

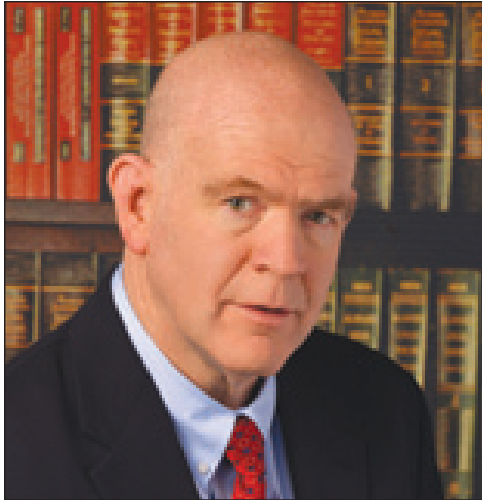
WHITE COLLAR

OFFICE AND PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEES INTERNATIONAL UNION, AFL-CIO, CLC ISSUE 537 | SUMMER 2018

You Are OPEIU



Join Us in Building a Strong and Powerful Union



Small Groups of Committed People Can Change the World

By Richard Lanigan
International President

My early experiences as an organizer seemed to follow a similar pattern. A small group of people, or occasionally one person, would reach out to Local 153, my local union in New York, because of changes in their workplace. After those initial meetings, employees would often form a committee. Then we would meet several times with the committee, making sure to answer all of its questions. The committee then spoke with fellow employees.

Often, we would then go public with the campaign. The employer usually hired legal counsel in an effort to divide the group and keep them from joining a union. The employer and their counsel would try to harass those who supported the union and held individual meetings to persuade employees not to join the union. Finally, the date for the election would come.

In one particular campaign, it snowed heavily on the day of the election and many eligible employees could not vote. The employees fell a few votes short and lost the election. Our committee members were devastated. As before the campaign, the employer continued to treat its employees poorly and was sarcastic about the union effort. It harassed the committee. A few felt hopeless, as they had sacrificed so much to get to the election. Many understood there needed to be change but were scared. Committee

members experienced stress on their relationships with loved ones at home. It was a very difficult time.

After witnessing continued abuse, one member of the committee spoke to a few fellow employees about change. They met again. Soon, they began to speak to other employees and developed a small committee. The committee called Local 153. This time the committee spoke to more people and met more frequently. Having seen the divisive tactics and harassment, the committee knew what to expect. This time the outcome was different; an overwhelming vote in favor of the union.

The employees met and spoke about what the first contract might look like. After that, proposals were submitted and negotiations started. Following many difficult sessions, the employees had no choice but to conduct a strike vote. At the end of the strike, which went on for weeks, the people won their first contract. It provided many new benefits for the staff including tuition reimbursement, improved vacation and sick time, a pension plan, arbitration, seniority, severance pay in the event of layoff, better promotional opportunity and many other changes. In addition, the group could now speak to management about any work-related problems without worrying about retaliation.

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The main reason the workplace improved is a few people... were persistent about changing their workplace.
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In the years that followed, we met with people who worked for colleges, food service, health centers, hotels, as maintenance workers, teachers, insurance claims processors and in many other occupations. In some cases, the pattern followed the one outlined above. Many now work under good contracts.

It's easy to say that such improvements came about as a result of negotiations. In some ways you might be right. You could say all these changes came about because there was a union. Again, you would be partially right. The main reason the workplace improved is a few people were willing to make sacrifices for the group and were persistent about changing their workplace. The renowned anthropologist Margaret Mead once said: "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it's the only thing that ever has." ■

Are You Registered to Vote?

This November's midterm elections will decide the future makeup of the House, Senate and several key governors' races, not to mention the Supreme Court.

Everything is on the line for working families, and the votes of working people could decide whether we have elected officials looking out for our interests or those more concerned with furthering the interests of corporate America.

The margin in the Senate is extremely tight; if Democrats pick up two seats, they can flip the majority. There are great candidates on the side of working families, running in places such as Nevada, Arizona and Mississippi, who can make that power shift a reality. A shift in the House is even more possible.

Do you know who is running for office in your state, and where the candidates stand on critical issues such as job creation, fair wages, collective bargaining rights, healthcare and education? Are you registered to vote?

To register to vote in your state, go to your union's website at opeiu.org and click on the register to vote button, or go directly to vote.gov to register. Encourage your coworkers, friends and neighbors to register, and get to the polls Nov. 6. Every state has different registration deadlines, so don't delay.

Finally, are you participating in the J.B. Moss VOTE Fund? OPEIU established the VOTE Fund so we have the necessary resources to support pro-worker political candidates and push for legislation that matters to working people. Just \$1 per paycheck can make a huge difference and ensure OPEIU members are heard and our interests protected.

The bottom line to remember: You can't vote in November unless you're registered.



Register now at opeiu.org or vote.gov

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OPEIU Scholarships Cultivate Tomorrow's Leaders

I am sincerely honored to have been selected as the recipient of a Howard Coughlin Memorial Scholarship. Thank you for your generosity, which will allow me to further my endeavors.

Thank you again for your thoughtful and generous gift.

Briyanna Rusley
Tennessee State University
Daughter of Edward Rusley
Local 101
Miramar, Florida

My family and I want to thank you for the Missouri camp program (Romeo Corbeil/Gilles Beauregard Memorial Scholarship Fund summer camp). Both my kids have gone (Katie in 2015 and Cyrus in 2017), and I can definitely say they learned and enjoyed the trip lots! Thanks again!

Anayelle Lopez
Local 8
Marysville, Washington

As a member of a family that has a long tradition of being union laborers, it is an honor for me to receive this Howard Coughlin Memorial Scholarship.

