



WHITE COLLAR

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

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Local 6 Wins Three-Year Contract for 3,600 Trial Court Workers

Local 6 President/Business Manager Mary Mahoney and Chief Justice for Administration & Management Robert A. Mulligan have executed a successor collective bargaining agreement covering 3,600 clerical and professional employees of the Massachusetts Trial Court. The agreement concludes more than a year of bargaining and covers the three-year period from July 1, 2007 through June 30, 2010. Local 6 members overwhelmingly voted to ratify the contract.

The agreement includes salary increases of 3 percent for each of the three years and adds a step to the existing salary schedule. It also introduces an innovative program that will enable managers to evaluate the per-

formance of employees and identify areas for professional training and development.

“We are very pleased to have a contract that is good for our membership and fair to the state court system,” said Local 6 President/Business Manager Mary Mahoney. “We have enhanced benefits and will have evaluations that protect and preserve the rights of members. And this contract has done something that no other state contract has previously been able to accomplish – a fifth vacation week after 17 1/2 years,” Mahoney said.

“I am delighted to reach a settlement with Local 6, which represents the people who are the backbone of this organization,” said Chief Justice Mulligan. “Our agreement improves employment terms and conditions and breaks



Chief Justice for Administration & Management Robert A. Mulligan and Local 6 President/Business Manager Mary Mahoney sign new collective bargaining agreement.

new ground in the areas of performance, accountability and career development.”

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Exuberant Democrats Still Undecided

While Republicans Are Unhappy With Their Choice

As this issue of *White Collar* goes to press, Senators Hillary Clinton and Barack Obama are still battling it out for their party’s presidential nomination.

In one of our country’s most exciting primary election seasons ever, Democratic voters are making history: either a woman or an African-American will be their party’s

presidential nominee.

And either way, working families win. Both Clinton and Obama are strongly in their corner and both repudiate Bush Administration policies that have crippled the middle class in America.

In Democratic primaries and caucuses across the country, turnout has doubled from 2004, reflecting a level of enthusiasm that

hasn’t been seen for decades. While their many debates have often been rancorous, Clinton and Obama aren’t that far apart on the issues. Poll after poll shows Democratic voters like them both!

By contrast, Republicans have made their choice, but many extremists in their party are unhappy with it. Right-wingers

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Editorial



Hillary's Got the Best Plan to Fix NAFTA

By Michael Goodwin, International President

As was the case in the recent Ohio Democratic primary, the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) has emerged once again as a major issue on the minds of voters in Pennsylvania, which holds its primary election on Tuesday, April 22, 2008.

We all know of the struggles the labor movement faced in the 1990s in opposition to NAFTA, a trade deal that was negotiated by the first President Bush, and signed into law by President Clinton. Despite all of the claims of how the new trade deal would bring jobs to the United States, we now know that millions of jobs have been lost as the work was shipped overseas or out of the country. There is no question that NAFTA was a

We need to stop the bleeding of good-paying union jobs and adopt a program where these jobs stay in the community.

bad deal and needs to be fixed.

As you know, the OPEIU has endorsed Senator Hillary Clinton for President in the Democratic primaries. The Obama campaign is trying to blame her for all of the misery caused by NAFTA. This claim is absurd, particularly in light of their charges following the release of Hillary Clinton's schedule as First Lady, that everything she did was purely ceremonial and challenged her claim that she gained experience in that role.

At the same time the Obama campaign claims she gained little governmental experience as First Lady, they are placing the full blame for the NAFTA debacle on her shoulders. They can't have it both ways! Either she occupied a ceremonial post or she had eight years of solid governmental experience.

The Obama campaign cites a few snippets and a drop-by meeting out of 11,000 pages of Hillary Clinton's schedule as First Lady in support of its claims. All of this is nothing more than negative campaigning to mask the fact that a high official in the

Obama campaign met with a Canadian representative, reassuring him not to worry about the high level of rhetoric espoused by the Obama campaign on NAFTA. When this first came to light, the Obama campaign said there was no such meeting. They then followed that with the story that the Canadian representative only dropped by the campaign office in Chicago, Illinois to say hello. Ten days later, they were still denying that any substantive meeting took place, only to admit after being pursued by the media, that the initial reports of the meeting and the content of the discussions were in fact true.

So the question now is which candidate is most sincere about fixing NAFTA, and what is their plan for how to do it? The Obama plan for NAFTA is full of generalities, with no specifics, and the Canadian meeting sheds serious doubts about their sincerity to fix it.

On the other hand, Senator Clinton has laid out a very specific plan to fix NAFTA, which includes strengthening labor and environmental standards and moving them into the core text of the agreement, eliminating foreign companies' ability to undercut standards in secret tribunals, applying the same enforcement as commercial provisions, and the appointment of a Trade Prosecutor to periodically review compliance.

As President, Senator Clinton has a strong plan to fix NAFTA in a way that will protect workers from the race to the bottom. It has to be made harder for companies to move jobs outside the United States, and her plan will accomplish that. We need to stop the bleeding of good-paying union jobs and adopt a program where these jobs stay in the community.

I believe that Senator Clinton's plan is best suited to accomplish this goal.



AFL-CIO Launches McCain Revealed Campaign

The AFL-CIO has launched its “McCain Revealed” campaign, an effort to expose Senator John McCain’s record and his allegiance to the failed policies of President George W. Bush.

The campaign will reach out to union households through worksite leaflets, door knocking, mail, union meetings and more. More information about the “McCain Revealed” campaign can be found at <http://www.mccainrevealed.com>. The site features an interactive briefing book on Sen.

McCain’s positions and statements, and is a tremendously useful tool for union members throughout the country.

