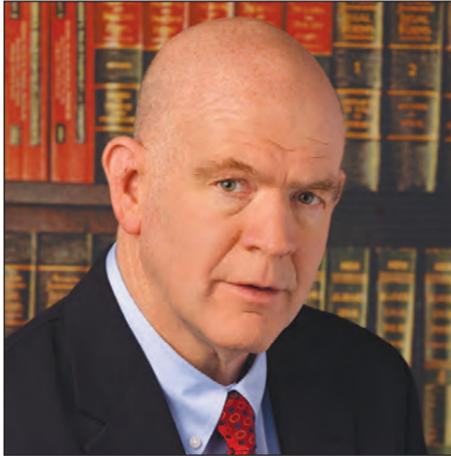


Thank You For
Repealing
Right To Work



**Labor Defeats Anti-Worker Law
While Restoring Prevailing Wage in Michigan**



Congress Takes from the Poor to Give to the Rich

By Richard Lanigan
President

Robin Hood became a legend in Western culture taking from the rich to give to the poor. In contrast, the recent congressional debt ceiling proposal seems designed to take from the poor to give to the rich.

Congress proposed defunding the bulk of the unused Covid-19 relief money currently dedicated to grants for health care providers, medical care for veterans, pension benefit support and aid to transportation systems that experienced a drop in ridership during the pandemic. These are all subsidies directly or indirectly impacting Americans.

The proposal did not ask for a roll back of the 2017 tax cuts or taxpayer funding to entities that did not lose money during the pandemic. For example, Amazon received more than \$1 billion in public money while its sales skyrocketed 37 percent year over year.

If Congress believes the country is in a financial shortfall, why target retirees' pensions when giving money to so many whose only need was increasing profit margins? Pensioners saw their retirement savings plummet during the 2008 recession when companies, such as General Motors, received subsidies. Pensioners, however, are likely to put their money back in the economy. Why target transportation systems whose ridership declined during the pandemic? Or health care providers, many of which supported

health care professionals who worked under unthinkable conditions with each Covid surge and faced life and death emergencies every day for more than a year?

Americans should not forget Covid funding protected people from eviction, foreclosure, bankruptcy, loss of employment and loss of health care and kept many businesses from closing.

The tax cuts of 2017 removed monies from the federal budget while making the wealthy even richer. In fact, many report on how little they pay in taxes relative to the amount of their wealth. When you reduce the amount of revenue in a budget, you are much more likely to be in a deficit. Congress did not seek to claw back the tax cuts. Much of the current deficit costs could be recouped if one or more of these tax cuts for the rich were repealed.

Another example is during the recession of 2008, taxpayer TARP (Troubled Asset Relief Program) monies were paid to large corporations. Some of those companies used the money for stock buy backs to increase the value of the remaining stock. During that same recession, retirees and others saw their fixed incomes shrink.

The debate should be whether it is better to provide tax cuts, TARP monies or Covid relief to people and companies that increased profits and do not need it, or should the funding go to health care that arguably saved lives, financially strapped transit systems or pensioners who worked

and saved their whole lives and have already been asked to bear a major burden of the shortfall. Where do you think the money is better used, with Amazon or with your retired relatives? We are fighting for the retirees, health care institutions, veterans and others who are slated to lose money already committed to them in earlier law and budgets.

If Congress believes the country is in a financial shortfall, why target retirees' pensions when giving money to so many whose only need was increasing profit margins?

Do you agree this is taking from the poor to give to the rich? If so, call your congressperson to protect pensioners and veterans, as well as hospitals and transit systems. In a working democracy we must be mindful of these issues the next time we are in the voting booth.

Union Contracts Help Close the Women's Pay Gap

March 14 was Women's Equal Pay Day, symbolizing how far into the year women must work to earn what men earned in the previous year. The date is even later in the year for women of color.

The National Committee on Pay Equity established Equal Pay Day in 1996. Each year since, it has been observed as a symbol of how many days into the new year the average woman must work to earn what the average white man earned the previous year.

Women of color are impacted the most by pay inequity. Black women must work until July 27 to earn what the average white man earned the prior year; Hispanic women do not reach pay parity until Oct. 5; and indigenous women must work until Nov. 30 to earn the same amount.

A recent analysis by the Economic Policy Institute found the gender pay gap persists at all levels of education.

Research suggests the wage premium from strong union contracts can make a difference in closing the wage gap. Union women workers earn 22 percent more, on average, than nonunion women workers. When working women have access to the benefits and protections provided by a union contract — and most women, according to Gallup, would join a union if they could — we can begin to close the wage gap and raise living standards for all working people.

