

## Fight Heats Up for Employee Free Choice Act



Photo credit: Bill Campbell, Local 32 Executive Board Member

The OPEIU was among the crowd of nearly 4,000 people who gathered to launch labor's drive to pass the Employee Free Choice Act in Washington, D.C. on February 4. The Employee Free Choice Act will strengthen penalties against employers that intimidate workers trying to organize or bargain a contract, establish mediation and binding arbitration on a first union agreement, and enable employees to form unions when a majority signs union authorization cards.

Together, members of the labor movement can help to rebuild America's middle class by urging our Senators to vote for the Employee Free Choice Act. Get involved today! See pages 3-5 for more information.

## Obama Stands With Labor, Reverses Bush Anti-Labor Measures

During his first months in office, President Obama has done much to show his solidarity with labor, including signing four pro-union executive orders that reverse rules issued by the Bush administration.

He also appointed several labor-friendly officials to key spots in the Labor Department and the National Labor Relations Board, including elevating

NLRB member Wilma B. Liebman, a former International Brotherhood of Teamsters lawyer, to chair the Board, hopefully paving the way for needed labor law reform. In addition, President Obama has shown his support for the Employee Free Choice Act.

Among the executive orders signed by President Obama, he approved "a rule requiring federal contractors to post

notices that workers have a right to form a union, and a second rule that bars contractors from seeking reimbursement from the government for expenses incurred in lobbying employees not to unionize. A third executive order rescinded a Bush administration rule requiring federal contractors to post notices that workers can limit their financial support

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## Editorial



### Area Educational Conferences — A Great Success!

By Michael Goodwin, International President

I am pleased to report that the Area Educational Conferences held recently in Los Angeles, California, Washington, D.C. and Nashville, Tennessee were a great success.

This year's round of conferences was well attended as members become more and more motivated as a result of the election of President Barack Obama and the prospects for real change.

The major subjects discussed were the passage of the Employee Free Choice Act and Health Care Reform. Nothing is more important now than enactment of these two critical pieces of legislation and that they be signed into law by the president.

#### American Red Cross workers are concerned about the safety of the blood supply and staffing levels.

Delegates heard a report from AFL-CIO Legislative Director Bill Samuel on the provisions of the Employee Free Choice Act and the prospects for passage of its various provisions, most important of which is majority sign-up and first contract arbitration. Mr. Samuel gave a detailed report on the position of several legislators on the bill, asking delegates to lobby Congressmen and Senators in their home states who are “wobbling.” As of now, all of the Republicans and several Democrats in the Senate are opposed to the provision regarding majority sign-up.

Presentations were also made by AFL-CIO Associate General Counsel Nancy Schiffer and Director Fred Azcarate of the AFL-CIO Organizing Department Voice @ Work Campaign. Both walked the delegates through the reasons why the Employee Free Choice Act is necessary, the challenges faced in getting it passed, and what the AFL-CIO media campaign is doing to educate the public.

Larry Cohen, President of the Communications Workers of America (CWA), rallied the audience to continue to fight for Employee Free Choice. He passionately pointed out that almost every industrialized country in the world provides greater rights for workers than the United States of America. In making his point, he displayed a copy of a CWA publication with the flags of all the countries with better labor laws for workers, noting the absence of the American flag. He also gave OPEIU credit for assisting the AFL-CIO Organizing Committee on developing amendments to the Employee Free Choice Act that would give workers the choice between majority sign-up and a secret ballot

election on the authorization card signed by the worker. He said the bill was recently amended in a Congressional committee to include this provision.

On health care reform, delegates heard from Gerald M. Shea, AFL-CIO Assistant to the President for External Affairs who has worked on health care issues for more than 25 years. He noted the often repeated quote by President Obama that “health care reform cannot wait, it must not wait, it will not wait another year.” He navigated through the issues, which included two possible flash points for the bill — who is going to pay the cost of including 47 million uninsured and the question of a public option fund for the public to purchase health insurance. He noted both of these issues need to be handled very delicately, stating that either one could be derailed politically, if not handled properly.

Michael Noonan of the AFL-CIO Labor Action Network gave an extensive presentation on how to access the Internet for information for use in organizing and political campaigns.

Presentations were also made by Paul McCarthy, Union Organizational Specialist; Arthur Matthews, Instructor, Cornell University School of Industrial Relations; Jason Harlow, President, Harlow Media and Michael Miller, Development Manager, PerksGroup.

Workshops were held on how to strengthen internal communications by Frank Emspak, Executive Producer and Jesse Russell,

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**Delegates attending the OPEIU Area Educational Conference in Washington, D.C. on Friday, May 29, 2009, Local 2 members and members of other unions demonstrate in front of the American Red Cross National Headquarters to protest ARC's concessionary bargaining stand.**

## Sponsor Harkin Says Changes May Be Needed to See Employee Free Choice Act Passage



**Senator Tom Harkin (D-Iowa), lead sponsor of the Employee Free Choice Act, addresses the crowd at the Employee Free Choice Act rally on February 4 on Capitol Hill. In May, Harkin said that changes in the bill's details may be necessary to pick up the needed 60 Senate votes to overcome a planned Republican-run filibuster against the measure.**

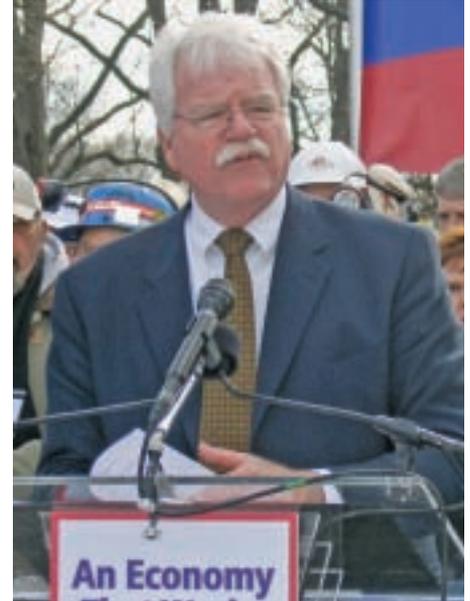
Sen. Tom Harkin, who took over the Employee Free Choice legislation due to the illness of longtime sponsor Edward M. Kennedy, said there may be changes to the bill to limit legislative opposition.

His spokeswoman emphasized Harkin stands by the bill's core principles of majority sign-up leveling the playing field in organizing drives, increasing penalties for labor law violators and ensuring that once unions are recognized, employers must sign a first contract with them, either voluntarily or through arbitration.

Majority sign-up is considered the heart

of the bill because it would take the choice of how to recognize unions — sign-up by a majority of workers or an election — out of the hands of the bosses and put it into the hands of the workers. And if workers choose sign-up, it cuts off much of the employers' opportunity for high-pressure threats, intimidation, spying and other illegal tactics they use in anti-union election campaigns.

The bill would also greatly increase fines for labor violation, make it easier to get court orders against law-breakers and mandate that once the union is recognized, the company must reach a first contract within 120



**Co-sponsor of the bill and Chair of the House Labor Committee, Representative George Miller (D-Calif.), addresses the rally.**

days of the start of bargaining, or the case will be referred to mandatory arbitration.

