

# WHITE COLLAR

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



## Meeting the Challenge to Organize



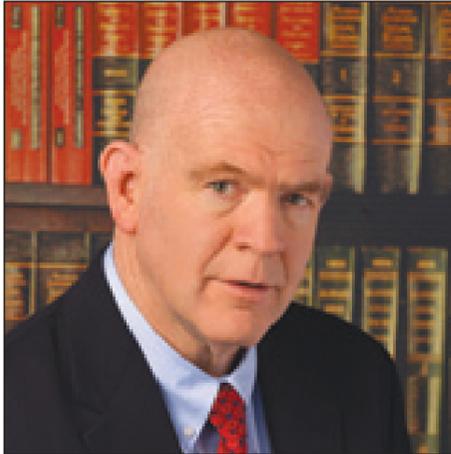
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## When Employees are Unified, They Can Be a Powerful Force for Change

By *Richard Lanigan, President*

Whether you voted for Donald Trump or Hillary Clinton, the recent election was difficult on the American people and on union members. No matter where the discussions were held — around kitchen tables, workplace cafeterias or in community centers — people were talking about the election.

We know during the election some of us may have focused more on what sets us apart rather than what binds us together, and that may be only natural during any election.

This election has shown that we have division over the direction of our country. Millions of working people who have experienced the devastating effects of globalization felt the need for change and voted the way they believed would provide them the greatest benefit. Millions of other people believed the best way forward was to vote for the other candidate. In the months following the election, the focus of conversations has continued to be on the issues dividing working people.

The Bible tells us Jesus Christ, in response to a comment by the Pharisees, stated “every kingdom divided against itself will be laid waste and every household divided against itself will not stand.” Abraham Lincoln, during the famous Lincoln-Douglas debates, stated “a house divided against itself cannot stand.” Lincoln’s statement spoke to how the United States was so bitterly divided over the issue of slavery. As we know, many Americans lost their lives because of the divisions in the country at that time.

In my years working with union members, one idea has always been very clear to me: When the union represents a group of working people, or when a group of working people is attempting to gain union representation, if those people are not unified around their key priorities, the union cannot be effective because it is divided. When this happens management usually prevails. On the other hand, when a group of employees is unified around an issue, it can be a powerful force for positive change in the workplace.

No matter how you voted, or if you voted at all, it’s at times like these that we should remind ourselves of what binds us together as union members and employees. In OPEIU we have been talking to people in different parts of the country, who work in the many industries where OPEIU has represented workers for years. If you took their main concerns and listed them, it would look like this:

- Job security
- A wage with which you can raise a family
- Quality education, including affordable college
- A safe place to live

- The right of a worker to be represented by a union
- Dignity and security in retirement
- Equal treatment
- To be treated with respect

These are the values of the OPEIU family. We believe these are not only values, but they are goals that are important to people, no matter how they voted or if they voted. In the coming months, rather than focusing on what divides working people, we will be focusing on what draws us together — our values.

As we go forward, there will be issues many of our members support, and there will be issues where our members are divided. It will be difficult to be sure how members feel about certain issues. If we believe certain issues run contrary to our goals or values, then we will speak out in a loud voice.

As your union we have learned over the years to work with those who respect us, fight those who don’t and negotiate with those who can be persuaded to do what is in the best interest of our members. Most importantly, we’ve learned when the time is right for each approach.

## Protecting Our Rights in the Workplace

As national right-to-work legislation is introduced in Congress and Supreme Court and cabinet nominees are considered by Congress—some of whom have long records of undermining workers’ rights—working families’ futures hang in the balance.

OPEIU local unions are preparing to meet these challenges, coming together as one union, learning new skills and working hard to bring the benefits of a union to working people everywhere. Listen carefully and you can hear the rallying cry to “organize, organize, organize!”

They also aren’t letting so-called right-to-work laws get in the way! Just look at Local 459 in Michigan or Local 101 in Florida as examples of OPEIU activists who are organizing

new members and negotiating excellent contracts, even in right-to-work-for-less states.

The bottom line is we are protecting our core values and our hard-fought gains in the workplace. **Join the fight, and organize, organize, organize!**

### Touchpoint Moross Employees Vote Union Yes!

After standing together strong and united for two years amid a fierce anti-union campaign in a right-to-work state, nearly 400 employees from Touchpoint Support Services at St. John Moross Hospital in Detroit, Michigan, voted to be represented by Local 459.

Local 459, which already represents Touchpoint employees at St. John Oakland and St. John Macomb hospitals, now represents the employees in the dietary and environmental services departments at Moross. “Touchpoint has been hired by St. John Health System to run these departments in all their hospitals, a type of subcontracting often done to avoid or break unions,” explains International Vice President and Local 459 President Sharon Taylor. “But at these hospitals, it’s the subcontractor’s employees who are desperate for union representation and are thus forming the unions.”

Amid anti-union rhetoric and promises for improved conditions from the company, the union lost its first election in 2015. After these promises brought nothing but additional cuts in benefits, the employees once again approached Local 459. “This time, OPEIU President

*60 percent of Americans support unions.*  
RIGHT-TO-WORK IS NOT THE WILL OF THE PEOPLE.

