



# WHITE COLLAR

OFFICE AND PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEES INTERNATIONAL UNION, AFL-CIO AND CLC

No. 466

Issue 1, 1999

*Remembering a life of service and dedication to the labor movement*

## Gwen Wells' contribution to OPEIU was "remarkable"

**Beloved White Collar editor, director of research & education dies at age 53**

A lifelong union activist and leader, Gwendolyn Wells spent her life doing what was most important to her — helping working people realize their personal and professional dreams. As the Director of Research & Education for the OPEIU — and the editor of the official union publication, *White Collar* — Wells ensured that thousands of men and women were able to reach their potential for the betterment of themselves, their families and their Union.

Wells' service tragically ended on Friday, January 15, 1999 as she lost her long battle with pancreatic cancer. She was 53.

### Interest in Union Representation Began Early

Born and raised in Dallas, Texas, Wells moved to New York specifically to work for the labor movement, by way of Cornell University where she acquired a Masters of Industrial and Labor Relations.

Her interest in workers' representation began at the University of Texas in Austin, where she worked and helped to organize for the American Federation of Teachers. Quickly demonstrating her special blend of skills, Wells soon became a local union vice president. Wells also was an elementary school teacher for a few years, teaching the fifth grade.

Since joining the OPEIU staff in 1979, Wells revamped the Research & Education Departments, increased resources, re-designed education programs, produced new publications (for example, *Research News*, the daily convention newsletter and *Welcome to OPEIU*), and improved and expanded the newspaper, *White Collar*.

Wells was also deeply involved with other union organizations, serving as a National Vice President of the Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW) — see CLUW resolution later in this article; member of the Board of Directors of the National Committee on Pay Equity; Executive Board, Metro Labor Press Association; Advisory Board, New York State School of Industrial and Labor Relations, Cornell University; and Member, AFL-CIO Standing Committee on Education.

News of her death was difficult for her friends and family at the OPEIU — both at the Local Union and International level — and for all those who had known and worked with her.

"Gwen's dedication to working people and her contribution to the OPEIU was remarkable," said OPEIU International President Michael Goodwin. "Gwen saw to it that countless OPEIU members were trained and educated to be better trade unionists. Her work within the labor movement will long be remembered, and she will be deeply missed by all who had the privilege to know her," Goodwin continued.

### Illness Couldn't Dampen Spirit

Despite her difficult illness, Wells' spirit remained high. Her uplifting words were included in the convention issues of *White Collar*, where Wells said, "I want to take this opportunity to thank all of my OPEIU brothers and sisters who have generously and lovingly sent me cards, flowers and gifts during my illness.

Just knowing I am in your thoughts and prayers has lifted my spirits and provided me with a healing strength," she continued.

"It's times like this when the importance of 'solidarity' becomes clear. In the name of solidarity, too, I hope you have a progressive and successful convention. I wish I could join you there because I miss you all... your prayers and best wishes mean so much to me."

Wells is survived by her mother, Rose Wells, her sister Mrs. Patty Warren and brother-in-law Henry Warren, all of San Antonio, Texas.

A memorial service was held in San Antonio, Texas, and another in New York City on March 7.

The family has established a memorial fund in Ms. Wells' name through the American Cancer Society, 19 West 56th Street, N.Y. 10019. A memorial fund has also been established in San Antonio, Texas.

### CLUW Resolution

In recognition of all her work on behalf of women in labor, the Coalition of Labor Union Women passed the following resolution at its National Executive Board meeting in February:

#### Gwen Wells

WHEREAS, the Coalition of Labor Union Women and the entire labor movement lost a strong advocate, a devoted trade unionist and a warm and courageous individual with the passing of Sister Gwen Wells; and

WHEREAS, her history of trade union activities goes back to the State of Texas where she was born and raised; where she worked to organize at the University of Texas and served as Vice President of the local American Federation of Teachers be-



Gwendolyn Wells

fore moving to New York where she received a Masters Degree in Industrial and Labor Relations from Cornell University; and

WHEREAS, in 1979 she joined the staff of the Office & Professional Employees International Union, AFL-CIO, CLC, and went on to become their Director of Research and Education, Editor of the OPEIU publication *White Collar* and, among others, to serve on the National AFL-CIO Standing Committee on Education, as Board Member of the National Committee on Pay Equity and on the Advisory Board of the New York State School of Industrial Labor Relations, Cornell University, and in her own community she was an active Big Sister; and

WHEREAS, throughout her life she fought for and was dedicated to the issues

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## ORGANIZING FOR CHANGE

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## Letters to the Editor



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 welcome 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: <http://www.opeiu.org>

The effects of public sector strikes are often a major inconvenience to the general public, and if such strikes are well organized, the effects can be crippling. As such, the most common reaction from the everyday person is one of annoyance, and if the strike lasts longer than a person first expects, annoyance turns to anger.

This response can be attributed to several factors, including ignorance of the issues surrounding the strike, media blackouts, governmental misinformation [colloquial word is "lies, lies and more lies"] and the apparent private sector prejudice towards the average public sector employee. The common person on the street wants to hear nothing of the issues leading to the strike or the dispute. Each one thinks only of himself/herself and feels, this is not a venue to air one's differences. "Don't inconvenience me because of your programs, take your issues somewhere else," they tend to say. Commoners on the street, whether white collar or blue-collar workers, feel "I'm en-

during with so much less, these public sector workers are fatted."

Members of the public don't seem to be concerned with the fact that it has taken many, many years for workers to get where they are. Since our sisters and brothers in the private sector have no recourse to air their problems and difficulties, rather than accept or tolerate minimal inconvenience, in support of their sisters and brothers, they buy into what the media sells them and turn around and proclaim that "unionized workers are very well paid, enjoy many fringe benefits and are never satisfied."

Who, then, has the responsibility to educate the masses, and bring them on-side? You, me and my brother and sister. Each of us must work hard in our own little circle of influence — the family, the school council, the community, the baseball club, etc. to educate the masses, make them understand what the struggle is all about and encourage their support and understanding.

One major stumbling block in attempting to tell our story, is our inability to reach the community because of a blatant lack of even-handed media coverage. Union activists are often interviewed by reporters and television crews only to find a .005 second coverage at 11 p.m. versus centre-stage coverage for the Minister who is out there telling lie after lie to the gullible public. Question: "Why is the media not interested in being honest and up-front?" Answer: "Because, although the reporter may be unionized and promise you objective coverage, we know who owns the station, or the newspaper, and they make the final cut. They are all part of the Corporate Agenda, and their head office is at Bay Street."

One yet untapped resource, in my opinion, is true solidarity. If we boast of a 400,000 public sector membership, have we stopped to think what political clout we have? And do we realize how inactive we have been to-date and how much good we can do if each of the 400,000 unionized workers speaks to three people or moves three people to action? True solidarity is the Bible of trade unions. Yet, so many activists pay lip-service to this word, thinking in their hearts, for example, "this is a school board problem, it's got nothing to do with me, I'm in the Utilities sector. What's the use of going out there to picket with them, when my turn comes and we're out there on the picket lines, the teachers will not be there with us."

It is essential that the community understands that "the public sector is comprised of simple people, you and me, trying to make a living and working hard to put food on the table for our families." It is only when this happens that the anger, frustration and rage will fade away and be replaced with support, cooperation and true solidarity for the common good.

Solidarity Forever.

Denzil D'Souza  
Recording Secretary  
OPEIU Local 491  
Scarborough, Ontario

## Local 3 takes political process by storm

The year 1998 proved to be a challenging political year for labor in California. Our Local decided to make it a priority. We would use it both as a way to be more involved in our Labor Council's Labor/Neighbor Program and as a tool to internally organize and activate our members.

The June primary contained an initiative, placed on the ballot by out-of-state extremists, which wasn't about union dues or campaign reform as it claimed but, instead, was a partisan attempt to silence working people's voice. The entire labor movement, including our local, rose to the challenge to defeat the notorious Proposition 226.

At a steward's training meeting held in April and attended by 40 of our members, we began to organize ourselves to meet the political challenges ahead. Using commitment cards, we asked people to commit to educating themselves about Prop. 226; to sell raffle tickets; to volunteer at their job site, in their community and/or church groups to help expose the vicious nature of this proposition; to help register new voters; to man phone banks; and, finally, to help get out the vote. These efforts helped us raise enough money to enable one of our members, educating, agitating and encouraging them to vote in the primary and to vote against Prop. 226.

We turned out enough of our members at the San Francisco Labor/Neighbor phone banking, precinct walking, and get-out-the-vote activities so that, in the end, we were ranked fifth of all the locals in terms of hours donated during this election period. The key to our ability to activate more than twice as many members as we had in the past was in providing many different ways in which each member could participate.