But majority sign-up — also called card-check — is the object of a business wrap-themselves-in-the-flag \$300 million “preserve the secret ballot” ad campaign. That convinced Republican-turned-Democrat Arlen Specter of Pennsylvania to oppose the bill and back the filibuster. Specter also opposes the arbitration provision.

“Compromises are going to be made,” said Harkin. Changing the bill could gain “grudging support” from both labor and business, he added.

## Specter Switches Parties, but Not Position on Employee Free Choice Act

Sen. Arlen Specter (R-Pa.), one of the last Republican moderates, announced April 28 he is immediately switching parties and will run for re-election next year as a Democrat. But it seems he's not changing his position against halting the planned GOP-led filibuster against the Employee Free Choice Act.

“While Sen. Specter's switch may be

good news to labor, his position against the Employee Free Choice Act certainly isn't,” said OPEIU President Michael Goodwin. “We're hopeful that he will rethink his position on this legislation that would give workers bargaining rights and provide a balance to the corporate greed that is ruining the American standard of living.

“We need Sen. Specter to help end these

delays and give workers a choice to form a union and collectively bargain for the protections and rights they deserve, without intimidation or fear of reprisal from their employers,” Goodwin continued.

Specter's switch, combined with the victory by Democrat Al Franken in Minnesota's open Senate seat — a race now

*(Continued on page 4)*

## Specter Switches Parties, but Not Position on Employee Free Choice Act

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resolved — gives Democrats and other labor allies the needed 60 votes to stop filibusters on a wide range of laws. But Specter isn't supporting key positions in the bill — he had co-sponsored it until this year, when he switched positions. Specter instead is calling for labor law reform of

the National Labor Relations Act.

In his March 24 floor statement announcing his decision to vote against cloture on the Employee Free Choice Act, Specter said “in seeking more union membership and negotiating leverage, labor has a valid point that they have suffered greatly from outsourcing of jobs to foreign countries and losses in pen-

sion and health benefits. President Obama has pressed Labor's argument that the middle class needs to be strengthened.

“The problems of the recession make this a particularly bad time to enact Employee Free Choice legislation. Employers understandably complain that adding a burden would result in further job losses. If efforts are unsuccessful to give labor sufficient bargaining power through amendments to the NLRA, then I would be willing to reconsider Employee Free Choice legislation when the economy returns to normalcy.”

Specter must shore up a voting record that shows him agreeing with the AFL-CIO on only 68 percent of its key votes throughout his Senate career. The Pennsylvania Democratic average is 85 percent.

### What Can You Do to Help?

**Call your Senators today! You can help turn around America's economy and rebuild the middle class with the Employee Free Choice Act.**

No matter how strong an economic stimulus plan we enact, it will not result in broadly shared, lasting prosperity unless we also restore workers' freedom to join unions and bargain with their employers for a better life.

That's why we need the Employee Free Choice Act — to turn around America's economy and rebuild the middle class. Our new president, Barack Obama, has said he will sign the EFCA once it lands on his desk. Now we need to get it there! Call your Senators today toll free at 1-866-207-2060. Urge them to co-sponsor and support the Employee Free Choice Act.

Use your own words, but here are some sample messages to think about for your call:

- Please co-sponsor and vote for the Employee Free Choice Act. In these perilous economic times, we must restore workers' freedom to bargain with their employers for secure jobs, health care,

retirement benefits and fair pay. It's time to rebuild the middle class and help struggling working families.

- Working families are struggling in today's economy. With our broken labor laws, working people are powerless to bargain for better health care, retirement and fair pay. CEOs wouldn't work a day without a contract to protect their soaring pay and golden parachutes — but they do all they can to keep their workers from bargaining and getting contracts. Workers need the Employee Free Choice Act to level the playing field.

- We need the Employee Free Choice Act because the current system for forming unions and bargaining is broken beyond repair. Corporations routinely harass, intimidate, coerce and fire workers just because they want the freedom to bargain for a better life — and even if companies get caught, they get little more than a slap on the wrist. This must be changed by enacting the Employee Free Choice Act.

Visit [www.EmployeeFreeChoiceAct.org](http://www.EmployeeFreeChoiceAct.org) for more information.

### Health Benefits May Be Extended if You're Laid Off

**U**nder the Federal Consolidated Omnibus Budget Reconciliation Act (COBRA), laid-off workers can continue their former employer's health coverage for up to 18 months, but the cost is often so high that it's unaffordable. With COBRA, workers normally have to pay 102 percent of their premiums, but the stimulus package may provide some relief.

The stimulus package subsidizes 65 percent of COBRA premiums for up to nine months for those laid off between September 1, 2008 and December 31 of this year. This won't apply to those workers who either lost their job because of misconduct or who left voluntarily, or to those whose companies have gone out of business or ended its group coverage. There are other conditions and stipulations, but this could offer relief to some workers.

### Labor Law Reform Needed Now!

**I**n a move that emphasizes the need for labor law reform, an appeals court recently sided with FedEx Ground over the Teamsters union, validating the use of independent contractors to pick up and deliver packages. The company currently has about 13,000 employees they classify as independent contractors.

FedEx won the worker classification dispute with the National Labor Relations Board in the U.S. Court of Appeals, D.C. circuit.

“This dramatically illustrates the need for changes to our current labor laws,” said President Michael Goodwin. “These workers, who are in actuality full-time employees with FedEx, are classified as independent contractors, meaning they have no rights to collective bargaining, no health care or pension benefits, and none of the protections that come with full-time employment.

“We need the Obama administration and our new Secretary of Labor to immediately address the loopholes and other serious problems with our labor laws and make reform a top priority,” Goodwin said.

## Letters to the Editor

### Dear President Goodwin:

The Employee Free Choice Act was introduced in Congress on March 10, 2009



**Again, we reprint letters from our members on various issues. We invite our readers to continue to share their opinions with us, whether in support of or in opposition to our own. Debate is healthy and welcomed in this union. Letters are edited for length only, not content. Remember: Anonymous letters will not be printed.**

**You can also reach us on the web:  
[www.opeiu.org](http://www.opeiu.org)**

as H.R.1409 and S.560. By now, you have seen the ads. Corporate lobbyists are making false claims about the legislation by saying it will result in union coercion, thus ending workplace democracy. It is vital that the labor movement respond quickly and aggressively to their misleading campaign.

It is up to us, particularly as labor leaders, to lead the way in this initiative. Together, with the new leaders we elected in November, the labor movement can pass the Employee Free Choice Act and restore workers' freedom to bargain for better health care, secure pensions and fair wages.

Your leadership in this fight can make the difference. It is truly up to us to reshape our economy so it is based on family-supporting wages and productivity — not on speculation and Wall Street success.

This is labor's opportunity to level the playing field. We are only a couple of votes away in the U.S. Senate. The opponents of the Employee Free Choice Act are not letting up. The corporate special interests are twisting arms, spending millions on misleading ads and spreading lies and propaganda to block the bill. We have got to put relentless pressure on members of Congress who haven't signed on and the Senate to get the 60 votes. Do your part. Call or write your Congressmen and Senators and encourage your members to do the same.