Cole Miller
Son of Pete Miller
Local 375
Terrace Park, Ohio

Thank you so much for giving me the opportunity to go to Missouri for the labor education camp. I had a blast and learned so much.

Natalee Lindemann
Daughter of Cara Lindemann
Local 11
Kelso, Washington

Thank you!

Sidney was the last one of my children to go to the summer camp, and I thank you so much for all your help and the opportunity for each of them over the last few years. This was something we would never have been able to send them to on our own.

Gina Vogel
Local 174
Canyon Country, California

Thank you for awarding me a scholarship from the Howard Coughlin Memorial Scholarship Fund. I am beyond appreciative for your generous contribution toward my education.

This money will not only relieve some of my financial stress, but it will also allow me to chase my dreams. This scholarship will allow me to attend my dream school — Wright State University — with less debt and earn my degree to teach adolescent-to-young adult English. I will have a chance to change the lives of my students...to be the lighthouse my teachers were on stormy days...to teach life lessons among English lessons...to ignite a passion for learning and an appreciation for literature that burns in my own heart. Thank you for awarding me this scholarship and making this all possible. I am immensely grateful.

Emily Day
Daughter of Julie Day
Local 98
Springfield, Ohio

Your letter was sent to me along with a check offering my children a chance at a brighter future by allowing them to continue their university studies. My late husband Jacques Dupuy was a staunch believer in higher education and had the event of May 31, 2013, not occurred, you can bet Jacques would be bugging our children about their upcoming university studies.

My daughter, Jade, and son, Gianni, are now respectively 17 and 15. Jade has started college and Gianni is more than halfway into high school. So, in a couple of years, university will be top of mind for both of them. As a single mom, I can only tell you all THANK YOU for the financial assistance offered to my children. It was unexpected, but I can assure you, highly appreciated.

Josée Capuano, widow of Jacques Dupuy
Jade Capuano-Dupuy, daughter
Gianni Capuano-Dupuy, son
Otterburn Park
Québec, Canada

Editor's Note: On May 31, 2013, an ORNGE air ambulance helicopter crash took the lives of OPEIU DAG 2007-A members First Officer Jacques Dupuy and Capt. Don Filliter, as well as paramedics Chris Snowball and Dustin Dagenais. Following the accident, fellow members of DAG 2007-A and OPEIU established an educational scholarship fund to provide for the children of these brave pilots.



We Want to Hear from You

Letters to the editor are welcomed.
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WHITE COLLAR

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What Exactly is the Fiduciary Rule? And Why Should You Care?

Last year, the implementation of the fiduciary rule was delayed by executive order of the president. A recent ruling by the third circuit court of appeals as much as killed the rule. One of the plaintiffs arguing on behalf of the nations' retirees was the American Association of Retired Persons (AARP), one of the nation's strongest advocacy groups for seniors. The rule will die completely if the administration does not appeal to the United States Supreme Court.

If the administration was watching out for the little guy, it would appeal to save a rule protecting Americans whose principal means to save for their retirement is affected by this rule. So far, it has not appealed. Some background may be helpful to understanding the fiduciary rule, and why you should care if it lives or dies.

From the 1950s to the early 1980s, many Americans were covered under a defined benefit pension plan. These pensions provided a set benefit or monthly payout based on how long you worked and the salary you earned. People who retired under such plans were provided a sense of security because they had an idea what they could expect as a payout years before they retired. This made retirement planning very easy and allowed people to establish lifestyles accordingly.

Since the 1980s, such plans have all but disappeared. Today less than five percent of the private sector workforce is covered under defined benefit pension plans. Defined contribution retirement plans, in which participants save their own money for retirement, have largely taken the place of defined benefit pension plans. Because public policy strongly supports saving for retirement, money saved in these plans is tax-deferred. Some plans are connected with employment and others are not. Some provide for the employer to make a contribution and to assist with investment decisions, and many do not.

Plans that are participant directed make the saver responsible for the investment of their money. Most participants in those plans do not have a great amount of education about investments. Some find the process alienating.

In 2006, prior to the enactment of the Pension Protection Act, nearly 48 percent of all Americans eligible to participate in workplace-based defined contribution plans were not participating, even when their employer agreed to match the employee's contribution.

Those who did participate had to rely on investment advisors to invest their savings. Often, these investment advisors are sales people who have as much personal interest in the commissions they earn from the purchase or sale of different investments using the retirees' assets as they do ensuring the investment would be prudent for the investor. So, there can be a conflict of interest between the investment advisors' earnings and the growth or security of the investors' assets. There are many stories about how retirees' investment accounts lost value as advisors' commissions grew from these sales.

In July 2014, the Seattle Times reported on an investment advisor who "encouraged hundreds of departing AT&T employees to roll over their retirement money into the kind of risky high-commission investments that Wall Street's self-regulatory agency warns against on its website." The article went on to report she "reaped hundreds of thousands of dollars a year in commissions and trips to resorts in the Bahamas and Florida. Not all her clients fared as well, and 37 have filed complaints against her, according to Financial Industry Regulatory Authority (FINRA) records reviewed by Bloomberg News," the article reported.

A recent report by the Council of Economic Advisors found that savers receiving guidance from an investment advisor, which may be suitable for them but not optimal, see investment returns reduced by a full percentage point on average. Overall, the report found that conflicted investment advice costs savers \$17 billion every year.

The fiduciary rule was adopted to eliminate the conflict of interest and require that the investment advisor have a duty or loyalty to the investor. The effect of the rule was the investments selected by these advisors would be based on the growth, rate of return or security of the investment, rather than the commission the investment manager can earn from the purchase or sale of the investor assets. The desired effect of the rule was to give retirees and those saving for retirement more confidence in a system that invests their life savings.