Here are a just a few things every union member should know about Sen. McCain before they vote in November:

McCain opposes the right to bargain. He voted against the Employee Free Choice Act (EFCA), which would level the playing field for workers trying to form unions, and for a national Right-to-Work for Less law that would attempt to eliminate unions altogether.

McCain will increase health care costs and reduce access. McCain’s plan undermines existing employer-based health care and pushes workers into the private market to fight big insurance companies on their own. It will reduce benefits, increase costs and leave many with no health care at all.

McCain helped companies send jobs overseas. McCain supported tax breaks for companies that ship jobs overseas, voted to weaken and waive Buy American laws that keep jobs at home and voted against protecting steelworkers’ jobs from illegal dumping.

McCain = Bad News for Working Families

John McCain Voted:

- For Bills That Would Export American Jobs
- Against Extending Unemployment Benefits
- For Privatization of Federal Jobs
- Against Raising the Minimum Wage
- Against Protection of Overtime Rights
- Against Allowing Vote on Employee Free Choice Act (EFCA)
- Against State Children’s Health Insurance Program (CHIP)
- For a national Right-to-Work for Less Law

“I’m not going to bring back a lot of these jobs. I can’t because with a global economy they’re headed the other way”

—John McCain, 12/4/07



Presumptive Republican party nominee Senator John McCain cuddles with President Bush. Do you think McCain’s policies will be any different?



President Michael Goodwin supports Senator Hillary Clinton's position on NAFTA on MSNBC's *Hardball with Chris Matthews* on March 25, 2008. OPEIU has endorsed Senator Clinton for the Democratic Party's nomination for President of the United States.

PHPA Council Meeting Held



PHPA held its Council Meeting in New Orleans on Feb. 4, 2008. Pictured left to right are: (back row) Jeff Stackpole; Paul Bohelski, Senior International Representative; Steve Rush; Al Morden; Larry Kopechanski, International Representative; Troy Montanez; Michael Goodwin, OPEIU President; Steve Rush; Melvin Schwarzwald, OPEIU General Counsel; (front row) Ken Bruner; Kevin Kistler, OPEIU Director of Organization and Field Services; Jeff Smith; Bill Sykes, PHPA Secretary-Treasurer; Butch Grafton, PHPA President; Sharon Diaz, PHPA Office Manager; and Bill Blume.

Local 6 Negotiates Contract for Registered Nurses At Rutland Regional Health Services

Local 6 has successfully completed negotiations for a comprehensive, three-year contract for 350 registered nurses employed with Rutland Regional Health Services in Vermont, and nurses overwhelmingly ratified the contract on January 17, 2008.

The affirmative vote clears the way for the February 1, 2008 to December 1, 2010 contract to be effective immediately. In the second year of the contract, nurses will be placed into a newly negotiated 26-step system, which pro-

vides for 2 percent incremental increases per step. Nurses placed into the new step system will receive between a 3.5 to 7.0 percent increase in 2009, depending on their position within the step system. In 2010, the third year of the contract, nurses will receive a 5 percent increase based on their moving up a step and a negotiated 3 percent increase in the step program.

Other salient provisions of the three-year contract include: an increase in shift and weekend differentials, and call-in

pay; an agreement from the hospital to maintain health insurance, pension and tax sheltered annuity programs; and an increase in tuition reimbursement.

“We are extremely pleased with this comprehensive contract that fairly compensates the unionized workforce at Rutland Regional Health Services,” said Local 6 President Mary Mahoney. “The hospital and the union were able to agree upon a contract that provides for genuine enhancements and secures important benefits for the nurses.”

OPEIU Local 251 Scholarship Winners

Kelley Burns, Recording Secretary of Local 251, has received a \$3,000 scholarship from the 2007 Union Leaders of the Future scholarship program offered through Union Plus. She was chosen from a large pool of applicants based on her “outstanding achievements, social commitments and leadership potential.”

Burns, who has served as a steward, trustee and recording secretary, is a single mother whose desire is to be a union activist. She has had training from the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service, as well as the National Labor College Southwest Organizing School. She wants to inform young people on the importance of unions. “My career goal, as a union organizer, is to reach the working class of this country—one worker at a time.”

Burns was flown to Washington, D.C. on November 28, 2007

and stayed at the Capital Hilton, just blocks from the White House. The next morning, the scholarship recipients met their mentors, all of whom are high-level national union leaders who will guide the winners toward their union leadership goals. Burns was paired with Roberta Reardon, the recently elected National President of the American Federation of Television and Radio Artists (AFTRA). Burns and Reardon will form a mentor/mentee partnership over the next 12 months with monthly telephone calls and frequent emails.

After the mentor portion of the day ended, the group toured the AFL-CIO’s national offices and met with President John Sweeney. Sweeney spoke to the group about the importance of education and thanked them for their commitment to the national labor movement.

Local 459 Names New President

Local 459 is proud to announce it has named a new president, Kevin Nix, a member of Local 459's Executive Board for the past six years and a Steward at UAW-GM/CHR for the past 13 years. UAW-GM/CHR is an employer represented by Local 459 in Detroit, Michigan.

Nix comes from a strong union family. His father is a retired international representative for UAW and former president of UAW Local 659 in Flint, Michigan. Nix is also proud to share that his great uncle was a participant in the Flint Sit-Down Strike of 1936-1937 against General Motors.

"Even though Michigan is going through some of the worst times in recent history, our members still display an upbeat attitude with Local 459 and where they work," Nix said. "This is not surprising to me, since in my opinion, we have some of the best staff around. I look forward to leading the membership of Local

459 as we move forward through these tough economic times."

"The staff of Local 459 is very excited about our new president and is looking forward to President Nix, our Executive Board, and our membership growing together," said Joseph Darby, Local 459 service representative, vice president of the national Pride at Work and secretary-treasurer of the Great Lakes Michigan Chapter of Pride at Work.

