



WHITE COLLAR

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

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Local 277 Wins Contract at Lockheed Martin

Local 277 in Fort Worth, Texas, has won a three-year contract with Lockheed Martin Aeronautics providing greatly improved wages and benefits for the more than 500 bargaining unit employees, announced OPEIU Vice President and Local 277 President Becky Turner.

“This is one of the best contracts in the aerospace industry, especially when pension benefits are being cut or done away with elsewhere in the United States,” Turner said. “This is a testament to the Local’s negotiating team and their willingness to work hard to fight for the members.”

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Local 277 members ratify the new contract with Lockheed Martin on May 13, 2006.

Mary Mahoney Honored by Massachusetts AFL-CIO

Mary Mahoney, president of Local 6, Boston, Massachusetts, was presented with the Massachusetts AFL-CIO’s Merit Award for her hard work and commitment to the state’s labor movement.

“I was honored to accept this award, but the real recipients should be the members of Local 6,” Mahoney said. “Our membership came together during tough times and they’ve always supported their union. I’m proud to be president of Local 6 and proud to accept this award on their behalf.”

“I am also honored to be accepting this award with two great labor leaders — Michael Goodwin and Robert Rizzi,” she continued. “And I’m privileged to be a member of such a distinguished group, both this year’s honorees and all the past recipients.”

Goodwin is OPEIU president and Rizzi is president of both the Norfolk County Central Labor Council and the Quincy/South Shore Building Trades Council.



Local 6 President Mary Mahoney receives the Massachusetts AFL-CIO Merit Award from President Bobby Haynes.

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Finally, Some Justice!

By Michael Goodwin, International President

Former workers of Enron, who have suffered various degrees of pain, including some who have had their lives totally ruined, have finally seen some justice with the convictions of Enron's executives Kenneth Lay and Jeffrey Skilling of conspiracy and fraud for their roles in one of the biggest corporate scandals in U.S. history. Both are scheduled to be sentenced on September 11, 2006 and face maximum prison terms of 165 years for Lay and 185 years for Skilling!

The convictions followed more than four years after Enron's collapse and the loss of jobs for thousands of employees and millions of dollars in investments in the company.

The jury determined that Lay and Skilling, who received tens of millions of dollars in stock options, repeatedly lied to cover up accounting tricks and business failures that led to the company's collapse. Their misdeeds led to the loss of more than \$60 billion in market value, \$2 billion in pension money and cost 5,600 employees their jobs.

The Enron convictions followed other convictions against corporate executives at WorldCom, Inc. and Adelphia Communications. Public outrage has finally induced Congress to pass laws designed to make company executives more accountable.

Lay was a campaign benefactor whom President Bush nicknamed "Kenny Boy," when the two were starting out in Texas. Mr. and Mrs. Lay contributed \$139,500 to Bush's political campaigns and Enron employees gave \$462,500 totaling \$602,000, making the company the leading political patron for Bush at the time of the company's bankruptcy in 2001.

The convictions follow 16 other guilty pleas from ex-Enron executives who are either finished, still serving or awaiting sentencing. Prosecutors said: "You can't lie to shareholders, and you can't put yourselves in front of your employees' interests. No matter how rich and powerful you are, you have to abide by the rules."

Prosecutors expressed sympathy for the thousands of Enron employees who lost their life's savings. "These convictions are not going to bring back their lost savings, jobs or their ruined lives. They do, however, send a message that the government will not let corporate leaders violate their trust and get away with it."



Kenneth Lay



Jeffrey Skilling

An ex-Enron employee said, "Poor people that rob a store get 10 to 15 years in jail. For what Lay and Skilling did, the potential sentences are more than justified." Many employees are calling on the government to fine Lay and Skilling heavily and compensate victims for their misdeeds. Another employee said, "I get sick every time I hear Lay and Skilling speak. If I was the judge, I would tell the two of them to turn over every single penny they have and pay back the people they victimized."

Well, it's about time! You may recall that the government spent an inordinate amount of time last year requiring officers and employees of unions to report receipt of items of value in excess of \$25 from an employer or vendor to the Labor Department. They probably spent more time on that than the prosecutors spent on Enron, WorldCom and Adelphia combined. This puts things in perspective, doesn't it?

We welcome the prosecution of all wrongdoers, however, and hope this is the beginning and not the end. Many of us have been observing corporate abuse and greed that has gone unchecked. The corporate executives have been out of control for many years, increasing their own compensation tenfold, while workers were told there is no money for you. Hopefully, these convictions will be a turning point where the rights of workers are

(Continued on page 4)



Clinton-Eaton-Ingham CMH Residential, Large Unit and RN's Achieve New Contracts

There are three Local 459 bargaining units at Clinton-Eaton-Ingham Community Mental Health (CEI CMH) — for RNs, Residential employees and a Large unit for all other employees. What started out as a health care and wage re-opener, led to an extension of all three contracts for 550 members.

Negotiations dragged on for months as the employer proposed that employees pay for nearly all future annual health care increases, with just a 1 percent raise. The Local 459 team estimated this would have meant employees would pay about 30 percent of their health care premiums within six years, and more in future years.

With the assistance of a state mediator, the administration finally proposed higher raises, but continued to tie any agreement to their burdensome health care plan. Local 459 had utilized increasing prescription and office visit co-pays to offset health care costs in past negotiations while maintaining a minimal insurance paycheck deduction. With more attractive raises on the table, the union negotiating teams decided to propose keeping the benefits the same but having employees pay up to ten percent of the cost for health insurance in exchange for an additional raise. The proposal included extending the contract's expiration date in order to capture the additional raises.