In April 2015, Forbes published an article about retirement savings. Although the article did not specifically address investor confidence as the reason for the shortfall on savings, it did state that 68 percent of Americans are not saving enough for their retirement.

Why should you care? **A better question may be: do you plan to retire?** ■

“
The report found that conflicted investment advice costs savers \$17 billion every year.
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Richard Lanigan Honored by Peggy Browning Fund



OPEIU President Richard Lanigan, second from left, receives the Peggy Browning Award. Also pictured are OPEIU President Emeritus and current International Vice President and Local 153 Business Manager Michael Goodwin, Peggy Browning Fund Board of Directors and Host Committee member Gwynne Wilcox, Esq. and President and Founder Joseph Lurie, Esq.

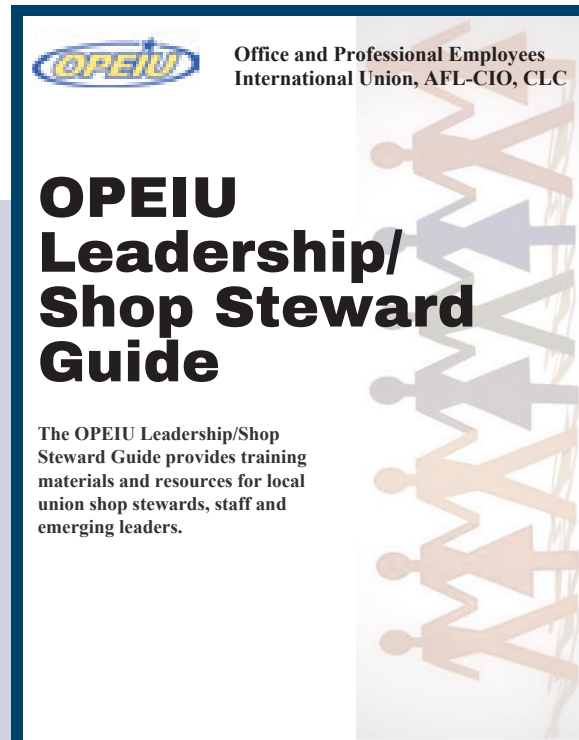
OPEIU President Richard Lanigan was honored by the Peggy Browning Fund, receiving its prestigious Peggy Browning Award for union activism, inspirational labor leadership and support of the American labor movement.

The Peggy Browning Fund is a nonprofit organization established in memory of Margaret A. Browning, a prominent labor attorney and member of the National Labor Relations Board. Its mission is to educate and inspire the next generation of law students to become advocates for workplace justice.

Attention OPEIU Stewards: Leadership/Shop Steward Guide Available at opeiu.org

To help its shop stewards best serve their members, OPEIU has developed a Leadership/Shop Steward Guide, which can be found at opeiu.org under Local Union Resources.

Empowered and well-trained stewards are the backbone of successful local unions. The OPEIU Leadership/Shop Steward Guide provides training materials and resources for local union stewards, staff and emerging leaders. Most of the content can be customized and adapted to fit the unique training needs of each local union. Go to opeiu.org and click on the Local Union Resources tab to check it out. Information on member benefits, new member orientations, how to talk to others about your union and other useful resources are also available.



Two New Areas of Study Added to OPEIU Free College Benefit

OPEIU is pleased to announce the addition of two new areas of study to the OPEIU Free College benefit available to all members and their dependents. Associate degrees can now be earned in labor studies and entrepreneurship, both under the business management degree program.

Here are upcoming registration deadlines (**Important note: You must have your local union number available when completing the application process**):

Fall I 2018: Aug. 17, 2018

Fall II 2018: Oct. 12, 2018

Visit FreeCollege.opeiu.org or call 888-590-9009 for more information.

Canadian members, please contact Luis Rosa at lrosa@egcc.edu for assistance.



Your OPEIU Identity Theft Benefit: Available 24/7 to Help Minimize the Threat

The statistics are frightening. There were 1,339 reported data breaches in 2017, up 22 percent from the prior year. In total, these breaches exposed more than 174 million records of consumer sensitive data, a 376 percent increase from 2016.

A data breach occurs when sensitive, confidential or protected information is exposed. The exposure can either be accidental or malicious in nature. And, what about those 174 million records of consumer sensitive data exposed last year? Those records contained names, Social Security numbers, email addresses, online account credentials, employee records, medical records and other personally identifiable information. Organizations breached included Uber, Equifax, Alteryx, Kmart, Verizon, Edmodo, FAFSA (IRS data retrieval tool), Verifone and America's Job Link. Most recently, exercise app Strava released a heat map of its users, inadvertently revealing sensitive information, such as the location of military bases and movements of its military users.

Identity theft cannot be completely prevented, however, there are ways to minimize the chances of becoming a victim:

- Enroll in OPEIU's complimentary identity theft member benefit by visiting opeiulDprotect.com (Canadian members, call 866-295-7966)
- Create strong passwords and update them frequently
- Be aware of what you share
- Keep sensitive personal and financial documents secure
- Protect your mobile device
- Check your credit report
- Don't fall for phishing scams

OPEIU has partnered with InfoArmor, a leader in identity protection to provide you with a complimentary identity solution benefit. You receive this benefit just by being a member of OPEIU. **To enroll, go to opeiulDprotect.com.**

If you are a victim of identity theft or have any questions, call InfoArmor at 1-855-990-0994. InfoArmor is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week. In Canada, OPEIU provides an identity protection benefit through Generali Global Assistance. Please call 866-295-7966 for assistance.

Resources: U.S. News & World Report, Identity Theft Market, InfoArmor and KII Consulting



Remember, all OPEIU Membership Benefit information can be found on our website, opeiu.org, and on the OPEIU app.

Download the app today at the App Store and Google Play.

It's About Freedom!