Richard Lanigan worked with us to bring on a full-time person — Blenda Coward, who is the chief steward at Touchpoint Macomb and who helped organize the group there in 2014 — to assist with our campaign. She literally camped out at Moross, interacted with the employees daily, and explained how much conditions had improved at her hospital since they joined the union,” Taylor said.

Coward, other leaders from Moross that included Janie Dombroski and Darlene Curry, and Local 459 Service Representatives Lance A. Rhines and Charles Terry fought against a fierce anti-union campaign waged by management and its team of union busters. “A group of Moross employees actually decided to do their own investigation by speaking with employees at the other hospitals, and discovered that these folks really liked being a part of Local 459 and their work life had improved since they organized. The group shared with their co-workers at Moross what they’d learned and that cinched it,” Taylor said.

In December, two elections were held and both the dietary and the environmental services employees voted overwhelmingly for Local 459 representation. “The employees at Touchpoint Moross are very excited to be part of OPEIU,” Taylor said.

**They are proving that by joining together and standing up for our values as working people, we can bring about great change, even in right-to-work states.**



Local 459 Service Representative Charles Terry, Moross employees Ed Brown, Cheryl Winters, Felicia Walton, Dora Coogler, Lorna Braden (obstructed), Kelly Gemes, Dartesha Johnson and Brenda Henley and Touchpoint Macomb Chief Steward/Temporary Organizer Blenda Coward.

## OPEIU Towing Program is a Hit

I just wanted to let someone know how pleased I am with the [OPEIU towing] program. I had to have my car towed last night, and I lost my card but called a co-worker, who had the card and phone number. With the stress of having your car breakdown on one of the coldest days of the year, calling and having it towed was the easiest part of the whole night. They, including the tow truck driver, were very nice to deal with and made it painless.

Thank you again for offering this wonderful service!

Linda Hernandez  
Local 11  
Kennewick, Wash.

I need to tell you that last night my son was driving my car and broke down. I gave him the information for the towing services to try. He said they were wonderful. Their first question was if he was alright and in a safe area. They pinpointed his exact location, called the towing service and then texted my son to tell him the name of the company that would be there and the time he should expect them. Although the towing company was late the service called my son back and kept in touch with him until he had the car towed.

I'm very impressed with this service and especially the fact that they made sure my son was taken care of. Thank you for offering this to the members, and I pray anyone else who needs this service has the same experience my son had.

Thanks again,

Awilda E. Bliss, BSR  
Local 2001  
Lauderdale, Miss.

## A Very Impressive Piece!

I'm sending you a quick email to say I think the paper looks fantastic!

Very well laid out, interesting layout, well done in placement of pictures and articles. It really is a very impressive piece. So, a round of applause for all! Great work!

Christine Page  
International Vice President  
President/Business Manager, Local 174  
Los Angeles, Calif.

Thanks very much for putting together such a stimulating publication for our members. I read White Collar this summer for the first time, hung on every word and was very moved, for a variety of reasons, by President Richard Lanigan's 'Millennials Are Learning the Power of Working Together,' (page 2, Summer 2016).

As a millennial who was deeply involved in the Occupy Wall Street movement as an activist who cared deeply about prosecuting systemic financial fraud, I must say President Lanigan is absolutely correct in his analysis. Furthermore, I am a millennial and grateful to be involved in organized labor.

José Negroni  
Local 153  
Brooklyn, N.Y.

## Appreciation for Flood Relief

Everyone here at Local 428 would like you all to know how greatly we appreciate the relief funds sent to members who were affected by the August 2016 flood.

My hope is for you all to let everyone know how truly grateful we are to each person who contributed to the relief funds.

I have had the opportunity to share with the members all the support, prayers and dedication given on your office's behalf in an effort to meet our members' needs.

Every recipient who received funds wishes to sincerely express their thanks to you and others!

In addition, we would like to extend a special thanks to Ms. Mary Mahoney, Ms. Colleen Pedersen, Ms. Suzanne Fenech and Ms. Juliet Casey.

Best regards,

Mr. Wilford Brumfield  
President  
Local 428  
Baton Rouge, La.

Cover: Local 1937 Vice President John Edwards, holding left cover of the banner, attends the AFL-CIO Organizing Institute. Learn more about this and similar training programs on page 13.

I recently found out that some of our members that had extensive flood damage received contributions from our brothers and sisters of OPEIU. I would like to thank you and all the brothers and sisters of OPEIU on behalf of Local 407 for the response that OPEIU gave to our members. Our company did not reach out to our members, but **thankfully we were supported by many kind and wonderful people of OPEIU.**

Most of our members had damages that were recoverable without financial ruin, but there were a few who had overwhelming damage that to this day they have not recovered from. Your contributions went toward helping them regain their lives. Thank you again on behalf of Local 407 and the Executive Board.

Paul Rivait, president  
George Evans, vice president  
Ted Drott, treasurer  
Keith Guidry, recording secretary  
Chad Prejean, trustee  
Ty Foxworthy, trustee  
John Hundley, trustee  
Local 407  
Abbeville, La.



## We Want to Hear from You

Letters to the editor are welcomed. Send correspondence to:

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or email to [frontdesk@opeiu.org](mailto:frontdesk@opeiu.org).