In solidarity,  
**John F. Conley**  
President

ITPE/OPEIU Local 4873

## Gold Coast Helicopter Pilots Have New Contract

**A** first contract has been signed with Gold Coast Helicopters in Phoenix, Arizona that will mean an increase in base salary, sick leave and night differential pay of 16.4 percent.

The nine pilots in this group fly out of Ft. Irwin, California at the National Training Center for desert warfare. "These pilots have a very difficult job, flying a 12-hour shift both in the daytime and at night using night vision devices," said Local 102 President Steve Rush. "They fly evaluators, shadowing combat aircraft while engaged in live fire maneuvers and in an unsafe laser environment wearing body armor and special eye protection.

"The new one-year collective bargaining agreement was presented to the pilots less than 48 hours prior to the government deadline and was ratified by 100 percent of the membership," said Rush. "I look forward to working with these professional aviators, and offer many thanks to OPEIU President Michael Goodwin, Director of Organization and Field Services Kevin Kistler and Senior International Representative Paul Bohelski for their support and expertise in making this happen."

## Union-Made Wines Support Justice for America's Farm Workers

**B**lack Eagle Wines are produced in a Napa Valley winery known for award-winning wines, using exceptional estate vineyard fruit. But more importantly, they are produced under United Farm Workers' (UFW) contracts guaranteeing decent pay, full benefits and protections for wine grape and farm workers. Black Eagle Wines were created to give wine consumers a meaningful way to help the UFW continue

its vital work while enjoying award-winning wines. A wide variety of wines are available, including Cabernet, Chardonnay, Merlot, Riesling, and Cabernet Sauvignon. For more information, visit [www.blackaglewines.com](http://www.blackaglewines.com).

The United Farm Workers, founded by Cesar Chavez in 1962, is the first and largest farm workers union in U.S. history and is now led by a good friend of OPEIU, Arturo Rodriguez.

### WHITE COLLAR

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## Summit Conversations Explore American Health Care for the 21st Century

President Michael Goodwin recently participated in the Summit Conversations on American Health Care for the 21st Century, a series of panel discussions exploring the consensus emerging about the kind of modernized health care system America needs. The summits, sponsored by America's Agenda Health Care Education Fund, explore the extent of the emerging consensus, what its limits may be, and whether the ideas being advanced will meet the needs of today's Americans.

President Goodwin was one of a select group of leaders chosen from labor, business, government, the health arena and other diverse sectors of American life who share an interest in solving America's health care crisis. The summit, which was held May 6 at the University of California—San Francisco, also featured former Majority Leader of the U.S. House of Representatives Richard Gephardt and John Arensmeyer, CEO of the Small Business Majority, among others. Previous summits featured, among others, University of Miami President and Former Health and Human Services Secretary Donna Shalala; Billy Tauzin,

President and CEO of PhRMA, and Iron Workers General President Joseph Hunt.

"The problem is working families shouldn't have to choose between food on the table and health care, and that's exactly what's happening," Goodwin said. "The bottom line is, people just fall out of the system, and that's why you're seeing less and less people being covered.

"We should not expect people with insurance to pay for the uninsured or the underinsured," Goodwin continued. "Our goal is to explore prevention and a more efficient health care delivery system to generate enough dollars to expand the number of people covered."

"The stakes in reforming health care are higher than ever before," said Mark Blum, Managing Director and CEO of America's Agenda Health Care Education Fund. "The elements of consensus revealed in the summit conversations have potential to be important guides and motivators for the Obama administration health care team and members of Congress who will likely shape the direction of American health care in this century."



President Michael Goodwin lends his vision on the steps necessary to achieve a health care system that works in the 21st century, as part of the summit conversations series on May 6 in San Francisco. Also pictured left to right are Paul Markovitch, Executive Vice President and Chief Operating Officer of Blue Shield of California; Carmela Castellano-Garcia, Esq., President and CEO of the California Primary Care Association; and former Majority Leader of the U.S. House of Representatives Richard Gephardt.

## Local 29 Executive Board Elected

At the April 15 general membership meeting, Local 29 Officers, Executive Board, and Health and Welfare and Pension Trustees were sworn in for the April 2009-2012 term. All seats were filled by acclamation, with the exception of one seat in which the nominee withdrew their nomination.

OPEIU Director of Organization and Field Services Kevin Kistler gave the oath of office to President/Business Manager Tamara R. Rubyn (Incumbent); Secretary Treasurer/Business Representative Patricia G. Sanchez (Incumbent); Vice President Kelly Gschwend (Incumbent); Recording Secretary Esmeralda Gomez; Trustees Katheryn Denny (Incumbent), Maya Garcia (Incumbent) and Sheila Wiltz; Executive Board Members, Hospital Sector, Alice Robinson (Incumbent), Jacqueline Dew (Incumbent) and Jo Lynn Pascale; Insurance Sector, Holly Carey (Incumbent), Marsha Cusumano and Deborah Krausch; Miscellaneous, Eric Sisneros (Incumbent) and Frances Watson; Health and Welfare Trustees Tamara R. Rubyn (Incumbent), Kelly Gschwend (Incumbent) and Yvonne Caisse; and Pension Trustee Patricia Sanchez (Incumbent).

Executive Board Members are widely representative from Associated Third Party Administrators, Blue Cross, Kaiser Permanente, Oakland Housing Authority, SEIU and United Labor Bank. "Our deepest appreciation and thanks to all who served on the Executive Board," said Rubyn. "We have been honored with their service, leadership and commitment to the Local 29 membership. We would like to give recognition to Recording Secretary Nancy May, Trustee Rene Stewart, Executive Board Members Yvonne Caisse, Linda Delay, Linda Gilmore and Velma Mason, and Health and Welfare Trustee Carole King.

## A Seat at the Table for Podiatrists

**A**t the invitation of the First National Guild for Health Care Providers of the Lower Extremity, OPEIU Guild 45, the group representing podiatrists — former U.S. House Majority Leader Richard Gephardt addressed the APMA Labor Committee in Washington, D.C. and gave key insights into the Obama administration's plans for health care reform.

Currently Mr. Gephardt, president of the Gephardt Group, is part of the think tank, America's Agenda Healthcare for All. "Dick has a unique perspective on the development of an approach to universal health care in this climate of financial insecurity," said Dr. John Mattiacci, OPEIU Vice President and Guild 45 President.

"His expressed opinion was that the approach to universal health care would be over a longer period of time than the 'year' expressed by the administration," Dr. Mattiacci continued. "His feeling is that we will see smaller changes to medical practices generally, and existing programs specifically, that will realize cost savings that will promote expansion of current Medicare, SCHIP and Adult Basic programs as well as a diminution in premium costs for existing indemnity plans.

"He said universal health care was a goal that was achievable, but not without changes to the way the government spends the money that will be needed to realize the goal. His talk was short on specifics because it was so timely. Universal health care is an administration goal that is just being formulated," Dr. Mattiacci said.

"What Mr. Gephardt did assure us of was that podiatry would be at the table," said President Michael Goodwin. "OPEIU is a board member of America's Agenda. I attend the meetings, and because of Dick Gephardt, podiatrists are being included in each stage of the debate."