OPEIU members throughout the nation recently joined hundreds of thousands of unionists and allies to unite for our freedoms and demand an end to a system and an economy rigged against us by the wealthy and powerful.

From San Francisco to Seattle, New York to D.C., OPEIU members marched on the "National Day of Action" to campaign for workers' rights and declared they would fight against corporate plutocrats and their bought-and-paid-for politicians.

And, they pledged to do it together, in organizing drives and at the ballot box. The case that brought them to the streets is one being considered by the Supreme Court, *Janus vs. AFSCME*, a case that is being pushed by the anti-union National Right to Work Committee, its legal defense arm and corporate backers. "The case is another attempt to limit working people's ability to come together through unions to achieve economic and social justice, and today working people are pushing back," OPEIU President Richard Lanigan said.



Marching in Washington, D.C., are, from left, members Sarah Acree and Jonathan Erickson, Bredhoff & Kaiser Chief Steward Felecia Brown and Local 2 Staff Representative Jessica Maiorca.

In the case, in which a decision is expected by the summer, the justices will decide whether every state and local government worker in the U.S. could become a potential "free rider," using union services, but not having to pay one red cent for them.

"We'll tell the truth about this case," AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Liz Shuler told the D.C. crowd. "Their agenda is simple," she said of the anti-union forces, "More power for the big corporations and fewer rights for the rest of us."

"Working people aren't taking this attack lying down," Lanigan added. "We're demonstrating the power there is in numbers, and we're standing united together to fight the forces that want to take away our power and our voice, and our rights to fair wages, equality on the job and a secure future for our families."

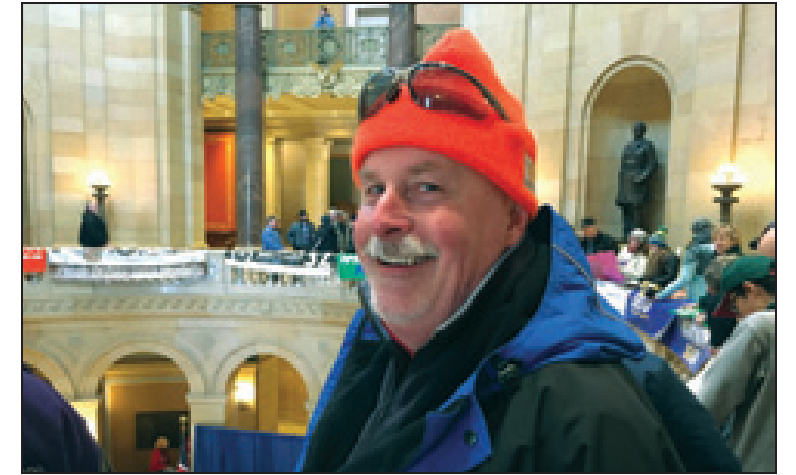
PAI contributed to this story.



From left, Local 100 Treasurer Walter Clarit Jr., member James O'Connor, Chaplain Luiz Morizot and International Vice President and Local 100 President Greg Blackman, marched for freedom and workers' rights in Miami.



Local 153 members, from left, Keisha McIntosh, Aileen Vazquez, Martin Beckerman, Brunilda Nunez, Executive Board member Robin Williamson, Kurt Best, Claudia Quick, Regina Frazier, Gladys Alvarez, Nkoma Woodside and some young future union members join the march in New York City.



Local 12 member Bernie Hesse at the Minnesota State Capitol Rotunda in St. Paul.



In Seattle, King County Executive Dow Constantine, second from left, with, from left, Local 8 Organizer Corinne Cosentino, Membership Support Representative Nallely Flores and Union Representatives Amanda Montoya and April Wyrick.



In Ohio, Local 1794 President Deborah Kline, left, with OPEIU supporters Toney Burton and Edie Rasell.

Building a Strong and Powerful Union

It's Your Union. Join Us in the Fight to Build a Brighter Future for All

Something is happening in America. Working people aren't sitting quietly as the wealthy rig the rules of the economy we built. We are leading a revolution to demand what we've rightfully earned.

To be effective, we'll need a strong and powerful union. Recognizing the urgency of the situation, OPEIU brought leaders and member activists together from all local unions to participate in a three-day training and educational program April 2-4 in Memphis, Tennessee, with the theme "Building Local Union Power to Meet the Coming Challenges."

"The goal of this training was simple," OPEIU President Richard Lanigan said. "We brought together all our local unions at one time, in one place, to bring home the point that it's going to take all of us, working together, to build a powerful union able to withstand the dark forces conspiring against all working people and their right to join unions.

"Thus, the training focused on how we, as local union leaders, could create an organization that all our members want to be a part of and can be proud of, and that builds power for working people to achieve strong contracts, better wages and benefits, and racial and social justice for everyone," Lanigan continued. "We're standing up for the freedom to join together in a union, and we're building an organization that our members can be proud to say represents them."



OPEIU President Richard Lanigan describes how OPEIU is building an organization strong enough to withstand the many forces conspiring against working families.



OPEIU Secretary-Treasurer Mary Mahoney helps local leaders understand how to run financially secure and transparent local unions.



DAG 110-S President Cody Neal.



From left, Local 277's Trustee Tonia Stonum, Vice President DeAundra Cephus and Lockheed Martin Steward Debra Johnson.



Local 101's President Jeremiah Edmond and Secretary Tracey Woodruff.



From left, Local 8's President Kellie McGuire, Organizer Corinne Cosentino, Vice President John Adams and Membership Support Representative Nallely Flores.



International Vice President and ITPEU/OPEIU Local 4873 President Dennis R. Arrington.



From left, OPEIU Nurses Council Secretary-Treasurer and Local 40 McLaren Macomb Vice President Dina Carlisle, RN, Ascension Crittenton Vice President Jo Walker, RN, and Treasurer Joanne Czeiszperger, RN.