The defeat of Prop. 226 was a major victory. All of the pundits right up until Election Day said it would pass. This victory for all working people in California was particularly important to our newly activated union members. Our local sent out thank you notes to the members who participated, wishing them a good summer and letting

them know that the November election was right around the corner and that we would be calling on them again soon for help.

In August, the activities began again. This time, however, we didn't start from the beginning, as we already had a list of activated members. After we received the list from the State Federation of Labor indicating that only half of our members were registered to vote, we decided to make voter registration a priority. We began by including a voter registration form in all of the packets that we sent to our new members. We picked several of our largest shops and set up voter registration tables. These tables proved very important — not only for registering people to vote, but also for giving the union more visibility at these work sites.

In October, we once again conducted phone banks, walked precincts and visited many of our work sites, encouraging people to not only vote, but to post yard signs, talk to their neighbors and family members — always emphasizing that each and every vote counted.

On November 3, 1998, our efforts paid off. We (and by "we" I mean the entire labor movement) were able to elect pro-worker, pro-family majorities in both of California's assemblies, a pro-labor governor and a pro-labor U.S. senator. But that is only part of the story. The most exciting chapter is what we are developing in our local. We have a new contingent of active members who have worked together and who better realize the strength of their union. They now know that by working together, we can be a powerful force — both at the polling booth and in our union.

In 1999, our local will again face the challenges of obtaining good contracts, as well as representing our members on the shop floor. But this time we will have something new on our side — we will have a more positive, worker-friendly environment in Sacramento, our state's capitol, for the first time in 16 years, and we will have a more activated membership. 1999 looks good for Local 3.

Conny Ford  
Union Representative  
Local 3  
San Francisco, California

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Official Organ of  
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## Work and Health

### A Nation of Sleepyheads

by Philip L. Polakoff, MD

**Y**ou'd think doing something we've been doing every day of our lives would make us pretty good at it. Right?

Wrong! At least for millions of Americans who, for various reasons, aren't able to get the hang of getting a good night's sleep.

As many as 40 million people in this country are afflicted with more than 70 different types of sleep-related problems. That's according to the National Center on Sleep Disorders Research. The center is part of the National Heart, Lung and Blood Institute, a unit of the National Institutes of Health (NIH).

Why are we such a nation of sleepy-heads?

"It's a two-part problem," says James P. Kiley, Ph.D., director of the sleep research group. "First we have a society that's on a 24-hour cycle — with multiple jobs in many cases and multiple responsibilities both at work and home. When you're pushed for time, as many people are, the first thing that usually goes is sleep."

But buying time with sleep hours is not a bargain. You often end up paying for it in decreased productivity and an increased risk for errors in judgment and accidents.

Lack of sleep and its link to accidents — automobile and on-the-job — appears to be a problem of far greater magnitude than previously believed. Fatigue leads to diminished mental alertness and concentration.

Kiley says there could be as many as 1,500 fatalities and 100,000 sleep-related automobile accidents annually in the United States.

Shift workers are especially prone to the problem. Their biological clock is ticking at the wrong time. The human body is set up to feel sleepy during the nighttime hours and to be active during the daylight hours.

People who work the night shift and try to sleep during the day are constantly fighting their biological clocks. They run the risks of accidents at work or on the road.

The second part of the problem relates to actual sleep disorders. Insomnia — the inability to fall asleep or remain asleep — affects millions. Sleep apnea — frequent long pauses in breathing during sleep, followed by choking and gasping for breath — affects at least 10 million.

Narcolepsy — falling asleep uncontrollably during the day — affects perhaps a quarter of a million people, and nobody really knows how many are affected by restless leg syndrome (RLS).

The crawly, tingling, pulling sensation of RLS in the legs, typically just before falling asleep, often leads to periodic jerking movements during sleep. It's disturbing to both the afflicted and his or her bed partner. The cause is unknown.

Massaging the legs or a warm bath before retiring sometimes helps. But symptoms almost always return, often during periods of stress.

Sleep experts believe most people should be getting somewhere in the range of seven to eight hours of restful shut-eye a night. If you're getting less than six hours regularly, chances are you're piling up a "sleep debt" that may be compromising your health and well-being.

considered a vital part of every activity she pursued on behalf of all of us.



## Gwen Wells

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and concerns of working women in her union, the labor movement and her community. She was devoted to the goals of the Coalition of Labor Union Women and in 1991 was elected to the CLUW Officers Council as a Vice President. She was officer Liaison to the CLUW Media Committee and continually worked to promote the objectives and interests of CLUW in innumerable projects over the years; she helped organize and increase the activities of OPEIU members in CLUW and advance the image of CLUW throughout the women's movement and organized labor as a whole. Therefore, he it

RESOLVED, that we rededicate ourselves to carry on her work with the same fervor and commitment to organizing, affirmative action, political action and union participation, with a special emphasis on education which she con-



## Washington Window

### What Happens When You Lack a Union Contract

**D**o you know what happens when you don't have a union contract? Arbitrary decisions made suddenly by corporate titans can immediately hurt you — and you can't do a thing about it.

For proof, consider this story of a small news service, based in Washington, D.C., and three state capitals, subsidiary of a larger company.

The large company, Dow Jones, is undergoing an internal war. Dissident board members charge it doesn't make enough money. They're fighting with the ruling family, demanding that less-profitable divisions of the organization be chucked overboard.

One of those divisions is a group of newspapers in small and medium-sized cities nationwide. The Ottaway newspapers turn pretty good profits for Dow Jones. Some do better than others and a few are losing money, but by and large they're profitable. Most of the papers are the sole newspaper in one-paper towns, local monopolies.

That's not good enough for the Dow Jones board. The newspapers don't make enough money. A Dow Jones board member told the *New York Post* earlier this year that Ottaway's papers are not a vital part of the organization.

Such a statement does wonders for workers' morale. They must ponder the future of their papers — and their jobs.

But the workers at the papers aren't the only ones, or even the first Ottaway workers, to feel the pain of the budgetary axe — pain caused by corporate Pooh-Bahs seeking ever more dollars to line their pockets.

No, the first pain came last year, to the small news service the Ottaway papers subsidize, with bureaus in Washington, Albany, N.Y., Harrisburg, Pa., and Boston. Several people were fired, strictly for budgetary reasons. The news service, paid for by Dow Jones via the Ottaway papers, wasn't profitable, you see. All it did was give the papers, and readers, news they need.

At the time of the first round of firings, management told the remaining workers there would be no further changes. On Monday, June 15, management announced it had changed its mind. It closed the news service, on two weeks' notice.

On June 26, the 10 remaining work-

ers — eight reporters, a wire editor and the Washington bureau chief (the supervisor) were out of jobs. They'll get severance pay. That's not the point.

The point is the workers at the news service did not have a union contract. Dow Jones, whose *Wall Street Journal* is editorially one of the most virulently conservative anti-worker newspapers in the country, stoutly resisted unionization. Its workers at the main office in New York City are Communications Workers of America members and covered by a contract.

Its Ottaway workers are non-union, and left to fend for themselves.

We're not saying unionization would have prevented closure of the news service, or Dow Jones' possible sale of the Ottaway newspapers. Corporate titans nationwide close workplaces all the time — even unionized workplaces — and take the consequences later.

We are saying there are consequences. If they had been covered by the CWA contract, Mark Wigfield, Judy Mathewson, Robert Swift and the other Ottaway workers would have enjoyed some protections — including one-month notification. For example:

- Severance pay based on length of service — rather than amounts set by Dow Jones whim. That would help workers like Swift, who has been with the company for 20 years, and whose job prospects in Harrisburg may be few. The minimum severance in the pact is two weeks for a six-month worker. The maximum is a year.

- Procedures for placing workers in new jobs in the company, if they want to stay. The contract — which covers Dow Jones, not Ottaway — gives laid-off workers priority for rehiring.

- Continuation of health benefits, at company expense.

Again, we're not saying the Ottaway workers, thrown out of their jobs with two weeks' notice, would have had all these protections were they unionized.

But they would have had a shot at them — and the fact they were union members would mean that, however long it takes, the company that closed their shop would eventually have to pay up.

That's what happens if you're covered by a contract. That's what doesn't happen if you're not.



# Federation of Catholic Teachers demonstrate union power

**3-year agreement brings 10 percent wage increase, huge pension jump**

Months of picketing and demonstrations have brought victory for The Federation of Catholic Teachers (FCT) — an affiliate of OPEIU Local 153 — as they reached an agreement with the Association of Catholic Schools that will mean a 10 percent wage increase and unprecedented pension enhancements for the

group's more than 3,000 employees in the bargaining unit.

