



SEIU 517M
PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

The **E-Former**

The Official Electronic Newsletter of
SEIU Local 517M

March 2021

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Local 517M Statewide Day of Action - Working Families First

By Clint Bryant, Labor Relations Specialist



The mission, goals, and priorities of an institution are made clear by studying its budget.

At Local 517M we are organizing our membership to call upon their elected leaders in the Michigan legislature to pass a supplemental budget that focuses on the health and safety of Michiganders and puts working families first.

Join us on Wednesday, March 3rd for a statewide day of action as we ask members of the legislature to support an equitable supplemental budget.

In this year's state supplemental budget, we are requesting additional funding to meet the needs of our schools, increasing funding and access to assist with COVID relief, and allocation of resources to rebuild our crumbling infrastructure.

As the budget battle continues, stay tuned for updates by visiting www.seiu517m.org.

[Locate your state legislator](#)

[Review the supplemental request](#)

Union Elections are Coming Soon!

There are several leadership positions up for election in 2021 including the SEIU Local 517M President, Local 517M Secretary/Treasurer, 3 State Bargaining Unit Presidents, 3 School and Local Government Region Presidents as well as several Board positions.

Get involved! The Union movement is only as strong as the leaders that take the time to be active which benefits all members.

Candidate Petition forms and election schedule will appear in the April edition of the E-Former and will be available on our website (www.seiu517m.org) at that time. For specific questions regarding elections, please contact Dave Corrie at corried@seiu517m.org.

STAY SAFE — STAY INFORMED

www.seiu517m.org

[Twitter at: @SEIU517M](#)

[Facebook at: SEIULocal517M](#)

SEIU Scholarship Applications Are Now Available

By Dave Corrie, Information Services Coordinator

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

Funding for the scholarship comes from our Annual Scholarship Golf Outing and other fundraising activities by our local units. 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 upcoming events.

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, 2021. The winners will be notified July 1, 2021.

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



Letters from 2020 SEIU 517M Scholarship Winners

By Dave Corrie, Information Services Coordinator

We received the following letters of appreciation from two of the 2020 SEIU 517M Scholarship winners.

Dear SEIU Local 517M,

I wanted to thank SEIU for awarding me one of the scholarships. The scholarship money will be used to pay for college textbooks and related expenses. Receiving this scholarship, brought much needed happiness to me at this time of virtual learning during the pandemic.

Please share my sincere thanks and appreciation with the SEIU award committee, officers and others who made this possible.

Many blessings to all of you in 2021!

*Sincerely,
Brooke Osterkamp
Computer Engineering Major
Michigan State University*

Dear Scholarship Committee,

I would like to thank you and your committee for selecting me as a 2020 Scholarship winner. This scholarship will help me to continue my education at CMU and is very much appreciated.

Jacklyn Beller

State Employee Benefits for Life Open Enrollment is March 8 – 26

Benefits for Life, the voluntary, employee-paid coverage offered through the State of Michigan, provides additional protection with premiums payable through payroll deduction. Eligible employees who would like to enroll, review existing coverage, or make changes can visit www.BenefitsforLife.org or call the Benefits for Life Call Center at 888-825-8395, Monday through Friday, 9:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m. Please note that when enrolling online you must register as a new user since usernames and passwords created in prior years are no longer valid. Options include:

- IDShield Identity Theft Protection
- Trustmark Universal Life Insurance with Long Term Care and/or Trustmark Critical Illness Insurance
- MetLife Supplemental Term Life Insurance
- MetLife Accidental Death and Dismemberment (AD&D) Insurance
- MetLife Legal Plans
- Trustmark Enhanced Accident Insurance
- Auto and Home Insurance through Liberty Mutual or MetLife
- Free Abenity Discount Plan

For more information, review the materials and watch the Benefits for Life videos on the [Employee Benefits Division website](#) and select “Voluntary Benefits” from the left menu, then “Active Employees.”