The agreement includes a 2 percent raise on April 1, 2006, a 3 percent raise on October 1, 2006, and a 3 percent raise on October 1, 2007. Employees will pay 5 per-

cent of their health care premium starting in January 1, 2007 and 10 percent starting in January 1, 2008 in place of the current \$10.51 per pay period. The current health care benefits and co-pays are unchanged. The agreement continues existing contract language through September 30, 2008. That language includes job security with a ban on privatizing Residential positions and specific conditions that CEI must meet before privatizing other bargaining unit jobs.

The Large unit approved the agreement by a vote of 173-21. Residential ratified by a vote of 71-2, and the RN unit unanimous-

ly endorsed the agreement 13 to 0.

Residential team members were Janet Bodiford, Michael Herdus, and Jason Miller. Paul Follis and Paul Ruggerio were the alternates. Large unit team members were Pam Bogle, Bart Jarmusch, President Ilene Jolly and Denise Reeves. Jeff Caler, David Frobish, Pam Marietta-Dickerson, and Yvonne Williams served as Large unit alternates. RN unit team members were Carla Flynn and Brenda Shuler with Kris Brady serving as alternate. The teams were assisted by Local 459 Service Representative Jeffrey Fleming.



Pictured left to right are (back row) Local 459 Service Representative Jeffrey Fleming, members Bart Jarmusch, Carla Flynn, Pam Bogle, Brenda Shuller, Mike Herdis, (front row) Jason Miller, Local 459 President Ilene Jolly and member Janet Bodiford.

Local 29 Installs Officers

In memory of OPEIU members affected by the 2005 hurricanes and in the spirit to renew and rebuild, the newly re-elected officers of Oakland-based Local 29 celebrated in true New Orleans Mardi Gras style at their General Membership meeting on April 19.

Region V Vice President and Local 29 President/Business Manager Tamara Rubyn chaired the event, which served to inaugurate the Officers and Executive



President Goodwin swears in the newly elected officers of Local 29 at their April 19 General Membership meeting in Oakland, California. President/Business Manager Tamara R. Rubyn is in the front row, third from left.

Board for a new three-year term, complete with a cajun buffet, a jazz dance procession and the swearing in the oath of office by International President Michael Goodwin. In keeping with the theme, Goodwin was crowned "King of The Mardi Gras."

"Local 29 Officers and Executive Board members believe it takes courage, not complacency, to accomplish the work ahead and each one has pledged to do the task," Rubyn said.

Finally, Some Justice!

(Continued from page 2)

respected over the greed of corporate executives. As President Kennedy once said in another context: "Let the word go forth ..." that this nation will not tolerate corporate abuse and greed anymore!

OPEIU extends its sympathy to all workers who have been victimized by corporate abuse and greed. There's not much we can do about it once the milk is spilt, but we can call for the aggressive pursuit of those responsible to be punished to the full extent of the law. With full implementation of the law, we are sure that the number of such cases will be less.

That's why we believe the unions are so important. They are the watchdogs, looking after workers' interests as a check and balance on the corporations. Union representatives have a right to ask questions about such issues as pension investments and to negotiate with the company if they are not satisfied with the answers. We are not saying that the unions can solve all the problems that may come up, but we are saying that workers would be much better off with an advocate in the workplace rather than allowing corporate executives to go unchecked.

That's why we continue to focus on organizing. To the extent that workers are

organized in greater numbers, you can expect greater accountability from employers. Organized labor has been advocating for workers in great numbers since the passage of the National Labor Relations Act in 1935 and has established the great American middle class. If we are to continue to have the great society that we love to enjoy, each and every one of us has to dedicate time to spread the message that organizing and forming a union is the only way to protect workers' interests.

Organize, organize, organize and protect yourself against corporate abuse and greed!

Local 39 Ratifies Three-Year Contract with MGE

On Friday, May 12, 2006 members of Local 39 in Madison, Wisconsin ratified a three-year contract with Madison Gas and Electric. In a 65-16 vote the office workers accepted a new contract that had some major changes from past contracts.

Under the new contract the membership will see the pension cap for current employees eliminated, but new employees hired after ratification will have a new defined contribution 401(k) plan instead of the existing defined pension benefit plan.

Under the new contract employees will continue to pay 10 percent of the total cost of health insurance premiums in 2007, though the health care plan will have some changes in 2007. These changes increased deductibles and co-insurance for out-of-network providers and included adding coverage for procedures not formerly part of the plan.

For the dental care plan, orthodontia will be added with the employer increasing their contributions, which will result in lower overall dental premiums.

Additionally, Good Friday has been added as a full holiday instead of the previous half day.

Wage increases will be 3.5 percent the first year, 3 percent the second year, and 3.5 percent in the third year. The current wage structure includes annual increases

for the first eight years of employment, which add another 5-10 percent to salary each year.

The negotiating team for the new contract was Chief Steward Chris Fujioka; John Peterson, Business Agent for Local 39; and stewards Al Belgen, Debi Solts-Meier, Cliff Murray, Tom Smith and Beth Ridgeman.

Local 39 Seeks Business Manager

Local 39 Business Manager John Peterson is retiring at the end of the year, and Local is seeking a skilled union activist to fill the position.

The position entails negotiating and administering 18 contracts, including the largest unit, CUNA Mutual, with 1,224 members out of a total membership of 1,515. Start date is approximately January 1, 2007. Resumes are being accepted now at OPEIU Local 39, 1602 S. Park Street, #226, Madison, Wisconsin 53714; via fax at 608-257-1155; or via email at union@opeiu39.com.



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Pennsylvania AFL-CIO Supports Podiatrists

The Pennsylvania AFL-CIO unanimously passed a resolution presented by OPEIU Podiatrists Guild 45 President John A. Mattiacci, who also serves as a president of the state labor body and as OPEIU Region II Vice President. Dr. Mattiacci is a podiatrist who represents Guild 45's interests nationwide. More than 500 members of Guild 45 are located in Pennsylvania.