Nix is married to Kristen and has a 16-year-old daughter, Bethany.



Local 459

Three-Year Contract Reached for IRMC POST

A three-year agreement between Local 459 and Ingham Regional Medical Center (IRMC) for 650 Paraprofessional, Office and Skilled Trade (POST) employees was reached on September 27, 2007.

In a break from tradition at IRMC, the contract was done before the expiration date of the old contract, September 30, 2007. Previous negotiations had dragged beyond the expiration date because IRMC had proposed concessions in pay and benefits. This was not the case this year and no concessions were put on the table by the employer.

The new contract contains raises of 3 percent across the board in October of 2007, 2008 and 2009. There is also a retention bonus of one percent for employees who are at the top of their step scale. This accounts for about two thirds of POST employees. The lump sum payment will be given in October of each contract year. For employees who have reached or will reach 20 years of service, the lump sum will be 2 percent for that year.

In addition, another step equal to 3 percent was added to the two lowest pay grades and for the Lab Tech Assistants. The classifications of Carpenter and Secretary were also upgraded.

Other financial improvements include:

- New Training pay of fifty cents per hour
- New Bonus for Financial Services employees of between \$300 and \$500 yearly
- New one-time \$75 Bonus for employees who sign up for the Flexible Spending Account (FSA)
- Retiree Health Care subsidy increased from \$150 to \$200 per month

A major issue at the table was the over-utilization of non-union per diem employees. This infringement upon bargaining unit work has steadily increased to the point that it had to be addressed by the union. Stronger language on the issue includes a strict limit of no more than 20 percent per diems in any department that has more than ten employees. Per diem employees are of value to the union membership because they allow for bar-



Pictured left to right are Local 459 members and staff Nate Simon, Charles Terry, Robert Potts, Rick Bailey, Kathy Lewis, Adam Layne and Lance Rhines.

gaining unit employees to use their vacation and time off.

That needs to be balanced, however, with union job creation. This new cap will be implemented over the next year. The effect will be additional full- and part-time union positions promotional opportunities and an increase in total membership.

Union representation was positively affected by the guarantee of a full-time Chief Steward. Additionally, a more streamlined grievance and arbitration process was agreed to, that will reduce the amount of time it takes for members to get an arbitration hearing. The language calls for the hearings to be scheduled within six months. Currently, it is not unusual for this time frame to be twice that.

Improvements in bereavement leave, jury duty leave, schedule changes and holiday language were also obtained. As an example, employees will no longer be required to work both Christmas Eve and Christmas Day.

The bargaining team put in many long hours and, came together for the membership. The team members were Rick Bailey, Adam Layne, Kathy Lewis, Robert Potts, Nate Simon and Charles Terry. They were assisted by Local 459 Service Representative Lance A. Rhines.

Linda Chavez-Thompson Honored for a Lifetime of Service

On March 19, 2008, the AFL-CIO and its constituency groups honored retiring Executive Vice President Linda Chavez-Thompson for her many years of service to the labor movement.

Among those on hand to pay tribute to Chavez-Thompson were AFL-CIO President John J. Sweeney, Secretary-Treasurer Richard L. Trumka, Executive Vice President Arlene Holt Baker, AFSCME President Gerald McEntee, CWA Secretary-Treasurer Barbara Easterling, and the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists President William Lucy. OPEIU President Michael Goodwin was also in attendance.

“I am blessed to have had 12 years worth of wonderful experiences, meeting thousands of union members and workers who have given me hope that our labor movement continues to be a major factor in their lives,” said Chavez-Thompson. “You have given me the opportunity of a lifetime, which was to go where I never dreamed I could go, and do more than I ever dreamed I could do.”

Chavez-Thompson has left the AFL-CIO to return home to San Antonio, Texas and be with her family, but her legacy will be felt throughout the future of America’s union movement.

Chavez-Thompson was elected to the office of executive vice president in 1995. A second-generation American of Mexican descent and the daughter of cotton sharecroppers, Chavez-Thompson became the first person of color to hold one of the top

three elected offices at the AFL-CIO. She previously served on the AFL-CIO Executive Council as a leader in AFSCME. Constantly traveling and speaking to union and community groups, she became the face of America’s new union movement to millions. Chavez-Thompson worked to strengthen state and local labor movements and served as a strong voice on behalf of civil, human and women’s rights. She has been a national leader on the issue of immigration and immigrant workers’ rights.

“In everything she’s done over a lifetime of service, Linda has broken new pathways for the labor movement,” Sweeney said. “Countless working women and men, not only in the United States but throughout the Western Hemisphere, have a better life because of all she’s contributed. She’s inspired tens of thousands of people to contribute through their own action, and wherever she’s gone, she’s earned tremendous affection.”

Under the AFL-CIO Constitution, Chavez-Thompson is now the AFL-CIO’s first executive vice president emerita. She continues to chair the AFL-CIO Immigration Committee and serves as head of the Inter-American Regional Organization of Workers (ORIT), the International Trade Union Confederation’s (ITUC) regional organization for the Americas. She also serves as an advisor to state federations and labor councils.

The AFL-CIO Constituency Groups — A. Philip Randolph Institute, Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance, Coalition of



Linda Chavez-Thompson

Black Trade Unionists, Coalition of Labor Union Women, Labor Council for Latin American Advancement, and Pride at Work — are unions’ bridge to diverse communities, creating and strengthening partnerships to enhance the standard of living for all workers and their families. OPEIU Secretary-Treasurer Nancy Wohlforth serves as co-president of Pride at Work.

The groups also promote the full participation of women and minorities in the union movement and ensure unions hear and respond to the concerns of the communities they represent.

Local 30 Celebrates Its Diversity

As the marchers in the annual Martin Luther King Jr. Day parade wound their way through the streets of downtown San Diego on January 19, people from all walks of life joined together to celebrate diversity. Among them were the members of Local 30, proudly representing the OPEIU in Southern California.