Local 517M History - The Executive Directors

By Dave Corrie, Information Services Coordinator

As we continue our 40th Anniversary series on the history of SEIU Local 517M, we look at the Executive Directors that have run the operations of the Local.



William “Bus” Bingham (1977 - 1985)

Bus was a consultant with his own labor relations firm. He worked part-time at the Local as Executive Director from 1977 until his death in 1985.

Phillip Thompson (1985 - 2012)

Phil was a staff representative at the time of Bus’ death and was charged by the Board to serve as the Interim Executive Director at that time. He was hired as the first full-time Executive Director in 1985 and served in this position until his retirement in 2012.



Phillip Patrick (2012 - 2014)

Phillip was hired to replace the retiring Phil Thompson. Phillip was a Human Services Support unit member and was serving as the Unit President at that time.

Liza Estlund Olson (2015 - 2019)

Liza came to us with experience in various issue activist organizations, the City of Lansing, and serving in various director positions in State government.



Jeremy Tripp (2019 - present)

Jeremy comes to us from our sister local the Michigan Corrections Organization where he served as the Director of Government and Legislative Affairs for over 10 years.

Local 517M Presidents Bill Ruhf and Joey Combs have also served in the role of Executive Director temporarily when the position was vacant.

Civil Service Rules on Technical Unit Compensatory Time Grievance

By Kevin Karpinski, Senior Labor Relations Specialist

CIVIL SERVICE ISSUES DECISIONS - Compensatory Time Group Grievance Declared a Prohibited Subject of Bargaining

The Technical Unit filed grievance L-32-02-OSE-02 on May 13, 2020, with the Office of the State Employer (OSE) on behalf of all employees who worked through the Covid-19 pandemic with assignments having buildings declared inaccessible and who were not tele-working from home. In other words, the essential and critical infrastructure employees. The Union issued a written request on the same date for a meeting with OSE under Article 9 (Grievance Procedure) of the Collective Bargaining Agreement (CBA). This meeting is part of the process to reach a remedy to the grievance prior to the arbitration hearing.

The grievance in question claims compensatory time (up to max 480 hours) for Essential/Critical Infrastructure Technicians who were required to work during an Emergency Order to shelter in place during all time periods when buildings were/are closed, partially open, inaccessible, partially inaccessible, etc. The essential Technical Unit Members continued working throughout the pandemic, from the beginning in March, 2020, to the present time.

On numerous dates the Union requested a meeting with OSE and to assign the case to an arbitrator. On July 28, 2020, OSE filed a Prohibited Subject of Bargaining (PSB) complaint against the Union for filing a grievance that is not covered by the CBA. The State Personnel Director (SPD) Jan Winters, and Civil Service Commission General Council John Gnodtke, issued an answer upholding the PSB complaint stating that the Union is prevented (Enjoined) from pursuing the grievance any further. In their decision, they stated the Union should have submitted grievances with the Appointing Agencies (Departments) rather than OSE. The Union filed the grievance where the Emergency Order was handled, OSE.

The PSB decision from the SPD October 13, 2020, stated that the matter was not covered by the Union contract even though we offered proof of the language and argued that the matter is clearly a compensation issue covered by the Union contract. It therefore should not be considered a subject that is prohibited from bargaining and allow the union to file a grievance. Due to this decision, the Union filed an Unfair Labor Practice (ULP) charge on November 24, 2020, within the 6-week deadline for filing a charge. In the ULP brief writing process, again with no actual "Hearing", or even a video conference, the Union argued to the Civil Service Hearing Officer that due process meetings were held with the Departments after the PSB decision was issued, but since we were "enjoined", we are unable to pursue this matter. We thought we were on solid ground with the contract language, and a recent precedent guiding case when we filed a previous grievance at OSE in 2019. In addition, we argued that OSE refused to meet with the Union under the Grievance Procedure language in the contract, so the Union had to act to protect our contractual rights. The ULP was denied by the Hearing Officer on February 18, 2021.

The SEIU 517M Technical Unit and Executive Board are currently reviewing appeal options.