President Goodwin introduced Mr. Gephardt and told the delegates that OPEIU joined America's Agenda because of podiatry and the profession's importance in the health care delivery



**Doctors of Podiatry at the APMA Legislative Conference in Washington, D.C. Pictured left to right are Dr. Terence McDonald (Florida), Dr. Kirk Contento (Illinois), former Representative Richard Gephardt, Dr. Kevin Naugle (Pennsylvania), OPEIU President Goodwin, Dr. John Mattiacci (Pennsylvania) and Dr. Mike Wodka (New York).**

system. President Goodwin stated that the Podiatrists "Keep America Walking" campaign was more than a slogan. "It is not only the prescription for personal health but also a metaphor for working people's financial health," Goodwin said. Someone who cannot ambulate will have a more challenged economic future in the workplace. Having podiatry at the table in the reformation of health care in America is essential to the success of any health care agenda. We minimize morbidity and therefore depress the mortality of the patient base.

"Gephardt's visit restored confidence that podiatry would be in the game in this administration's efforts as opposed to playing catch up later," said Dr. Mattiacci.

## Labor Support Integral to Scott Murphy Win

**O**PEIU members joined with other labor volunteers to realize victory for Democrat Scott Murphy, a businessman making his first race, in the special election held March 31 in New York's 20th Congressional District to replace now-Senator Kirsten Gillibrand (D).

Thanks to an army of union volunteers, Murphy defeated Jim Tedisco, the former state Senate minority leader, by just 401 votes — the margin of victory was even slimmer on election night, where Murphy was the projected winner with just 26 votes! But once the absentee ballots were counted, the victory stretched, thanks in great part to labor's support!

Activist Domingo Roman headed up OPEIU's volunteer effort. Also volunteering was Local 153 Business Representative Seth Goldstein, and members Mabel Wong and Terry Nixon (Seton Hall University), and Local 32 Secretary-Treasurer Allen Byron.



**Activist Domingo Roman (right), who was in charge of OPEIU's volunteer effort, is pictured with (left to right) fellow OPEIU volunteer and Local 153 Business Representative Seth Goldstein, candidate Scott Murphy, and Senator Charles Schumer.**

## Kevin Kistler Receives 2009 Ellis Island Medal of Honor

OPEIU Director of Organization and Field Services and Local 153 member Kevin Kistler has received the 2009 Ellis Island Medal of Honor, one of the highest non-military honors bestowed upon American citizens. The award was given to 100 individuals (chosen from 10,000 nominations) during a ceremony on Ellis Island, in sight of the Statue of Liberty, in New York City on May 9. The award was established in 1986 to pay tribute to the immigrant experience and individual achievement.

Named for the gateway through which more than 12 million immigrants came to America in search of freedom of speech, religion and economic opportunity, the medal is given each year to individuals who nurture ethnic heritage in America; build bridges between people of different ethnic, racial and religious groups; and embody the values of hard work, self-improvement and community service for which those who made a new home in America came to be known. Approximately 2,000 persons from all walks of life (including six former U.S. Presidents and other influential people, including Hillary Rodham Clinton, Joe DiMaggio, Bob Hope, Henry Kissinger, Martin Scorsese and Donald Trump) have received the medal since its inception in 1986. Though all have contributed significantly to the American way of life, not all are famous.

The Ellis Island Medal of Honor is recognized by the United States House of Representatives and the Senate, and as such the names of all winners are listed in the Congressional Record.



**Pictured at the 2009 Ellis Island Medal of Honor awards dinner are (standing) Alan Kistler, Kevin Kistler Jr. and Megan McDonald. (Seated, left to right) Lisa McMullen, President Michael Goodwin, Kevin Kistler and Emma Geiger.**

“We’re very proud of Kevin and believe he more than deserves this honor,” said President Goodwin, who was in attendance at the awards ceremony. “Kevin has spent his life working to ensure that people of all racial, ethnic and religious backgrounds are afforded the protections and benefits that come with union membership. His life’s mission has been to give people, including those whose ancestors traveled through Ellis Island, the opportunity to achieve all that America has to offer,” he concluded.

## Local 494 Members Ratify Four-Year Contract with UAW

Job security and pensions were the top issues during this round of negotiations for Local 494 in Detroit, Michigan, which represents more than 310 clerical and maintenance workers nationwide who work for the United Auto Workers.

The four-year contract was ratified by 93 percent of the members on February 24, 2009 and will mean, among other things, a \$3,000 signing bonus, a 3 percent lump sum payment in 2010, 4 percent in 2011 and 3 percent in 2012. There were also benefit improvements in health care, tuition assistance, funeral leave, payment in lieu of vacation and life insurance. The pension formula for future retirees also increased by \$1.65 over the life of the Agreement, as well as other pension improvements.

Bargaining with another union can be difficult, but OPEIU Local 494 President and bargaining team Chair Kris Bucci recognized the pivotal role that unions, and particularly the UAW, have played in building a strong middle class. “We have a vested interest in the success of the UAW, both materially as well as morally,” she said.

“Our members are hard-working progressive unionists who know the value of a contract,” said Bucci. After reviewing the results of the bargaining surveys circulated to the membership, the committee had 34-typed pages overflowing with ideas for these negotiations. “Utilizing our member-

ship’s collective knowledge to negotiate a fair contract was especially gratifying,” remarked Bucci.

The collective bargaining committee included Bucci, Maria Catalfio, Karen Dunning, Jeanne Fraser, Jan Lafata, Audrey McKenna and Caroline Vega.



**OPEIU collective bargaining committee members, pictured left to right (back row) Karen Dunning, Jeanne Fraser, Caroline Vega, Maria Catalfio, (front row) Audrey McKenna, Local 494 President and bargaining team Chair Kris Bucci, and Jan Lafata.**

## Members at Sandia National Laboratories Win Good Wages and Benefits

**M**ore than 450 members employed by Sandia National Laboratories have won a new three-year contract with wage increases of 4 percent in 2008, 3 percent in 2009, and 3 percent in 2010. The contract also means a change in how they charge their sickness absence, a payment stipend for Office Administrative Assistants (OAAs) who fill in for non-represented staff, salary increases for students, and an improved dental plan, reports Local 251 President Susan Rivas. This new contract will expire on September 30, 2011.

The negotiations resulted in the union winning on all of its core concerns. One important item was on the charging of sickness absence. The first 24 hours of sickness absence will no longer be charged to Paid Time Off (PTO), but will be immediately covered by sickness absence. For this new agreement to continue, however, OPEIU represented employees' average use of sickness absence must not exceed an agreed upon unit-wide average utilization. Local 251 leadership and Sandia National Laboratories will meet each year to review utilization rates. Additionally, OAAs who temporarily fill in for non-represented secretaries will receive an additional \$1.35/hour while providing temporary coverage.

"None of these good wages and conditions would have been possible without the full support of the negotiating committee and membership," said Rivas. "OPEIU Senior International Representative Paul Bohelski made himself available to lead the negotiations as I was sometimes unavailable to attend negotiations due to an extended illness. There were nearly 30 negotiating sessions culminating in a ratification meeting that was held on December 18. The membership present at the ratification meeting voted overwhelmingly to support the new contract."