Research suggests the wage premium from strong union contracts can make a difference in closing the wage gap.

Black and Hispanic women experience the largest pay gaps

Women's hourly wages as a share of white men's, by race and ethnicity, 2022



Notes: Hourly wages for each group are represented by the average wage of the middle 20 percent of their respective wage distributions, that is, the average of the 40th–60th percentile for each group. See Gould and deCourcy (2023) for more details on that specification.

Source: EPI analysis of Current Population Survey Outgoing Rotation Group microdata. For more information on the data sample, see EPI's State of Working America Data Library at epi.org/data.

Provided by the Economic Policy Institute

INSIDE THIS ISSUE



On the cover: OPEIU Vice President and Local 42 President Lisa Blake, left, and Local 459 members Ashley Huff, center, and Tori Centilli, who is also a chief steward and executive board member for the local, are among the many OPEIU members who worked toward repeal of Michigan’s so-called “right-to-work” law.

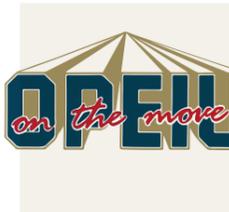
With the repeal of the anti-worker law, working people in Michigan are now better protected on the job. They have also proved the power we have when we stand together to fight for our rights on the job. See the cover story on pg. 6 for more about working people’s victory in Michigan.



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Minneapolis Institute of Art Staff Ratify Contract 14

OPEIU CONNECT

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NLRB Ruling Expands Workers’ Rights

In a precedent-setting case brought by Local 40, the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) rules employers may not offer severance agreements requiring employees to waive labor rights.

When McLaren Macomb, a hospital in Mt. Clemens, Michigan, offered a severance agreement preventing 11 service employees from making disparaging statements about them as a condition of their severance, Local 40 filed a charge with the NLRB.

“[Management] was trying to give people severance agreements with non-disclosure agreements (NDAs) that would prevent them from looking bad,” said Dina Carlisle, RN, Local 40 president.

The NLRB issued its *McLaren Macomb* ruling Feb. 21 stating such agreements are unlawful and unenforceable. The board’s decision reestablishes a longstanding precedent that employers cannot require workers to waive their labor law rights as a condition of a severance agreement. It had abandoned this precedent in a 2020 ruling. The decision is retroactive with a six-month statute of limitations.

According to the ruling, “a severance agreement is unlawful if its terms have a reasonable tendency to interfere with, restrain or coerce employees in the exercise of their Section 7 rights.” In effect, it allows workers who have signed such agreements to speak freely about their working conditions.

“We are very excited this frees up workers from being put into this kind of situation in the future,” Carlisle said. “It’s beautiful how this far-reaching win will help workers everywhere.”

Membership Benefits

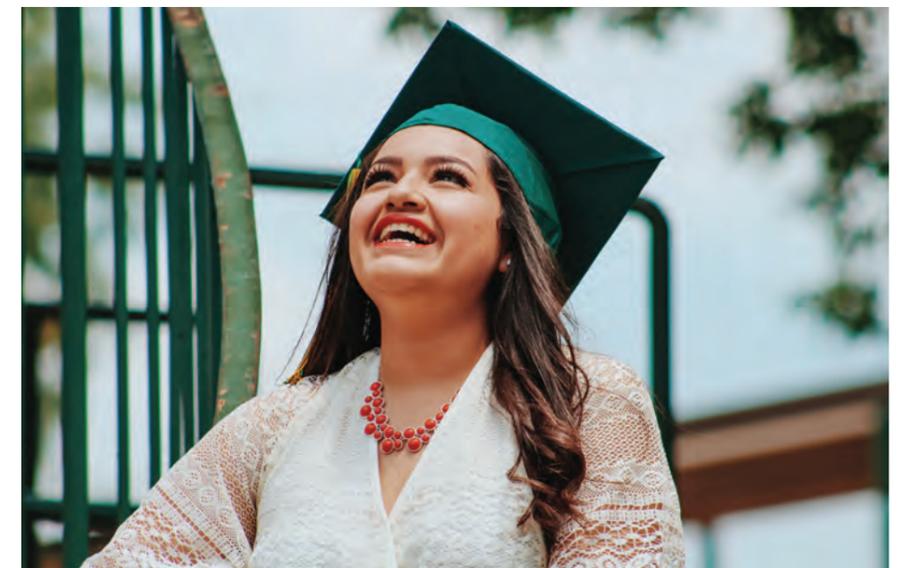
OPEIU Program Offers Help with Student Debt

If you are one of millions of Americans burdened with student debt, your union has a program that may be able to help.