The resolution, *Fairness for Specialty Medical Providers*, recognizes that under an insurance system known as "capitation" that pays a medical provider a stipulated amount for each patient, participating podiatrists are not paid an amount sufficient to cover the financial risk of the patient's care.

Fairness for Specialty Medical Providers

The resolution states, in part, that the "capitation system allows the insurance company to retain the profit associated with the patient's premium (based on actuarial statistics) by downloading the financial risk of the statistically aberrant patient (whose care will involve more cost than the premium supplies) to the participating podiatrist.

"Now therefore be it resolved that the AFL-CIO and its member unions oppose any insurance plan that compensates doctors of any specialty in a manner that results in the doctor becoming financially responsible for the care of the patient/subscriber of an insurance or healthcare plan," continues the resolution.

"And be it further resolved that the member unions and Locals of the Pennsylvania AFL-CIO be informed of this type of compensation plan and the inequitable financial risk that it transfers to the doctors who will be treating the union and Local Union members under these certain plans."

OPEIU Initiates New Organizing Program

OPEIU has initiated a new internal organizing program in Local Unions with bargaining units in right-to-work states.

There are 23 right-to-work states in the U.S. where union membership is voluntary. On average, only 50 percent of the members in bargaining units in those states join the union. In contract years, union membership rises to an average of 70 percent but tends to drop in non-contract years to 30 percent. OPEIU has identified 25,000 employees in bargaining units in right-to-work states that have not joined the union.

One of those situations is in Las Vegas, Nevada, where 40 percent of the approximately 2,000 taxi drivers represented by ITPE Local 4873 are in the union. Also, the United Steel Workers represent taxi drivers in Las Vegas and are in the same situation.

OPEIU/ITPE and USW have joined together in a strategic organizing effort to be known as the "Alliance" to bring into membership more than 3,000 taxi drivers in Las Vegas who are represented by the two unions but have not joined.

The new organizing initiative will establish "membership benefits only," which will be sufficient in size and scope to attract non-union taxi drivers into membership.

The "Alliance" will share costs for the program, scheduled to be effective October 1, 2006.

OPEIU is planning to extend the program to other Local Unions with bargaining units in right-to-work states on an incremental basis. Las Vegas will serve as the pilot program for the initiative.

ITPE Local 4873 President John Conley said: "I look forward to working with OPEIU on this initiative in Las Vegas, and

I'm very excited over the opportunity to internally organize 3,000 taxi drivers."

OPEIU President Michael Goodwin has been invited by United Steel Workers' President Leo Gerard to attend the USW's Executive Board meeting on July 12, 2006, in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania and present the new organizing program.

Further details on the initiative will be reported in subsequent issues of *White Collar*.

Long Overdue Pardon for Rosa Parks



In 1955, Rosa Parks made history in Montgomery, Alabama when she was arrested for refusing to give up her seat on a bus to a white person. Now, 51 years later, the Alabama Legislature has voted and signed into law legislation, "The Rosa Parks Act," that pardons Rosa Parks and hundreds of others that were arrested for violating segregation-era laws.

"The pardon for Rosa Parks and other women and men who participated in the civil rights movement is an important step toward correcting a terrible injustice in our nation's history," President Michael Goodwin said.

Parks' defiance sparked a 381-day boycott by black residents of the bus system that spearheaded the civil rights movement. She died in 2005, at age 92.

Pilots Have New Contract with Ross Aviation

Pilots at Ross Aviation, represented by OPEIU/PHPA Local 102, have ratified a first time collective bargaining agreement by a 16-2 margin. The five-year agreement, effective April 6, 2006, provides for substantial wage increases with year over year increases of 5.2 percent for pilots with less than 25 years of service. Pilots with 25 or more years of service will be paid \$93,555 effective June 1 and 3 percent year over year increases thereafter, resulting in a \$105,297 annual salary in the last year. Initial average wage increase for the first year of the contract will be approximately 21 percent.

Furloughed pilots received 15 days of furlough pay within 15 days, retained their sick leave upon recall and were credited with an equal amount of unpaid vacation time in exchange for the cash-out upon furlough.

Agency shop provisions were also agreed to, a first for the pilots at Ross Aviation.



Pictured left to right are International Representative Paul Bohelski, Committee Chairperson Mike Loewen, negotiating team member Tim Barre, and OPEIU/PHPA Local 102 President Steve Rush.

PHPA's Carl John Neubig Honored Local 109 Receives Charter

PHPA clerical employee Carl John Neubig Sr., who has been the PHPA office manager since its inception and just recently retired, was honored on May 5 for his hard work and dedication on behalf of the union. Neubig is pictured to the right receiving a plaque for a job well done.

At the same meeting (pictured bottom right), Local 109, representing the EMS Pilots employed at Air Methods Corp., was presented with a charter from OPEIU by President Michael Goodwin.



Carl Neubig is honored by PHPA, and presented with a plaque for a job well done by President Butch Grafton.

PHI Pilots Seek Arbitration in Contract Dispute

Local 108, representing helicopter pilots employed by PHI, Inc., have requested binding arbitration in their contract dispute with the company. Local 108 and PHI have been in negotiations for 26 months to renew an agreement that ended May 31, 2004. The parties have been in mediation since August 2005.

If approved by the Federal Mediation Board, the Board will assign an arbitrator to the case. If either party refuses arbitration, a 30-day cooling off period will begin. Should a new agreement not be reached by the end of the cooling off period, both parties would be released to take self-help measures.

“By an overwhelming majority, Local 108 members have already granted the union leadership the authority to take whatever action is necessary,” Local 108 President Capt. Steve Ragin said.