The negotiating committee consisted of Rivas, Vice President Amy Cogswell, Secretary-Treasurer Barbara Ropke, and Recording Secretary Kelley Burns, all of whom are members of the Local 251 Executive Board.

Now that negotiations are over, Local 251 continues to actively work on the passage of the Employee Free Choice Act, federal legislation that was introduced by Senator Edward Kennedy on March 10, 2009. New Mexico became a targeted state when Senator Jeff Bingaman started to waiver on his previous position of co-sponsoring the Employee Free Choice Act. The Local is continuing to work on active organizing campaigns with several large organizations in the Albuquerque area.

## Local 8 Update



**Local 8 members from Community Health Center La Clinica and Sea Mar Community Health Center advocate to protect Medicaid funding at the state capitol in Olympia, Washington.**



**Local 8's Executive Board meets in advance of the Voice of the Membership Assembly held on May 16-17 to prepare recommendations to the membership. The recommendations involved changing the Local's governance structure to enhance union democracy and participation. Pictured are Local 8 President Verlene Jones, (standing, second from right), Secretary-Treasurer and Organizing Director Cynthia Shu (seated, second from left) and Business Manager Suzanne Mode (far left, standing).**

## And The Local 30 Winners Are...

Local 30 recently held its annual 'Evening With The Stars' awards banquet to recognize Local 30 members for their outstanding service to the union on a variety of projects in 2008.

The event, which was held in San Diego, gave top honors — the Michael Goodwin Award — to Mark Englehart, a Steward and Labor Liaison for Local 30 employed at the California Service Center (CSC). A long-time member and leader in Local 30, Englehart was recognized for his role in the many successes of the CSC.

The 2009 Gwen Newton Award, the Local's next highest honor, went to Carmen Corral and Sue Smith, both employed by Kaiser Permanente in San Diego for their outstanding work in both the Labor Management Partnership and as officers and stewards with long tenure with Local 30.

In addition to the achievement awards, Local 30 also presented checks to the winners of the annual scholarships. The Local 30 Scholarship Fund awards six, \$1,250 scholarships each year to members or their dependents. This year's winners were Mitchell P. Ashdown, Corinne L. Diaz, Alyssa G. Durago, Gabriel Frias, Laura Hill

and Lindsay A. Holowach.

"I was very proud to have received this award from my sisters and brothers in Local 30," said Englehart, "Being recognized for your efforts always feels good, and makes you want to do even more."

"This is a great event for us because it offers appreciation to those members who are on the front lines every day doing the hardest job in the Union," said Local 30

Executive Director/CFO and OPEIU Vice President Walter Allen Jr. "These are the people who make our union great, and who strengthen the entire labor movement every day. Congratulations to all of our winners."

"It is always a pleasure to do this event because it means so much to all the members who attend," reported Sue Smith, event chairperson. "It is a really nice event for us all."



**Mark Englehart, winner of the Michael Goodwin Award.**



**Carmen Corral and Sue Smith, winners of the Gwen Newton Award.**

## Local 30 Celebrates Diversity

Local 30 members took to the streets in San Diego on March 28 to participate in the annual Cesar Chavez parade. Members and their children from Southern California and Arizona joined together to celebrate the diversity that makes them so proud!

"Our slogan is, 'Our Diversity Makes Us Strong,'" declared Local 30 Vice President Cathy Young, "And we believe that throughout our membership. Our Executive Board has made a commitment of time and money to involve as many of our members in these events as possible. Every event gets larger than the last, and more frequent!"

The Diversity committee is a part of the organizational structure of Local 30. The purpose of the committee is to encourage membership in and support for various organizations in the community that support equality and integration. Among the organizations Local 30 supports are Pride At Work, the Coalition of Labor Union Women, and

the A. Philip Randolph Institute, among many others. The committee also organizes the events that Local 30 members participate in and manages all the logistics.

"This is yet another way for the union to build solidarity in our community, and at the same time internally organize our

members," said Local 30 President Marianne Giordano. "Our participation in these events sends a great message to the community about unions and how we support each other. We get a great turnout and it is always a lot of fun not only for our members, but their kids as well."



**Local 30 members celebrate their diversity at the Cesar Chavez parade.**

## OPEIU Shop Stewards Work In Unity

Every shop steward knows there is strength in unity. This is a story of two dynamic OPEIU Shop Stewards, Dawn Moore of Local 29 and Pam Gloster of Local 3, who represent the members at the Alameda office of Associated Third Party Administrators. They were faced with the challenge of layoffs and how to work together to protect the members' contractual rights.

The employer announced layoffs of 43 bargaining unit employees due to the loss of a major account. The layoffs affected members from both Local 29 and Local 3. In light of today's difficult economic climate, the membership took action for the greater good and voted to take an unpaid furlough day. This unpaid day allowed

employees facing layoff additional paid days.

There were numerous seniority lists to be checked for accuracy, announcements to be made to the employees, day-to-day meetings with management and, most importantly, the daily interaction with frightened members about to lose their jobs.

Moore and Gloster mentored and counseled employees as true professionals and union leaders. Working together in unity with the membership, it didn't matter if you were a member of Local 29 or Local 3, as we were all one OPEIU. The Local Unions expressed special recognition to Local 29 Shop Steward Rene Lorenzi and Local 3 Shop Steward Frank Mahony for their coordination of layoffs at the Concord office.



(Left to right) Local 29 Shop Steward Dawn Moore and Local 3 Shop Steward Pam Gloster.

## New Grants Help OPEIU Members Save for College

With the economy in a seemingly endless free fall, the rising cost of a college education is putting working families in a bind. However, if you opened a new college savings account, your union may be able to help.

The new Union Plus College Savings Grant offered \$500 to qualified OPEIU members who opened a new tax-free "529" college savings or prepaid tuition plan by June 30, 2009. You are eligible for the \$500 grant if you have had an OPEIU Union Plus Credit Card, Mortgage or UnionSecure Insurance policy for one year and contribute at least \$1,000 in the account by November 30, 2009.

Members with a previously opened education savings accounts were not eligible to apply for a grant.

The 529 savings plan is one of several savings programs that can help you afford a college education, which is becoming more and more important in our information-fueled economy (see information at the end of this article).

The 529 plans, operated by each individual state, encourage people to save for future college costs. The Union Plus College Savings Grant underscores the importance that unions place in higher education.

The college grant is part of a \$3 million initiative introduced this year by Union Plus to assist union members facing financial hardship during the current recession. The program – called Union SAFE, for Security, Assistance and Financial Education – provides a wide array of benefits for qualifying members – from financial counseling to help with

hospital payments to job loss protection to help avoiding foreclosure.

### College Saving Tips

Education is an investment in a career and helps to increase future earning potential. With the cost of education increasing by nearly 6 percent each year, financing that investment can be overwhelming. But with careful planning you'll be well on your way to affording that education. Start your plan now by looking into these resources:

- Qualified OPEIU members were eligible to get a \$500 grant by opening a 529 college savings account created this year.
- Consider a state prepaid tuition account to lock in current tuition prices and avoid future inflation.
- Put away \$2,000 each year and use the money, tax-free, to pay for college expenses with a Coverdell Education Savings Accounts (ESAs).
- Learn what the benefits of Roth IRA plans are. As long as you only withdraw contributions and not earnings, you can pay for college expenses without having to pay income tax or an early withdrawal fee.
- Research all available grants and scholarships, including federal Pell Grants aimed at assisting low-income families.