# They're doing it, and you can too!

## Organizing for a Just America Starts with Us

### One Small Step to Build Union Power in Your Workplace

Most of us would probably agree that when the lion's share of wealth and prosperity is enjoyed by only a very few, at the expense of working people, we can't just sit on the sidelines waiting for a solution. We must be the solution. As union members, we can step up our commitment to organize, mobilize and, very importantly, join with our community and faith allies. It's a tall order, but how else can we be a powerful force to bring about economic, racial and social justice for all?

Backing unorganized working people in their efforts to form a union should continue to be our urgent focus, along with broadening our reach among our own co-workers through member-

*67 percent of young professionals think it's a good idea to be represented at work.*

TALK TO YOUR YOUNG FRIENDS, FAMILY MEMBERS AND NON-UNION CO-WORKERS AND TELL THEM WHY THE UNION WORKS FOR YOU!

share about reaching out to new employees. If we're going to recommit our union to being a social movement and address the important issues of our day, we need to use all the handy tools and resources at our disposal to connect with each other in a meaningful way.

In the coming months, the OPEIU website will have a Union Orientation Toolkit with practical materials to help create or enhance an effective orientation to reach out to new employees who might not become connected to their union otherwise. In the meantime, here are a few ideas to put into action, think about bringing up to your shop steward or take to your next union meeting for discussion.

A few tips for new member orientations:

- Encourage shop stewards or other workplace leaders to take responsibility for the member orientations during the designated time for new employees. Provide training and guidance on how to conduct the orientation and ways to follow-up with the new employees.
- Negotiate orientation time in your union contract, or try to get a written agreement from the employer to ensure union presence on the agenda.
- Establish a systematic 1:1 program to pair workplace leaders with new employees to provide a positive first impression of being part of OPEIU. Even if attending the orientation isn't possible or applicable for your situation, a new member outreach program can still be created.
- Create an orientation agenda that includes: Introductions, What is a Union?, Benefits of Working Union, Becoming a Member, Staying Connected, Our Union Contract and Ways to Get Involved.
- Provide a welcome packet with relevant and current materials.



## Local 101 in Florida Secures Unprecedented 18 percent Increase

After a long, difficult year of negotiations, Local 101 in Miramar, Florida—a right-to-work state—has secured a contract totaling an 18 percent wage increase for more than 300 city employees.

The three-year deal provides for 6 percent wage increases each year and is retroactive to 2012. Congratulations to the negotiating committee, comprised of Local 101 President Jeremiah Edmond, Secretary-Treasurer Joan McLean, Secretary Janine Alleyne, negotiator Glenda Armstrong, Waste Water Plant Operator Zolanolo Taylor, Vice President Roy Virgin and negotiator Tracey Woodruff. They're proving once again that great things can be accomplished, even in right-to-work states.

What are your tips or ideas for reaching out to new co-workers? Send an email to OPEIU Director of Organizing Cindy Schu at [cschu@opeiu.org](mailto:cschu@opeiu.org) to share your experiences. Remember to check back on the OPEIU website soon for the Union Orientation Toolkit.

# Historic Women’s March

## OPEIU Women Send Washington a Message: Protect Our Rights!

OPEIU women — and men — showed up in droves to participate in the Women’s March in Washington, D.C., and at sister marches in cities throughout the country Jan. 21 to stand up for gender justice, equality and opportunity for all.

Carrying signs declaring “will strike if provoked” and chanting “women’s rights are workers’ rights,” OPEIU members sent a message to the new administration that they are going to continue to stand up for women’s rights and speak out on issues affecting all working families, such as immigration and the right to form and join unions.

“We saw OPEIU members of all ages, but particularly our young Rising Stars, participating in marches in Washington, D.C., and from California to New York, demonstrating a great deal of enthusiasm to protect labor’s core values and resist all attempts to curb the rights of women, immigrants and working families,” said President Richard Lanigan.

“Let’s harness that enthusiasm and spread the word about the important role that unions play in protecting these rights for all Americans,” he continued. “Talk to your co-workers, friends and family about the benefits that come with joining together in a union. Get involved in your community, and consider running for local office yourself to become the change you want to see.”



Washington, D.C. marchers.



AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Liz Shuler welcomes the crowd of labor marchers in D.C.



Local 30 UPR/UBT Representative at Kaiser Permanente Jacqueline Gilbert, right, with her daughter Baylee.



Marchers make their way down 7th Street in D.C.



Local 30's Generation Next Chair Carolina Aceves, left, and her friend Audrey Miller.



Local 2 members and OPEIU Director of Communication, Education and Research Nicole Korkolis, second from right, join 500,000 other concerned citizens at the Women's March on Washington, D.C. Pictured are Local 2 Executive Board Member Caniesha Seldon, Local 2 members Dan Riehl and Tichakorn Hill, Korkolis, and Helen Melton of the Solidarity Center.

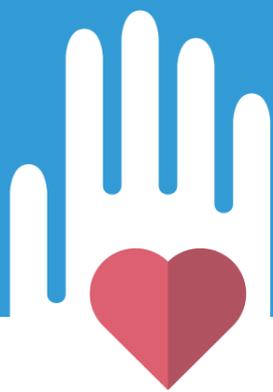


Members of Local 30 and their families join the San Diego Women's March.