Each July, OPEIU awards five \$2,500 scholarships to members in good standing through the OPEIU Student Debt Reduction Program. To be eligible, members must have completed an associate or undergraduate degree and have at least \$10,000 in outstanding student debt.

Applications are due to the Secretary-Treasurer’s office of the International Union no later than **June 30, 2023**.

Full details and eligibility requirements can be found at opeiu.org under the Member Resources tab and by clicking the Membership Benefits link.



Labor Defeats Right-to-Work Law in Historic Michigan Effort

OPEIU members throughout Michigan celebrated a watershed victory as Gov. Gretchen Whitmer signed the repeal of the anti-worker legislation and restored prevailing wage in the state.

In March, a pro-worker legislature sent a historic piece of legislation, the repeal of the notorious “right-to-work” law, to the Michigan governor’s desk. Whitmer signed the bill March 28, making Michigan the first state in decades to repeal the anti-union law.

“Today, we are coming together to restore workers’ rights, protect Michiganders on the job and grow Michigan’s middle class,” Whitmer said in a statement. “Michigan workers are the most talented and hardworking in the world and deserve to be treated with dignity and respect.”

The same day Whitmer signed legislation restoring a prevailing wage law Republican lawmakers repealed in 2018.

“This legislation can and will strengthen the rights of Michigan workers,” said Lisa Blake, an OPEIU vice president and president of Local 42 in Farmington Hills. “Its signing is a testament to what can happen when working people stick together at the ballot box and at work.”

“It’s a good time to be a Michigander,” said Local 40 President Dina Carlisle, RN, who is based in Mt. Clemens. “This will strengthen the rights of union workers relative to their employers every single day.”

So-called “right-to-work” laws were developed in the 1940s to counteract workers’ rising power. The laws aim to undermine unions’ bargaining strength by prohibiting union security agreements. Union security agreements require all employees benefiting from a union contract to pay their fair share of bargaining and representation costs.

“Its signing is a testament to what can happen when working people stick together at the ballot box and at work.”

– Lisa Blake, an OPEIU vice president and president of Local 42



Local 277 member Lisa Bennett and Michigan AFL-CIO President Ron Bieber celebrate labor’s victory.



Many OPEIU members worked to see repeal of the so-called “right-to-work” law in Michigan. Local 459 Organizer Monica Artis, standing, mobilizes members at McLaren Greater Lansing Hospital.



Local 459 members employed by Touchpoint at Ascension Macomb-Oakland Hospital join the fight in Michigan, including, left to right, stewards Neal Davis, Clinton Howard and Tonya Goard-Gaines.

Honoring OPEIU’s Essential Workers

OPEIU conducted interviews with dozens of members providing health care, transportation, food service, credit union and other vital services on the front line of the Covid-19 pandemic. These brave members talked about the challenges they faced, shared their personal stories of isolation and fear and how they were able, through the power of their union, to stand up for themselves and their co-workers.

“Like any health care worker, at the beginning of the pandemic, there was a rollercoaster of emotions,” said Kathleen Miyashiro, a registered nurse at Kapi’olani Medical Center for Women & Children in Honolulu, and member of the Hawai’i Nurses’ Association (HNA)/OPEIU Local 50. “From fear and anxiety, to feeling angry, to feeling betrayed and abandoned at times.

“We looked at the pandemic as an opportunity for us, as health care workers, to be really supportive and there for our community – to do the right thing,” Miyashiro continued. “Our duty is taking care of the sick and needy.”

In the early days of the pandemic, personal protective equipment, or PPE, was in short supply nationwide. “We had to fight for very basic things in the beginning,” said Dan Ross, RN, Local 50 president and an OPEIU vice president. Local 50 appealed to hospitals’ management before the pandemic reached crisis levels, Ross said, yet the response, to varying degrees, was “wholly inadequate.”

Health care workers nationwide working in hospitals, clinics, laboratories and patients’ homes were regularly left without the protective equipment they needed to stay safe. “There was no way to distance myself from anyone in the beginning,” said Sara Jacob, a member of Local 459 and a residential care steward at Community Mental Health in Lansing, Michigan, who works closely with patients.

Hundreds of millions of people contracted Covid-19 in the United States alone, and it has claimed the lives of more than 1 million Americans to date. Health care workers are at particularly high risk of contracting the virus without adequate PPE. In the early days of the pandemic, workers were often asked to reuse potentially contaminated masks.

“I was the first one in my unit to contract Covid through my job,” Miyashiro said. “I

actually suffered long Covid, so those six months were probably the most trying and challenging times of my life.