"We are very happy with this agreement," said FCT President Michele Cody. "We've achieved what we set out for — increased wages, a livable pension and job security. One of the most outstanding aspects of the negotiation is that the Archdiocese finally

realized the need for parity between elementary and high school teachers. And now this will be accomplished over time."

"It was a long road, but our efforts paid off," said OPEIU International President Michael Goodwin. "We've made tremendous progress in solving the parity issue. Over time, elementary school teachers can



Members of the Federation of Catholic Teachers conduct a demonstration at the Waldorf Astoria hotel in Manhattan.



expect to be paid the same as the secondary school teachers."

Contract provisions include:

- Percentage raises of 3%, 3% and 4%;
  - Parity increases to begin this year and continue for the next 12 years, bringing the elementary school salary up to the high school salary;
  - Pension enhancements in two forms; Voluntary Retirement Plan & 5-year average;
  - One step added to each column of High School Salary Scale;
  - Coverage payment raised from \$100 to \$125 for high school teachers;
  - 25 more sick days in bank;
  - 4 more steps added to non-degreed salary column;
  - Part-time salary increases: from \$50 to \$75/day for non-degreed; from \$75 to \$100/day for degreed;
  - Incorporation of two new schools (St. Peter's in Liberty, N.Y. and St. Joseph's in Florida, N.Y.);
  - Security regarding bumping for tenured teachers;
  - An agency fee for all teachers newly hired, not joining the Union, or all non-union teachers who voluntarily transfer from one school to another;
  - In order to achieve the above, the FCT agreed to no demonstrations 15 minutes prior to and 15 minutes after any Mass and, that all elementary school teachers must make appropriate progress to achieve certification in the Catechist Certification Program.
- The contract was ratified on January 28 with 91 percent approval of the membership.

## Québec education reform

# SEPB Local 57 wins more than 3,000 new members

Organizing fever has struck Canada's SEPB Local 57 as they win representation rights for 2,050 additional employees at the Marguerite-Bourgeoys School Board. Representation votes, which were necessitated by the restructuring of the school board sector in Québec, were held throughout the province in December and January.

The Union now represents 2,500 technical and paratechnical staff, office and day care workers and student supervisors at Marguerite-Bourgeoys, in a unit where Local 57 previously represented only 450 workers.

The new unit was established when the Québec government reduced the existing 156 confessional school boards to 72 linguistic boards. Local 57 competed against the larger Canadian unions, CUPE and the Québec Teachers Association (CEQ). "Our union is the smallest of the "big" unions and throughout the campaign people have come to realize that we truly have the reliability of the bigger groups and the flexibility of a small group that make us the best organization to defend and promote their rights," said Canadian Director and Local 57 Secretary General Michel Lajeunesse.



Canadian Director Michel Lajeunesse

SEPB President Maurice Laplante, who also serves as a Vice President of the International Union, worked on the campaign with Pierre Bernatchez, Bogidar Perucich, Josee Dumontet and many Local 57 rank-and-file activists.



SEPB Local 57 President Maurice Laplante

On January 11, the 1,300 white collar employees at Marie-Victorin school board also opted for Local 57 over the Québec Teachers Association. Previously, Local 57 represented only 300 members while the CEQ had 1,000 members.

## Demonstrations led to contract

The FCT and Local 153 staged numerous demonstrations as contract negotiations repeatedly stalled for a renewal of the collective bargaining agreement covering the FCT elementary and high school teachers employed in the schools of the Archdiocese of New York. The contract expired August 31, 1998. Demonstrations were held at St. Patrick's Cathedral during the annual Labor Day Mass held Sunday, September 13; at Cardinal Spellman High School in the

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## Federation of Catholic Teachers

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Bronx; at John F. Kennedy High School in Somers, N.Y.; outside the Waldorf Astoria Hotel in Manhattan during the annual Alfred E. Smith dinner; and a prayer vigil was conducted at St. Teresa's Roman Catholic Church on Staten Island.

"We were frustrated by the enormous gap between what the Association of Catholic Schools offered and the needs of the teachers," Cody said. "Our last resort was to demonstrate how strongly the teachers felt about the issue.

"We made our voices heard through old-fashioned union activism," Cody continued. "Thousands of Catholic teachers came together and sent a message to the Archdio-

cese that we were not going to work without substantial improvements in our wages and benefits."

"And it worked," Goodwin added. "We kept hoping that the Archdiocese and John Cardinal O'Connor would deal with us fairly, and although we were disheartened by their initial offers, the FCT kept going until they won a fair agreement."

"Special thanks go to the OPEIU, specifically Michael Goodwin and Richard Lanigan, and to the FCT staff," Cody said, "including FCT Secretary Edwena Dunne, Treasurer Pat Gabriel, Erika Miklus, Eileen Sweeney, Deane O'Donohue, Robert DiNardo, Brian Maher, Maryann Perry, John McEnilley, and Michael McComiskey."

## Hoffa elected Teamsters president



James P. Hoffa

More than two decades since his famous father ran the union, James P. Hoffa has been elected president of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters after winning 54 percent of the vote in a mail ballot contest.

"Hopefully now the Teamsters can put the troubles of the past behind them and move forward in fulfilling the union's agenda," said International President Michael Goodwin. "It's an exciting time for the Teamsters, and I look forward to working with the new leadership in the future."

AFL-CIO President John Sweeney also commented that now the Teamsters' members can move forward after a difficult time. "Today, with strong new leadership, they can begin to take on the many challenges facing them and all working families," Sweeney said.

## OPEIU wins big at DTC

### Four out of five DTC employees vote for union representation

In the largest National Labor Relations Board election in Wall Street history, 72 percent of employees participating in the election at The Depository Trust Company (DTC) voted November 5, 1998 for continued union representation by the OPEIU, Local 153. The election was held following a petition from an independent union, the Wall Street Employees Association (WSEA), to the NLRB for an election of bargaining representative at DTC.

Of the 1,070 eligible voters, an overwhelming 701 voted for continued OPEIU representation by Local 153; 97 voted for representation by WSEA. There were eight challenged votes, and the remaining 176 voted for neither group. Local 153 defeated WSEA by a 7-1 margin.

"The employees at DTC made their wishes quite clear — they want to continue to be represented by a real union, not a thinly veiled company union," said OPEIU International President Michael Goodwin. "Even with the company's powerful union-busting attorney, the so-called Wall Street Employees Association couldn't fool workers into thinking they were better off without union representation.

"DTC employees also sent a clear signal that we don't need union busters in New York City," Goodwin continued. "We're now looking forward to negotiating in good faith with DTC, and arriving at a contract that best protects our members."

The OPEIU has represented employees at the New York Stock Exchange (NYSE) since the 1940s, and the workers at DTC since 1972. The current contract expired October 31, 1998.

## About our members

## Doctors bring medical care to remote lands



Dr. David McPhillips brings eyecare to remote regions of the world.

The members of OPEIU's National Guild of Medical Professionals work hard each day to ensure that their patients receive the best possible medical care available.

Some of these members are also making sure that thousands of people throughout the world are exposed to otherwise unavailable medical care.

Dr. David R. McPhillips, an ophthalmologist whose practice, Primary Eye Care Associates, P.C. is located in Horsham, Pennsylvania, brings eyecare to remote regions of the world through the Pennsylvania state chapter of his international organization VOSH — Volunteer Optometric Service to Humanity.

Dr. McPhillips' interest in overseas medicine began when he was a student and in-

involved in the organization SOSH — Student Optometric Service to Humanity. "I thought it was such a great organization, and that there were certainly going to be people who were involved in SOSH as students who would want to continue this work once they were out in the world practicing medicine."

McPhillips soon found that there were many doctors who shared his desire to bring proper medical care to people who couldn't otherwise afford it. In 1990, through his newly formed organization, McPhillips began bringing much-needed eyecare to remote lands throughout the world. There are now approximately 100 members volunteering through twenty VOSH chapters in the United States.

Destinations are chosen based on greatest need, McPhillips said, and have included remote locations such as Guatemala, Mexico, St. Lucia, Jamaica, Cuba and Trinidad. Each trip is staffed by approximately one dozen volunteers, each of whom pay all of their expenses for the seven to ten day mission. VOSH typically plans two to three

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Dr. McPhillips

## Locals take advantage of OPEIU computer purchase program

### Goal to link all Locals with International

Many of our Local Unions are jumping on the Information Superhighway, taking advantage of an exciting initiative offered by the International Union.

At our 1998 convention, it was announced that the OPEIU would be instituting a new and innovative program to link Local Unions with the International. The program provides all of our Locals with the opportunity to receive a \$1,000 technological subsidy toward the purchase of a state-of-the-art computer, and a \$200 technological subsidy toward the purchase of a printer. For those Locals that already have a computer, a \$300 subsidy for software upgrades is available.