Did you participate in local marches? Send us your photos and we'll post them on the OPEIU website at [opeiu.org](http://opeiu.org). Email them to [frontdesk@opeiu.org](mailto:frontdesk@opeiu.org) with the subject "Women's March." You can also share them on Facebook ([facebook.com/opeiu](https://facebook.com/opeiu)), Twitter ([@opeiu](https://twitter.com/opeiu)), and Instagram ([@opeiu](https://www.instagram.com/opeiu)).



Local 30's Jacqueline Gilbert, left, and Business Agent Angela Jensen.



# SPOTLIGHT ON OPEIU NURSES

## OPEIU Nurses Council Leads Charge to Improve Workplace Conditions



Paige Yates, RN

OPEIU Nurses Council (ONC) Chair Paige Yates, RN, shared her experiences at the CAR:NG Conference at Rutgers University, where a coalition of labor and community organizations gathered to share workplace best practices with nurses from across the United States.

Yates is also president of Local 22 in Little Rock, Arkansas, which represents nurses and other healthcare professionals. Among the topics discussed at the conference were how to build stronger unions, healthcare industry consolidation, community campaigns and coalition building, workplace health and safety and more. “The conference allowed us as nurses to collaborate, share and learn to better navigate the ever-changing world of healthcare labor relations,” said Yates.

Also discussed was nurse to patient ratios, an issue that tops the ONC’s agenda. The ONC will be participating in a national short-staffing rally May 5 in Washington, D.C. Visit the ONC website at [opeiunursesCouncil.org](http://opeiunursesCouncil.org) for more information.



### Nurses Are Most Trusted Profession... Again!

For the 15th straight year, nurses top the list of the most trusted professions in the country, according to a recent Gallop survey.



Vanny Ly, RN

## Local 459 Nurse Honored for Lifetime Achievement

The Lansing State Journal has recognized Local 459 nurse member Vanny Ly with its 2016 Lifetime Achievement Award. “Ly is one of an elite group of nurses who can float to any area, including some of the specialty areas that require a different skill set than that of a floor nurse,” said OPEIU Nurses Council Vice Chair and Local 459 Chief Steward Julie Murray, RN. “She eagerly takes on unfamiliar territory, as she knows she will add to her knowledge base, and she thrives on learning new things. A nurse with this kind of versatility is fairly rare and certainly treasured.”

Ly came to the United States from Cambodia in 1983, as her family fled a refugee camp in Thailand. After mastering the English language and finishing high school, she earned a degree from Michigan State University and began working at what was then Ingham Regional Medical Center in 1993. The hospital is now known as McLaren Greater Lansing.

“For me, as a member of the union, it makes me feel secure that my workplace will be fair and I will have a voice if need be,” Ly said. Congratulations to Ly, one of the more than 10,000 nurses and healthcare professionals who proudly call themselves a member of OPEIU.

## A Letter to the Doctors and Nurses Who Cared for My Wife

*After his 34-year-old wife suffered a devastating asthma attack and later died, the Boston writer Peter DeMarco wrote the following letter to the intensive care unit staff of CHA Cambridge Hospital who cared for her and helped him cope.*

As I begin to tell my friends and family about the seven days you treated my wife, Laura Levis, in what turned out to be the last days of her young life, they stop me at about the 15th name that I recall. The list includes the doctors, nurses, respiratory specialists, social workers, even cleaning staff members who cared for her.

"How do you remember any of their names?" they ask.

How could I not, I respond.

Every single one of you treated Laura with such professionalism, and kindness, and dignity as she lay unconscious. When she needed shots, you apologized that it was going to hurt a little, whether or not she could hear. When you listened to her heart and lungs through your stethoscopes, and her gown began to slip, you pulled it up to respectfully cover her. You spread a blanket, not only when her body temperature needed regulating, but also when the room was just a little cold, and you thought she'd sleep more comfortably that way.

You cared so greatly for her parents, helping them climb into the room's awkward recliner, fetching them fresh water almost by the hour, and by answering every one of their medical questions with incredible patience. My father-in-law, a doctor himself as you learned, felt he was involved in her care. I can't tell you how important that was to him.

Then, there was how you treated me. How would I have found the strength to have made it through that week without you?

How many times did you walk into the room to find me sobbing, my head down, resting on her hand, and quietly go about your task, as if willing yourselves invisible? How many times did you help me set up the recliner as close as possible to her bedside, crawling into the mess of wires and tubes around her bed in order to swing her forward just a few feet?

How many times did you check in on me to see whether I needed anything, from food to drink, fresh clothes to a hot shower, or to see whether I needed a better explanation of a medical procedure, or just someone to talk to?



*Peter DeMarco and his wife, Laura Levis, hiking together last summer in Scotland. Photo courtesy of Peter DeMarco.*

How many times did you hug me and console me when I fell to pieces, or ask about Laura's life and the person she was, taking the time to look at her photos or read the things I'd written about her? How many times did you deliver bad news with compassionate words, and sadness in your eyes?

When I needed to use a computer for an emergency email, you made it happen. When I smuggled in a very special visitor, our tuxedo cat, Cola, for one final lick of Laura's face, you "didn't see a thing."