“It was very helpful to have a union during that time,” she said. “It was even before the pandemic started.”

Adapting to Meet the Challenge

OPEIU and its local unions coordinated nationally and locally to provide PPE where possible, organized to hold employers accountable, negotiated important safety measures into collective bargaining agreements and regularly consulted with an industrial hygienist hired by OPEIU at the start of the pandemic.

Local unions from Florida to Hawai’i continued to adapt to ever-changing conditions and, despite the many challenges, to organize new members.

“Organizing really kept the group going,” said Walter Clarit Jr., a transit operations supervisor in Miami-Dade County and treasurer of the Government Supervisors Association of Florida (GSAF)/OPEIU Local 100. “We didn’t hide it – everyone was hurting, but people still have to get to work, if there’s work to go to.” That’s why, like so many other OPEIU leaders, Clarit continuously ensured his co-workers knew their rights, their contract and the power of their union behind them.

The pandemic prompted collaboration with other local unions in the area and within OPEIU, said Sharon Taylor, president of Local 459, which represents nearly 2,500 members, almost all of whom were deemed essential during the early days of the pandemic. They formed coalitions with other local unions to stay informed about what workers in other hospitals, courts and social services were facing.

Through it all, they did not stop organizing. “You need new members to bring life and new energy into the union,” said Taylor, who also serves as an OPEIU vice president.

“There’s nothing like meeting with a group of people who want to be union members and want to make their lives better.”

Maria Szejbach, RN, served her community on the front lines of the pandemic as an intensive care unit nurse at McLaren Macomb Hospital in Michigan. A nurse for nearly 50 years, and a Local 40 bargaining team member for 20 years, she noted the importance of her union in not only promoting safety at work, but ensuring there was work to go to.

“We looked at the pandemic as an opportunity for us, as health care workers, to be really supportive and there for our community – to do the right thing.”

– Kathleen Miyashiro, RN, member of HNA/OPEIU Local 50

“Our union advocated for all nurses, including ones who couldn’t work or were fearful of working,” Szejbach said. “Even if their department shut down, we kept them employed through work-sharing agreements so everyone could still take home a paycheck.”

In addition, she said, benefits negotiated pre-pandemic proactively kept nurses at McLaren from working mandatory overtime, which, in turn, ensured the hospital maintained more reasonable staffing levels during the pandemic.

When Szejbach began working at the hospital in 1995, nurses were forced to work overtime during an understaffed midnight shift. “I was told if you left, you’d be charged with abandonment and lose your license,” she recalled.

The nurses went on strike over the issue in 2004, winning contract language that, years later, acted as a safety valve and mechanism for action during the pandemic as workers grappled with the virus and its impact on their lives.

Ryan Francesco Vilardi, a Local 29 member and clinical lab scientist at the Children’s Hospital of Oakland, noted the connection between a strong union and workplace protections. That connection was immediately apparent in the early days of the pandemic, when his Local 29 representative showed up and began handing out masks.

“It was a big thing, because sometimes we had to reuse our mask,” he said. “It showed how much the health of the membership mattered.” Membership engagement was key to weathering the crisis, Vilardi said.

“If you have an engaged membership within the union, you basically have the best possible mechanism to deliver and get the change you want in your workplace,” he said.

Thank you to all the front-line workers who gave their all and sacrificed so much for their communities.



OPEIU *on the move!*

Since 1945 the Office and Professional Employees International Union (OPEIU) has stood at the forefront of the movement to organize professional workers, helping them attain the wages, benefits and workplace conditions all working people need and deserve.

OPEIU nurses, clerks, teachers, pilots, umpires, engineers, accountants, librarians, podiatrists and bank tellers, as well as tech, museum, nonprofit

and university employees, government and manufacturing workers and many others are leading the fight for a decent standard of living in the industries we work in — industries affecting our lives and the well-being of our communities.

Nearly 80 years ago, we received our charter from the American Federation of Labor, establishing what was then called OEIU as the premier union for professional working people. Today, the approximately 100,000 members of OPEIU work throughout the United States and Canada.

OPEIU's demonstrated, decades-long commitment to working people in professional, technical and clerical roles is embodied by our democratic structure and is driven, as any union should be, by members like you.

A new economy has created new problems requiring new solutions. Thanks to the work of OPEIU members, stewards and representatives, however, OPEIU is fortunate to have renewed energy to combat the many issues facing working people.