Local 30’s Diversity Committee takes responsibility for organizing local member involvement in a range of activities throughout the year to celebrate and strengthen OPEIU’s commitment to diversity. “Our Diversity Makes Us Strong” was this year’s theme for the Local 30 marchers.

“We have a lot of fun bringing this message to so many people at events like this,” said Local 30 Vice President Cathy Young. “It is important to not just talk about these issues but to walk the walk. We are proud of our Union and we want people to see what brings us together.”



Local 30 members march in the Martin Luther King Jr. Day parade.

Give Back to the Mother Who Gave You So Much

Show mom how special she is with a gift from Union Plus Discounts. A special bouquet, theater tickets or Norwegian cruise all with savings to you as a union member.

Cruise Discounts

Save a minimum of 5% on a cruise for mom anywhere in the world from Norwegian Cruise Line. Enjoy Hawaii with NCL America, which operates US-flagged, all union cruise ships. Call **1-866-867-0593** or visit www.UnionPlus.org/Cruises.

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Save on taking mom out to the movies, or the theater. Call **1-800-565-3712** and use **ID#744387769** or visit www.UnionPlus.org/Entertainment.

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Stay in touch with mom and save an additional 5% off the regular rate of any individual or family calling plan purchase at a Cingular Wireless store.

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Save 15% on flowers for mom. Visit www.UnionPlus.org/Flowers or call **1-888-667-7779**.

Union-Made Clothing Discounts

Help mom look her best in union-made clothes and save up to 10%. Visit www.UnionPlus.org/Clothing



So, show mom she's special - and save - with one of the discounts from Union Plus! Mom will love you and you'll love the savings. It pays to be a union member...and Union Plus proves it to you every day!

For more information please visit

www.UnionPlus.org/MothersDay



Local 108 Fights Wrongful Termination of Union Activists

Local 108 is fighting for the reinstatement of two striking EMS pilots who were wrongfully terminated for their union involvement by Air Evac in Phoenix, Arizona, a PHI company.

The two pilots, Local 108 Strike Captain John Strickland, a 15-year employee of PHI and bargaining committee member representing the more than 250 striking EMS pilots employed by PHI and Bill Sorenson, an 11-year employee and union activist, were fired by PHI during the strike action supposedly for issuing alleged death threats to replacement workers.

“In order to remove these two union stalwarts from the strike action, PHI exaggerated a statement used privately among the strikers as cause for their termination,” said Senior International Representative Paul Bohelski. “PHI refused to meet with the striking pilots on neutral turf to investigate this matter with their union representative, and summarily fired them without allowing them the right to due process during the investigation.”

Local 108 then filed suit against PHI in federal court for wrongful termination under their protected right to strike, and also filed

a companion grievance against the company for failure to have just cause for the terminations — a requirement under the existing but expired collective bargaining agreement, which PHI refused to process.

“Earlier this year, the Federal Judge slammed PHI for asking the courts to dismiss the union’s lawsuit against PHI, while at the same time the company refused to hear the companion grievances at the PHI Pilots’ System Board of Adjustment (SBA),” Bohelski

said. “Immediately after receiving the Judge’s ruling, PHI contacted the union and said it wanted to hear the grievances at the next SBA meeting, which was held January 30, 2008. The grievances deadlocked at the SBA and the union filed for arbitration from the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service.

“Once the facts are presented to a neutral arbitrator, Local 108 anticipates a complete exoneration and full reinstatement of both pilots,” Bohelski said.



Local 108 EMS pilots who are on strike with Strickland and Sorenson demonstrate at the Air Evac headquarters in 2006.

Local 109 Pilots Win in Federal Court

Local 109, representing more than 1,000 EMS helicopter pilots across the United States, has logged another win in Federal Court.

On January 24 in the United States District Court in Denver, Colorado, Federal Judge Robert E. Blackburn ordered Air Methods Corporation (AMC) to abide by a previous AMC Pilots’ System Board of Adjustment (SBA) Decision issued in May 2007, stemming from a grievance filed by the union over the proper method to calculate overtime pay, in a manner consistent with the language found in the collective bargaining agreement.

OPEIU Senior International Representative Paul Bohelski, presented the grievance matter to the SBA and the Local 109 Executive Board, led by their President, Captain Jeff Stackpole, and Board member, Captain Troy Montanez, authorized the filing in federal district court to enforce the findings of the SBA’s Decision and Award.

The Judge’s Conclusion and Orders upheld Local 109’s position, and ordered Air Methods Corporation to comply with the Award of the SBA, including retroactive pay to all affected employees. In addition, the Judge ordered AMC to pay the court costs of the union, and Local 109 filed for reimbursement of attorney’s fees.



ATTENTION UNION MEMBERS

The AFL-CIO and the Union Plus Benefit Program have a special program for members who wish to purchase or refinance a home.

This program is part of your Union Plus benefits package and should be taken advantage of for great savings.

Please let us know the best way to get the information to your members by calling Paul or Gregg at the number below.

800-972-4818

or SW Division at 877-440-1916



Wohlforth Urges Union Women to Seek Leadership Roles

OPEIU representatives from around the country traveled to Rutgers University, School of Management and Labor Relations on March 28, 2008 to attend the 5th Annual Women in Leadership Development (WILD) Conference. The conference, attended by women members from many unions, drew upon their experience and commitment for strengthening the labor movement. The conference focused on how unions help women and how women help unions. The objective was to educate and empower union women in leadership skills, political action and policies that will bring about positive change — and that it did!

Among the labor and political leaders addressing the conference was OPEIU Secretary-Treasurer Nancy Wohlforth, who called for women to be more active in their local and international unions as shop stewards and officers. She urged union women to seek leadership roles in their unions.