As an OPEIU member, you also may be eligible for special union scholarships, including the Union Plus Scholarship Program.

Visit [opeiu.org](http://opeiu.org) or [UnionPlus.org/Education](http://UnionPlus.org/Education) for more information on ways to save money for higher education.



## WASHINGTON WINDOW

### They're Not the Worst of the Worst, But...

**T**hey're not the worst of the worst when it comes to excessive executive pay, but we thought you might like to read the description, from the AFL-CIO's newest Executive Paywatch report and website, of the compensation for the top honchos of Toll Brothers, the nation's largest luxury home contractor. Here's a substantial portion of it:

"Toll Brothers Inc., benefited from the housing bubble that collapsed in 2007. Now, because of an expanded tax break in the proposed federal budget, the nation's 13 largest builders, including Toll Brothers, could collect billions of dollars more by offsetting recent tax losses with taxable profits earned in previous years. Toll Brothers and other big home builders stand to collect \$2.4 billion in tax refunds this year under existing law," the report says.

The Laborers' International Union argued strongly and unsuccessfully against that tax break for the big boy construction contractors. Those firms helped drive the economy into the ditch by, among other things, writing sub-prime mortgages to unqualified buyers. Those mortgages were bundled together, sold as securities by builders to banks — which, caught in massive defaults, dragged down the economy and us with them.

To continue with the Toll Brothers report: "The company has not treated its shareholders as kindly. For starters, the term 'pay for performance' takes on a whole new meaning at the Horsham, Pa.-based company, whose stock plummeted more than 70 percent from its all-time high of \$58.25 in July 2005 to \$17 on March 20, 2009.

"As the housing market cratered in 2007 and it became clear that Robert

Toll, the founding chairman and CEO, would not qualify for a bonus under the existing plan, the company decided to move the performance goal posts."

Toll Brothers' "pay practices earned the company a failing grade from The Corporate Library, an independent corporate governance research firm. The compensation awarded to Toll rated a "High Concern" from The Corporate Library. Even as the company lost \$297.8 million for the fiscal year that ended Oct. 31, (Robert) Toll received \$8.8 million in total compensation for the year. That's twice as much as the \$4.6 million median compensation for CEOs of a peer group.

"Toll's 2008 compensation dropped 44.3 percent from the \$14.4 million he received for the fiscal year ending Oct. 31, 2007, but he isn't hurting. He collected \$46,800,368 in 2008 by exercising and selling some stock options. The board promptly gave him another \$7,360,143 in new stock options," the report adds. Between all the options plus some outright grants of stock, Robert Toll now owns 15 percent of the company.

Shareholders weren't exactly happy with the new compensation scheme, Paywatch says: Only 55 percent voted for it at last March's annual meeting. It links Toll's bonus not to the company's net income, but gives him a "percentage of the company's income before taxes and bonuses," based on "revenues of at least \$1.5 billion and several squishy factors such as "management enhancement and efficiencies and financial market visibility and access," whatever that means.

"Paul Hodgson, director of research at The Corporate Library and a leading authority on executive compensation,

noted the new Toll Brothers' scheme virtually guarantees excessive bonus payments," Executive Paywatch concludes.

Our point about the Toll Brothers' golden compensation plans for its top corporate honchos isn't that it's outrageous, though it is. It's that it's typical.

The average corporate executive now makes as much in a day as an average worker earns in a calendar year — and that's a calendar year with no time off at all. In other words, 365 days.

Many of the corporate chieftains earn a lot more than that. The highest-paid, Bruce Wasserstein, CEO of the investment house Lazard Freres, earned \$133.7 million last year. That's \$366,301 a day, or \$15,263 an hour.

And, with their performance in running the national and world economies into the ditch not just last year but in the last several decades of frenzied "free-market" capitalism, deregulation and workers-be-damned policies and politics, Robert Toll and the rest of his high-paid overpriced colleagues aren't worth it.

It is these high-priced pooh-bahs who sent the world into the latest crash, the worst since 1929. It is their colleagues, the financial finaglers — they're also listed on Executive Paywatch — who are responsible for the rampant speculative excesses that collapsed and then led to the current economic slump.

And it is the Robert Tolls of the world who are responsible for putting you out of work, or cutting your pay and denying you health care, or both.

The problem with grossly overpaid executives like Robert Toll and Bruce Wasserstein is not that they're overpaid. It's that they're paid anything at all. They and their ilk are worth zero.

# Work and Health

## The Magic Bullet — Or Is It?

**Submitted by Jeffrey S. Freed, M.D.**

**Associate Professor of Surgery, The Mount Sinai School of Medicine, NYC  
OPEIU Local 153 Health Fund Medical Director**

A single pill to prevent cardiovascular disease sounds like a perfect solution, but little progress has been made since the idea was first suggested more than five years ago by Nicholas Wald, head of London's Wolfson Institute of Preventive Medicine, and his colleague Malcolm Law. Their case for the prevention of heart disease using a "polypill," was described as "one of the boldest claims for a new intervention." The substance of the claim was that, if taken by everyone with established cardiovascular disease and — most importantly — all those aged 55 or over, the polypill could reduce rates of heart attack and stroke by more than 80 percent.

Now, more than five years later, you might imagine that a clutch of research groups would be eagerly competing to test this innovative suggestion. Not so.

The polypill was to be comprised of a statin to lower cholesterol, aspirin to thin the blood, three types of blood pressure lowering drugs, and folic acid — intended to lower serum homocysteine concentrations to protect the arteries in the heart. The logic was that most people in western soci-

ety are at raised risk, that cardiovascular disease is consequently common, and that the drugs to treat it are effective and safe. "No other preventive method," they wrote, "would have so great an impact on public health in the western world."

At present, however, there are no plans to run a trial of the polypill on a generally healthy population. So, mindful of its potential impact on public health, why the reluctance?

The reasons for the reluctance are clear. First, there is a fear that a pill might make people think that it is alright not to follow basic health recommendations. It is well known that stroke and heart attack are the major reasons we die, and die before our time. Prevention requires education regarding the reasons for this. As a lifestyle priority, this is much more important than any polypill. Our efforts should be aimed at creating better health strategies where people would not eat saturated fats, would do their exercise every day, would eat less salt and sugar, and hopefully a polypill would not be necessary. But this must be emphasized at every level, starting in the schools when kids are quite young and impression-

able. And a "magic bullet," a polypill, may even further dissuade the public from adapting the life changes. And we have no idea what the long-term problems of taking a combination of these drugs will do. Although each drug may be relatively safe in its own right, the combination may have some effect that is unpredicted and potentially harmful.

The polypill concept may well be of "medicalising" whole populations. Recommending healthy people take a polypill may well result in their conversion to the belief that we are all "sick," and need treatment. In fact most people begin their lives healthy, and only their lifestyle, and genetics, a factor not altered by any pill as of this date, determine their general state of health. To repeat, exercise, proper diet, cessation of smoking and decreasing alcohol intake, are the best weapons we have against developing cardiovascular disease — not universal access to a pill.