As we emerge from the worst depths of the Covid-19 pandemic, inequality defines our economy now more than ever. Thanks to actions approved during our last convention, however, OPEIU continues its commitment to organizing the unorganized and raising living standards and the quality of life for all working people. OPEIU is truly on the move!

1906

The American Federation of Labor (AFL) issues its first federal clerical charter to a local union — Stenographers, Typists, Bookkeepers and Assistants, Federal Labor Union No. 11587, which becomes Office Employees International Union (OEIU) Local 1 in 1945.

1935

In the throes of the Great Depression, President Franklin D. Roosevelt signs into law the National Labor Relations Act, which extends collective bargaining and organizing rights to millions of workers in the private sector, though it excludes many professions held by women and people of color to appease white Southern Dixiecrats.



1941

The union's first organizing director, Henderson B. Douglas, on the stump organizing for the union.

1937

Several locals are chartered by the AFL, including ones in New York City (which would later become Local 153), Oakland (Local 29), Los Angeles (Local 30) and Chicago (Local 28). At the AFL Convention in Denver, the American Federation of Office Employees International Council — a loose organization of the newly chartered locals — is created.

1943

The first issue of *The Office Worker* (which becomes *White Collar* and is now known as *OPEIU Connect*) is published in March. The International Council opens its first office in Washington, D.C.



1945

On January 8, AFL President William Green officially issues a charter to the Office Employees International Union, which begins with 22,000 members meeting for the first convention in Cincinnati, Ohio. Ninety delegates attend from 54 local unions. Paul Hutchings is elected first president of OEIU and Howard Hicks is elected secretary-treasurer.

1929

The Great Depression begins, disrupting the global economy, leaving working people across the world in a persistent state of precariousness and poverty.



ON THE MOVE

1947

Congress overrides President Harry Truman's veto of the Taft-Hartley Act, which severely restricts many of the rights granted to working people by the National Labor Relations Act of 1935. The anti-union bill, passed in concert by lawmakers in both parties to rein in workers' power, allowed states to enact so-called "right-to-work" laws, forced union officers to sign non-communist affidavits with the federal government and heavily restricted legal rights of strikers.

1953

U.S. union density reaches an all-time high; about 35 percent of all U.S. workers are union members.

1955

The union holds its convention in New York City, where the International headquarters are moved. *The American Federation of Labor and the Congress of Industrial Organizations merge after a nearly two-decade-long split over strategic differences, forming the AFL-CIO.*



1951

The first-ever written International union contract is reached with the Tennessee Valley Authority, a federally owned corporation created to provide flood control, electricity and economic development to the Tennessee Valley during and after the Great Depression.

1965

At its 10th Convention in San Francisco, OEIU changes its name to the Office and Professional Employees International Union (OPEIU). Delegates vote to create an International strike fund.

1968

Dr. King is assassinated while standing in solidarity with striking AFSCME sanitation workers in Memphis, Tennessee.



1963

President John F. Kennedy, who by executive order the previous year recognized federal employees' right to bargain collectively, is assassinated in Dallas, Texas.



Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and A. Philip Randolph, in coordination with a broad coalition of civil rights and labor rights advocates, organize and execute the historic March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom.

1962

Former President Truman addresses OPEIU delegates.



1961

The union's political action fund, Voice of the Electorate (VOTE), is established.

1970

200,000 postal workers stun the nation by going on an illegal, but effective, strike for higher wages and better working conditions. Bowing to pressure, President Nixon signs the Postal Reorganization Act, granting full collective bargaining rights to postal workers across the U.S.

1987

A sex discrimination lawsuit filed by OPEIU in 1984 leads to a settlement in which thousands of female OPEIU members at the Tennessee Valley Authority receive a total of \$5 million in pay equity raises.

1980

OPEIU holds its 15th Convention in New York City, where John Kelly is elected president.

1981

President Ronald Reagan, a former union president himself, fires 13,000 striking air traffic controllers in PATCO, emboldening employers, industry groups and anti-union politicians to launch sustained attacks on labor unions nationwide. Subsequent research determines Reagan's actions resulted in lower wages for union and nonunion workers as bargaining power declined.

1994

Michael Goodwin is elected OPEIU president, a position he holds until his retirement in 2015.



1995

OPEIU celebrates its 50th birthday. The Federation of Catholic Teachers (FCT), comprised of 3,000 teachers within the Archdiocese of New York, affiliates with Local 153.

1997

Thousands of podiatrists form within OPEIU the first-ever American union for doctors, known as The First National Guild for Healthcare Providers of the Lower Extremity/OPEIU Guild 45.

2001

The Industrial Technical Professional Employees Union (ITPEU) affiliates in July, becoming ITPEU/OPEIU Local 4873.