A number of our Locals have already availed themselves of this technological subsidy, and have taken the first steps toward becoming linked via computer to the International. Among those unions that have received computer subsidies are Local Unions 6, 9, 17, 19, 51, 56, 73, 107, 119, 179, 330, 391, 402 and 455. At press time, orders were being processed for Local Unions 11, 39, 42, 45, 64 and 95.

All Locals are encouraged to take part in this program. For further information, contact the International at (212) 675-3210.



## Doctors bring medical care to remote lands

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missions per year, some of which are partially funded through grants from local Lions and Rotary clubs, churches and other community groups. VOSH has conducted 15 missions since its inception in 1990.

VOSH now has a permanent destination at an orphanage in Guatemala in the Peten, one of the largest rainforests in the world. Approximately 50,000 people live in the remote area — a place so rural, there are no roads; visitors must travel by boat.

McPhillips has been on fifteen missions, most recently traveling to the Dominican Republic in February 1998, and to the Peten in early December 1998. The student organization, SOSH, is also planning to visit the Peten on its next trip — as the work it was



A VOSH volunteer sorts and categorizes donated eyeglasses.

conducting in Haiti has been suspended due to political instability in that country.

### Eyeglasses available for those who need them

In the past nine years, VOSH optometrists have examined thousands of patients for eyeglass prescriptions, glaucoma and cataracts. They have also referred patients to local surgeons, and dispensed thousands of pairs of eyeglasses and bottles of medications.

Wherever the VOSH team travels, thousands of people come to receive the free eye examination and, if necessary, eyeglasses.

"We see about 600 people each day," Dr. McPhillips says. "The exams are not done in offices. They are usually performed in just a room or a community center."

Patients who need them are provided with eyeglasses, all of which have been donated. When an individual or organization donates used eyeglasses to VOSH, a volunteer picks up the glasses and delivers them to another VOSH volunteer to be inspected and have their prescription determined. The eyeglasses are then prepared for the next mission. They are cataloged according to prescription and style, cleaned and packed in boxes.

"We can usually match up prescriptions perfectly," Dr. McPhillips says. "If an unusual prescription is needed, we then have them made and sent to the person at our own expense." Dr. McPhillips says that being able to provide eyecare to children, in particular, in these impoverished provinces makes all the effort worthwhile.

"The gratitude these people show is often quite touching," McPhillips says.

"This is a great example of the exceptional people we have involved in the OPEIU," says Director of Organization Jay Porcaro. "David is one of the many dedicated health care professionals — each doing wonderful work — that we're so proud to count among our membership."

## Boston supports unions' right to unionize

On October 21, 1998, Boston's city council passed a crucial resolution supporting the rights of unions to organize, free of any coercion or pressure from employers.

Signed by City Council President James M. Kelly and Councilors "Mickey" Roache and Thomas M. Keane Jr., the resolution recognizes that while federal law protects employees' right to join a union, there is often illegal interference by employers seeking to derail the union and possible organization. The resolution then calls upon employers in Boston to "stay out of their employees' decision" to unionize, and to "provide their employees the opportunity to choose whether to unionize or not free from intimidation or coercion." Finally, the resolution asks employers to abide by their employee's decision to be represented by the union "by engaging in card-check elections and thereby avoiding the delays and legal maneuverings that accompany NLRB election processes."

Following is the entire text of the Boston resolution:

WHEREAS: Federal law protects employees' rights to form or join a union; and

WHEREAS: Many employers interfere with employees' efforts to exercise their right to unionize by threatening to

close their facilities, to fire union activists, or to otherwise retaliate against them, or in some cases by carrying out these threats; and

WHEREAS: Many employers engage in vigorous campaigns against their employees' efforts to unionize when the decision is properly one for the workers to make themselves; and

WHEREAS: As a result of employers' intrusion into the employees' decision, employees are often deprived of an opportunity to choose a union free from intimidation or coercion; and

WHEREAS: Employers often stall or delay the proceedings before the National Labor Relations Board which are intended to allow employees an expeditious means of selecting a union to represent them; and

WHEREAS: Unions provide employees with a voice on the job, encourage job innovation, and productivity growth; and

Continued on page 7

## OPEIU calls for passage of antitrust relief measure

The OPEIU is lobbying for passage of legislation that would ensure patient safety and quality of care while protecting our nation's medical workers by revising antitrust laws to give doctors the ability to bargain collectively with HMOs and other health insurers. This freedom to negotiate contracts will help to ensure fair methods of competition for the nation's 650,000 doctors.

Introduced last session by Representative Tom Campbell (R-Calif.), "The Quality Health-Care Coalition Act" (HR 4277) would allow negotiations between a coalition of health-care professionals and a health-care service plan regarding the terms and conditions of a contract, and to their carrying out such terms and conditions.

"It's the best way I can see to let the market deal with the complaints so many health care professionals have raised with HMOs," says Rep. Campbell. "Medical professionals should be allowed to form their own professionals associations and bargain with the HMOs and other organizations in their area rather than have the federal government establish rules that specify the HMO-medical professional relationship.

"By allowing health care professionals, including physicians, nurses, pharmacists and midwives, to form their own profes-

sional associations and bargain with the HMOs and other organizations in their areas," continued Campbell, "all health care professionals will be enabled to secure contracts of a more fair and equitable nature; and the patients will be better served. First on the list of contractual terms that health care professionals will demand is a greater right to prescribe and care for patients as they see fit, by being allowed to return to practicing their professions."

Among opponents to this measure are the Federal Trade Commission (FTC) which claims the measure will raise health care costs. The measure will next be considered by the House Judiciary Committee.

OPEIU Director of Organization Jay Porcaro was quoted in a recent *USA Today* cover story, "Strength in Numbers; Doctors Push to Unionize as Battles with HMOs Intensify," as saying that without the power to organize and bargain collectively, it will be extremely difficult for doctors to exert any real pressure on HMOs and other insurers.

"You have to work very carefully around what the existing (anti-trust) parameters are," says Jay Porcaro of the [OPEIU], which represents medical professionals. "Unless or until we can get something like the Campbell bill passed . . . it's chasing windmills," quotes the article.

## New educational scholarships established

The Executive Board has enthusiastically passed a motion endorsing President Michael Goodwin's recommendation to establish educational scholarships for officers and staff of Local Unions.

The new scholarships will provide a one-time \$1,000 subsidy to each Local Union over a three-year period to send any one or more of its officers or staff for training in the labor relations field.

"This training will enable Local Union representatives to more effectively represent OPEIU members," Goodwin said. "We all need our representatives to be as sharp as they can be at the bargaining table and in grievance procedures, and this training will give them the knowledge they need to make informed decisions." As with all new programs, Goodwin said, the Union sees an expansion of the initial benefits at a later date.

This plan follows on the heels of the \$1,000 per local technology initiative established in 1998. [See story this issue for more details about the technology program, and to learn which Locals have already taken advantage of the subsidy.]

More specific information about the union representative training has been sent out to Local Unions. Questions about the program should be addressed to Director of Field Services, Kevin Kistler at (212) 675-3210 or your Regional Vice President.



## Boston supports

Continued from page 6

**WHEREAS:** Unionized employees generally earn more than their non-union counterparts, and contribute to the economic vitality of our communities; and

**WHEREAS:** Unions have contributed to the growth of democracy, the well being of America's working families, and our communities generally, therefore, be it

**RESOLVED:** To that end, we call on all employers to stay out of their employees' decision by clearly communicating to their employees that the employer is neutral on their choice, and will deal fairly with any union that they may select; and, be it further

**RESOLVED:** We call on all employers within our community to provide their employees the opportunity to choose whether to unionize or not free from intimidation or coercion; and, be it further

**RESOLVED:** We call on all employers to abide by their employees' decision to be represented by a union by engaging in card-check elections and thereby avoiding the delays and legal maneuverings that accompany NLRB election processes.

## Berthina Palmer, charter member of Local 1794, dies at 71

In her 52 years of service to the labor movement and to the Cleveland AFL-CIO Federation of Labor, Berthina Palmer proved she was a tireless fighter on behalf of working men and women. So diligent about her work, it was highly unusual when she called in sick in early January. It was with great sadness that her brothers and sisters at OPEIU Local 1794 learned a few days later that Palmer had died in her sleep at age 71.

Born in Cleveland, Berthina Palmer went to work for the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO) office the day after her high school graduation in 1947. While working, she attended Cleveland College of Western Reserve University, where she joined Alpha Kappa Alpha Sorority, and then went on to Cleveland Marshall Law School. She passed the bar examination in 1954.