President Michael Goodwin presents Local 109 with charter. Joining in are (left to right) Senior International Organizer Jeff Rusich, Dan McDade, Paul Bohelski and Jeff Stackpole.

Local 277 Wins Contract at Lockheed Martin

(Continued from page 1)

Highlights of the contract include 10 percent in wages over its three-year term: Four percent effective May 15, 2006, 3 percent May 14, 2007, and 3 percent May 12, 2008. In addition, all employees will receive a \$2,000 signing bonus up front and an annual \$700 cost of living adjustment (COLA) bonus as a supplement to quarterly COLA increases beginning August 14, 2006. The COLA formula provides a 1¢ per hour increase for each .3 increase in the cost of living index over the benchmark of 196.1.

Pension benefits were increased by 17 percent with the formula increasing from \$58 to \$68 per month times years of credited service. Also, employees with restored credited service will receive an 18 percent increase in pension bridging with a formula increase from \$22 to \$26 per month.

The employer will pay 87 percent of the cost of the medical plan and the employees will pay 13 percent with a cap of \$19.50 per week for individual coverage and \$50 per week for family coverage for the life

of the contract for HMO, PPO or POS plans. Employer paid Life and AD&D insurance plans were enhanced and two new options were added to the dental and vision benefit plans.

Seventy percent of the membership benefited from the negotiating committee's review of job descriptions resulting in updates, upgrades or creation of new occupational titles.

The outstanding contract was overwhelmingly ratified by the membership on May 13, 2006. The negotiating team, led by President Becky Turner, included Secretary-Treasurer Margo Peel, Vice President Gene Patton, Recording Secretary Marty Schmoker and Trustees Ramona Alexander and Jackie Curry.

The contract expires May 17, 2009.



Local 277 President Becky Turner delivers report on negotiations. Seated left to right are Secretary-Treasurer Margo Peel, Trustees Jackie Curry and Ramona Alexander, Vice President Gene Patton and Recording Secretary Marty Schmoker.

Goodwin Honored by Jewish Labor Committee



International President Michael Goodwin is honored May 11, 2006 in New York by the National Trade Union Council for Human Rights of the Jewish Labor Committee. Also honored at the Human Rights Award Dinner was Gary La Barbera, president of Teamsters Local 282, and Richard Dreiling, CEO and president of Duane Reade (a New York drugstore chain). Goodwin is pictured with Avi Lyon, executive director of the Jewish Labor Committee; La Barbera; Randy Weingarten, president of the United Federation of Teachers and a presenter at the dinner; Jewish Labor Committee President Stuart Appelbaum, who also serves as president of the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union, UFCW; and Dreiling.

OPEIU Needs Your Help!

Submitted by Region V Vice President Walter Allen Jr.

There's no time to waste!

With the best opportunity to take back the Congress in the past several years, there is no time to waste. OPEIU members from coast to coast are gearing up for the 2006 mid-term elections and the goal is simple: We want our Congress back!

The OPEIU Voice Of The Electorate (VOTE) fund is also being made ready to support candidates across America who believe in, and will support the ideals and issues of working people. Our members can be proud of the involvement of our union in the political process and certain that this year will be better than ever. OPEIU has taken a place of prominence among labor organizations involved in shaping the agenda to benefit our hard working members. From efforts to fight anti-worker legislation to tax cuts for the rich, from support for public education to worker safety regulations, and much, much more, OPEIU has spoken out to candidates across the country and made it clear that our support goes to those who will support

working families.

As the election cycle progresses in 2006, it is now more important than ever to support our VOTE program. It takes money to support the candidates that will help to change things in Washington, D.C. and give the workers of this country a say once again. VOTE contributions from our members are the only way we can be a part of this very expensive process. If we don't do it, no one will, and nothing will change.

If you are a member of VOTE already, thank you. If not, what are you waiting for? Ask your Local Union leaders how you can donate as little as \$1 per week through payroll deduction. If every OPEIU member donated something, our VOTE fund would have more resources to put OPEIU in a very strong position this fall to help organized labor really make a difference.

If you have never made a donation to our VOTE fund before and just want to see how good it feels, for a one-time donation of \$20, we will send you a beautiful

VOTE pin together with more information about VOTE. Your contribution will help your



union to help you this fall, and you get a really nice union pin without even having to attend a meeting or function! Just send your \$20 donation to: OPEIU, VOTE Fund, 1660 L Street, NW, Suite 801, Washington, D.C. 20036, Attention Secretary-Treasurer Nancy Wohlforth.

Remember, we all must work together to elect worker-friendly candidates who will put the issues of importance to us all ahead of those of the select few. We deserve better than we have been getting these past several years, but no one is going to hand it to us. We are going to have to stand up and take it back. Isn't it worth \$20 to help us reach our goals?

Help us help yourself by making a contribution to VOTE today!

Thank you!

Conley Leads ITPE Convention



John Conley, president of the Industrial, Technical, Professional Employees Union (ITPEU), affiliated with OPEIU as Local 4873, leads its quadrennial convention in Savannah, Georgia, March 27-28, 2006. The convention delegates passed 15 resolutions, which will guide the union for the next four years, and unanimously amended the ITPE constitution to make the union more efficient and promote membership participation in its governance. Conley also serves as an OPEIU Region III Vice President.

Local 251 Wins Contract

During August and September 2005, Local 251 negotiated a new three-year contract with Employee and Labor Relations at Sandia National Laboratories in Albuquerque, New Mexico.

The agreement, effective October 1, 2005, provides for wage increases of 4 percent for the first year, 3 percent in the second year, and 4 percent in the third. Two new job classifications were established that will provide higher pay bands and career development for clerical employees, and additional pay allowances for controlling classified work stations were increased by 5 percent weekly. Despite a management proposal of no pay for overtime before an employee completed a 40-hour schedule, Local 251 defended the right to be paid overtime after eight hours per day and kept that right in the contract. In addition, health care and pensions were retained.