Participants were enthusiastic after hearing all the positive messages and leadership success stories that were told by guest speakers.

Subjects included achieving political power, cultivating personal leadership, building leadership skills, owning power and implementing change.



OPEIU Secretary-Treasurer Nancy Wohlforth addresses the WILD conference at Rutgers University in New Brunswick, NJ.

UFW President Addresses OPEIU Executive Board



UFW President Arturo Rodriguez updates the OPEIU Executive Board on the struggles of farm workers in their fight for decent working conditions in the fields. The International Union and many Local Unions have made contributions to the UFW in support of this effort.



UFW President Arturo Rodriguez presents OPEIU President Michael Goodwin with a UFW banner with an inscription by Helen Chávez, widow of the late co-founder César Chávez at OPEIU's Executive Board meeting in March 2008. Also pictured is OPEIU Secretary-Treasurer Nancy Wohlforth.

Rodriguez has been a long-time friend of OPEIU and has helped the union campaign for representation among Hispanic workers. OPEIU and many of its Local Unions also have maintained working relationships with the UFW over the years and have supported the union with contributions.

California Celebrates Chávez's Birthday

The State of California has established an official state holiday in honor of the late labor leader César Chávez, co-founder of the United Farm Workers union.

Chávez was born on March 31 and that is the date set by the State of California to honor him. Born in 1927 he was an American agrarian labor leader, born in Yuma, Arizona. As a migrant worker, he became involved in 1952 in the self-help Community Service Organization (CSO) in California, working among Mexicans and Mexican Americans.

In 1962, he left the CSO to organize wine grape pickers in

California and formed the National Farm Workers Association (NFWA). Using strikes, fasts, picketing and marches, he was able to obtain contracts from a number of major growers.

In 1966, the NFWA merged with the AFL-CIO Agricultural Workers Organizing Committee to form the United Farm Workers Organizing Committee, later to become the United Farm Workers union.

Chávez died in 1993 but his work on behalf of agricultural workers will never be forgotten. He was succeeded by Arturo Rodriguez as president of the United Farm Workers.

Lobbyist Corner

American Families Need an Economic Program That Works

Submitted by OPEIU Lobbyist Robert McGlotten of McGlotten & Jarvis

While the presidential campaigns are now in full swing, this is no time for members of Congress to wait for November 3, 2008 to act on programs that will assist working families. While a stimulus program is important, it is just a temporary fix.

We need the Congress and the Democratic Leadership to continue to address the urgent call from workers across this country that health care, jobs, housing, and education are problems that need legislative solutions now. These issues need not — and cannot — wait for the next president to take office.

Both Houses must pass legislation to help stabilize the nation's turbulent home mortgage market. They need to revamp the Federal Housing Administration's mortgage insurance program to allow it to refinance troubled sub prime mortgages.

The House and Senate have broad support for the Mental Health Addiction Act that should be passed and sent to President Bush. Efforts to assist the Medicare and Medicaid programs need to be continued. Medicaid beneficiaries need S.399/H.R.1647 to be passed, which would give them access to podiatric physicians so they may be provided adequate foot and ankle care.

The above are just a few of the unfinished issues the leadership of OPEIU demands that Congress act upon and make part of a long-range legislative agenda.

- Extending unemployment insurance (UI) benefits—about 250,000 jobless workers exhaust their benefits each month
- Increase the food stamp program so families don't go hungry and food dollars are pumped back into the local economy
- Give states some fiscal relief. Because of the housing crisis, states are strapped for funds and are cutting budgets that affect schools, public services, Medicaid health care for children, fire and police services.
- Provide funding for job-creating infrastructure projects already in the pipeline—projects that would put people to work making needed repairs to schools, unsafe bridges and sewage treatment facilities.

As members of OPEIU, we know the real state of the economy. Working families have watched for the past seven years as jobs have gone overseas or just disappeared, wages have stagnated, pensions have been reduced and health care benefits have shriveled. And this is all under the leadership of President Bush.

Take Action — Your Involvement is More Important Than Ever!

Contact your local representatives. Every letter counts. Every phone call can make a difference. If you prefer to make written contact, OPEIU advises you to either mail or e-mail all correspondence.

If you don't know who your House representative is, the Clerk of the House maintains addresses and phone numbers of all members and committees: Clerk of the House, US Capitol, Room H154, Washington, DC 20515; phone (202) 225-7000; hours 9 a.m. to 6 p.m. (EST), Monday through Friday. The following websites also contain links to congressional directories: <http://www.house.gov/writerep> and <http://www.senate.gov>.

Please direct your questions about communication with your Senators to the specific office(s) in question, using the following format: Office of Senator (Name), United States Senate, Washington, DC 20510. You may also phone the U.S. Capitol's switchboard at (202) 224-3121. An operator will connect you directly with the House or Senate office you request.

You can also access this information at your local library, or call the International Union at 202-393-4464 for a booklet listing congressional representatives.

Your action is needed now. Do your part to help yourself and your family. Start writing and calling today!

Notice To Employees Subject To Union Security Clauses

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

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

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

Individuals who are employed by public employers in the states of New Jersey and Minnesota are covered by the demand and return system applicable to them and are not covered by this procedure. Other individuals who elect to be nonmembers may object to funding expenditures which are

not germane to the collective bargaining process. Expenditures germane to the collective bargaining process ("chargeable" expenditures) represent that portion of the Union's expenditures devoted to collective bargaining, contract administration, grievances, arbitration, and other matters affecting wages, hours and other conditions of employment. Examples of "chargeable" expenditures include: the costs of negotiations with employers; contract administration expenses; communication with employers in regard to work-related issues; handling employees' work-related problems through the grievance and arbitration procedure; and Union administration.