2003

Nancy Wohlforth is named OPEIU secretary-treasurer, becoming the first openly gay woman to hold international office in any U.S. labor union.

2006

The first helicopter pilot strike in history begins on Sept. 20, involving hundreds of pilots employed by PHI, Inc. in Lafayette, Louisiana, and represented by Local 108.

2009

The Employee Free Choice Act—which would have made card check, rather than National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) elections, the standard for union representation certification—fails narrowly in the Senate, in part due to the Obama administration’s lack of vocal support. It also would have strengthened enforcement mechanisms against employers’ unfair labor practices.

2010

Mary Mahoney is named OPEIU secretary-treasurer, a position she holds to this day.



The Hawai’i Nurses’ Association (HNA) affiliates with OPEIU, adding 4,000 nursing professionals to our ranks, becoming HNA/OPEIU Local 50, as Hawai’i is the 50th state.

The Association of Minor League Umpires (AMLU) overwhelmingly votes to affiliate with OPEIU, becoming AMLU/OPEIU Guild 322.



2015

Richard Lanigan is named the fifth president of OPEIU, a position he holds to this day.

2016

Local 8 joins historic Coalition of Kaiser Permanente Unions.



2017

The OPEIU Nurses Council lobbies for safe nurse-to-patient staffing ratios on Capitol Hill.



OPEIU extends its defense fund benefit to furloughed government employees and introduces new identity protection benefit for all members.

2020



Covid-19 is declared a worldwide pandemic. OPEIU members across industries work tirelessly, at great personal risk, as essential workers providing critical services throughout the uncertainty of the pandemic’s first year. Nurses, medical staff, radiology and lab technologists, search and rescue helicopter pilots, nonprofit workers and other essential workers face an array of challenges posed by the growing crisis.

The World Health Organization (WHO) designates 2020 as the “Year of the Nurse and Midwife,” in honor of the 200th birth anniversary of Florence Nightingale, considered the founder of modern nursing. OPEIU represents approximately 27,000 nurses and other health care professionals in local unions across the U.S. who serve on the front line of the pandemic.

Kickstarter employees win an NLRB election, becoming the first wall-to-wall tech company to unionize in U.S. history. The group, Kickstarter United, joins Local 153.



Employees of Eagle Pro Clean at the Biggs Army Airfield in El Paso, Texas, form a union with Local 4873 in June.



2019

OPEIU expands in the nonprofit sector by launching Nonprofit Employees United, a central hub for existing and new members to coordinate, educate and strategize.



Employees at BookPeople, Texas’ largest independent bookstore, vote to join Local 277.

OPEIU launches its National Retirement Savings Plan, a 401(k) option for members.

The Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO) Act, a transformational labor law reform bill, is first introduced in Congress by Rep. Bobby Scott and Sen. Patty Murray.

2018

OPEIU members gather in Memphis in May to honor civil rights leader and champion of workers’ rights, Dr. King.



OPEIU launches the Apprentice Organizer Program, devoting significant resources to the goal of organizing the unorganized—a program that has brought membership growth and new energy to OPEIU and its local unions.



Nonprofit employees across the U.S. continue to organize and win strong contracts with OPEIU, including those at LYRIC who form a union with Local 29 and Crisis Connection who join Local 8.



OPEIU conducts its first-ever national member survey to democratically guide the union’s presidential endorsement process. Members list handling the Covid-19 pandemic as their most pressing concern heading into the 2020 elections.

Joe Biden is elected as the 46th president and Kamala Harris is elected as the first woman vice president of the U.S.

Student workers overwhelmingly vote to join Local 153.



Kickstarter United ratifies a historic first contract.

Union approval reaches a modern high—68 percent support unions and a majority of Americans report wanting a union in their workplace.

In the wake of the Supreme Court’s overturning of Roe v. Wade, staff at Guttmacher Institute, the nation’s foremost reproductive rights research institute, unionize with Local 153.

In a major ruling, the NLRB states in McLaren Macomb employers may not offer severance agreements requiring employees to waive their labor law rights. Local 40 brought the case to the board on behalf of its nurses at the Michigan hospital.



Tufts University resident assistants overwhelmingly vote to join Local 153.

Workers at Bandcamp unionize with Local 1010.

OPEIU’s 29th Convention is held in Philadelphia.

2021

In January, OPEIU launches Tech Workers Union Local 1010, an arm of the union with a mission to raise industry standards and provide all tech workers a better future in their workplaces through collective bargaining.



Code for America staff join Local 1010, becoming first “civic tech” union in the U.S.

