



SEIU 517M
PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

The **E-Former**

The Official Electronic Newsletter of
SEIU Local 517M

December 2019

South Haven Food Service Members Raise Funds for Children in Need

The South Haven Schools Food Service Unit held their 3rd Annual fundraiser for the “Back Packs in A Blessing” organization. The Back Packs in A Blessing organization provides meals for the weekend for students in the South Haven School District. The fund raiser took place on November 1st at the Lakeside Entertainment Bowling Alley in South Haven, Michigan. SEIU 517M members from South Haven Schools, Covert Schools, and friends and families of SEIU members came together once again in an effort to support children in need.

“If it weren’t for the members of SEIU 517M, we wouldn’t be able to provide the number of meals that we do, the contribution that has been made through this annual fundraiser has definitely made a difference in our ability to provide for the children,” said Mr. Thomas Marcoux, Regional Director of the Back Packs in A Blessing organization. South Haven Schools Food Service Unit President Tracy Burrows was very happy to see the people of her community come out and support this worthy cause. President Burrows also said “not only is this a great cause to contribute to, but it’s also a great time, we look forward to this event every year.”

There was a total of 63 bowlers, and \$690.00 was raised, which exceed last year’s total’s. A fun time was had by all, especially our award winners. The Most Fun Award winners were Kyle Caponigro, and Annika Chalupa. The High Score Award went to Mr. Lonnell Hobbs, the Best Bowler Award went to our own SEIU 517M Executive Director Jeremy Tripp. The most prestigious award, the Worst Bowler Award, went to Bre Jackson and Josh Martinez.

Plans for next year’s fundraiser are already being made, “this event has grown every year and we want to make sure that next year’s event is no exception,” said event coordinator and unit chief steward Michele Leadingham. Special thanks goes out to South Haven Food Service unit member Beth Lewis, who also assisted in the coordination of the event, and another special thanks to members of the Covert School unit, Chyrell Sexton and Janet Latham for their support.



Front Row: Beth Lewis, Tracy Burrows, and Emily Walker. Back Row: Christina Leadingham, Jason Newton, Michele Leadingham, Tynisha Jackson, Joey Combs, Janet Latham, and Chyrell Sexton.



Front row: Kyle Caponigro, Annika Chalupa. Back row Jeremy Tripp, Lonnell Hobbs, Bre Jackson, and Josh Martinez.

Active Members Still Needed for Committees!

By Joey Combs,
SEIU 517M President



Member engagement is the engine of our UNION. The more members that are engaged, the more powerful and visible we are. Did you know your Union has several standing committees you can join? We are currently recruiting new members to come and join us as we get ready for a new year. The committees that are currently available are:

New Member Orientation and Sign Up. Membership is the fuel that runs our UNION. The new member orientation and sign-up committee helps units with member to member outreach in new hire orientations.

The Member Engagement Committee promotes membership in the Union. Member engagement is the engine of the UNION. Member engagement has been done via member events and activities such as general membership/chapter meetings, conferences, bargaining surveys, brown bag lunch activities, ice cream socials, bingo, bowling outings, community garden events, hustle/salsa lessons during lunch breaks, picnics, and our Annual golf outing.



Leadership Development. Leaders are the drivers of our UNION. The Leadership Development Committee currently holds a yearly Leadership Academy. The members of the committee facilitate the various modules of the 4-hour sessions, which are spread over 4 Saturdays. The participants are fellow members who apply for the Leadership Academy cohort and are selected based on certain criteria.

Political/Legislative Committee shall oversee and promote the Union's political and legislative programs, as well as promote member involvement in the Committee on Political Education (COPE).



The African American Caucus (AFRAM) is committed to enhancing opportunities for education, training, mentorship, leadership development and networking for SEIU members and staff of African descent. This committee is open to all races.

The Election/Tally Committee oversees the general elections of the Local and shall be responsible for nominations and the preparation, tallying and certification of general election ballots.

The Community Partnership Committee focuses on opportunities for members to partner with community allies and others with a common goal. The committee works to build solidarity with other unions, organizations and neighbors to unite and advance our vision. As we continually find ways to increase our public visibility as advocates for quality public services, we will need community partners!

According to Article VII, Section 3 of the SEIU Local 517M By-Laws:

Section 3: Standing Committee Members shall serve until discharged by the President, or until the conclusion of the President's term. Special Committee Members shall serve for the term of the committee as established upon committee assignment. Any Committee Member may resign upon written notice to the President.

To be appointed to one of the above committees, you need to contact President Joey Combs at jcombs@seiu517m.org and let her know who you are, which unit you are in, and which committees you are interested in serving on.

Flint Para-professionals Ratify New Contract

Flint school's paraprofessionals reached a tentative agreement on November 8th for a two year agreement after a year-long fight for better wages. The agreement includes a 10% increase in their wages with a 5% across the board increase within 30 days of ratification and another 5% increase the first pay period in August, 2020.

The bargaining committee was also successful in securing a 10% increase in annual longevity pay outs, 2 additional paid inclement weather days for a total of 5 days per school year, and increases in the compensation that the paraprofessionals receive when they must substitute for their assigned teachers in a classroom. Increases in stipends for paraprofessionals who perform Learning Support Services was also successfully bargained.

The new agreement was unanimously ratified by the membership on Monday, November 25th. Congratulations to the Flint School's bargaining team - Carmella Johnson, Jan Martin, Laura Balknight and Mary Maussoud for a job well done.

New Leaders Sworn In for the Saginaw School Unit

There are new member-leaders at the Saginaw Schools unit. The following members have been elected to fill the following positions:

Erric Poole, Unit President
Jeanette Barnett, Unit Vice President
Roberta Oldenburg, Secretary
Greg Price, Campus Officer Steward
Dennis Morrison, Campus Support Steward
Buffy Joles, Para Professional Steward

All were sworn in at the November 12th Chapter meeting. In addition to the swearing-in ceremony, we asked State Representative Vanessa Guerra (D-Saginaw) to stop by and provide a legislative update.

We talked about issues that effect our members on their jobs including: Snow Day Legislation, the 3rd grade reading law and how our schools are funded. Rep. Guerra was kind enough to help us replace the State of Michigan Flag at Arthur Hill High School.

Calendar of Upcoming Events - December, 2019

December 11: Technical Unit Board Meeting,
Lansing Office

December 24 - 25: SEIU and State Offices
Closed for Christmas Holiday

December 31: SEIU and State Offices Closed
for New Year's Holiday

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

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

State of Michigan Retirement Board Appointment Has SEIU Ties



Governor Gretchen Whitmer has appointed Former SEIU Local 517M Executive Director Phil Thompson to the State of Michigan Retirement Board. He will represent the general public for a term commencing January 1, 2020, and expiring December 31, 2023. He will succeed Mark Boonstra whose term expires on December 31, 2019.

The State of Michigan Retirement Board provides oversight of the State Employees' Retirement System, the Judicial Retirement System, and Military Retirements. These three systems handle nearly 80,000 active and retired employees.