Examples of expenditures not germane to the collective bargaining process ("non-chargeable" expenditures) include: expenses made for community services; for political purposes; for 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 J.B. Moss Voice of the Electorate (VOTE) Fund, is an independent, segregated fund that receives voluntary donations and contributes to political candidates who support the needs of working men and women. No money received from dues or fees goes to the VOTE fund. Accordingly, the VOTE fund is not considered in the calculation of the percentage of expenditures that is spent on non-chargeable expenses.

Individuals who choose to file an objection will receive a rebate of their fees equal to the percentage of the Local Union's expenditures that is spent on non-chargeable expenses. The Local Union's expenditures include those amounts it remits to the International Union as per capita payments. In determining the Local Union's percentage of non-chargeable expenses, the percentage of non-chargeable expenses of the International Union is applied only to the Local Union's per capita payments to the International Union. The percentage of non-chargeable expenses of the International Union, which will be effective starting with the month of January 2008, and continuing until a new percentage is issued, is 15.94%. The major portion of a Local Union's expenditures

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

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

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

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

Challengers must notify Nancy
(Continued on page 12)

Work and Health

My Favorite Topic and Yours...and How to Improve It

Submitted by Jeffrey S. Freed, M.D.

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

In a recent article in *The New England Journal of Medicine*, perhaps our foremost medical magazine, Dr. Susan Okie wrote an article titled, "The Employer as Health Coach." This article described how many companies are attempting to promote health through programs that encourage employees to participate in better health strategies. In fact, this is not a new concept; there have been many previous articles in which employers have encouraged their employees to eat healthy food.

One of the major reasons that employers are willing to fund these programs is that they are the major source of money for payment of health insurance premiums in this country. Therefore, promoting good health practices among employees would result in lower costs to them. And healthy employees are more productive and take less time off for illness.

In spite of the fact the employers' reasons for promoting these good health practices may be self-serving, the result is that you, the

employee, have a better life with less down time and in general better quality of life.

Strategies have included employers subsidizing the cost of better foods in their cafeterias and some companies have offered annual health-risk questionnaires and screening tests to identify risk factors. The result has been a reduction in the number of employees smoking and a decrease in the amount of alcohol consumed; measurements of physical activity, use of seatbelts, reduction in dietary fats; reduction of high blood pressure; reduction of cholesterol and many other positive measures resulting in improved health. Programs promoting good mental health have also been provided.

To be effective, these programs need to be very broad in scope, but designed for the specific population of employees to be reached. The creativity of the design of the programs and tests will determine how successful each is. There is a real potential for reduction in the employee contribution for

health care costs if these programs work. There would be a definite improvement in the quality of life of each employee with success of each program. There would be increased productivity and lower cost to all concerned along with better lives for those employees who participate.

All this being said, it is the suggestion of this author that each employee seriously consider approaching their union representative and expressing support for these types of programs so that the union can promote inclusion of these programs in future contracts.

Your health is the most valuable thing you have. Each way you attempt to preserve that health, through your family and through your employer, will result in a higher quality of life, something that, in this case, money can potentially buy.

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

Notice To Employees Subject To Union Security Clauses

(Continued from page 11)

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

The Unions shall bear the burden of justifying their classifications and calculations.

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

Once a written challenge is received from an objector, the Local Union will place an amount equal to the challenged portion of the fee into an interest-bearing escrow account. It shall remain in that account until the arbitrator issues a decision. Should the decision lower the percentage of chargeable expenditures, the appropriate portion of the escrowed fees, plus the interest earned

by that portion while in the escrow account, will be refunded to the challenger. All objectors in each Local Union affected by the decision of the arbitrator will then pay the adjusted fee amount determined by the arbitrator. If the arbitrator approves the Unions' classifications and/or calculations, the escrowed money and interest will revert to the Local and International Unions.

**It's An
Election Year.
Are You
Registered
To Vote?**



WASHINGTON WINDOW

The Budget: A Political Document

Every president's budget is partly numbers, partly priorities and partly political hogwash. And what we hope is the final such budget from anti-worker GOP President George W. Bush, for fiscal 2009, which starts Oct. 1, contains a healthy dose of that last ingredient. Consider some of the schmaltzy political rhetoric—and what it leaves out:

The budget: “The president’s budget reaches balance in 2012, while continuing to invest in the nation’s safety and prosperity. Critical to continued deficit reduction is a growing economy, and for that reason the budget promotes an economic growth plan, makes tax relief permanent, and proposes other policies to improve the quality of education, expand access to affordable health care, address the rising cost of energy, and help Americans keep their homes.”

Reality: Growth plan? What growth plan? One of the few items that grows under Bush is the budget deficit, back up to more than \$400 billion a year. Hello: Bush took over a government with a \$250 billion surplus. He promptly ran it deep into debt to pay for his tax cuts

and war in Iraq. One of the few items that’s grown under W is red ink.

Reality: “Critical to continued deficit reduction”—never mind that the deficit’s going up again—“is a growing economy.” Growing? Someone tell that to the Maytag worker in Galesburg or the hotel worker in San Francisco or the teacher in St. Louis.

Growing for whom? Not for us.

Reality: “Makes tax relief permanent.” This, of course, means Bush’s tax cuts for the rich. The top 1 percent of the country now controls 22 percent of the wealth, aided and abetted by the Bush-GOP tax cuts of 2001 and 2003. The rich took our money and stuffed it in their pockets. But he doesn’t tell you for whom he’s making the tax relief permanent. We’ll give you one guess.

The budget: The budget would “expand access to affordable health care,” Bush’s introduction says. It later explains how he wants to do so: “It proposes replacing the existing—and unlimited—tax exclusion for employer-sponsored insurance with a standard deduction, which levels the playing field for Americans who purchase health care

individually rather than through their employers.”

