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The Official Electronic Newsletter of SEIU Local 517M

April 2019

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New Executive Director Hired

On March 6, 2019, the SEIU Local 517M Executive Board unanimously voted to hire Mr. Jeremy Tripp of Lansing, MI as the next Executive Director of SEIU Local 517M.

Mr. Tripp, formerly the Director of Government and Political Affairs for the Michigan Corrections Organization, SEIU Local 526M brings over 10 years of high-level experience and expertise to the position.

Throughout his time in Michigan politics and within SEIU, Mr. Tripp has gained a reputation for working intensely on member programs and developed a proven track record of moving issues that matter most to the membership.

When asked about accepting the position Mr. Tripp said "I am really looking forward to starting this journey with 517M. We represent some of the most amazing and talented people across the State of Michigan and we have a unique opportunity to continue building a union we can all be proud of and best serves our members needs. I am thankful to the 517M Executive Board for this opportunity and will work my hardest to ensure 517M remains a leader and innovator in Michigan."

The hiring announcement comes after an exhaustive search process which attracted quality candidates from across Michigan and the United States.

Mr. Tripp is expected to begin his duties on April 15th, 2019 and has already begun the process of reaching out and getting to know the 517M Board, Staff and Membership.

Welcome Jeremy!



It's Not Too Late to Sign Up for Lobby Day on April 10th!

By Amy Davis-Comstock,
COPE Committee Chair

Register today for Lobby Day on April 10th! This is an opportunity for us to meet our Senators and Representatives in Lansing to discuss the issues that affect us. The day starts with a continental breakfast and becoming familiar with the issues to be discussed with your individual legislators. After meeting with the Representatives in the morning, the union has invited legislators and their staff to have lunch with us. This provides a more casual environment to discuss interests



and build relationships with our state elected officials. After lunch, we have scheduled meetings with Senators from our districts.

We will focus on the budget, specifically fixing the roads and education; outsourcing of union jobs; and revenue sharing. As members, we are welcome to discuss matters concerning us, our families, and our jobs.

Whether you have attended Lobby Day in the past or not, don't miss this great opportunity to have your voice heard by those who represent us in Lansing! **Please remember that 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 for this event closes **MONDAY, APRIL 8th** so [Register Now](#).

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

517M Hires New Office Manager



SEIU, Local 517M is excited to announce that we are bringing on a new Office Manager, Olivia Toretta, effective April 15th, 2019.

Olivia joins 517M with a proud union background and work experience in the labor movement as well as non-profit arena. She has a degree in Political Science from Michigan State University and has spent the last few years sharpening her skills within organized labor.

In her previous employment, Olivia was known for her creativity and innovation and is excited about bringing her expertise to 517M. Most recently, she has been working for Michigan Corrections Organization, SEIU Local 526M, as a Member Engagement Associate.

Olivia takes over for Cindy Wilson who is set to retire after 28 years of dedicated service to the men and women of SEIU, Local 517M. Olivia will be working with Cindy for a month during the transition period.

Please help us give a warm welcome to Olivia Toretta.

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 throughout the year. Please check the SEIU Local 517M website (www.seiu517m.org) for event listings.

Eight \$500 non-renewable scholarships will be awarded 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](#).

April is Distracted Driving Awareness Month



The month of April is Distracted Driving Awareness Month. It is a united effort by the National Safety Council to recognize the dangers of and eliminate preventable deaths from distracted driving. Their mission is to eliminate roadway deaths by 2050.

Every day, at least nine Americans die and 100 are injured in distracted driving crashes. Cell phones, dashboard touchscreens, voice commands and other in-vehicle technologies pose a threat to our safety. The consequences of those distractions are not worth the convenience they offer. In 2017, over 40,000 people died in car crashes, and over 1,200 of those were on-the-job fatalities. Every one of those people had families and communities who mourned their loss.

Because all roadway deaths are preventable, the only acceptable number of roadway fatalities must be zero. How do we get from 40,000 deaths per year to zero?

- Always wearing seatbelts. In 2016, 48% of passenger-vehicle occupant fatalities were unrestrained.
- Never drive impaired. We lose 10,000 people every year in alcohol-involved crashes – that means one person every 48 minutes.
- Never driving distracted. While 47 states and the District of Columbia ban texting, no state bans all cell phone use even though studies show that hands-free cell phone use is far from risk-free.