And one special evening, you gave me full control to usher into the I.C.U. more than 50 people in Laura's life, from friends to co-workers to college alums to family members. It was an outpouring of love that included guitar playing and opera singing and dancing and new revelations to me about just how deeply my wife touched people. It was the last great night of our marriage together, for both of us, and it wouldn't have happened without your support.

There is another moment — actually, a single hour — that I will never forget.

On the final day, as we waited for Laura's organ donor surgery, all I wanted was to be alone with her. But family and friends kept coming to say their goodbyes, and the clock ticked away. About 4 p.m., finally, everyone had gone, and I was emotionally and physically exhausted, in need of a nap. So I asked her nurses, Donna and Jen, if they could help me set up the recliner, which was so uncomfortable, but all I had, next to Laura again. They had a better idea.

They asked me to leave the room for a moment, and when I returned, they had shifted Laura to the right side of her bed, leaving just enough room for me to crawl in with her one last time. I asked if they could give us one hour without a single interruption, and they nodded, closing the curtains and the doors, and shutting off the lights.

I nestled my body against hers. She looked so beautiful, and I told her so, stroking her hair and face. Pulling her gown down slightly, I kissed her breasts, and laid my head on her chest, feeling it rise and fall with each breath, her heartbeat in my ear. It was our last tender moment as a husband and a wife, and it was more natural and pure and comforting than anything I've ever felt. And then I fell asleep.

I will remember that last hour together for the rest of my life. It was a gift beyond gifts, and I have Donna and Jen to thank for it.

Really, I have all of you to thank for it.

With my eternal gratitude and love,

Peter DeMarco

*This article originally appeared in The New York Times, Oct. 6, 2016. Readers may add their own comments on this moving piece to the hundreds already made by nurses, doctors and others by visiting The New York Times and searching "Laura Levis." NBC Nightly News also featured the letter in its Oct. 10 broadcast, available online.*

## Apply now for OPEIU Scholarships



Applications are now being accepted for the 2017 OPEIU educational scholarships. All members are encouraged to apply.

The **Howard Coughlin Memorial Scholarship** awards 12 full-time higher education scholarships of \$6,500 and seven part-time scholarships of \$2,650, each awarded on the basis of at least one per region, to OPEIU members and associate members in good standing and their children. Applicants must either be high school seniors or graduates entering or enrolled in a college, university or recognized technical or vocational school as full- or part-time students.

The **John Kelly Labor Studies Scholarship** awards 10 scholarships of \$3,250 for OPEIU members or associate members who have been members for two or more years and are pursuing an undergraduate or graduate degree in labor studies, industrial relations, union leadership and administration and/or a program sponsored by the National Labor College.

The **Romeo Corbeil/Gilles Beaugard Memorial Scholarship Fund** offers summer camp for 20 children, between the ages of 13 and 16, of OPEIU members or associate members. The one-week camp will be held July 16-21 and will teach children about the labor movement while providing fun summer activities, such as swimming, canoeing and volleyball.

**Deadlines are March 31 for the Howard Coughlin and John Kelly scholarships. The summer camp deadline is May 15.**

**Scholarship rules and applications are available at [opeiu.org](http://opeiu.org) under the Member Resources/Union Benefits link. Apply today!**



*International Vice President and Hawai'i Nurses Association (HNA)/Local 50 President Maureen Meehan-Golonka, RN, right, with Michelle Apo, RN, mother of Kasie Apo Tokayama, who was awarded a full-time 2016 OPEIU Howard Coughlin Memorial Scholarship. Michelle Apo works at Kaiser Maui Lani Pediatrics Outpatient on Maui.*

## New for 2017: Student Debt Reduction Program



OPEIU is pleased to offer a new OPEIU Student Debt Reduction Program to help members repay their student debt.

The fund will provide five awards of \$2,500 each year. A member can be awarded only once in a lifetime, and must have completed an associate or undergraduate degree. They must also have at least \$10,000 in student debt and be able to prove their account is current. Application acceptance begins April 1, and the deadline for all submissions is June 30. Complete rules and an application will be posted on April 1 at [opeiu.org](http://opeiu.org), under the Member Resources/Union Benefits/OPEIU Membership Benefits link.

**Attention all local unions: Sample language for establishing a union/employer-provided student debt reduction program is available to bargain into your employer contracts. Contact the International for more details.**

## DID YOU KNOW?

More than 44 million Americans in the U.S. are living with student debt totaling \$1.26 trillion.



## Local 306 President Pam George Retires

After a lifetime dedicated to improving the lives of members of Local 306 in Amarillo, Texas, Pam George is embarking on her well-earned retirement.

A true union activist and leader, George served as Local 306 president for 36 years and was employed 46 years at Pantex nuclear facility in Amarillo.

“Pam has been an effective leader of Local 306 and an integral part of OPEIU for four decades, and has been able to maintain an overwhelming percentage of the membership of her local despite being in a right-to-work state, no small feat,” said President Richard Lanigan. “In the face of aggressive management demanding contract concessions that would have decimated members’ benefits — particularly their health care benefits — Pam led the Local 306 strike of 2015, and her efforts preserved and maintained benefits for employees of Pantex for many years to come.