Local 251 negotiated a 10 percent

increase to the pension for new retirees. The 10 percent increase, along with the two new job classifications with the 5 percent weekly added for classified work stations, were the two main deciding factors for the members to ratify the new contract.

However, after the contract was ratified, Sandia withheld the 10 percent increase without notifying the union. It was not until later that the union became aware that the pension increase was not being paid. During the union's investigation, Sandia's officials said that the negotiated pension increase for new retirees was in the process of being approved. Finally, when the union was officially notified by Sandia that it was not yet approved and they had no indication when or if the Department of Energy (DOE)

would approve it, Local 251 and the other unions at the plant immediately filed a Step 3 grievance with the company and filed charges with the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB). When the local newspapers discussed the issue with the unions and were preparing to go to press with the story, the company relented and the unions were told that DOE had approved the pension increase and Sandia had agreed to pay them retroactively.

Solidarity by the members of Local 251 and the other unions, along with aggressive action on their parts, brought the winning results. The new retirees will be receiving retroactive pension benefits, which will amount to approximately \$2,400 for each retiree.

Local 251 Steward Named Employee of the Month

Bob Locher, a Local 251 member and shop steward and mail clerk in the Mail Services Department at Sandia National Laboratories in Albuquerque, New Mexico, has



Bob Locher

been selected as "Employee of the Month" in his department for assisting his co-workers and team leaders.

Locher's supervisor, Jan E. Wallner, selected him for the honor, which included a steak dinner at his favorite restaurant.

"Bob is always helpful to the union, his co-workers and team leaders," said Local 251 Vice President Amy Cogswell. "He also helps with updating the OPEIU bulletin boards at Sandia National. Congratulations to him for his great work!"



Members of the Local 251 Negotiating Team. Pictured from left to right are (back row) Diane Nakos, Employee and Labor Relations, Sandia National Laboratories; Paul Bohelski, OPEIU International Representative; Julian Sanchez, Senior Manager, Employee and Labor Relations, Sandia; Don Devoti, Manager, Sandia; (middle row) Kelly Thoessen, Administrative Staff Assistant, Sandia; Carolyn Lucero, Manager, Sandia; Crystal Rose, OPEIU Local 251; Sylvia Lopez, Recording Secretary, Local 251; (front row) Gila Yaniv, Employee and Labor Relations, Sandia; John McAuliffe, Employee and Labor Relations, Sandia; Susan Rivas, President, Local 251; and Amy Cogswell, Vice President, Local 251.

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Legislative Corner

OPEIU Urges Passage of Minimum Wage Increase Now!

When the federal minimum wage increased to its current \$5.15 an hour, the year was 1997 and the average price for a gallon of gas was \$1.42.

For nearly 10 years, the price of gas and just about everything else has increased except the minimum wage, leaving hard-working Americans struggling more and more each day to make ends meet.

A full-time minimum wage worker now only earns \$10,712 per year, a paltry income that leaves a family of four living well below the poverty line.

That fact is no greater evidence that members of Congress (who each have awarded themselves with a salary of more than \$162,000 per year) need to take action now to raise the minimum wage and improve the standard of living for millions of people.

Unfortunately, what Congress has done so far is a slap in the face of working Americans.

On Capitol Hill, an OPEIU-backed proposal by Sen. Edward Kennedy (D-Mass.) to raise the minimum wage to \$7.25 per hour was voted down last year by Senate Republicans. A compromise attempt for a \$1.10 living wage increase was also defeated.

Republicans said that the pay increase proposed in Kennedy's legislation—that would give America's lowest-wage earners a raise of only \$4,000 per-year—would cause some employers to go bankrupt.

Republicans also offered their own minimum wage proposal, but along with a wage increase, the plan offered incentives to big business by slashing overtime and threatening worker safety. Democrats successfully defeated the plan.

With both proposals dead, congressional observers say additional movement will not happen anytime soon, leaving working people without hope for help from their highly-paid lawmakers.

OPEIU demands that Congress do better. Let your voice be heard in the voting booth this November!



Take Action — Your Involvement is More Important Than Ever!

Many people ask—how can I make a difference? Can one voice alone make the president stop his assault on working families, or make Congress protect our rights? It's true that one voice alone is easy to dismiss, but the sound of our voices strongly united cannot be silenced. We must take action together to protect working America. Your involvement is more important than ever! Here's how you can take action today!

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: Contact the Clerk of the House, US Capitol, Room H154, Washington, DC 20515; phone (202) 225-7000; hours 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Friday.

To find out the name of your Senator, contact the Secretary of the Senate, US Capitol, Room S312, Washington, DC 20515; phone (202) 224-3622; hours 9 a.m. to 6 p.m., Monday through Friday.

Your action is needed. Do your part to help yourself and your family!



WASHINGTON WINDOW

Litmus Test

If the radical right can have its “litmus test” for judicial nominees, why can’t we have one for congressional candidates? In that spirit, here is a first example: The Senate vote on a labor rights amendment on May 23.

The amendment, by Senator Edward M. Kennedy (D-Mass.), lost in the GOP-run Senate, 57-40. Remember that, and remember Republicans control the Senate, 55-45. Kennedy’s amendment, which he tried to attach to the immigration bill the Senate passed on May 25, would have brought undocumented workers under U.S. labor laws.

It also would have drastically increased fines on employers who break job safety and health laws and wage and hour laws, and imposed criminal penalties — five years in jail — for any employer whose “willful” violation of federal job safety and health standards led to a worker’s death on the job.