Her heart was with the labor movement and political activism, and she spent the next five decades helping to organize workers throughout the Cleveland area. She was an integral part of the CIO's efforts to organize the Local Industrial Union (LIU) Number 1794 (United Office and Clerical Workers) in the late 1940s. In the '50s, she was present when 1794 became the Directly Affiliated



Berthina Palmer

Local Union (DALU) 1794, AFL-CIO, after the merger of the CIO and the American Federation of Labor. In 1980, when DALU 1794 was chartered by the OPEIU and became OPEIU Local 1794, Palmer was listed as a charter member.

Palmer also attended founding conventions of the Coalition of Labor Union Women and of the A. Philip Randolph Institute, a forum for black union members.

She was a founder of the Junior Women's Civic League and active with the NAACP. She also served on the Cleveland school board for ten years, arriving at the onset of the desegregation movement. While many of her colleagues on the board were unable to deal with the changes ordered by a federal court, Palmer was a staunch supporter of the desegregation law and worked diligently to enforce it.

Bert, as she was known to friends and colleagues, served Local 1794 in many ways. She was always a leader — often formally elected, sometimes not. She helped administer the Local's internal affairs, protect its finances, and negotiate collective bargaining agreements. According to Local 1794 President Tom Frishie and Executive Secretary John Ryan, Palmer generously shared her experience, knowledge and compassion. Palmer's dedication to the labor movement was indisputable; she was the consummate "good union member."

Donations can be made to the Berthina Palmer Scholarship Fund, c/o Mr. Danny R. Palmer, Trustee, P.O. Box 2221, Ashtabula, OH 44005. The fund will contribute equally to the A. Philip Randolph Institute and the AKA Sorority Scholarship Funds.

## Greater representation of women



Elizabeth Alonso

The OPEIU has one of the highest representations of women on its board among AFL-CIO unions, with 11 women serving on the 24-member International Executive Board. The women gathered in January at the first meeting of this newly elected board. Pictured from left to right: (Back row) Anita Roy (Local 12), Julie Weir (Local 502), Theresa Horner (Local 42), Kathleen Kinnick (Local 3), Janice Best (Local 343), Claude Grenier (Local 434), and Millie Hall (Local 494). (Front row) Maureen Bo (Local 8), Patricia Priloh (Local 457), and Judy Solkovits (Local 140). Elizabeth Alonso (Local 29) was not present at the time the photo was taken.



# 5th Annual John Kelly Labor Studies Scholarship Deadline: May 31, 1999

In memory of John Kelly, OPEIU International President since 1979 who died on March 10, 1994, the International Union Executive Board established a new scholarship fund in his name. "John Kelly was totally committed to education and training for working people, most particularly our own members," said his successor President Michael Goodwin. "It was during John's presidency that the union began the Howard Coughlin Scholarship Fund, added and expanded union training programs for members, officers and staff," Goodwin said.

However, whereas that fund is open to members and their children for any university/college study, the John Kelly Labor Studies Scholarship Fund is dedicated strictly to OPEIU members who desire to pursue studies and a career in labor relations. This is the fifth year it will be awarded.

"We owe so much to John Kelly and are very pleased to memorialize him in this way," said Goodwin.

The rules for that scholarship follow:

## Rules

Ten (10) scholarships per year will be awarded on the basis of at least one (1) per region and not to exceed one (1) per family. Applications are open to members or associate members in good standing for at least two (2) years. All applicants must meet the eligibility requirements and comply with the Rules and Procedures as established by the OPEIU Executive Board. Each scholarship has a total maximum value of \$2,000.

## Eligibility

The applicant must be:

- a member of OPEIU in good standing or an associate member; and

The applicant must be either an undergraduate or graduate in one of the areas of study below:

- Labor Studies
- Industrial Relations
- Social Science or a related field

## Procedures

Each applicant must file an official John Kelly Labor Studies Scholarship Program application. Application forms must be endorsed by the local union president or secretary-treasurer attesting that the member or associate member is in good standing and has been a member for at least two (2) years. Such endorsement must be obtained before the application is submitted.

## Forms

Application forms may be obtained at your local union office or at the Secretary-Treasurer's office of the International Union.

## Applications

All applications must be received at the Secretary-Treasurer's office of the International Union, 1660 L Street, NW, Suite 801, Washington, DC 20036, no later than May 31, 1999.

## Requirements

**High School Transcript** — All applicants are required to submit their high school transcripts. High school transcript *must* show rank in class or rank in class must be provided.

**College Transcript** — If presently enrolled in a college, university or a recognized technical or vocational post-secondary school as a full-time student, applicant is required to submit transcript, along with their high school transcript.

**Essay** — All applicants are required to submit an essay on their occupational goals (300 to 500 words).

**Statement of Intent** — All applicants shall be required to submit a statement of intent to remain within the OPEIU for a period of two (2) years.

All requirements are due at the Secretary-Treasurer's office no later than May 31, 1999.

## Selection of Scholarship

The selections shall be based on recommendations of an academic scholarship committee. Announcements of the winners will be made during the month of August of each year.

Address all inquiries to:

Office and Professional Employees International Union  
John Kelly Labor Studies Scholarship Fund  
1660 L Street, NW, Suite 801  
Washington, DC 20036  
Phone: (202) 393-4464, Fax: (202) 347-0649



# OPEIU Announces 12th Annual Howard Coughlin Memorial Scholarship

**T**welve (12) full-time and six (6) part-time scholarships will be awarded. Applications are open to members in good standing, or associate members, or their children, all of whom must meet the eligibility requirements and comply with the rules and procedures as established by the Executive Board. Each full-time scholarship has a total maximum value of \$4,000; each part-time up to \$2,000.

These scholarships for members in the United States (Canada has its own scholarship program) are limited to at least one per region in the U.S. and one per family.

## New Part-Time Scholarship Created

The Executive Board at its June 1996 meeting approved converting two (2) full-time scholarships into four (4) part-time scholarships and to add two (2) additional part-time scholarships for a total of six (6) part-time scholarships.

One of such part-time scholarships will be awarded in each region in order to reach a greater number of members. Full-time scholarships are generally awarded to children of members.

The following rules shall apply to part-time scholarships:

- part-time scholarship is defined as a minimum of three (3) credits and no more than two (2) courses.
- part-time scholarship award shall be up to \$500 per year for a maximum value of \$2,000.
- in the event that the student does not attend a college/university each semester, they have two (2) years maximum to use the part-time scholarship.
- if the student becomes a full-time student, while receiving a part-time student status scholarship, the scholarship will be revoked, and they will be able to apply for a full-time scholarship.
- part-time scholarship awards shall be subject to all other eligibility rules under the Howard Coughlin Memorial Scholarship Fund.

The Howard Coughlin Memorial Scholarship Awards, therefore, shall consist of twelve (12) full-time awards and six (6) part-time awards.

## Eligibility

An applicant must be either:

- a member of OPEIU in good standing or an associate member;
- the son, daughter, stepchild or legally adopted child of an OPEIU member in good standing or an associate member; and

An applicant must be either:

- a high school student or high school graduate entering college, university or a recognized technical or vocational post-secondary school as a full-time student;
- presently in college, university or a recognized technical or vocational post-secondary school as a full-time student.

## Procedures

Each applicant must file an official OPEIU scholarship program application. Application forms must be endorsed by the Local Union president or secretary-treasurer attesting that the member or parent of an applicant is in good standing or an associate member. Such endorsement must be obtained before the application is submitted.

## Forms

Application forms may be obtained at your local union office or at the Secretary-Treasurer's office of the International Union.

## Applications

All applications must be received at the Secretary-Treasurer's office of the International Union, 1660 L Street, NW, Suite 801, Washington, DC 20036, no later than May 31, 1999.

