



**SEIU 517M**  
PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

The **E-Former**

The Official Electronic Newsletter of  
SEIU Local 517M

## June 2021

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##### Region 3:

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##### Scientific and Engineering Unit:

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#### Executive Director:

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#### Information Services/PDF/

#### Member-Only Benefits:

[Dave Corrie](#) - 517.267.2090

#### Lansing Office Manager:

[Olivia Toretta](#) - 517.267.2095

### Time is Running Out to Vote!

By Dave Corrie, Information Services Coordinator

The SEIU Local 517M Union Officer Election is nearing its completion. Votes must be cast by 5:00 p.m. on Friday, June 4th. Ballots will be counted on Monday, June 7th and newly elected leaders will take office on July 1, 2021.



This election is for the Local-wide position of Secretary/Treasurer. If you haven't voted already, you can vote now at:

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/YZ5RP97>

You will need your membership number in order to cast your vote. It was located on your voting postcard or email that you received announcing the election. If you misplaced it, you can contact Dave Corrie at [corried@seiu517m.org](mailto:corried@seiu517m.org) or call 517-267-2090 by 4:00 p.m. on Thursday, June 3rd and it can be given to you.

Some candidates ran unopposed and are listed below.

Local President – Joey Combs

#### Region/Unit Board Level

Region 1 DVP – Leticia Trevino (City of Saginaw)

Region 1 Secretary – Roberta Oldenburg (Saginaw Schools)

Region 2 DVP – Yolanda Johnson (City of Battle Creek)

Region 2 VP/Treasurer – Peter Anderson (Allegan Co Road Comm)

Region 2 Board representing Chapter 1 - Jeanette Latham (Covert Schools)

Region 3 DVP – Carmella Johnson (Flint Schools)

Region 3 Secretary – Jan Martin (Flint Schools)

Region 3 Board representing Mott Community College – Sandy Hill

SE President/DVP – Michelle Kusnier

SE Secretary – Molly Mott

SE Board representing EGLE (3 positions) – Leni Steiner-Zehender, David Lawrence, Greg Merricle

SE Board representing MDOT (3 positions) – Michael Duell

SE Board representing MDARD (2 positions) – Arina Ferdig

SE Board representing DHHS - Tonya Heyer

*Elections for the Human Services Support and Technical bargaining units will take place this Fall.*

**STAY SAFE — STAY INFORMED**

[www.seiu517m.org](http://www.seiu517m.org)

[Twitter at: @SEIU517M](https://twitter.com/SEIU517M)

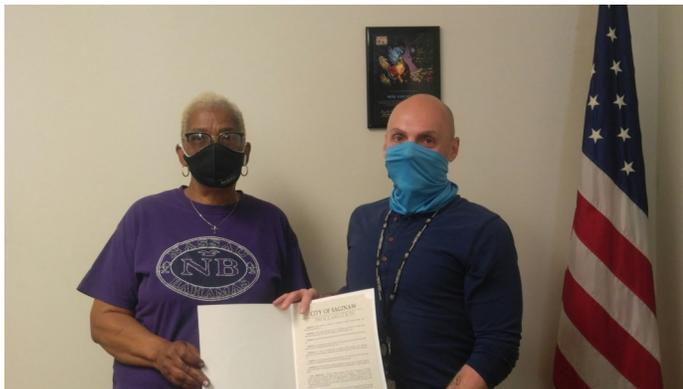
[Facebook at: SEIULocal517M](https://www.facebook.com/SEIULocal517M)

## SCCMHA Staff Receives Recognition from Saginaw Mayor

By Clint Bryant, Labor Relations Specialist

In honor of May being Mental Health Awareness Month, Saginaw’s Mayor Brenda Moore took time to meet with Saginaw County Community Mental Health Agency (SCCMHA) member-leaders to thank them for their invaluable work throughout the pandemic. “We wouldn’t have made it without all of your hard work and support. On top of the pandemic, we experienced a historic flood in Midland and Saginaw. As we persevere, your work must be highlighted and recognized, Thank You”, said Moore.

Traditionally, the city of Saginaw recognizes members of the SCCMHA administration, but this year it was time for change to ensure essential, frontline staff was shown appreciation. SCCMHA members will enter bargaining this year with the contract campaign entitled “DIGNITY”.



L-R: Saginaw Mayor Brenda Moore with SCCMHA Chapter President Ash Christians.

## SEIU Meets with State Board of Education Vice President Dr. Pamela Pugh

By Clint Bryant, Labor Relations Specialist

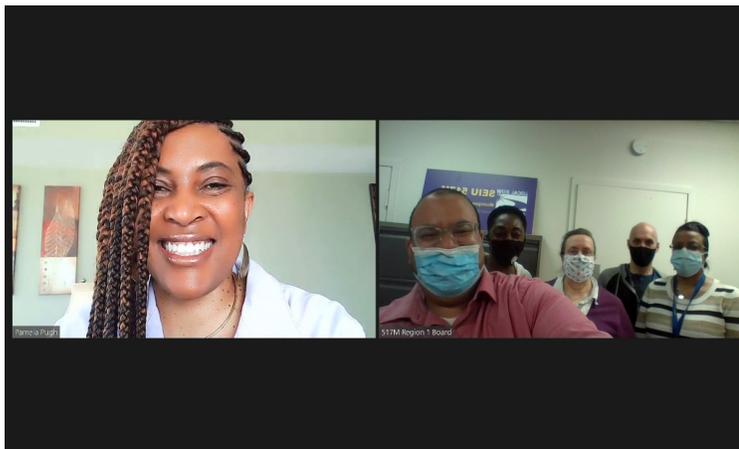
With many students and staff returning to in-person instruction now and over the summer, one of SEIU Local 517M’s goals is to engage our members about issues that matter most. Prior to the SEIU Region 1 Board meeting, members were asked for questions or concerns they might have as workers, parents, and grandparents and were then given the opportunity to ask those questions directly.