Employees at Augsburg University make history by forming a union with Local 12, making them the first unionized professional staff at a private university in Minnesota.



Employees at Secretly Group, a family of American independent record labels based in Bloomington, Indiana, win voluntary recognition of their union with Local 174. The group becomes the first-ever independent record label to unionize.

OPEIU’s 401(k) plan reaches \$100 million in assets.

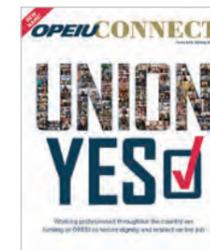
The PRO Act is introduced in Congress for a second time.

Liz Shuler becomes the first woman to lead the AFL-CIO.



2022

After 68 years, OPEIU’s magazine gets a new name, OPEIU Connect.



NLRB elections are on the rise, outpacing the already underfunded NLRB’s ability to efficiently process workers’ election petitions. An AFL-CIO campaign leads to the agency receiving its first funding boost in more than a decade.



Secretly staff win first union contract in indie music.



Nonprofit Workers at INCLUDEnyc Win First Contract

INCLUDEnyc, a New York City-based nonprofit connecting young people with disabilities and their families with educational, employment and living opportunities and resources, settled its first contract with members of Local 153.

Grounded in their mission, INCLUDEnyc staff prioritized the needs and concerns of people with disabilities throughout the organizing and bargaining processes since voting unanimously to form a union with Local 153 last year.

The 27 family educators, youth and family coordinators and administrative and operations staffers ratified a contract in April addressing many of their bargaining priorities and establishing a meaningful wage floor at the community-based nonprofit.

The group, known as Union INCLUDE, said in a statement “the members of Union INCLUDE are so proud to have achieved a first contract that includes just cause, a fair discipline and discharge protocol, and a robust arbitration and grievance process. We also established a comprehensive non-discrimination clause, a broad bereavement policy that accounts for chosen family, protections for our students and their families regarding immigrant status, as well as support for employees who are eligible for public benefits.

“Finally, we are so proud to be a part of the broader labor movement in the push for fair compensation in the nonprofit industry by securing a \$60,000/year wage floor by the third year of our contract, along with several other economic wins, such as a wage premium for bilingual workers, a more reasonable cost-of-living adjustment, floating holidays and Summer Fridays. We are indebted to and so grateful for Local 153,” the statement concluded.



Members of Local 153 at INCLUDEnyc secure their first contract.

Minneapolis Institute of Art Staff Ratify Contract

Following several public displays of solidarity, Local 12 members at the Minneapolis Institute of Art (Mia) voted to approve their contract.

In February, employees voted overwhelmingly to ratify a two-and-a-half-year agreement with the art museum. The 150 curators, support staff and public-facing staff members are represented by Local 12 in Roseville, Minnesota.

The contract includes \$4 across-the-board raises, boosting lower-paid staff salaries the most — in some cases up to 20 percent. For the first time, the contract also establishes a progressive discipline procedure for museum staff. Its ratification, with 95 percent in support, comes on the heels of a highly publicized informational picket in mid-February.

“This contract gives significant raises to those at the bottom of the pay scale, who most acutely feel the effects of high inflation,” said Aaron Barger, an IT systems administrator at the museum. “This wasn’t



Employees at the Minneapolis Institute of Art conduct an informational picket Feb. 16. Pictured is Diane Richard, an editor on the design and editorial team.

given freely, but was fought for by my colleagues and me, all of whom engaged in previously unprecedented labor actions at Mia.

“We overcame years of reticence and a real fear of individual retaliation to demand a fair contract from management for everyone,” Barger continued. “I feel like we all took care of [each other] and I am very proud of everyone’s contribution to this contract fight.”

Tech Workers at Public Benefit Corporation findhelp Join Local 1010

In an election certified by the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), findhelp tech workers voted 95-52 for their labor union, the findhelp Solidarity Network. The union will now begin forming a bargaining committee and initiate the collective bargaining process.

“Today’s an exciting day for all findhelp employees,” said Leah Norman, a community engagement manager and organizing committee member. “Our union gives us a seat at the table and provides us a voice in our working conditions. Findhelp Solidarity Network looks forward to collaborating with findhelp management to negotiate a contract that fosters our ability to do our best work and support as many people as possible. As the labor movement grows in the tech industry, we are excited to be a part of it!”

The group is composed of employees spread across the United States and from throughout the organization, which is headquartered in Austin. More than 165 curators, engineers, salespeople, business analysts, production support, customer success and other classifications work daily to modernize America’s social safety net for anyone in need. The findhelp employees join a growing movement of tech workers across the country represented by OPEIU’s Tech Workers Union Local 1010.