From left, Local 153 Executive Board members Brenda St. John, Eugene Taylor, Brenda Knight and Robin Williamson.

I Am OPEIU!



OPEIU members gathered in Memphis to honor the slain civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and remember those union members who stood up and declared “I Am a Man,” during the 1968 Memphis sanitation workers strike. Carrying signs that read “I Am OPEIU,” these union members demonstrated the struggle for economic and racial equality, on and off the job, continues today.

I Am OPEIU!

OPEIU Members Honor 50th Anniversary of Memphis Sanitation Workers Strike and Legacy of MLK

Hundreds of OPEIU member activists gathered in Memphis to commemorate a landmark moment in the history of working people, the 50th anniversary of the Memphis sanitation workers strike and the assassination of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Fifty years ago, two young sanitation workers, Echol Cole and Robert Walker, were crushed to death by a malfunctioning truck, setting in motion a movement and sparking the historic I Am a Man strike of 1,300 African-American workers who were frustrated by the city's response to the tragedy and by its long history of neglect and abuse of black employees.

It is also 50 years since the killing of Dr. King, who was in Memphis supporting the striking workers. It was there that King delivered his last speech, commonly referred to as the Mountaintop speech, where he said the prophetic words, "Like anybody, I would like to live a long life. Longevity has its place. But I'm not concerned about that now. I just want to do God's will. And He's allowed me to go up to the mountain. And I've looked over. And I've seen the Promised Land. I may not get there with you. But I want you to know tonight, that we, as a people, will get to the promised land!"

"We feel honored to be here in Memphis to celebrate these brave union men who stood up and said they would no longer be mistreated and abused by their employers, and demanded recognition of their union and their rights to equality, better wages and safety on the job," OPEIU President Richard Lanigan said. "How fortunate we are to be here to recognize and celebrate Dr. King's legacy, 50 years after his ultimate sacrifice in the fight for social and economic justice for all working men and women."

As Dr. King told the striking workers the night before his assassination, "We've got to give ourselves to this struggle until the end. Nothing would be more tragic than to stop at this point in Memphis. We've got to see it through." This fight continues today, as working people throughout the nation are still standing together in their unions and demanding their rights to fair wages, a safe work environment and equality for all people.



International Vice President and ITPEU/OPEIU Local 4873 President Dennis R. Arrington with civil rights leader Rev. Jesse Jackson.



Hundreds of OPEIU members made the trip to Memphis to join thousands of union members and civil rights activists to commemorate the 1968 sanitation workers strike, including these members of Local 153 in New York.



Local 537 Business Manager/Secretary-Treasurer Jacqueline K. White-Brown, left, and Business Representative Lynnette T. Howard join OPEIU members from across the country at the march.



International Vice President and Executive Director of Local 112 Mike Bodinsky, left, and International Vice President and ITPEU/OPEIU Local 4873 President Dennis R. Arrington with Tom Perez, chairman of the Democratic National Committee and former U.S. secretary of labor, center.

OPEIU Launches Apprentice Organizer Initiative

Recent data confirms union membership increases wages for all working people, and the gender wage gap among union men and women is about half the size of the wage gap among non-union workers. Strong unions positioned for growth are the key to achieving pay equity — as well as tackling issues such as retirement security, student debt and ensuring all Americans have access to safe and affordable healthcare. OPEIU has a new plan to make sure our local unions are strong and growing to meet these and many other challenges.

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, female union members typically earn \$224 more per week than women not represented by a union. It's clear protecting and strengthening the rights of working people to come together and form unions is the key to achieving equal pay for all.

OPEIU is committed to building a stronger, more powerful union that can best represent our members and spread the benefits of union membership to as many working people as possible. We are equally committed to empowering local unions to create effective organizing programs to increase our membership, strengthen existing bargaining units and develop future labor leaders.

OPEIU has launched a new large-scale initiative aimed at doing just that. The OPEIU Organizer Apprentice Program provides an opportunity for OPEIU local unions to build organizing capacity with assistance from the International. The International will provide both financial support and guidance in hiring, directing, mentoring and training a full-time organizer apprentice with the understanding that the local union will commit fully to an ongoing staff position dedicated solely to organizing. The goal is for the local union to eventually operate a self-sustaining organizing program.

"To interest new members in our union, the foundations of our local unions have to be strong and seen as a force to take on the obstacles that get in our way of achieving a more equitable workplace and, ultimately, society in which we live and work," OPEIU Organizing Director Cindy Schu said. "The goal of this program is to help shore up these foundations and make our local unions stronger and more battle ready to take on the forces against working people."



Carolina Aceves, who is an active member of Local 30 in San Diego and serves as chair of its youth initiative, Generation Next, is the local's new organizing apprentice.

One of the best features of the program is that, whenever possible, the apprentice organizer will be hired from the membership or former membership of the local union. "The goal is to cultivate the development of OPEIU members to grow and become leaders of their union," Schu said. "By looking to our membership, we're finding people with an already built-in appreciation for their union and an understanding of the benefits of OPEIU membership, and thus a direct interest in seeing the union grow and prosper."

The first local unions participating in the program are already in place. "Our executive board recently approved participating in the Organizer Apprentice Program," said Susan Ebeling, president of Local 12 in Minneapolis. "This gives us the support and resources we need to build our organizing capacity and we're very excited to get our program underway this summer."

"We're focusing organizing resources in the communities and regions of our local unions to create sustainable organizing programs," Schu said. "It's encouraging so many of our leaders are willing to commit fully to building organizing capacity and, in turn, a stronger, more powerful union."

The new apprentice organizers are finding it to be an equally rewarding and productive experience.