“OPEIU thanks Pam for her lifetime of dedication and service and expresses its sincere best wishes for a healthy and happy retirement,” Lanigan continued.

Local 306 recently held elections and the following officers were elected: President Tiffany Sturkie, Vice President Paul Owen, Financial Secretary Nikki Winningham, Recording Secretary Kerri Gilley, and Trustees Nancy Muncy, Jena Buchanan, and Cathy Saldana.

## Local 1937 Has New Contract for Merck Employees

Local 1937 has a new contract at Merck Sharp & Dohme pharmaceutical company in West Point, Pennsylvania, which includes a \$5,000 bonus to all active employees and wage increases totaling 11 percent over the five-year agreement.

The contract also contains other benefit improvements, including a joint statement from both the union and the company agreeing to promote a culture of diversity and inclusion in the workplace, the first of its kind with any union representing employees at Merck.

“Thanks to International Representative Gary Nuber, we were able to secure this contract, which we wouldn’t have been able to do without his help,” said Local 1937 President Dottie Miller. Congratulations to the negotiating committee of Miller, Nuber, John Edwards, Frank Chapman, Sherry DelVecchio, Rob Schwoyer and Christel Sholly.



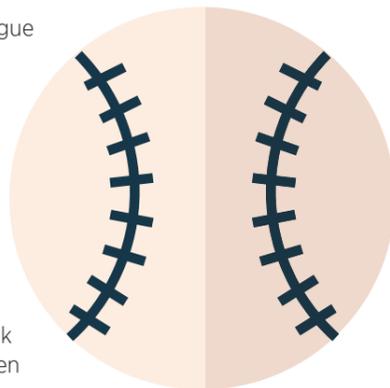
## Umpires Hit One Out of the Park

The 220 members of the Association of Minor League Umpires (AMLU), OPEIU Guild 322, have voted to approve a new five-year contract with Minor League Baseball that includes salary increases of 5 to 10 percent, plus per diem increases throughout the life of the contract.

The contract brings other improvements in safety protocols, including an upgrade in the quality of hotels the umpires stay in while traveling, which guarantees they will only stay in hotels with indoor entrances, thus reducing the risk of break-ins. Changes were also made to strengthen the concussion protocol procedures, among other benefit improvements.

“This is a very good contract. Overall, the quality-of-life issues for minor league umpires are 180 degrees better from the formation of the AMLU in 1999 until today,” said AMLU Executive Director Shaun Francis, who negotiated the agreement with the AMLU Executive Board and its president Chris Tipton.

AMLU became an affiliated guild of OPEIU in 2010. “Our affiliation with OPEIU has given us the strength and resources we need to be able to negotiate strong contracts like this,” Francis said.



## Members Take Advantage of OPEIU Initiative to Develop Leadership and Organizing Skills



The graduating class of the 41st UALE Northeast Regional Summer Institute for Union Women, which included Local 1937 President Dottie Miller and Local 2 Staff Representative and First Vice President Carolyn Bennett-Lewis.

Local 1937 President Dottie Miller and Local 2 Staff Representative and First Vice President Carolyn Bennett-Lewis were part of the graduating class of the 41st UALE Northeast Regional Summer Institute for Union Women held at Rutgers University. According to Miller, the classes were packed

with valuable information and were an excellent opportunity to meet with other union women and discuss issues they felt need to be addressed at their local unions and in their contracts with employers, such as maternity leave and the ever-widening wage gap.

“It provided me with a new understanding of the issues healthcare workers — both union and non-union — are facing every day too, and of the issue of immigration and social injustice, which was made much clearer in this setting. I’m so thankful to the International for allowing me the opportunity to participate in this excellent training,” Miller said.

OPEIU is making this and other leadership and organizing skills development training available to local union leaders and member activists who want to sharpen their skills. Such was the case with Local 1937 Vice President John Edwards, who recently attended the AFL-CIO Organizing Institute’s three-day training program in Tacoma, Washington.

*“I would like to thank OPEIU for allowing me the opportunity to attend the Organizing Institute, a great place to jump start your organizing efforts.”*

— John Edwards, Local 1937

*Continued on page 14*

*Members Take Advantage of OPEIU Initiative*

*Continued from page 13*

“I would like to thank OPEIU for allowing me the opportunity to attend the Organizing Institute, a great place to jump start your organizing efforts,” said Edwards. “The passion of the trainers was motivating. They had the whole class engaged from start to finish.

“Every union member should look for opportunities to help organize and empower the workforce,” he continued. “This will result in an increase in union membership. Organizing cannot be done alone, and the network of experienced organizers you’ll meet through the Organizing Institute will become an important resource. Organizing is the grassroots of the labor movement.”

**Local unions interested in sending members to the Organizing Institute or similar training programs should contact the International for more details.**



*As part of OPEIU’s initiative to provide organizing training to any interested members, Local 1937 Vice President John Edwards, holding left corner of the banner, attends the AFL-CIO Organizing Institute.*

## Big Co-Working Firm Settles OPEIU NLRB Case by Rewriting Handbook

The nation’s largest co-working startup, New York-based WeWork Companies, has agreed to rewrite an employee handbook that broke labor law, after charges were brought to the National Labor Relations Board by Local 153.