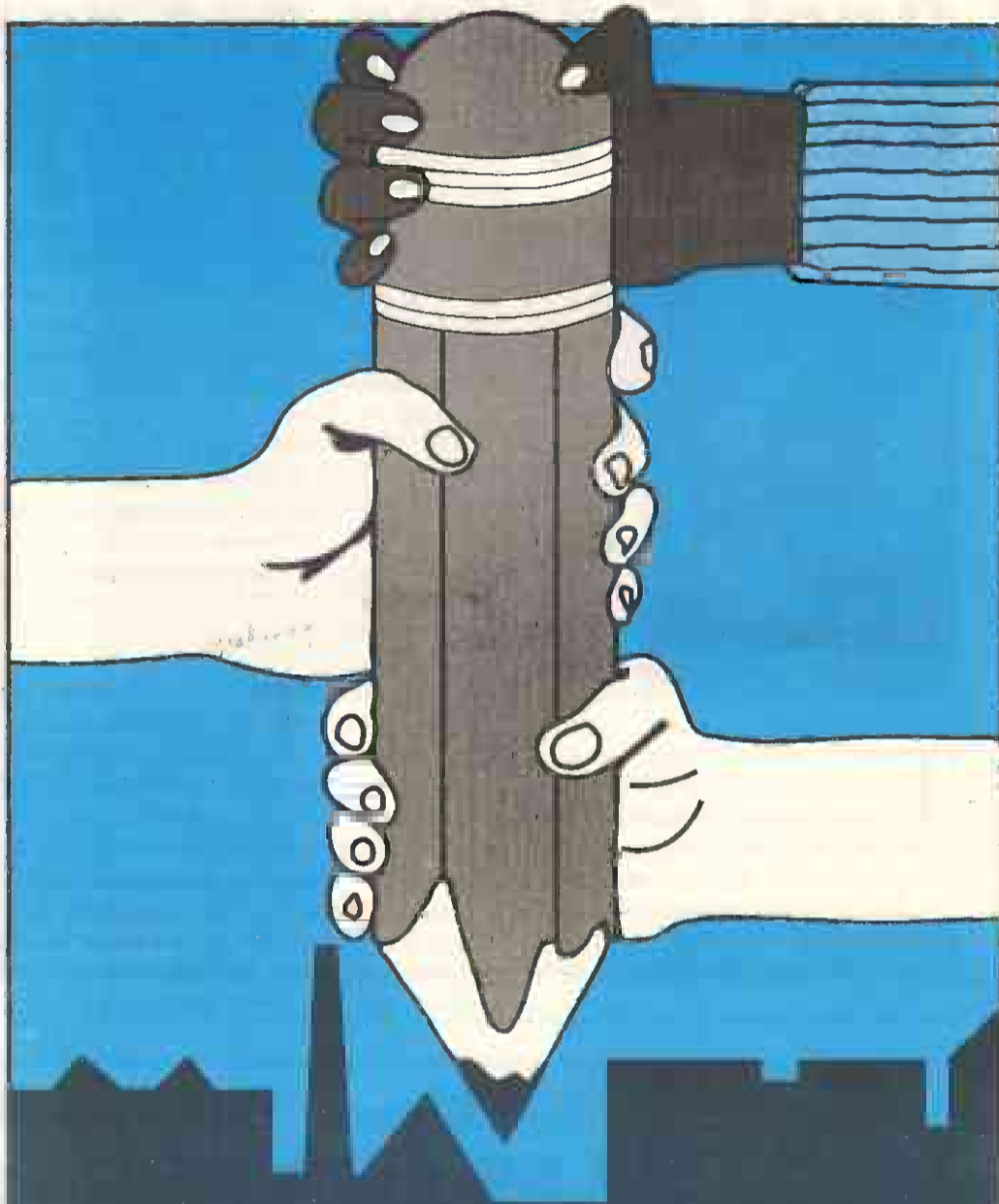
## Requirements

**High School Transcript** — All applicants are required to submit their high school transcript. High school transcript must show rank in class or rank in class must be provided.

1. **College Transcripts** — If presently enrolled in a College, University or a recognized Technical or Vocational Post-Secondary School as a full-time student, applicant is required to submit transcript, along with their High School Transcript.

2. **Test** — All applicants are required to take a Scholarship Aptitude Test — SAT — (the Admissions Testing Program Examination of the College Entrance Examination Board), American College Testing Program — ACT — or equivalent examination by a recognized Technical or Vocational Post-Secondary School. If you have already taken the above tests, you should request your school to forward the results of your test to the Secretary-Treasurer's office of the International Union.

All requirements are due at the Secretary-Treasurer's office no later than May 31, 1999.



SEND FOR OPEIU SCHOLARSHIP APPLICATION  
Application deadline — May 31, 1999

Please send me the application for the 1999 Howard Coughlin Memorial Scholarship.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_

Zip \_\_\_\_\_

OPEIU Local Union \_\_\_\_\_

Send to: OPEIU  
Howard Coughlin Memorial Scholarship Fund  
1660 L Street, NW, Suite 801  
Washington, DC 20036

Call for Canadian Address at (514) 522-6511.

## Selection of Scholarship

The selections shall be based on recommendations of an academic scholarship committee. Announcement of the winners will be made during the month of June each year.

Address all inquiries to: Office of Professional Employees International Union, Howard Coughlin Memorial Scholarship Fund, 1660 L Street, NW, Suite 801, Washington, DC 20036. Phone (202) 393-4464, Fax: (202) 347-0649.



## Canadian Locals in the News

# Opal Skilling retires from Local 15, named Secretary-Treasurer Emeritus



The Executive Board of Local 15, Coquitlam, British Columbia, hosted a retirement party in September for Sister Opal Skilling, a member and representative for thirty-eight years and duly elected Secretary-Treasurer — Skilling served from 1962 to 1997, the longest serving Secretary-Treasurer in the

OPEIU's Canadian history. In recognition of these many years of service, it was unanimously decided at the Local 15 General Council Meeting in October that Skilling be conferred the title of Secretary-Treasurer Emeritus.

Honored guests included OPEIU's President Michael Goodwin, Secretary-Treasurer Gilles Beauregard, and Canadian Director Michel Lajeunesse (pictured at left). The Premier of British Columbia, Glen Clark, also took time out of his busy schedule to join in wishing Skilling a well-deserved retirement.

As master of ceremonies, Doug Gibson — a long-time member and dear friend of Skilling — introduced the Head Table and other long-time labor leaders, including: Jim Dugan of the Plumbers; Bill Kessel, Floorlayers; Ray Haynes, retired B.C. Federation of Labour; John Fitzpatrick, Marine Workers and Vancouver District Labour Council; Jean (Mohart) Scott, Past President; Terry Smith, IWA and others addressed the crowd. Local 15 President Barry

Hodson then introduced Skilling who said; "It is awesome, not a complete surprise, but awesome. To think that our OPEIU officers would fly in from New York, Washington, D.C., and Montreal and that our Premier would be available to spend the evening."

After recognizing the more than two hundred friends, family, union members

and guests, Skilling gave a special thank you to "my Delores, Vicki and Adele, and our office staff and our Business Representatives, Paul and Nao, and, of course, my Barry!" She also gave a special thanks that her family — sons, grandchildren and great grandson — were included in this touching and memorable event.



### Local 463 — Montreal, Québec

## Local 463 celebrates 40th anniversary

More than 140 delegates from Local Union 463, which represents members working at Gaz Métropolitain in Montreal, Québec, convened on November 7, 1998 for the Local's convention. This was also the 40th anniversary celebration for the Local.

With the theme, "40 years of solidarity to be proud of," the convention's topics included work reorganization, bargaining demands, pension and internal organizing. Festivities surrounding the anniversary

hosted by Local 463 President François Bisson took place at the convention adjournment in the presence of International Secretary-Treasurer Gilles Beauregard, Canadian Director Michel Lajeunesse and Eastern Canada Council President and International Vice President Claude Grenier. Also present were Local 463 past president and current E.C.C. Representative Denis Fréchette, current union representative Simon Berlin, and Local 463 Honorary President Phil Lamoureux.

## Prairies get a new ROC organizer

Longtime activist Judy Boehmer has recently been hired as the new ROC Organizer for Region 9, Manitoba, Saskatchewan, Alberta. Boehmer has been with Local Union 397 since 1980 where she held union offices such as steward, council member, trustee, recording secretary, and

first place and second place president of the Local. She also was regional member representing the Prairies on the Canadian Consultative Committee. This young grandmother of nine has also represented OPEIU for a number of years on the Women's Committee of the Canadian Labour Congress.

## OPEIU member chosen as NDP candidate

Nathalie Galesloot, an administrative assistant with the Mid-Canada Council in Thunder Bay, Ontario, Canada, won the nomination to serve as the New Democratic Party's candidate in the next provincial election for Thunder Bay-Superior North. The election is expected to be held in the spring of 1999.

Galesloot will run against one-term MPP Michael Gravelle, a Liberal from Port Arthur. She is confident she can beat Gravelle, saying, "Thunder Bay is a big labor town and this riding here has historically been represented by the NDP." Galesloot has the support of New Democ-

rat Gilles Pouliot who, until his announced retirement this year, held the Lake Nipigon riding — now part of the Thunder Bay-Superior North riding.

Galesloot, who was trained as a registered practical nurse, says her top priority if elected is to stop cuts to health care and education.