Reality: The next thing you’ll hear if that scheme comes to fruition—and luckily it won’t this year, because the Democratic-run 110th Congress won’t even listen—will be the mad stampede of happy corporate feet as tens of thousands of employers cut costs by dumping their workers’ health care coverage.

Bush would throw those workers onto the market, letting the insurers compete for them. Expanding access? Hardly. “Denying access” is a better description.

Will Bush try to push all this through? Yes. But this year, there should be a big difference in the Dems’ response: Don’t wimp out, but call him on it.

As Change to Win Chair Anna Burger says, make Bush veto bills and force the GOP to vote on the vetoes.

If Bush wants to use his veto to strip workers of health care and throw them on the mercy of the companies, fine. If he wants to use his veto to give permanent tax cuts to the rich while denying jobless benefits to workers, fine. Let him do it and let the GOP take the heat. Then give them heat right back, in November.

Members to Receive New PerksCard

As this edition of *White Collar* went to press, the union was in the process of mailing a new PerksCard to the last known address of all OPEIU members. The PerksCard program was recently revised to make its website more user-friendly to union members.

Members will be able to save hundreds of dollars annually on items that they buy every day, such as movie tickets, video rentals, dining out, health care, car repairs, home

improvements and much more! Additionally, they will receive discounts on all of their special occasion purchases, including gifts, travel and entertainment.

Discounts are available to members when they show their PerksCards at participating merchants’ locations. They can also print discount coupons online, or purchase gift cards to be used at participating merchants’ stores. For more information, visit www.perkscard.com.

If you didn’t receive your card, please call 1-877-737-1086.



Local 153 Members at Seton Hall Win Big!

The 230 members at Seton Hall University in South Orange, N.J. won big in their recent contract negotiations, reported Local 153 Secretary-Treasurer and Region II Vice President Richard Lanigan.

The major issue in dispute was employee contributions to the University's health care plan, which were as high as \$522 per month for members in the best family plan. The University's plan was provided through CIGNA.

Local 153 Senior Business Representative Patricia Hoffman recommended that the union take over providing equivalent health care coverage through the Local 153 Health Plan. The union taking over health care coverage was successfully accomplished recently at Long Island University (C.W. Post and Brooklyn centers), Amalgamated Life Insurance Company and Amalgamated Bank. The proposal required extensive examination and review and difficult negotiations with the University. To complicate matters, 32 members were not covered by health insurance because they could not afford the employee contributions or had alternate coverage through a spouse.

The examination revealed that the University was scheduled to pay CIGNA \$1.35 million in 2008, while the Local 153 Health Plan estimated that it could provide equivalent health care coverage for \$1.25 million. The union's estimates covered all members currently in the University's plan and also offered coverage to the 32 members not in the plan, at the University's

expense. The Local 153 Health Plan agreed to cap the University's first year cost to \$1.35 million with increases of 8 percent in each of years two and three of the contract.

The results of the examination and review were presented to the University in negotiations and after several meetings an agreement was reached. The agreement was overwhelmingly ratified by the members at a meeting on November 14, 2007. The happy occasion was followed by an evening celebration event on January 4, 2008.

Members at both meetings said that this was the most successful negotiation with Seton Hall University in more than 20 years! Numerous members expressed their gratitude to the union for making their lives a little better by eliminating employee contributions. Some said they may now be able to give up their second jobs, which they needed to pay employee contributions.

In addition to the big win on employee contributions, the contract also provided:

- Wage increases of 3 percent on July 1, 2007, 2008 and 2009
- Length of service increments ranging from \$300 to \$750
- Job classification review leading to

concept of equal pay for equivalent work

- A provision that employees may attend classes during the day, using meal time of up to five hours per week

- An additional holiday for volunteer work
- Promotional increases changed to 7 percent

- Pension contributions increased to \$12 per week, effective July 1, 2007 and \$13 per week, effective July 1, 2009

- Two bargaining unit members to be added to the University's Health and Safety Committee

- An increase in Performance Attendance awards

- An increase in parking reimbursement at the Law School

- A \$2,000 waiver of coverage incentive

The negotiating committee was led by Local 153 Senior Business Representative Patricia Hoffman, Consultant Michael Thompson and Local 153 Health Fund Director George Bueno. They were joined by Chief Shop Steward Brenda Knight, Assistant Chief Shop Steward Mabel Wong and committee members Mayra Colon, Magdeline Dreher-Moore, Terry Nixon and Jackie Wilson.



OPEIU President and Local 153 Business Manager Michael Goodwin with Chief Shop Steward Brenda Knight, Assistant Chief Shop Steward Mabel Wong, Senior Business Representative Patricia Hoffman, Consultant Michael Thompson and Committee Member Terry Nixon, at the January 4 event celebrating the Seton Hall contract.

WHITE COLLAR

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Exuberant Democrats Still Undecided

While Republicans Are Unhappy With Their Choice

(Continued from page 1)

such as Rush Limbaugh and Anne Coulter question whether Sen. John McCain (who wants to make permanent the Bush tax cuts for the rich and who would pay for them by cutting spending for entitlements—safety net programs for the retired, poor, sick or disabled) is “conservative” enough to be their standard-bearer in the general election.

To appease the Conservative Political Action Conference, McCain vowed to move even further to the right than his current 90 percent supportive voting record. As Democratic chairman Howard Dean warned: “From Iraq to health care, Social Security to special interest tax cuts, he’s promising nothing more than a third Bush term.”

Just prior to Super Tuesday, Sen. Obama won the support of party icon Senator Edward Kennedy (D-MA). Many said his endorsement would have its greatest impact on Hispanics and union members. Yet in most states on Super Tuesday, Clinton overwhelmingly won both.

Clinton even won Kennedy’s home state of Massachusetts. “I’m not surprised at all,” said Boston Mayor Thomas Menino. “This is Clinton country up here. This was about real people who saw in Clinton a fighter on their behalf.”