“The workers of findhelp have spoken and today we have shown that organized labor has a place at findhelp and in tech,” said Keith Young, a software engineer and an organizing committee member. “I am optimistic we can look forward to a constructive and fruitful bargaining process between the collective bargaining committee and management — the workers of findhelp deserve nothing less.”

Formerly Aunt Bertha, findhelp is the nation’s leading social care network, servicing organizations across all 50 U.S. states, territories and Puerto Rico by providing technological solutions to connect resources to their communities with dignity and ease. They join a growing wave of tech workers demanding a voice in the conditions affecting their workplace and industry. They are leading the charge in ensuring those who make the invaluable tech tools we all use are treated with dignity and respect.



The findhelp organizing committee, clockwise left to right, are Kristen Neely, Danielle Nasr, Kelsey Swindle, Tiff Owens, Sanam Tiffany, John Lednicki, Matt Smith, Keith Young and Leah Norman.

Student Workers Continue Organizing with Local 153

Local 153 in New York continues to organize student workers at the nation's colleges and universities, including Fordham and Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute.

In March, resident assistants (RAs) at the Bronx-based Fordham University voted 47-19 to join Local 153. The 96 RAs join more than 200 OPEIU members who also work at Fordham.

"We couldn't [have won] without the support of our fellow RAs and Local 153," said Sophia Ghelardini, an RA at the university, in a press release. "After winning our union 47 to 19, we are prepared to begin the bargaining process in hopes of gaining better compensation, more protections and an effective line of communication."



Resident assistants at Fordham University.

Also in March, resident assistants at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute (RPI) in upstate New York voted 55-9 to join Local 153. "We're proud of our 55-9 victory, but this election is only the beginning," said Carlton Berthold, an RA. "We are now equipped to negotiate directly with the RPI administration to win better pay and working conditions for all our RAs. Moving forward, we hope this victory inspires student workers and faculty to follow in our footsteps and fight for change in their own workplaces."



Resident assistants at Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute.

A supermajority of resident and graduate resident assistants at the University of Pennsylvania signed onto a petition to file for a union election with Local 153 in March. Student workers at the Philadelphia-based Ivy League university report excessive hours, an inability to express concerns and restrictions on outside employment as drivers of their decision to unionize.



Resident and graduate resident assistants at the University of Pennsylvania gather support for a union.

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Local 6 Urges Legislation to Curb Workplace Violence

Local 6 in Massachusetts is advocating for passage of new legislation introduced into the Vermont legislature aimed at curbing the incidences of workplace violence against health care workers. Local 6 represents registered nurses at Rutland Regional Medical Center in Vermont.

The bill, H.265, proposes the commissioner of labor issue a standard under the Vermont Occupational Safety and Health Act for violence prevention in health care and community services workplaces. It requires all covered employers adopt a workplace violence prevention and crisis response within six months of the bill’s enactment.

Under the measure, employers would be required to take steps preventing or mitigating hazards, such as having adequate lighting, alarm systems, exit routes, entry procedures for buildings and areas, appropriate monitoring systems and designated areas for patients and clients. Employers would also have to implement procedures for staffing and working in teams and for flagging patients or clients with a history of violence. It also calls for employee training and the establishment of a response committee to monitor ongoing compliance.

“No working person should fear for their safety and well-being at work,” said Mary Mahoney, president of Local 6 and OPEIU secretary-treasurer. “This legislation requires procedures be put in place to respond to an incident or credible threat of violence, and, most importantly for prevention, that medical facilities identify all patients or clients with a history of violence.”

Recent OSHA statistics show assault to be a significant and rising cause of workplace fatalities. During three months in 2022, a study showed more than two nurses were assaulted every hour in the United States.

Local 30 Trains City of Hope Stewards for Front-Line Leadership



Local 30 recently conducted its annual training for stewards at the Los Angeles-based City of Hope Medical Center.

The stewards, most of them new to their roles, represent nearly 400 members at City of Hope. “This is a very engaged and eager group,” said Annette Baxter, director of member services at Local 30. “The number of stewards at City of Hope has grown to 25 and this training provides the tools and instruction needed for them to do the job.”

Local 30 reports it greatly appreciates and thanks all its stewards across its membership, knowing without these front-line leaders, great representation would be impossible.

City of Hope clerical workers and stewards, left to right, are Carmen Alarcon, Claudia Cordova, Gabriela Maldonado, Heverlin Angel and Keyonda Collins.



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