"I am grateful and proud to be part of the Office and Professional Employees International Union," wrote Galesloot in a letter to International President Michael Goodwin. "I thank you sincerely for your support and encouragement and will work diligently to achieve success for the New Democratic Party and the OPEIU."

### Local 57 — Montreal, Québec

## Fighting for first contract

Eighteen employees from Caisse populaire St-Agapit, in a small town outside Québec City, have joined OPEIU Local 57. The new Local 57 members went on strike on October 15, 1998 when bargaining talks for their

first contract broke off. The Québec Labour Department has appointed a conciliator in the ongoing dispute. OPEIU Local 57 currently represents 3,000 members in 110 caisses populaires across the province of Québec.



## Local News

# Local 35/NML ratifies new 4-year contract



Joe Burbach, President of Local 35, takes part in the informational picket.

“We won a contract we can all be proud of,” said Frozine Billoups, Local 35 Chief Steward at Northwestern Mutual Life Insurance Company.

For six months, union members at Northwestern Mutual fought back against company proposals to create new part-time positions without benefits, assign new work schedules, including Saturdays, increase employee health care contributions by up to 7 percent, and provide only merit increases at management discretion.

Local 35 members fought back by building solidarity within the Milwaukee Labor Community and taking their fight for a new contract to the company’s agents and the public. Informational picketing, a candlelight vigil, protests at Northwestern Mutual’s agents convention, radio commercials

and other events were held to demonstrate their determination to fight for a fair contract. Through the support of the Milwaukee County Labor Council, union members from across the community joined with OPEIU Local 35 to let management know that NML workers had the support of their union brothers and sisters.

They reaped the benefit of their hard work and determination when the membership ratified a new contract on August 26, 1998. The new contract calls for wage increases totaling 16.4 percent over the four-year agreement. Management withdrew their proposal to force employees to work Saturday at straight time and employees the right to refuse assignment to evening schedules. In addition, management withdrew their proposal to create new part-time positions without benefits. Increases to em-

ployee health care contributions were held to a minimum with a 1 percent increase taking effect in the year 2000 and another 1 percent in the year 2001.

“We received outstanding support from our International Union. Without their

help and support, we wouldn’t have been successful,” said Judy Burnick, Business Manager of Local 35. According to Joe Burbach, President of Local 35, “International Representative Bonnie Strauss did a great job in building and keeping the internal solidarity we needed.”

Members of the bargaining committee included: Frozine Billoups, Dan Brophy, Cindy Trapp-Dietz, David Maass, Cylvia Prince, Calvin Bailey, Tom Schalk, Business Representative Cindy “Ski” Oleson and Business Manager Judy Burnick. The new contract will expire in May 2002.



The candlelight vigil.

## Local 277 congratulates its Howard Coughlin Scholarship winner



Local 277 President Ronnie Jones presents the Howard Coughlin Scholarship to Amber Gentry, daughter of Local 277’s Production Operations Chief Steward Debbie Gentry. The proud mother has been a member of Local 277 for 21 years. Amber graduated from Springtown High School, Springtown, Texas in the spring of 1998, and currently attends Tarleton University at Stephenville, Texas.

### Canadian Locals continued . . .

## Three bargaining units merge

Black Top & Blue Cabs (1960) Limited (a subsidiary of Black Top Cabs Limited), Beach View Services Ltd. (Beach Place Ventures Ltd.) and Office and Technical Employees Union, Local No. 15 — three bargaining units with separate certifications and contracts for the office, dispatch and garage — have been consolidated into one certification and one contract. According to Business Representative Paul Bjarnason, the new certification, Beach Place Ventures Ltd., is a bargaining unit of sixty (60) members including supervisors as amended by the British Columbia Labour Relations Board on August 8, 1998.



# The 1998 Scholarship Award Winners

*The OPEIU is proud to help make the goal of higher education a reality for many of its members and their families. Congratulations and best wishes to all the 1998 winners of the OPEIU's various scholarship programs.*

## Howard Coughlin Memorial Scholarship

The following were selected for the 1998 Howard Coughlin Memorial Scholarship full-time and part-time scholarship awards:

### ★ ★ ★ Full-Time Winners ★ ★ ★

#### Region II

**M**s. Stephanie F. Coouia, daughter of Paciencia Coouia, Local 2, Washington, DC.



**M**s. Margaret L. Hartmann, daughter of Grace L. Hartmann, Local 32, Newark, New Jersey.

**M**s. Christine Gressianu, daughter of Floriana Gressianu, Local 153, New York, New York.



**M**s. Janice J. Kim, daughter of Cheon W. Kim, Local 2, Washington, DC.

#### Region III

**M** Benjamin G. Trotter, son of Bonnie H. Trotter, Local 119, Chattanooga, Tennessee.



**M**s. Amber L. Gentry, daughter of Deborah A. Gentry, Local 277, Fort Worth, Texas.

**M**r. Jonathan R. Lee, son of Donna M. Lee, Local 30, Los Angeles, California.



**M**r. Brian K. Wong, son of Lisa W. Wong, Local 8, Seattle, Washington.

#### Region VI

**M**r. Daman S. Auvenshine, son of Theresa M. Auvenshine, Local 459, Lansing, Michigan.



**M**r. Brian L. Kienitz, son of Bonnie A. Kienitz, Local 12, Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minnesota.

**M**s. Christine M. Kryscio, daughter of Keena M. Kryscio-Riffenburg, Local 512, Michigan.



**M**r. Eric M. Wu, son of Hsiaolan Nancy Wu, Local 339, Akron, Ohio.



★ ★ ★ **Part-Time Winners** ★ ★ ★

**Region II**



**M**s. Rosanna M. Farley, Local 2, Washington, DC.

**Region VI**

**M**s. Jean McQuiggin, Local 11, Portland, Oregon.



**Region VII continued**

**M**s. Sandra L. House, Local 459, Lansing, Michigan.



**Region V**

**M**s. Rose M. Varela, Local 30, Los Angeles, California.



**Region VII**

**M**s. Denise A. Brilowski, Local 95, Rapids, Wisconsin.



**M**s. Laura A. LaFleur, Local 459, Lansing, Michigan.

**The John Kelly Labor Studies Scholarship Fund**

The following were selected for the 1998 John Kelly Labor Studies Scholarship Fund awards:

**Region II**



**M**s. Rosanna M. Farley, Local 2, Washington, DC.

**Region V**

**M**s. Rose M. Varela, Local 30, Los Angeles, California.



**Region VII continued**

**M**s. Jody M. Hanneman, Local 95, Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin.



**M**s. Cynthia M. Price, Local 2, Washington, DC.



**Region VII**

**M**s. Adrienne L. Beckham, Local 512, Lansing, Michigan.



**M**r. Raymond F. Przybelski, Local 95, Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin.



**M**r. Sean C. Safford, Local 2, Washington, DC.

**M**s. Karen M. Genisot, Local 95, Wisconsin Rapids, Wisconsin.

**M**s. Nancy J. Weeks, Local 12, Minneapolis-St. Paul, Minnesota.





## Tennessee Valley Authority Employees Fund Scholarship

The following were selected for the 1998 Tennessee Valley Authority Employees Fund Scholarship Program awards:



**M**s. Kristina L. Alegre, daughter of Linda D. Alegre, Local 119, Chattanooga, Tennessee.

**M**s. Danielle L. Garner, daughter of Donna G. Garner, Local 119, Chattanooga, Tennessee.



**M**r. Shane L. Sykes, son of Freddie L. Sykes, Local 119, Chattanooga, Tennessee.



**M**r. Chad A. Tollett, son of Carol D. Tollett, Local 268, Knoxville, Tennessee.

**M**s. Hollen L. Barner, daughter of William A. Barner, Local 119, Chattanooga, Tennessee.



**M**s. Heather M. Jones, daughter of Pamela M. Jones, Local 119, Chattanooga, Tennessee.



**M**r. Wesley D. Sherer, son of Carol A. Sherer, Local 119, Chattanooga, Tennessee.



**M**r. Kyle M. Barnes, son of Barry W. Granstaff, Local 119, Chattanooga, Tennessee.

## Announcing the 1999 Office and Professional Employees International Union Romeo Corbeil Scholarship Fund

### Summer Camp

Ten (10) scholarships will be awarded on the basis of at least one (1) per region and not to exceed one (1) per family for a lifetime. Applications are open to children (between ages 13 and 16 ONLY) of OPEIU members in good standing or associate members, all of whom must meet the eligibility requirements and comply with the Rules and Procedures as established by the OPEIU Executive Board. Each scholarship has a total maximum value of \$2,000.

### ELIBILITY

An applicant must be either, the son, daughter, stepchild or legally adopted child (between ages 13 and 16 ONLY) of an OPEIU member in good standing or an associate member.