Topics included: ventilation, M-STEP testing, transportation, childcare, and sanitization of school facilities. “Legislators in Michigan must stop using our children as pawns, this is not a game, this is about the lives and education of our most precious resource, our children” said Dr. Pugh.

The next SEIU Region 1 Board meeting is scheduled for August 4<sup>th</sup> and will feature Congressman Dan Kildee (MI-5) who will answer questions from the members of SEIU Local 517M.

If you would like to submit a question for Congressman Kildee, [please submit them here](#).

If you would like to attend the meeting in-person or virtually on Zoom, please e-mail Clint Bryant at [cbryant@seiu517m.org](mailto:cbryant@seiu517m.org).



L-R: Dr. Pamela Pugh, SEIU Labor Relations Specialist Clint Bryant, Jeanette Barnett (SPSD), Roberta Oldenburg (SPSD), Ash Christians (SCCMHA), LaRunja Frills-Brown (Saginaw Libraries)

## **Technical Unit Launches Video Discussion Groups**

By Kevin Karpinski, Senior Labor Relations Specialist

Technical Unit union members are eligible to join facilitated video discussions about your job and experiences throughout the public health crisis caused by COVID-19. This showcase of technician work is also designed to allow feedback about wages and benefits as we head into contract negotiations later this summer. The discussion groups will start meeting the 2nd - 3rd weeks of June.

We want to hear from you and other members working in similar jobs in your department and in different departments. The project is titled “Water Rules” and focuses on your job and professionalism as union workers serving the public. As public servants, SEIU Local 517M members provide protections to all Michiganders which include keeping our water, soil, air and natural resources clean and pristine. Water Rules!

### Technical Unit Member Discussion Groups

Water Rules – Water & Environmental Quality/Testing - DHHS and EGLE

Front Line Health Care - MDOC, DHHS, and DMVA

Critical Safety - First Responder, Homeland Security & Military - DTMB, EGLE, and DMVA

Haz Mat - Hazardous Materials - DHHS, EGLE & DNR Animal Lab

Hatcheries & Research Stations/Commercial & Recreational Fishing - DNR

First Responders & Natural Resources - Forest Fire Fighters/Forestry/Wildlife - DNR

Flight - Aircraft Pilots & Drone Operators (Flight School Certified) - DNR and MDOT

Crime Fighters – Forensic, Fingerprint, Evidence, Firearms, Facial Recognition - MSP

Inspectors - Transportation Infrastructure (2 Groups) - MDOT

Media/Comm/Professional Tech (Media, Content, PR) - LEO, MDARD, MDE, All others

Do you have a co-worker who would like to participate in these groups but isn't a member? Encourage them to join you in union membership so that they can participate. Have them go to the HRMN Self-Service Portal (<https://bit.ly/Join517M>) and become an SEIU member today!

## **Flint Paraprofs Fight for Pay**

By Dominic Barbato, Labor Relations Specialist

With the passage of the American Rescue Plan (ARP), the city of Flint and its school district are set to receive a large amount of stimulus money, and the paraprofessionals of the Flint Community School District are fighting to make sure some of that is used to support their work.

The paraprofessionals are in the process of securing a \$20 per hour increase for their members who work this summer, utilizing the ARP funds. After hearing the district was planning on providing extra money for teachers, union leadership worked to secure the same for SEIU Local 517M members. “We requested extra money for work this summer and were able to get it”, said Carmella Johnson, president of the paraprofessional unit at Flint Schools. As of this writing, the district is putting together a formal Memorandum of Understanding for the arrangement. SEIU Local 517M has been vocal on the state level about the use of pandemic relief funds to support employees performing critical public service during COVID-19.

Local 517M members at Flint Schools are also in contract negotiations with the district. They are seeking a wage increase and more affordable healthcare. “I think negotiations are going well and we are moving along, I am optimistic at the direction we are going and I am optimistic we will have an agreement before the current one expires”, Johnson stated.

## **A Letter from Retired Technical Unit President Arnie Beller**

### **Thank You Very Much!!!**

I am retiring from state service on May 14, 2021 after 36 years with the Michigan Department of Transportation as a Transportation Technician. I will also have to step down from all my positions with SEIU 517M and the United Technical Employees Association where I currently serve as President. I have been very proud to represent our fellow technicians since 1994 serving in various union roles from Steward all the way to Association President. It also allowed me to serve the members of SEIU 517M as a Divisional Vice President since 2016. I am truly grateful for all these opportunities to serve other hard-working men and women in our State.

I want to thank the members of the Tech Board and both the Negotiating and Grievance Committees for allowing me to work with you through the years. I have met and made so many great friends while working for the whole of the union.

I also want to thank the SEIU 517M Board for the opportunity to serve with you. I really enjoyed meeting and working closely with everyone over the past 6 years. I will miss you all. Please continue your strong leadership for the good of the union.

And thank you to all our great staff at SEIU 517M. We have an outstanding and dedicated staff that always has the best interest of our members at heart. I have watched and witnessed just how much time and commitment they give to our union, both at the office and on their own time. No one ever needs to question the integrity of our union or staff, I have not seen a better group of professionals.



Finally, thank you to the members of the United Technical Employees Association and the members of SEIU 517M. You have allowed me to serve over 27 years. It has been an honor and privilege to represent and serve. I will never forget all that I have learned along this journey.

See you soon and Stay Safe,

Arnie Beller