And it would have made it easier for workers to go to court and get judges to order employers to stop labor law-breaking, notably the rampant illegal firing and harassment of pro-union workers and union organizers. Kennedy noted his amendment would not just help the undocumented workers by bringing them out of the shadows and under protection of labor law, overturning a Supreme Court decision, but it would also help native workers. That’s because corrupt and vicious employers use the threat of importing undocumented workers to force the native workers to accept lower wages and lousy working conditions.

We don’t know how much lobbying was done for this amendment beforehand. Let’s assume there was little, because that makes the vote even cleaner: It shows the

present minimum number of senators workers can count on — and who.

And it also shows the stance of all senators who various pundits say are pondering runs for the White House in 2008, and all who seek re-election this year. With those elections in mind, here are the results:

- Every Republican voting, including all mentioned for the presidency in 2008 — George Allen (Va.), Sam Brownback (Kan.), Majority Leader William Frist (Tenn.), Chuck Hagel (Neb.), front-runner John McCain (Ariz.), and GOP conference chairman Rick Santorum (Pa.) — opposed Kennedy’s amendment and working women and men.

- Every Republican named so far as being in a tight race for re-election — Rick Santorum, Conrad Burns (Mont.), Michael DeWine (Ohio), James Talent (Mo.) and Lincoln Chafee (R.I.) — voted against working women and men. So did all the other GOPers seeking re-election, including John Ensign (Nev.) and George Allen.

- Democrats Ben Nelson (Neb.), Herbert Kohl (Wis.) and Max Baucus (Mont.) also voted against working women and men. Nelson is seeking re-election and considered vulnerable in a very “red state,” Nebraska. Kohl is seeking re-election and considered safe. Baucus isn’t up for re-election until 2008.

By contrast, the 40 votes for Kennedy’s amendment included 39 Democrats and Democratic-leaning independent Jim Jeffords of Vermont. Here are those results:

- Every Democrat mentioned as a potential presidential contender in 2008 — 2004 nominee John Kerry (Mass.), Evan Bayh (Ind.), Joseph Biden (Del.),

Hillary Clinton (N.Y.), Russ Feingold (Wis.) and Chris Dodd (Conn.) — voted for workers.

- All but two Democrats seeking re-election this fall voted for workers and for Kennedy’s amendment. The pro-labor voters include vulnerable senators such as Debbie Stabenow (Mich.), Robert Menendez (N.J.) and Maria Cantwell (Wash.). They also include senators with safe seats, such as Dodd, Kennedy himself, Clinton and Jeff Bingaman (N.M.). The two exceptions were Ben Nelson and Herbert Kohl.

- Special mention should go to two Democrats. One, Florida’s Bill Nelson, is seeking re-election and is not considered vulnerable. But he’s running in a “red state” and faces a well-funded, and controversial GOP foe. The other had every reason to vote against workers, and didn’t: South Dakota’s Tim Johnson. Bill Nelson voted with workers, even though (1) GOP nominee George W. Bush carried the sunshine state, (2) the other Florida senator, GOPer Mel Martinez — a former Bush cabinet member — voted against workers and (3) in November, Nelson will face Rep. Katherine Harris (R), the infamous Florida secretary of state in the 2000 election robbery/fiasco, who will spend millions of her own money to try to beat him. Johnson isn’t up until 2008, but he won his 2002 race against GOPer John Thune by fewer than 600 votes statewide. Then Thune, with a lot of help from Bush in one of the “reddest” states in the U.S., knocked off Johnson’s colleague, then-Majority Leader Thomas Daschle (D) in 2004. Thune is now in the Senate, and voted against workers. The hazards didn’t stop Johnson, though: He sided with us. Thanks, Tim!

Senate Passes Immigration Bill, Rejects Kennedy's Pro-Worker Amendment

By a 62-36 vote on May 25, senators passed a wide-ranging immigration bill – after rejecting a proposal to strengthen the rights of immigrant, and non-immigrant, workers. The bill is a huge disappointment to union advocates of immigration reform because it still leaves millions of undocumented workers vulnerable to employers and subject to deportation, rather than putting all on a path to green cards. It also includes a 370-mile border fence and plans to import “guest workers.”

The amendment's drafter, Senator Edward M. Kennedy (D-Mass.), argued that immigrants have no labor rights. He said that lets employers both exploit them, under threat of deportation, and use the threat of importing undocumented workers to drive down native workers' wages and working conditions.

Kennedy was an original drafter of a key version of the immigration bill that the Senate is wrangling over. His bill would open a path to eventual legalization via green cards, after six years or more, for the 11 million undocumented workers in the U.S.

But it was superseded by a measure that splits those workers into three groups — one that can seek green cards, one that must return to U.S. border posts and apply to come back into the country and a third group of several million that would be kicked out. The bill also increases enforcement and establishes a “guest worker” program.

Undocumented workers are not covered by labor laws, and Kennedy tried to change that. (See Washington Window on page 11 for more information about the Kennedy amendment.)

The immigration bill authorizes a large “guest worker” program, which lets up to 200,000 workers each year seek legal status on their own if the government determines American workers are not available to fill the affected jobs. Temporary workers

would be required to return home at the end of the program.

The bill also allows the millions of undocumented immigrants who have been in the U.S. for more than five years to keep working and eventually become citizens, as long as they pay more than \$3,000 in fines and fees and learn English.

The House has already passed an immigration plan, but despite protests from organized labor the president has urged Congress to pass a bill that follows the approach taken by the Senate.

“The country's immigration plans should not create second-class citizens open to exploitation at the hands of their employers,” International President Michael Goodwin said. “Any immigration bill should provide rights and fair treatment for all employees.”

AFL-CIO Resolution on Immigration Reform

The AFL-CIO resolution on immigration reform includes three goals...