Continued on page 22

LOCAL UNION NEWS



Local 40 Town Hall Sheds Light on Threat Posed by Nurse Staffing Shortages

If you're a registered nurse and your union contract with two hospitals includes safe-staffing ratios, what do you do if the hospitals break those pact provisions?

The answer from Local 40, which represents about 1,000 nurses at two hospitals in the Detroit suburb of Mount Clemens, Michigan, is you hammer at the issue in bargaining sessions, file labor law-breaking complaints with the National Labor Relations Board — and make sure the public understands the threat these nursing shortages have on the care they and their families receive at area hospitals.

Local 40 convened a Town Hall meeting in Mount Clemens on the evening of April 19 to tell the community what's going on. More than 100 people showed up to hear from Local 40 nursing members and former President Janice Czarnecki, RN, as well as guest speaker Julie Murray, RN, who serves as vice chair of the OPEIU Nurses Council and is a McClaren Greater Lansing chief steward at Local 459 in Lansing, Michigan.

Safe staffing is a nationwide problem, as insurers lean on hospitals to cut costs by cutting down the number of nurses available per shift. The firms' tactic is to deny

reimbursements for claims, arguing they're paying too much for too many people. One result is doctors' short visits with patients.

Another and more common result is fewer nurses in key hospital areas, such as intensive care units, cardiac care units and emergency rooms. As a result, OPEIU — and its OPEIU Nurses Council, which represents about 10,000 nurses and healthcare professionals throughout the country — has campaigned, state by state and nationwide, for mandatory safe-staffing ratios and limits on mandatory overtime.

There has been success in California and several other states. Bills on those issues, H.B. 4629 and S. 487, are pending in the GOP-run Michigan legislature. The union also backs safe-staffing legislation from Rep. Jan Schakowsky, D-Ill., in Congress, but that body's GOP leaders won't consider it.

"Local 40 supports a number of bills pending in the Michigan legislature that address the issues of RN-to-patient staffing ratios, that require hospitals to inform the public of their



Local 40 President Jeff Morawski, RN, leads the Town Hall discussion with Local 459 McClaren Greater Lansing Chief Steward Julie Murray, RN, left, former Local 40 President Janice Czarnecki, RN, second from left, and member Christy Wood, RN, a medical surgical nurse at McLaren Macomb.

actual staffing ratios and that limit overtime for hospital registered nurses," said Local 40 President Jeff Morawski, RN.

"This is not only an issue of protecting nurses and healthcare professionals, but an issue of public health," he continued. Overworked nurses, pushed into long hours and overtime — and subject to assault — can't "provide the highest level of care possible for their patients."

"Nurses care deeply about patients and their families and want to ensure they are able to properly care for them. Only with legislated safe staffing requirements will that be possible," Morawski said.

Nurses also suffer as a result. Recently, assaults have occurred at the two hospitals where Local 40 represents nurses, McLaren Macomb and Ascension Crittenton. Yet, the hospitals refuse to address the issue. It has not deterred the nurses and Local 40 from its mission of improving staffing so nurses can better care for their patients — and be safe on the job. "More and more, healthcare workers are in danger when they're working," Morawski said.

PAI contributed to this story.



Local 459 Nurses Honored by Lansing State Journal



Local 459 registered nurses, from left, Kyra Keusch, Lisa Campbell and Jessica Newton.

Three Local 459 nurses have been honored by the Lansing State Journal in its annual Salute to Nurses, recognizing their exceptional contributions to the nursing profession with a special newspaper insert and awards luncheon.

The awards were presented May 9, during the annual Nurses Week. Kyra Keusch, an RN in the intensive care unit at McLaren Greater Lansing, received the 2018 Nurses in Service to Our Country Award for her recent volunteer work in Puerto Rico. Keusch was the first Local 459 nurse to answer the call when OPEIU asked for volunteers to go to Puerto Rico after Hurricane Maria. She took vacation time to travel with 300 union brothers and sisters to assist with disaster relief. Keusch is very active, volunteering almost every time Local 459 asks for help. She serves as a union steward for her unit and is also recording secretary on the Local 459 executive board.

Lisa Campbell, RN, a float nurse at McLaren, was awarded the 2018 Clinical Practice Award. Campbell is incredibly enthusiastic about her nursing career, even after 21 years in the field. She is chairperson of the hospital's Professional Practice Committee, serves as a union steward and finds time to volunteer for the Nurses Honor Guard (to learn more about the OPEIU Nurses Honor Guard, visit opeiunursesCouncil.org).

Jessica Newton, RN, works nights on a medical surgical floor at McLaren and received the 2018 Rising Stars Award. She understands the way to make changes in her profession is to become involved, so Newton volunteers for the Professional Practice Committee and is the chairperson of her unit council.

"We are so proud of our hardworking Local 459 nurses," said Sharon Taylor, International vice president and Local 459 president. "It's wonderful to see them recognized by their peers and the Greater Lansing community. We congratulate them all."

OPEIU Nurses Take DC



OPEIU Nurses Council Vice Chair and Local 459 McLaren Greater Lansing Chief Steward Julie Murray, RN, right, and Recording Secretary Kyra Keusch, RN, travel to Washington to attend the Nurses Take DC Rally April 28. Held annually, the rally draws nursing professionals from throughout the country to the nation's capital to bring attention to important issues facing healthcare, such as nurse staffing shortages and violence against healthcare workers. Murray was also an invited speaker at the event.

Local 381 Supports Striking Teachers



From left, AFT Local 2309 retired member Tony DeGiusti, OPEIU Local 381 Recording Secretary Beverly Miller and Trustees Laura Adams and Debra Wojtek, AFT Local 2309 President Ed Allen and Local 381 Secretary-Treasurer Linda Smith.