### PROCEDURES

Each applicant must file an official OPEIU scholarship program application. Application forms must be endorsed by the Local Union President or Secretary-Treasurer attesting that a parent of an applicant is a member or an associate member in good standing on the date of award. Such endorsement must be obtained before the application is submitted.

### FORMS

Application forms may be obtained at your Local Union office or at the Secretary-Treasurer's office of the International Union.

### APPLICATIONS

All applications must be received at the Secretary-Treasurer's office of the International Union, 1660 L Street, NW, Suite 801, Washington, DC 20036, no later than May 31<sup>st</sup> of each year.

### SELECTION OF SCHOLARSHIPS

Announcement of the winners will be made during the month of June of each year.

### ADDRESS ALL INQUIRIES TO:

Office and Professional Employees International Union  
Romeo Corbeil Scholarship Fund "Summer Camp"  
1660 L Street, NW, Suite 801  
Washington, DC 20036

PHONE: (202) 393-4464 FAX: (202) 347-0649  
Call for Canadian Address at (514) 522-6511.



# Notice to Employees Subject to Union Security Clauses

The 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. This is the only obligation under such clauses 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 co-workers, but nonmembers may file objections to funding expenditures that are nongermane 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 you file an objection to the funding of expenditures that are nongermane 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 the development of contract proposals;
- Participate in strike votes;
- 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 and 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; lobbying on matters directly related to conditions of employment and Union administration.

Examples of expenditures nongermane to the collective bargaining process ("non-

chargeable" expenditures) are those made for community services, for lobbying on issues that benefit represented employees and their families as citizens rather than as workers; for political purposes, for certain 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 Voice of the Electorate fund ("VOTE"), is 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 expenditures that is spent on non-chargeable expenses. This percentage is calculated separately for the International Union and for the Local Union. The major portion of an objector's fees remains with the Local Union. Studies show that the percentage of reduction for the Local Union ranges between 0% and 8%. The remaining smaller portion of the objector's fees goes to the International Union. The percentage of non-chargeable expenses of the International Union, which will be effective for the months of September, 1998 through August, 1999, is 28.94%.

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. That challenge must specify precisely which classification and/or calculation of the International Union and/or Local Union are being challenged.

Challengers must notify Gilles Beauregard, Secretary-Treasurer, at the Office and Professional Employees International Union at 1660 L Street, N.W., Suite 801, Washington, DC 20036, in writing, within thirty (30) days of their receipt of the Objector Letter, of any challenge he or she wishes to make through this arbitration procedure. That challenge should specify what portions of the International and/or Local Union classifications or calculations are being challenged.

The Unions shall bear the burden of justifying their 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 arbi-

tration 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 on 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 amount determined by the arbitrator. If the arbitrator approves the Union's calculations, the escrowed money and interest will revert to the Local and International Unions.

Individuals who choose to file objections

to funding expenditures that are nongermane to the collective bargaining process should file them in writing with the Office and Professional Employees International Union, 1660 L Street, N.W., Washington, DC 20036. Attention: Gilles Beauregard, 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, 1999. This objection will be effective September 1, 1999 through August 31, 2000. All objections must be renewed each year in writing. In all years thereafter, future objections or renewed objections must be postmarked during the month of June. All timely future or renewed objections will be effective September 1 through August 31 of each year thereafter for which an objection is filed.

## Want the hottest news?

### Sign up for the OPEIU MemberGram

Sometimes the news is too important. There's legislation coming up for a vote that will affect you and your families, and you have to contact your legislator quickly. There's a rally or march scheduled to fight an abusive employer. Or, a new court decision or governmental regulation that will have immediate effects on your job.

It's times like these when the new OPEIU MemberGram will be invaluable.

International President Michael Goodwin will express the MemberGram to interested local union activists whenever important issues arise. Just sign the form below, which duplicates the MemberGram design, and watch the mails.

"It's important to improve our communications with you, the members, to involve you more actively in decision-making and in actions of the union. And communications should never be one-way. I, therefore, look forward to your responses on the effectiveness of the MemberGram as well as the subjects we cover," President Goodwin says, as he urges members to sign up.

### From the desk of President Michael Goodwin



# MemberGram

Yes, sign me up to receive the MemberGram whenever hot topics come up. I want to be kept informed on issues, activities, and decisions that affect me, my family and my local union.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Local Union \_\_\_\_\_

Social Security # \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

Phone (Daytime) \_\_\_\_\_ (Evening) \_\_\_\_\_

FAX \_\_\_\_\_

Complete and send to:  
MemberGram, OPEIU, 1660 L Street, N.W., Suite 801, Washington, DC 20036



## Editorial



# America's Working Families Prevail in '98 Elections

by Michael Goodwin, International President

Someone once said, "What is the first part of politics? Education. The second? Education. And the third? Education."

Never was this more plainly seen than in the 1998 election cycle, when organized labor undertook a full-fledged political education campaign aimed at reaching the 13 million AFL-CIO union members in this country. This grassroots campaign encouraged union members to vote for candidates who supported labor's agenda, while increasing overall awareness of the issues affecting working families.

Labor '98 was a massive, multi-million dollar political operation spearheaded by the AFL-CIO — of which the Office and Professional Employees International Union played an integral part.

And the results were staggering.

Due to our grassroots get-out-the-vote efforts, union members turned out in droves on Election Day — 49 percent, versus just 34 percent in non-union households. The numbers were even more impressive in regions such as California where union turnout was 59 percent, versus just 32 percent in non-union households.

This means that nationwide, union households cast 23 percent of the total vote, while we are just 17 percent of the voting age population.

The campaign's reach was unprecedented. Seventy percent of union members reported that they received information from their unions. That is an overwhelming majority of union households who were contacted in one way or another — either through phone banks, direct mailings, or personal contact on a job site or at their home.

Labor votes ensured that we picked up several labor-friendly House seats in November. It has proved crucial in many ballot

initiatives, including the defeat in Oregon of Measure 59 by a vote of 51 percent to 49 percent. Union members opposed this initiative — which would have greatly restricted union participation in the political process — by 63 percent. Twelve percent of union members indicated that Measure 59 was the number one reason they voted in the

Thirty OPEIU members were assigned as Labor '98 coordinators — union officers, international staff and rank-and-file members from Local Unions across the country. These coordinators reached out to AFL-CIO members in a concerted effort to get-out-the-vote, particularly in districts where the races were close.

whose track records proved that they would protect the interests of working families — despite party affiliation.

President Clinton recognized our efforts in a teleconference between the Executive Council of the AFL-CIO — of which I proudly serve as a Vice President — and the White House, wherein President Clinton thanked organized labor for its role in the political campaigns.

The results of this campaign certainly proved the importance of knowledge. Armed with this information, working people were able to go to the polls on November 3 and use their vote effectively — defeating both candidates and initiatives aimed at silencing organized labor.

Once again, labor showed that, together, we have power — and we know how to use it. Labor '98 was an all-out effort to reach union members and impress upon them the importance of participating in the free election process at a local, regional and national level.

All those who attempted to silence working families learned a valuable lesson last November — we have a strong and powerful voice, and we intend to use it to further and protect the interests of working people everywhere.

*Members were not urged to vote along party lines, but instead to choose candidates whose track records proved that they would protect the interests of working families — despite party affiliation.*

'98 election. This vividly illustrates how important it is to educate voters, to clearly lay out the issues before them and provide them with the information they need to make informed decisions at the polls.

We certainly made waves this year, and people noticed. Mark Baker, a Republican candidate from Illinois' 17th District, was quoted in *The Washington Post* as saying, "We saw people standing in line at the polls Tuesday morning with overcoats over pajamas. That tells me that they were dragged out of bed."

More than likely, many of these people were propelled out their beds by the message sent by organized labor — that this election would prove to be one of the most critical in American history, especially so for the working people of this nation.

How was all this work accomplished?

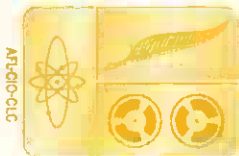
The huge educational effort was led by 392 Labor '98 coordinators and a whopping 750 get-out-the-vote coordinators working throughout the United States. Labor volunteers made 5.5 million phone calls to potential voters urging them to get to the polls on Election Day and educating them about the issues of importance to labor families. More than 9.5 million pieces of mail were sent to union households outlining the different initiatives on the ballots, and providing background information on the candidates in the region. Finally, 511 different leaflets were produced and distributed at job sites throughout the country.

And the OPEIU was right there, doing its part to ensure that union members made their voices heard at the polls.

And the campaign was a non-partisan effort. Members were not urged to vote along party lines, but instead to choose candidates



International President Michael Goodwin with President Clinton.



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