*Jeffrey S. Freed, M.D., P.C. specializes in general surgery/proctology. He can be reached via email at jsfmd@aol.com.*

### **Work and Health Special Feature**

## Understanding Autism

Autism, a neurological disorder, has become part of our national dialogue. The statistics are startling, with diagnosis rates growing 10 to 17 percent per year. That means an estimated 1 in 150 babies will develop autism — or about 1.5 million Americans.

Despite its prominence, you probably know a lot less about autism than you think. For one thing, autism ranges dramatically in severity — from mild to debilitating.

Autism is characterized by three distinctive behaviors, including difficulty with social interaction; problems with verbal and non-verbal

communication; and repetitive behaviors or narrow, obsessive interests. Males are four times more likely to have the condition than females.

Children with autism also appear to have a higher risk of developing co-existing medical problems, including fragile X syndrome (which causes mental retardation), Tourette's syndrome, learning disabilities, attention deficit disorder, sensory hypersensitivity and epilepsy.

The causes of autism are uncertain though recent studies strongly indicate that some people have a pre-disposition to the condition. The medical community further believes

environment — specifically exposure to toxins like mercury — may play a role. While autism does not have a cure, children with the disorder can make great strides with early diagnosis — especially before age 3 — and treatment.

Autism is a complex mix of developmental, social and physical symptoms — making each case as unique as the person diagnosed. So remember not to define the individual, with his or her distinct needs and abilities, by the condition!

*Source: BlueCross BlueShield of Georgia, Inc.*

# Notice To Employees Subject To Union Security Clauses

This Notice is for all employees working in the United States under an OPEIU contract containing a union security clause which requires, as a condition of employment, that an employee pay dues or fees to the Union. The obligation stated in this Notice is the only obligation under such clause regardless of the wording of the clause. Individuals who are members pay dues, while individuals who are nonmembers pay equivalent fees. These dues or fees, which are authorized by law, are your fair share of sustaining your Union's broad range of programs in support of you and your coworkers, but nonmembers may file objections to funding expenditures that are not germane to the collective bargaining process and thereby be obligated to pay fees representing only expenditures germane to the collective bargaining process.

Only if you are not a member of the Union or if you resign your membership, and in either case, file an objection to the funding of expenditures that are not germane to the collective bargaining process, may you pay fees representing only expenditures germane to the collective bargaining process. However, if you resign your membership, the many rights and opportunities available to Union members will not be open to you. For example, if you resign your membership you will no longer be able to:

- Vote on the terms of your contract;
- Participate in strike votes;
- Participate in the development of contract proposals;
- Nominate, vote for, or serve as an officer of your Local Union;
- Nominate, vote for, or serve as a delegate to the International Convention; and
- Enjoy discounts and other benefits available only to members, including eligibility for OPEIU scholarships for you and your family.

Individuals who are employed by public employers in the states of New Jersey and Minnesota are covered by the demand and return system applicable to them and are not covered by this procedure. Other individuals who elect to be nonmembers may object to funding expenditures which are not germane to the collective bargaining process. Expenditures germane to the collective bargaining process ("chargeable" expenditures) represent that portion of the Union's expenditures devoted to collective bargaining, contract administration, grievances, arbitration, and other matters affecting wages, hours and other conditions of employment. Examples of "chargeable" expenditures include: the costs of negotiations with employers; contract administration expenses; communication with employers in regard to work-related issues; handling employees' work-related problems through the grievance and arbitration procedure; and Union administration.

Examples of expenditures not germane to the collective bargaining process ("non-chargeable" expenditures) include: expenses made for community services; for political purposes; for cer-

tain affiliation fees; and for benefits available only to members and their families. The fee reduction will represent these non-chargeable expenditures. The International Union's J.B. Moss Voice Of The Electorate fund ("VOTE"), is an independent, segregated fund that receives voluntary donations and contributes to political candidates who support the needs of working men and women. No money received from dues or fees goes to the VOTE fund. Accordingly, the VOTE fund is not considered in the calculation of the percentage of expenditures that is spent on non-chargeable expenses.

Individuals who choose to file an objection will receive a rebate of their fees equal to the percentage of the Local Union's expenditures that is spent on non-chargeable expenses. The Local Union's expenditures include those amounts it remits to the International Union as per capita payments. In determining the Local Union's percentage of non-chargeable expenses, the percentage of non-chargeable expenses of the International Union is applied only to the Local Union's per capita payments to the International Union. The percentage of non-chargeable expenses of the International Union, which will be effective starting with the month of January 2009, and continuing until a new percentage is issued, is 14.92%. The major portion of a Local Union's

*(Continued on page 15)*

 <p><b>at&amp;t</b> <b>MOBILITY - WIRELESS</b></p> <p>Available from AT&amp;T for the best combination of lowest rates and coverage. See the specifications and your terms, conditions coverage, exclusions and limitations. <b>AT&amp;T IS THE ONLY WIRELESS SERVICE PROVIDER TO PUBLICLY PROMISE THAT THEIR ARE PROUD TO BE A HIGH COMPANY</b> that has been awarded 12% ACSI award for customer service.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A 100% satisfaction guarantee when you call 1-800-451-1234</li> <li>• 24/7 service for any problem you have</li> <li>• 100% satisfaction guarantee when you call 1-800-451-1234</li> <li>• 100% satisfaction guarantee when you call 1-800-451-1234</li> <li>• 100% satisfaction guarantee when you call 1-800-451-1234</li> </ul> <p>Mobile Network • 100% (see 1-800-451-1234)  <a href="http://www.att.com/wireless">www.att.com/wireless</a></p> <p>AT&amp;T Sales and Service • 1-800-451-1234  <a href="http://www.att.com/wireless">www.att.com/wireless</a> OR          Certified Techs. Members of <a href="http://www.itsm.com">www.itsm.com</a>          (574) 333-4567</p> <p>Unlimited Premium • 20% (Plan by Union)          Call Techs. Members of 1-800-451-1234 OR  <a href="http://www.itsm.com">www.itsm.com</a></p> <p>Problems call Jeff Young (413) 691-1508</p>	 <p><b>at&amp;t</b> <b>NETWORK</b></p> <p>Available from AT&amp;T for the best combination of lowest rates and coverage. See the specifications and your terms, conditions coverage, exclusions and limitations. <b>AT&amp;T IS THE ONLY WIRELESS SERVICE PROVIDER TO PUBLICLY PROMISE THAT THEIR ARE PROUD TO BE A HIGH COMPANY</b> that has been awarded 12% ACSI award for customer service.</p> <p><b>SAVE AS MUCH AS 15% ON VARIOUS AT&amp;T NETWORKING PRODUCTS AND SERVICES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• LONG DISTANCE</li> <li>• INTRASTATE</li> <li>• LOCAL SERVICE</li> <li>• WIRELESS ACCESS - HIGH SPEED             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• DSL &amp; FULLY MANAGED</li> </ul> </li> <li>• IP OFFERINGS THAT INCLUDE             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• BUNDLED OFFERS OF VOICE DATA AND VIDEO</li> </ul> </li> <li>• CONFERENCING             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• VOICE</li> <li>• WEB MEETING SERVICE</li> </ul> </li> </ul> <p>(AT&amp;T CONNECT)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• INTERACTIVE VIDEO COMMUNICATIONS</li> </ul> <p>Call us so we can work with you to define all options available to meet your communications requirements.</p> <p><b>Our services are under 1pay1plan and multiple use!</b></p> <p><b>CONTACT YOUR UNION SALES TEAM</b>          1-888-474-8848          OR          FAX US AT 1-703-991-8387 OR          EMAIL Frank.Buchanan@att.com          Problems call Jeff Young (703) 691-1511</p>
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## New Union SAFE Program Offers Financial Assistance Options

**W**orried about paying your bills? A new program from Union Plus may be the answer.

The Union SAFE program offers help for union members who are Union Plus Credit Card holders, Union Plus mortgage holders or UnionSecure insurance policyholders.