Teachers all over the country are standing up for their rights and demanding they be treated with the respect and dignity they deserve. In Oklahoma, teachers walked out of the classroom and straight to the State Capitol in Oklahoma City to protest low wages not just for teachers, but also for support personnel and for the general lack of funding for education in the state.

On the eighth day of the walk out, members of the OPEIU Local 381 executive board delivered a donation to AFT Local 2309 President Ed Allen in support of the strike.

Local 129 Has New Contract at NASA



Signing of the ratified agreement with Chenega Security Solutions at NASA are, from left, Local 129 Chief Steward and Negotiating Committee Member Monica Barnes, President Sherry Patton and Negotiating Committee Member Heidi Mattingly.

Local 129 in Lake Jackson, Texas, has ratified a five-year contract for customer service representatives employed at NASA's Johnson Space Center in Houston, Texas, which means wage increases of 1.5 percent in the first three years of the contract with wage openers in 2020 and 2021.

Additionally, Local 129 was able to secure senior pay for anyone who invested 15 years of service or more. The contract with Chenega Security Solutions at NASA also provides zero fringe benefits cuts.

Locals 32 and 153 Train Stewards to Meet Coming Challenges



New Jersey's Local 32 and Local 153 in New York recently held in-depth training for its shop stewards to help them meet the challenges of today's worksites and learn how to build union power in the workplace. OPEIU's Bargaining Coordinator Sandy Pope and staff members of both locals led the full-day training.

Local 40 Affiliates Radiologic Employees Association



Michelle Foster is sworn in as vice president of the Ascension Crittenton radiology technicians by Local 40 President Jeff Morawski, RN.

A long-standing independent union of about 50 radiology technology technicians at Ascension Crittenton Hospital in Rochester, Michigan, has affiliated with Local 40.

The Rochester Crittenton Radiologic Employees Association (RCREA) joins Local 40's almost 1,000 healthcare professionals at Ascension Crittenton and McLaren Macomb Hospitals for greater bargaining strength and to increase growth capacity. Former RCREA leaders will hold positions on the Local 40 executive board.

Recently, Local 40 voted to expand their bylaws to include not only licensed nurses, but also other medical professionals. "Both organizations recognize it is in the best interests of our respective memberships to enter into this agreement to maximize our collective bargaining and representation strength and to increase our capacity to grow our union membership," reads the affiliation agreement.

"Increasing in size helps us absorb fixed costs, and also affords us more leverage and visibility when demonstrating at local and state levels," added Local 40 President Jeff Morawski, RN.

Local 6 Reaches Three-Year Agreement with Massachusetts Trial Court

After months of difficult negotiations, the members of Local 6 employed by the Trial Court of Massachusetts voted to ratify a new three-year contract, which includes a 5 percent wage increase and a number of other significant benefit improvements.

The contract, which is retroactive to July 1, 2017, covers the 2,800 clerical and professional employees represented by Local 6 who work for the Trial Court across the Commonwealth.

The negotiating team focused on improving wages and working conditions, achieving a 5 percent wage increase over the term of the contract, with the possibility of an additional 1 percent if 2018 tax revenues equal or exceed \$27,072 billion, an increase in bereavement leave, tuition remission for members' spouses, electronic dues authorization, mutual respect language and many other language improvements.

"We had a large and diverse negotiating team representing a variety of court

departments and regions of the state," said Chief Negotiator and Local 6 Business Manager George Noel, "and I want to recognize and thank each of them for their hard work and dedication to the members."

Negotiating team members included Secretary-Treasurer and Probation Operation Supervisor Patti Pelletier, Recording Secretary and Probation Operations Supervisor Deborah Puopolo, Executive Board Member and Accounting Coordinator Cara Madarese, Head Account Clerk Michelle Latimer, Assistant Electronic Monitoring Coordinator Phil Lang, Research Attorney Arthur Fenno, Head Account Clerk Soryia Rothman, Assistant Court Service Coordinator Shawn Wright, Head Law Librarian Robin Bates, Staff Interpreter Mary Martinez, Case Coordinator Kathaleen Siebert, Judicial Secretary Susan Henderson, Sessions Clerks Kathy Hamlin, Carmen Lozada-Carroll and Erin Grassetti, and Business Agents Garrett Mahoney, Dick

Russell, Phil Basile and Dan Totten. Special Assistant to the President Dick Martin was particularly helpful to the negotiating team, offering his vast knowledge and experience in the court system.

"Local 6, along with our sister state public sector union, negotiated in a very tough atmosphere due to anti-union Governor Charlie Baker, who imposed a 5 percent cap for economic parameters for three-year contracts on everyone," Noel said.

Massachusetts public sector unions met and shared information for months during this whole process. Local 6 members joined other unions by sending petitions to the governor and contacting their legislators demanding fairness. "Under these adverse bargaining conditions, we negotiated the best contract achievable. This was possible due to the support of our members and our ability to work with our sister public sector unions," Noel noted.

New Local 6 Members Sign First Contract with Massachusetts Board of Bar Overseers

New Local 6 members have proudly signed their first contract with the Massachusetts Board of Bar Overseers (BBO), which provides three wages increases of 2.5 percent, a system of predictable and consistent wage scales and steps, a \$90 signing bonus, paid vacation, retirement contributions, a formal grievance procedure to guarantee due process and fairness and much more.

The new unit is comprised of attorneys, investigators and administrative staff employed at the BBO and Office of Bar Counsel (OCR). "This first contract is the culmination of a lot of hard work that began when management subjected these professionals to arbitrary, unnecessary and damaging changes to their workplace," said George Noel, Local 6 business manager.

"These brave professionals determined overwhelmingly that coming together in a union provided them the best avenue for achieving a fair resolution and for preventing further arbitrary action," Noel said. "They shared a goal to create a better workplace for themselves and for those who follow, while preserving the mission and integrity of their office."