The charges against WeWork, and its forced changes in the employee handbook, are important because they show even more ways that firms in the emerging “gig economy” exploit workers and break labor laws.

But the labor law-breaking isn’t over at WeWork, NLRB records show: Local 153 also has an open case against WeWork in Crystal City, Va., just outside Washington, D.C. And, an individual worker in California is awaiting a ruling on her illegal firing.

According to its website, WeWork provides firms, especially startups, with workspace designs and Internet connections. But it also runs happy hours, arranges meetings with “investors and industry leaders,” sets up

networking events and even has a summer camp for its employees and customers.

What it also did, the NLRB said, was illegally bar its workers from “engaging in legal activities, such as discussing wages and unionizing.”

“One offending section of the handbook, titled ‘Do the Right Thing,’ told employees to weigh whether a situation may be unethical by asking themselves questions such as ‘how would I feel if it made headlines in news outlets?’” added Seth Goldstein, a Local 153 senior representative.

To settle the New York case, WeWork promised to email its workers and post notices in its U.S. offices telling workers of the right to unionize. The firm denied the handbook banned unionizing, but said it would change it anyway.

Local 153 “is pleased that WeWork is finally being held accountable for violating federal labor law and will be required to maintain an

open environment where employees have the freedom to speak out on work issues,” said Goldstein.

In the Crystal City complaint, filed Sept. 16, Local 153 told the board’s regional office in Baltimore, Maryland, that WeWork broke the law by illegally retaliating against pro-union workers, illegally disciplining and firing them and illegally refusing to hire workers due to their pro-union views.

Besides the charges in Crystal City, the board is considering a WeWork case in San Francisco, California, filed last December by former employee Tara Zoumer.

Zoumer said she was fired after refusing to sign a mandatory arbitration agreement and a ban on class action suits as a condition of continued employment with WeWork. The NLRB has recently been tossing out firms’ mandatory arbitration clauses — and their bans on class action.

*Press Associates*

## Local 2 Members at AFGE Rally for a Strong Contract

Local 2 members employed at the American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) headquarters in Washington, D.C., kicked off their contract negotiations at an informational meet and greet that demonstrated the group’s strength and unity.

The negotiating team handed out Local 2 t-shirts that declared “this place works because we do,” as they geared up for what would turn out to be tough negotiations. Management tried to impose contract language that would remove the members’ right to a weekend, gut their grievance procedure, and extend the probationary period. As of this printing, management is also refusing to meaningfully bargain over paid parental leave, outsourcing of union work, and rising healthcare costs.



*Local 2 members picket AFGE headquarters on February 7 demanding a fair contract.*



*Local 2 members show solidarity at contract kick-off event.*

## Notice to Employees Subject to Union Security Clauses

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

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

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

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

Expenditures germane to the collective bargaining process ("chargeable" expenditures) represent that portion of the Union's expenditures devoted to collective bargaining, contract administration, grievances, arbitration, and other matters affecting wages, hours and other conditions of employment. Examples of "chargeable" expenditures include the costs of negotiations with employers; contract administration expenses; communication with employers in regard to work-related issues; handling employee's work-related problems through the grievance and arbitration procedure and Union administration.

Examples of expenditures not germane to the collective bargaining process ("non-chargeable" expenditures) include: expenses made for community services; for political purposes; for certain affiliation fees; and for benefits available only to members and their families. The fee reduction will represent these non-chargeable expenditures. The International Union's J.B. Moss Voice of the Electorate ("VOTE) fund, is an independent, segregated fund that receives voluntary donations and contributes to political candidates who support the needs of working men and women. No money received from dues or fees goes to the VOTE fund. Accordingly, the VOTE fund is not considered in the calculation of the percentage of expenditures that is spent on non-chargeable expenses.

Individuals who choose to file an objection will receive a rebate of their fees equal to the percentage of the Local Union's expenditures that is spent on non-chargeable expenses. The Local Union's expenditures include those amounts it remits to the International Union as per capita payments. In determining the Local Union's percentage of non-chargeable expenses, the percentage of non-chargeable expenses of the International Union is applied only to the Local Union's per capita payments to the International Union. The percentage of non-chargeable expenses of the International Union, which will be effective starting with the month of January 2017, and continuing until a new percentage is issued, is 11.71 percent. The major portion of a Local Union's expenditures is for items other than the per capita to the OPEIU. Studies show that the final percentage of rebates for non-chargeable Local Union expenditures ranges between 0 and 8 percent.

Individuals who choose to file objections to funding expenditures that are not germane to the collective bargaining process should file them in writing with the Office and Professional Employees International Union, 80 Eighth Avenue, Suite 610, New York, NY 10011, Attention: Mary Mahoney, Secretary-Treasurer. The objection must include the objector's name, home address, Social Security number, employer, job title, department, work location, Local Union number and business telephone number.

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

In addition to any other avenue of relief available under the law, an objector may challenge the International Union's and/or the Local Union's classification or calculation of expenditures before a neutral arbitrator appointed by the American Arbitration Association

pursuant to its Rules for Impartial Determination of Union Fees. Any challenge a nonmember makes may be coordinated or consolidated with other challenges to the Local Union or International Union determinations before a single arbitrator selected by the American Arbitration Association. Such challenges may also be coordinated or consolidated with challenges to other OPEIU Local Union classifications or calculations.