Perhaps even more important, Clinton on Super Tuesday won lopsided victories in blue states the party must carry in November while Obama did better in red states that are less crucial to Democrats in the general election.

Why OPEIU Supports Clinton

While Clinton and Obama hold similar positions on most issues, experience that will enable Clinton to begin solving problems “on Day One” makes her a clear choice for working families, which is why she earned the OPEIU endorsement.

One example:

Health care is her signature issue and

the number one domestic concern of voters. Both Obama and Clinton have proposed universal health care, but his is voluntary while under her plan everyone is covered, no exceptions. Health insurance experts know that unless everyone is in the risk pool, private carriers will continue to cherry-pick the healthiest people who are most profitable to them and refuse to cover the sick who need insurance most. This is no small difference.

Obama is an inspirational speaker but he is running into a “where’s the beef?” problem as voters look for more substance. Clinton’s strengths are apparent in the debates. She appeals to voters more interested in results than in inspiration. Ever since she went to work for the Children’s Defense Fund shortly after graduating from Yale Law 35 years ago, she has been a champion for working families.

Senator Clinton has long been “one of us” in organized labor. In her current capacity as the Senator from New York, she co-sponsored the Employee Free Choice Act (EFCA) that will strengthen workers’ right to organize. She describes the legislation as “giving people choices and protecting

workers’ fundamental rights. Unions helped to build the middle class in this country. To rebuild our middle class, we need to restore a level playing field for unions and give them a meaningful opportunity to organize for better wages, stronger benefits and safer working conditions.”

The Clinton-Obama race is so close it may not be determined by primary and caucus voters, but by “superdelegates” – the 800 party leaders and elected officials who commit themselves to a candidate before or during the national convention.

If Democrats had the winner-take-all system as Republicans do, Clinton would be her party’s nominee. But the proportional delegate system makes it all but certain that neither candidate can win the nomination in the remaining primaries and caucuses.

Whatever happens, we know this for sure: the American people’s confidence in their current administration is gone. The overwhelming sentiment of the electorate is that America is on the wrong track. Voters want change.

Whether it’s Clinton or Obama, change they’re going to get!



Hillary Clinton supporters rally in New York City.

Local 6 Wins Three-Year Contract for 3,600 Trial Court Workers

(Continued from page 1)

Chief Justice Mulligan and President Mahoney both commended the bargaining committee for their hard work, professionalism and dedication throughout the process.

The Massachusetts Trial Court includes seven court departments with 7,000 employees who deliver justice in 106 courthouses across the state. Comprehensive management reform is underway throughout the Trial Court to increase accountability and transparency, as it serves thousands of citizens daily.

Local 6 represents the employees who maintain, staff and supervise the courthouses, including custodians, case specialists, session clerks and office managers. Local 6 serves more than 5,000 members in both the private and public sector and in organizations such as municipalities, credit unions and ambulance companies, as well as in the Trial Court.

“This has been a monumental year for Local 6, which survived a raid threat from the National Association of Government Employees (NAGE),” Mahoney said. NAGE sought to lure away Local 6’s workers under the premise that NAGE could negotiate a better contract. Ironically, negotiations for the NAGE-represented workers are now mired in fact-finding, and NAGE has not reached a contract for their employees. “We have actually tried to help the NAGE management on some of their basic policy issues, despite our differences,” Mahoney said. “We are pleased to have been able to negotiate a great contract for our members, and are sure that they feel their faith in staying with Local 6 has been well-justified.”



Members of the OPEIU Local 6 and management bargaining committees were on hand for the signing of the new collective bargaining agreement. Pictured from left to right are: (standing) Paul Cervizzi, Malden District Court Chief Probation Officer; Wendy Wilton, Clerk-Magistrate Ayer District Court; Liz Tavares Deputy Commissioner OCP; Jean Driscoll, Labor Counsel; Mark Conlon, Personnel Administrator; Roger Michel, Appeals Court Senior Staff Attorney; Peter Anderegg, Head Law Librarian-Fitchburg Law Library; Patricia Pelletier, Probation Operations Supervisor-Dedham District Court; Thomas Gavaghan, Land Court Engineer; Richard Martin, Trustee, OPEIU Local 6; Nufynna Callahan, Administrator Coordinator-Judicial Institute; Gloria Comerford, Case Coordinator-Norfolk Probate & Family; Frank Harrington, Facilities Manager-Dudley District Court; Maura Chenery, Probation Case Specialist-Peabody District Court; Claudia Dutra, Court Interpreter; Tracy Monahan, Senior Business Agent-OPEIU Local 6; (seated) Paul Edgar, Director of Human Resources; Robert S. Manning, OPEIU Local 6 General Counsel; Mary Mahoney, OPEIU Local 6 President/Business Manager.

Unable to attend the contract signing and not pictured are Pamela Casey-O’Brien, Essex Probate & Family Court Register; Brian Archambault, Head Law Librarian-Essex Law Library; Donna Barrette, OPEIU Local 6 Secretary-Treasurer; Paula Campbell, Office Manager-Plymouth Juvenile Court; Kathy Cashton, Probation Office Manager-Middlesex Juvenile Court; Nancy McCann, Official Court Reporter; Peggy McDonough, Official Court Reporter; Kathy McGinnis,

Probation Case Coordinator-Essex Probate & Family Court; Carol Meehan, Court Facilities Bureau-Springfield; Jonathan Paleologos, Housing Specialist-Northeast Housing Court; Deborah Puopolo, Probation Operations Supervisor-Quincy District Court; Christopher Salt, Court Interpreter; Patricia Santamaria, Head Administrative Assistant-Springfield District Court; and Domenic Sarnelli, Housing Specialist-Western Housing Court.



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