- 1) Reform proposals must provide a clear and well-defined path to permanent residency for those workers already here and contributing to their communities.
- 2) Our laws must include uniform enforcement of workplace standards to ensure a more just and level playing field.
- 3) To achieve a blanket standard of workplace rights, we must reject outdated guest worker constructs that by their very nature harm the interests of foreign and U.S.-born workers alike.

Vacancies Still Available at 2006 Romeo Corbeil/ Gilles Beauregard Summer Camp!

Several vacancies are still available for the Romeo Corbeil/Gilles Beauregard summer camp, a one-week summer camp for teens who are children of OPEIU members. The camp is held annually at Lake Wappapello in Missouri. This year the camp will be held July 29-August 5, 2006. The International Union will pay transportation expenses and camp registration fees up to \$2,000.

The camp offers an opportunity for teens to learn about unions and issues of importance to working families and their children while having a great time. It is an excellent project for youth education, and will hopefully inspire a new generation of union activists.

Don't miss this opportunity! If you have any applicants from your Local Union that would like to attend, please contact Secretary-Treasurer Nancy Wohlforth at (202) 393-4464 and request an application.

Work and Health

Women Who Don't Snooze Enough Gain Weight

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 large-scale study, women who slept only five hours per night gained significantly more weight, and gained weight at a more rapid pace over 16 years than women who slept seven or more hours per night. There is no explanation for this observation yet, but further studies are planned to try to identify the reasons for this.

In the study conducted by Dr. Sanjay Patel at Case Western Reserve Medical School, women who slept five hours or less per night gained 2.5 lbs more than women who got in at least seven hours each night. That's the findings made in a 16-year study presented by Dr. Patel and his researchers at the American Thoracic Society meeting.

The data on 68,183 middle-age women enrolled in the Nurses' Health Study represented the largest study to track the effects of sleeping habits on weight gain over time

ever conducted.

The investigators found that weight gain appeared to have something of a dose-dependent effect. Women who slept six hours gained 1.6 lbs more compared with women who slept for seven hours or more.

The average weight gain in the women who slept the least "may not sound like much, but it is an average amount," said Dr. Patel. "Some women gained much more than that, and even a small difference in weight can increase a person's risk of health problems such as diabetes and hypertension."

The study cohort included women who in 1986 reported their usual sleep duration. The women were then followed for 16 years, with weight being reported every two years. At the study outset, the women who reported getting just five hours of sleep weighed 5.4 lbs on average more than women who slept for seven hours or more.

The associations between sleep duration and weight gain persisted even after controlling for things such as snoring (a marker for sleep apnea), caffeine consumption, smoking, alcohol use, socioeconomic status and medication use, the authors found.

"There have been several hypotheses about why sleeping less may predispose you to gaining weight," Dr. Patel said. "In short term-just over two nights of sleep deprivation-studies have suggested hormone levels controlling appetite become out of control, suggesting that sleeping less in the short term may predispose you to be more hungry and so you may eat more."

But the authors collected data on diet, and found that contrary to what might be expected, women who slept less ate fewer total calories than women who slept more.

They also collected information about exercise, and saw a bell-shaped curve. Women who slept seven hours participated in exercise more than women who slept either less than five hours or more than nine hours, but these differences were relatively modest and could not explain the differences in weight levels.

The scientists also suggested that it was possible the amount of sleep women have may also affect the basal metabolism rate (the rate at which we burn calories at rest). This might lower calories burned in those who get less rest, resulting in weight gain.

More studies are already in progress to try to understand this phenomenon. However, one thing is clear: Sleeping at least 7 hours a night is absolutely a requirement to maintain your weight, and most probably, your health.

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

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Take this coupon to your Cingular store and save 5% every month for 2 years!

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The Cingular Union Plus Discount Foundation/FAN number is:

00113662

(02/06)



Cost of Living Increases

The International Union has prepared the following chart that highlights the cost of living figures for urban wage earners and clerical workers, as published monthly by the U.S. Department of Labor, Bureau of Labor Statistics (www.bls.gov) based on 1982-84=100.

As the chart indicates, the cost of living for urban wage earners and clerical workers has increased 3.7 percent over the twelve-month period, April 2005-April 2006.

Consumer Price Index (COLA) Urban Wage Earners and Clerical Workers U.S. City Average — All Items

| Description | May | June | July | Aug. | Sept. | Oct. | Nov. | Dec. | Jan. | Feb. | Mar. | Apr |
|------------------------------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|-------|
| 2005 | 190.0 | 190.1 | 191.0 | 192.1 | 195.0 | 195.2 | 193.4 | 192.5 | | | | |
| 2006 | | | | | | | | | 194.0 | 194.2 | 195.3 | 197.2 |
| 2004 | 184.7 | 185.3 | 184.9 | 185.0 | 185.4 | 186.5 | 186.8 | 186.0 | | | | |
| 2005 | | | | | | | | | 186.3 | 187.3 | 188.6 | 190.2 |
| Annual Point Change | 5.3 | 4.8 | 6.1 | 7.1 | 9.6 | 8.7 | 6.6 | 6.5 | 7.7 | 6.9 | 6.7 | 7.0 |
| Annual Percent Change | 2.9% | 2.6% | 3.3% | 3.8% | 5.2% | 4.7% | 3.5% | 3.5% | 4.1% | 3.7% | 3.6% | 3.7% |

The Consumer Price Index (COLA) is issued by the U.S. Department of Labor on the second or third Wednesday every month.

Save On Summer Entertainment

OPEIU members enjoy summer with savings on entertainment.

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■ **Theme Parks** — Save from \$3 to \$19 a ticket at theme parks nationwide (excluding Disney World) including Busch Gardens, SixFlags, Universal Studios and more.



Call **1-800-565-3712** (mention ID: 744387769) or visit www.UnionPlus.org/Entertainment



OPEIU 05/06

NBA or NFL?