Members of the Local 6 bargaining committee at the Massachusetts Board of Bar Overseers sign their first contract.

Newly organized members provided the negotiating team, which was led by Noel and consisted of Al Nolan, Pam Harbeson-Depew, Samantha Fluxgold, Bernice Addonizio, Gloria J.D. Gallington, Linda Bauer, Sabra Mitchell and Stacey Taylor, with unrelenting support. That backing gave the negotiating team the strength to get through 23 intense negotiating sessions that resulted in a contract the members deserved and of which all could be proud. "The Local 6 members at the BBO learned that by working together, they could demand respect and fairness and be heard," Noel said.

Local 30 Cleans Up the Beach and Makes a Statement While Doing It!



Members of Local 30 stormed the beaches of San Diego in April as part of a beach clean-up sponsored by the Surfrider Foundation, an organization dedicated to the protection and enjoyment of the world's oceans, waves and beaches through a powerful activist network. Through their community activism, they also sent a strong message to the people of San Diego about the importance of voting in the upcoming elections.



Three Contracts Settled at Cougar Helicopters



Representatives from the three units at Cougar Helicopters hold a dignified and spontaneous protest to move negotiations forward.

Two newly amended contracts and one first contract have been settled at Cougar Helicopters, Inc., in St. John's Newfoundland, Canada, by OPEIU DAG 110-S.

The contracts cover three separate units represented by OPEIU at Cougar: Helicopter pilots; Search and Rescue Cabin Crew (SAR CC); and Weather Observers, Radio Operators and Dispatchers (WORD). The contracts contain significant gains, including a 0.5 percent increase upon ratification and another 0.5 percent increase every six months, step level increases and longevity payments, an add-on allowance for various specialty work and absolutely no concessions. WORD employees also will receive a \$2,500 lump sum for this first agreement with the company. All three agreements were ratified by an overwhelming majority of the membership.

The negotiations were difficult, however, and dragged on for months as management refused to move on certain issues. As negotiations stalled, the union members held a respectful yet forceful protest to demonstrate their united front to management, led by SAR CC negotiating team member and unit President Cody Neal, WORD negotiating team member and unit President Justin Kelly and Pilot negotiating team member and unit President Kelly Jamieson. Representatives from the three units greeted the company's CEO, Ken Norie, at the headquarters' entrance with signs reading, "We Want a Contract." The members' united front helped moved negotiations forward. "A good contract is one built over a long period of time and is a testament to the strength of the bargaining team's commitment to its members and the members' trust in its team," Kelly said.

OPEIU Launches Apprentice Organizer Initiative

Continued from page 16

"I've found it valuable as an apprentice organizer to be able to bring workers, their families and community partners together to fight, defend and create one strong voice that will help pave the way for change," said Carolina Aceves, an apprentice organizer with Local 30 in San Diego. "Organizing at this moment is especially necessary

when there is such uncertainty. We've all been dreading the Janus decision, and although this will definitely impact our labor movement, organizing has taught me that even against odds, the power of unity will always prevail."

"The Organizer Apprentice Program has provided me with the amazing opportunity

Local 8's Shannon Bono Celebrates 30 Years of Service



Shannon Bono, a Local 8 member employed by IBEW Local 77 in Kennewick, Washington, was honored by the local union for her 30 years of outstanding service and union membership.

"Her patience and guidance to the Kennewick office has been truly one of the best things at this local," said Kellie McGuire, Local 8 president and the office manager at IBEW Local 77. "Thanks for all your hard work and dedication."

to learn exactly how important the role of the organizer is, and how significant it can be to help people unite and create a voice for themselves in their workplace," said Martinique Phillips-Sotka, an apprentice organizer with Local 29 in Oakland. "I am so grateful for this experience and all of the information I've learned."

Local 29 Officers and Executive Board Installed for New Term



Local 29 officers and executive board members accepted their oath of office at the local union's general membership meeting April 18. The oath was administered by retiring Secretary-Treasurer Patricia G. Sanchez, who was given emerita status to recognize her many years of dedicated service to the members. Pictured, from left, are Vice President Denice L. Washington, Secretary-Treasurer Kelly Gschwend, Executive Board members Barbara Banford, Rhonda Fortier-Bourne and Jackie Dew, Recording Secretary Esmeralda Gomez, Trustee Jo Lynn Pascale, Executive Board members Minnie Chan, Pharaoh Lamont Stone, Joyce Lau, Hang Le To and Rosemarie Boothe-Bey, International Vice President and President/Business Manager Tamara R. Rubyn and Trustee Maya Weston. Not pictured is Trustee Holly Carey.

Recognition was also given to exiting board members Natalie Naylor, Eric Sisneros, Rosanna Wiebe and Angie Keller. Thanks to all for their dedication to the membership, commitment to the labor movement and efforts to improve the lives of all working families.

OPEIU Podiatrists Celebrate Major Legislative Victory



OPEIU podiatrists are celebrating a major legislative victory with the signing into law of S. 2372, the VA MISSION Act, which reclassifies podiatrists as podiatric surgeons within the VA Health Administration. The bill, which OPEIU podiatrists and the American Podiatric Medical Association (APMA) fought to make a reality, also addresses recruitment and retention issues within the VA system and will ensure veterans now receive the highest quality in foot and ankle care.

Here, OPEIU President Richard Lanigan, seated second from right, International Vice President and ITPEU/OPEIU Local 4873 President Dennis R. Arrington, standing far right, Dr. Dennis Frisch, seated far left, a podiatric physician, OPEIU member and APMA president, and several OPEIU and APMA members meet with minority leader Senator Charles Schumer (D-N.Y.), seated second from left, to push for the needed legislation.

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