Challengers must notify Mary Mahoney, Secretary-Treasurer, Office and Professional Employees International Union, 80 Eighth Avenue, Suite 610, New York, NY 10011, in writing, of any challenge he or she wishes to make through this arbitration procedure. Such notifications must be received by the secretary-treasurer within thirty (30) days of the challenger's receipt of a letter from the Local Union informing the challenger of the amount of the rebate, the basis for the calculation and the internal procedure for filing a challenge. That challenge should specify which classification and/or calculations of the International Union and/or Local Union are being challenged.

The Unions shall bear the burden of justifying their classifications and calculations. If a hearing at which the parties or witnesses may

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

Once a written challenge is received from an objector, the Local Union will place an amount equal to the challenged portion of the fee into an interest-bearing escrow account. It shall remain in that account until the arbitrator issues a decision. Should the decision lower the percentage of chargeable expenditures, the appropriate portion of the escrowed fees, plus the interest earned by that portion while in the escrow account, will be refunded to the challenger. All objectors in each Local Union affected by the decision of the arbitrator will then pay the adjusted fee amount determined by the arbitrator. If the arbitrator approves all or part of the Unions' classifications and/or calculations, the escrowed money and interest allocable to that part of the fee will revert to the Local and International Unions.

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Learn more at [amalgamatedbank.com](http://amalgamatedbank.com)

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1 Available only to current members of qualified AFL-CIO member unions, other authorized individuals associated with eligible unions and other sponsoring organizations with a qualifying agreement. Must provide acceptable proof of union membership such as a membership card from your local union, a pay stub showing dues deduction or the Union Plus Member Discount Card and subscribe to service under an individual account for which the member is personally liable. Offer contingent upon in-store verification of union member status. Discount subject to agreement between Union Privilege and AT&T and may be interrupted, changed or discontinued without notice. Discount applies only to recurring monthly service charge of qualified voice and data plans, not overages. Not available with unlimited voice plans. For Family Talk, applies only to primary line. For all Mobile Share plans, applies only to monthly plan charge of plans with 1GB or more, not to additional monthly device access charges. Additional restrictions apply. May take up to 2 bill cycles after eligibility confirmed and will not apply to prior charges. Applied after application of any available credit. May not be combined with other service discounts. Visit UnionPlus.org/ATT or contact AT&T at 866-489-8008 for details.

2 AT&T will apply the Accessory Discount to the prices of select Accessories available through AT&T, which may be modified by AT&T from time to time. The term "Accessory" or "Accessories" means supplementary parts for Equipment (e.g. batteries, cases, earbuds). The Accessory Discount will not apply to Accessories purchased for use with datacentric Equipment such as modems, replacement SIM cards and car kits or to Apple-branded Accessories, and the Accessory Discount may not be combined with any other promotional pricing or offer.



President Richard Lanigan receives the Jewish Labor Committee's Human Rights Award from AFL-CIO Executive Vice President Tefere Gebre, left, and JLC President Stuart Appelbaum, right. Appelbaum is also president of the Retail, Wholesale and Department Store Union/UFCW.

## Lanigan Honored by Jewish Labor Committee

President Richard Lanigan was honored by the Jewish Labor Committee (JLC) at its 45th Human Rights Awards Dinner Nov. 14 in New York City, where he offered a message of hope, strength and unity after the divisive presidential election.

AFL-CIO Executive Vice President Tefere Gebre presented the Human Rights award to Lanigan, who told the gathered labor and community activists that the JLC "fought the Nazis in Germany," and that vigilance will be needed again as "we may be going into a very dark period where intolerance is encouraged by elites."

Lanigan offered a message of hope, however, saying organized labor will stand strong and protect our labor values of tolerance and inclusion and will fight to protect the rights of all working Americans.

"We're not going anywhere," Lanigan said.

The JLC was founded in 1934 to mobilize unions, Jewish organizations and mutual aid societies across North America to help fight Nazism in Germany. Today, the JLC brings together the organized labor movement and the organized Jewish community to promote workers' rights, civil rights and human rights in the workplace and community and combat all forms of prejudice.

## Schwarzwald Retires as OPEIU General Counsel



After serving OPEIU for more than 20 years, Melvin Schwarzwald has retired as OPEIU general counsel.

"Mel provided OPEIU with sound advice, helping me and my predecessors ensure that we best represent our members," said President Richard Lanigan. "OPEIU owes him a great debt of gratitude for his service and dedication to the union. We'll miss his wise counsel and advice and wish him well in his 'semi-retirement.'"

While he's reducing his workload, Schwarzwald will continue to serve the labor community through his firm, Schwarzwald, McNair & Fusco

in Cleveland, Ohio, which specializes in the representation of labor unions that serve employees in both the public and private sectors. He will also continue to serve as a member of the Lawyers Advisory Panel of the AFL-CIO and on the board of directors of the Lawyers Coordinating Committee of the AFL-CIO.

With such an illustrious career representing working families, Schwarzwald said "serving OPEIU has been the highlight of my career."

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