36 have been accused of spousal abuse

7 have been arrested for fraud

19 have been accused of writing bad checks

117 have directly or indirectly bankrupted at least 2 businesses

3 have done time for assault

71, repeat, 71 cannot get a credit card due to bad credit

14 have been arrested on drug-related charges

8 have been arrested for shoplifting

21 currently are defendants in lawsuits, and

84 have been arrested for drunk driving in the last year.

Can you guess which organization this is?
The NBA or NFL?

Answer: Neither. It's the 535 members of the United States Congress!

Union Member Rights and Officer Responsibilities

The Labor-Management Reporting and Disclosure Act (LMRDA) guarantees certain rights to union members and imposes certain responsibilities on union officers. The Office of Labor-Management Standards (OLMS) enforces many LMRDA provisions while other provisions, such as the bill of rights, may only be enforced by union members through private suit in Federal court.

Union Member Rights

Bill of Rights — Union members have:

- equal rights to participate in union activities
- freedom of speech and assembly
- voice in setting rates of dues, fees, and assessments
- protection of the right to sue
- safeguards against improper discipline

Copies of Collective Bargaining Agreements — Union members and nonunion employees have the right to receive or inspect copies of collective bargaining agreements.

Reports — Unions are required to file an initial information report (Form LM-1), copies of constitutions and bylaws, and an annual financial report (Form LM-2/3/4) with OLMS. Unions must make the reports available to members and permit members to examine supporting records for just cause. The reports are public information and copies are available from OLMS.

Officer Elections — Union members have the right to:

- nominate candidates for office
- run for office
- cast a secret ballot
- protest the conduct of an election

Officer Removal — Local union members have the right to an adequate procedure for the removal of an elected officer guilty of serious misconduct.

Trusteeships — Unions may only be placed in trusteeship by a parent body for the reasons specified in the LMRDA.

Prohibition Against Certain Discipline — A union or any of its officials may not fine, expel, or otherwise discipline a member for exercising any LMRDA right.

Prohibition Against Violence — No one may use or threaten to use force or violence to interfere with a union member in the exercise of LMRDA rights.

Union Officer Responsibilities

Financial Safeguards — Union officers have a duty to manage the funds and property of the union solely for the benefit of the union and its members in accordance with

the union's constitution and bylaws. Union officers or employees who embezzle or steal union funds or other assets commit a Federal crime punishable by a fine and/or imprisonment.

Bonding — Union officers or employees who handle union funds or property must be bonded to provide protection against losses if their union has property and annual financial receipts which exceed \$5,000.

Labor Organization Reports — Union officers must:

- File an initial information report (Form LM-1) and annual financial reports (Forms LM-2/3/4) with OLMS.
- Retain the records necessary to verify the reports for at least five years.

Officer Reports — Union officers and employees must file reports concerning any loans and benefits received from, or certain financial interests in, employers whose employees their unions represent and businesses that deal with their unions.

Officer Elections — Unions must:

- hold elections of officers of local unions by secret ballot at least every three years.
- conduct regular elections in accordance with their constitution and bylaws and preserve all records for one year.
- mail a notice of election to every member at least 15 days prior to the election.
- comply with a candidate's request to distribute campaign material.
- not use union funds or resources to promote any candidate (nor may employer funds or resources be used).
- permit candidates to have election observers.
- allow candidates to inspect the union's membership list once within 30 days prior to the election.

Restrictions on Holding Office — A person convicted of certain crimes may not serve as a union officer, employee, or other representative of a union for up to 13 years.

Loans — A union may not have outstanding loans to any one officer or employee that in total exceed \$2,000 at any time.

Fines — A union may not pay the fine of any officer or employee convicted of any willful violation of the LMRDA.

The above is only a summary of the LMRDA. The full text of the Act, which comprises Sections 401-531 of Title 29 of the United States Code, may be found in many public libraries, or by writing the U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Labor-Management Standards, 200 Constitution Ave., NW, Room N-5616, Washington, D.C., 20210, or on the Internet at www.dol.gov.

Note: In officer's elections, unions must also provide reasonable notice of nomination of officers to union members.

Stewards' Training Stresses Grievance Resolution



Pictured left to right are (back row) Barbara Ropke and Bob Locher from Sandia National Laboratories; International President Michael Goodwin; International Representative Paul Bohelski; Frank Watkins and Cheryl Cormican from Sandia National; Mike Loewen and Tim Barre, Ross Aviation pilots; (middle row) Betty Ann Chavez, Sandia National; (center) Susan Rivas, president of Local 251; (front row) Sylvia Lopez, Sandia National; Cynthia Torres, ABF Freight; (center, front) Amy Cogswell, vice president of Local 251; Kelley Burns and Judy Abeita Chavez, Sandia National.

On April 18, 2006, Local 251 presented stewards' training to OPEIU stewards at Sandia National Laboratories, Ross Aviation and ABF Freight, all located in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Carol Oppenheimer and Morty Simon, from the Southwest Organizing School, presented valuable techniques to the stewards that told them how to investigate, prepare, present and resolve grievances. There was much discussion, interaction and role playing that was lively and

kept everyone interested in participating.

President Michael Goodwin and International Representative Paul Bohelski addressed the stewards, and also joined in the training and participated in the program throughout the afternoon. Local 251 President Susan E. Rivas and Vice President Amy Cogswell also led the training throughout the day.

"Attendees remarked the training was the best workshop they ever attended for many reasons," Rivas said. "They felt Carol

and Morty provided excellent training and information that could be applied in a practical way, and they displayed a true commitment to labor union ideals.

"All those present were excited to have Mike and Paul with us," Rivas continued. "Our stewards not only gained knowledge, but also a feeling of connection with the strength and principles of the International Union. The stewards felt empowered, which is a great thing to carry away from any stewards' training session," she concluded.

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