For more information on distracted driving, check out our their webpage at: <https://www.nsc.org/pages/ddam/ddam-materials>

Register Now for the SEIU 517M Scholarship Golf Outing



The Annual SEIU Local 517M Scholarship Golf Outing will be held on Friday, August 9, 2019 at Wheatfield Valley Golf Course in Williamston. Registration will begin at 8:00 a.m. with a shotgun start at 9:00 a.m. This event has been well attended for several years and is always a great day for a great cause! Last year, the event raised enough money to fund 8 scholarships for SEIU Local 517M members and their children.

The cost this year is \$80 per player and includes golf with a cart, coffee and donuts, lunch at the turn, chicken and pasta dinner, prizes and much more!!! [Download the registration form here](#)

Get your foursome ready and join us for a great day of golf and supporting a great cause! Contact Dave Corrie at (517) 267-2090, or e-mail at corried@seiu517m.org with any questions.

Westland Library Workers Win First Contract!

On March 12, 2019, the non-supervisory union members at the Westland Library voted unanimously in favor of ratifying their newly negotiated Collective Bargaining Agreement. This is their first ever contract and they are now members of SEIU Local 517M!

"Thank you so much for all your work in getting us to this point. Please pass along our thanks to everyone at SEIU Local 517M for supporting us in our struggle for healthy working conditions and accountable library governance. We are incredibly grateful to have you as our representatives." said Westland Library Member Katie Dover

The library board approved the new Collective Bargaining Agreement at their meeting on March 13, 2019. Congratulations and welcome to the SEIU Local 517M family!



Pictured L-R: Cari Fry (Bargaining Team member), Dominic Barbato (SEIU Staff), Lori Weinrick-Waybrant (Bargaining Team member), Katie Dover (Bargaining Team member), James Higgins (Library Board), Ishwar Laxminarayan (Library Director), Gary Chappell (Library Board), Gayle Nicholson (Library Board), Stephani Field (Westland City HR), Mike McNamara (Library/City Attorney)

Calendar of Upcoming Union Events - April, 2019

April 10: Lobby Day at the Capitol, Lansing

April 15: School and Local Government Region 2 Board Meeting

April 27: SEIU Local 517M Executive Board Meeting, Lansing

For more information on the above and future events, consult our on-line calendar at: <http://www.seiu517m.org/events/month/>

Student Debt Forgiveness Navigator Member Benefit Launched!

Did you know that depending on your occupation and/or employer, you may be able to have all or part of your federal student loans forgiven!

SEIU has partnered with Savi, a social impact startup company, to provide SEIU dues paying members a free online student loan evaluation tool to determine eligibility for federal repayment and forgiveness programs. Just enter your basic information, employer, and loan information on their secure website, and the software will do the rest for **FREE**. It will automatically determine your repayment options, including whether you qualify for any loan forgiveness program and show you what your potential savings could be.

Once you see your options, you can choose to apply for the programs yourself or use their new platform to apply electronically using the software—which includes the ability to talk to a student loan expert. The full cost of the service is \$89.95 but, because you are an SEIU member, the cost is only **\$29.95**. That's a \$60 savings just for being an SEIU member!

Start your journey to student loan freedom today.

Please call the **SEIU Member Benefit Call Center at 1-844-836-7348** with any questions about the program.

Member Benefits Experience

Here is a testimonial from a member about a purchase from Lowe's through the Click N Save Member-Only benefit.

"It was a great experience. I typically shop local to help the local economy and the "little guy". I went to an appliance store on Saturday and was willing to pay \$50 more for a stove if they threw in free delivery. They wouldn't budge. So, I bought the stove through Lowe's for a lower price and free delivery. So if I am going to order online anymore, I will definitely go through Click N Save!" - Cathy Weissert, City of Battle Creek

Be sure to get on SEIUMB.com and register for Member-Only benefits and get the most out of your union dues.

HSS Unit Steward Elections

The Human Services Support Unit will be holding their Steward Elections in June. Winners will begin their term of office July 8, 2019 and their term will end on June 30, 2021.

Members in good standing as of pay period ending May 18, 2019, are eligible to participate in the Steward and Alternate Steward Election. If a member is not in current dues status for pay period ending May 18, 2019, they will not have the right to vote, nominate a member for the Steward/Alternate Steward, or run for a Steward/Alternate Steward position in their jurisdictional area. To run for a position, you must have been in active dues status for one year.

Nomination and voting information will be emailed directly to HSS unit members in June.