Have you been laid off for more than 90 days?

Do you have hospital bills\* that total 10 percent of your household income?

\* Costs should be those that the individual is paying, excluding costs paid for by

your health insurance.

Planning on opening an education sav-



ings account/529?

Have you been on strike for more than 30 days?

Have you become disabled within the

last six months (and been out of work at least 3 months)?

If you answered yes to any of the questions above and you participate in Union Plus programs, you could be eligible for financial help.

Eligible union members can apply for Union SAFE grant money (which does not need to be repaid) — and access Union Plus benefits and advice — to help combat the problems in today's economy.

Visit [unionplus.org](http://unionplus.org) and click on "Union SAFE Grants" today for more information.

## Notice To Employees Subject To Union Security Clauses

*(Continued from page 14)*

expenditures is for items other than per capita to the OPEIU. Studies show that the final percentage of rebate for non-chargeable Local Union expenditures ranges between 0% and 8%.

Individuals who choose to file objections to funding expenditures that are not germane to the collective bargaining process should file them in writing with the Office and Professional Employees International Union, 1660 L Street, N. W., Suite 801, Washington, D.C. 20036, Attention: Nancy Wohlforth, Secretary-Treasurer. The objection must include the objector's name, home address, Social Security number, employer, job title, department, work location, local union number, and business telephone number.

In order for an objection to be recognized at this time, it must be postmarked during the month of June, except that new hires who choose not to join the union may also submit their objection postmarked within thirty (30) days of being compelled to pay dues or fees to the Union or within thirty (30) days of the new hire's receipt of a new employee letter from a Local Union, and except that newly resigned members may also submit their objections postmarked within thirty (30) days from the receipt by the Union of the resigning member's letter of resignation. All objections will be effective on the first

day of the month following the month in which the objection was received by the Union.

In addition to any other avenue of relief available under the law, an objector may challenge the International Union's and/or the Local Union's classification or calculation of expenditures before a neutral arbitrator appointed by the American Arbitration Association pursuant to its Rules for Impartial Determination of Union Fees. Any challenge a nonmember makes may be coordinated or consolidated with other challenges to the Local Union or International Union determinations before a single arbitrator selected by the American Arbitration Association. Such challenges may also be coordinated or consolidated with challenges to other OPEIU Local Union classifications or calculations.

Challengers must notify Nancy Wohlforth, Secretary-Treasurer, Office and Professional Employees International Union, 1660 L Street, N.W., Suite 801, Washington, D.C. 20036, in writing, of any challenge he or she wishes to make through this arbitration procedure. Such notification must be received by the Secretary-Treasurer within thirty (30) days of the challenger's receipt of a letter from the Local Union informing the challenger of the amount of the rebate, the basis for the calculation, and the internal procedures for fil-

ing a challenge. That challenge should specify which classifications and/or calculations of the International Union and/or Local Union are being challenged.

The Unions shall bear the burden of justifying their classifications and calculations. If a hearing at which the parties or witnesses may be present is held by the arbitrator, it will be held at a location most convenient to the largest number of involved challengers. The cost of any arbitration proceedings will be paid for by the Unions. However, a challenger will have to pay his or her own lost time and travel expenses, and the fees, costs, and expenses of any persons they involve in the proceedings.

Once a written challenge is received from an objector, the Local Union will place an amount equal to the challenged portion of the fee into an interest-bearing escrow account. It shall remain in that account until the arbitrator issues a decision. Should the decision lower the percentage of chargeable expenditures, the appropriate portion of the escrowed fees, plus the interest earned by that portion while in the escrow account, will be refunded to the challenger. All objectors in each Local Union affected by the decision of the arbitrator will then pay the adjusted fee amount determined by the arbitrator. If the arbitrator approves the Unions' classifications and/or calculations, the escrowed money and interest will revert to the Local and International Unions.



Printed in USA



## Obama Stands With Labor, Reverses Bush Anti-Labor Measures

*(Continued from page 1)*

to unions,” reports *The Washington Times*, May 5, 2009.

“The first bill Mr. Obama signed was a union-backed measure that makes it easier for workers to sue employers for wage discrimination. He also signed a bill that nixed a pilot program opposed by the Teamsters that allowed Mexican trucks into the United States for cross-border commerce, despite complaints that the restriction violated the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA),” *The Washington Times* continued.

“I do not view the labor movement as part of the problem. To me, and to my administration, labor unions are a big part of the solution,” President Obama said in a video address to the AFL-CIO Executive Council’s March meeting in Miami, Florida.

## Area Educational Conferences — A Great Success!

*(Continued from page 2)*

Producer of Workers Independent News.

At the Washington, D.C. conference, delegates were addressed by the newly appointed junior Senator from the State of New York, Kirsten Gillibrand, who replaced Senator Hillary R. Clinton when she was elevated by President Obama to the position of Secretary of State. Senator Gillibrand thanked OPEIU for its support.

During the lunch break, OPEIU delegates, Local 2 members and members of other unions held a demonstration of 250 people in front of the American Red Cross (ARC) National Headquarters to protest ARC’s demands that employees make numerous concessions in bargaining. The unions with ARC contracts at various locations across the United States are OPEIU, AFSCME, IBT, CWA and SEIU. The OPEIU provided a 14-foot “rat” to emphasize the union’s displeasure with ARC’s bargaining stand. ARC workers are concerned about the safety of the blood sup-

ply and staffing levels. Millions of union members donate blood to ARC so the company should be more sympathetic to their needs.

And, of course, the all important Vice President’s breakfasts were held on the closing morning of each conference giving the VPs an opportunity to report to the delegates on various activities within their regions. This segment of the Area Educational Conferences is always well received by the delegates.

At the end of each conference, delegates submitted evaluations. In every case, the program received high marks! All participating Local Unions are entitled to receive a \$1,000 subsidy to offset the cost of attending the conferences.

We look forward to the next series of Area Educational Conferences to be held in 2011. There will also be an Educational Conference held on Sunday, June 27, 2010, just prior to the OPEIU Convention in San Francisco.

**For more information about the  
OPEIU, visit our website at  
[www.opeiu.org](http://www.opeiu.org)**