now! The deadline to apply is February 4, 2019. Our goal is to enroll four member leaders from each region and division within our local. The first two meetings will be held on Saturday, March 9, 2019, and Saturday, April 6, 2019.



The Saturday workshops start out with showing the member leaders how to internally organize their workplaces to build and sustain

real power. The workshops continue by giving the member leaders effective communication tools and resources. Finally, the last workshops were dedicated to building better communities by building strong relationships with fellow leaders and other allies. These workshops also show our member leaders how to be strategic thinkers, to lead on organizational equity and inclusion and how to write plans to effectively carry out a community partnership.

If you are interested in applying for the next academy session, please complete the following [application](#).

2019 SEIU Local 517M Scholarship Applications Now Available



SEIU Local 517M is proud to offer our own scholarship program to help dues-paying members in good standing and their children with college expenses.

The funding for the scholarship comes from our Annual Scholarship Golf Outing and other fundraising activities by our local units which include raffles and fundraising events. We hope you are able to participate in any or all of these events throughout the year. Please check our SEIU Local 517M website for our calendar of events.

Eight \$500 non-renewable scholarships will be awarded this year to students based on successful completion of the application process and meeting certain criteria. Awards will be made via a lottery system from all eligible submissions.

Scholarships are awarded without regard to gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, disability, or political affiliation of the applicant. Scholarships are limited to one per household for each academic year.

Applications must be received by May 31, 2019. The winners will be notified July 1, 2019.

For full details and the application, [please click here](#).

Ribbon Cutting of New Saginaw Unemployment Office

On Wednesday, January 16, 2019, the Unemployment Insurance Agency (UIA) hosted a ribbon cutting to celebrate the grand opening of its new location. Those involved celebrated keeping the office local. The office is now located at 515 N. Washington Avenue in Saginaw and is inside the Commerce Tower building. There was talk of moving the UIA office out of the area, but union employees reached out to local government leaders and elected officials.



L-R: HSS Unit Member Tracy Lopez, Rep. Vanessa Guerra, HSS Chief Steward Jeanette Brown

State Representative Vanessa Guerra (D-Saginaw) said, "It was only a few short years ago that there was the recommendation to close the Saginaw office and they were going to send our Saginaw residents to places like Lansing and Grand Rapids."

Saginaw Mayor Floyd Kloc said, "It's a great day, because if you think about it, it's a great day any time we're able to say we've preserved and relocated a hundred jobs downtown, and at the same time we've revitalized an icon structure here in town. Both of those are huge achievements for our city."



Jeanette Brown, chief steward at the Saginaw UIA office spoke with Representative Guerra who was pleased that some of our union members took action by reaching out to her and informing her about the Agency's decision to close the office. She said that because of our members quick action, she was able to reach out to local leaders, like State Senator Ken Horne, to help keep the Unemployment Insurance jobs in Saginaw, which turned out to be a success.

Representative Guerra invited Jeanette Brown to represent the union by standing by her in the front and helping cut the ribbon at the ceremony.

Executive Director Leaves SEIU for State Position



Governor Whitmer has appointed SEIU Local 517M Executive Director Liza Estlund Olson as the Director of the Office of the State Employer. Her last day at SEIU was January 11th.

The Office of the State Employer negotiates labor agreements with the state employee unions.

SEIU Local 517M is currently in the selection process for a new Executive Director.

We wish Liza the best of luck in her new endeavor.

Lobby Day Set for April 10th

The SEIU Local 517M COPE Committee invites you to join with them and your fellow members on Wednesday, April 10, 2019, 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 with 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. **You must use vacation time to attend!**

Registration begins at 8:30 a.m. and activities will last from 9:00 a.m. - 3:00 p.m.

Registration closes **MONDAY, April 8th** so [Register Now](#).

For more information, please contact [Amy Davis-Comstock](#) or [Janice Cosey](#).

Save the Date for the SEIU Scholarship Golf Outing



Mark your calendars and join us for a fun day of golf in the warm sun to help fund the SEIU Local 517M Scholarship Fund. The outing will be on Friday, August 9, 2019 at Wheatfield Golf Course in Williamston.

More information including the registration form can be [found here](#).

New Student Debt Member Benefit is Coming Soon!

SEIU Member Benefits will be rolling out a new Student Debt Members-Only Benefit this Spring.

Local 517M has been chosen as a pilot local for this program.

The program will have several components. The first component is a free calculator to see which student debt programs that you may be eligible for and what the savings could be.

The second component is a fee-based assistance plan that will guide you through the process and handle the paperwork for you!

More information will be sent when the program is available.

Calendar of Upcoming Union Events - February, 2019

February 1: SEIU Scholarship Application Period Begins

February 4: Deadline for Leadership Academy Applications

February 11: Scientific and Engineering Unit Board Meeting, Lansing Office

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

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