

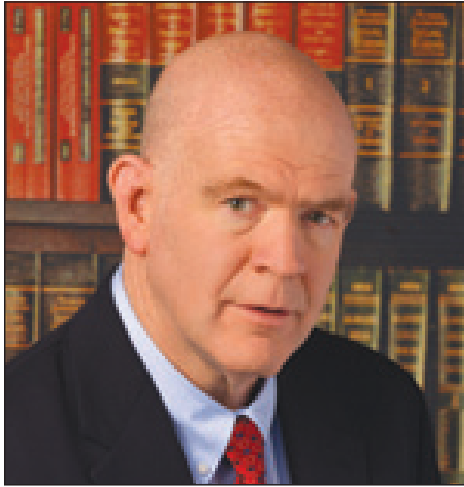
# WHITE COLLAR

OFFICE AND PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEES INTERNATIONAL UNION, AFL-CIO, CLC ISSUE 539 | WINTER 2019



## Helping Those Dedicated to Helping Others

OPEIU is helping nonprofit professionals  
join together to strengthen their workplaces



## If Congress Wants to Show It Can Work in a Bipartisan Way, Increase Social Security Benefits Now

By *Richard Lanigan*  
President

The year was 1972. Nixon had been elected for a second term as president. The country was at war in Vietnam. Bobby Fischer was playing world-class chess, and the Beatles had broken up several years earlier. Baby boomers were listening to Roberta Flack's song, "The First Time Ever I Saw Your Face" and going to the movies to see "The Godfather." The cost of a movie ticket was \$1.70. The muscle car ruled the American road, running on gasoline costing 36 cents per gallon. The annual median income for full-time workers was \$10,540. The average price of a car was \$3,879, and the average price of a new home was \$24,700.

It was prior to the Employee Retirement Income Security Act of 1974 (ERISA), and nearly half of those employed were covered by a private sector defined benefit pension. Also, most working people had employer-provided family health insurance costing approximately \$2,200 per year, fully paid by the employer. Premium sharing, high deductibles, catastrophic coverage and expensive co-pays had not yet become part of the American healthcare vocabulary.

1972 was also the last time Congress seriously examined Social Security to determine whether it was working for Americans the way it was intended. At that time, Congress amended Social Security to include a cost-of-living-adjustment (COLA) feature. Medicare amendments were added as well.

In the years between 1972 and now, there have been efforts to cut and/or privatize Social Security. Many predicted the Social Security trust fund would become insolvent.

Given the volatility in the equity market and a more expensive cost-of-living, 75 million Americans have come to rely on Medicare.

While Social Security benefits have not been reduced, they no longer provide the security legislators had in mind in 1972 due to changes in lifestyle, life expectancy and increased inflation. The cost-of-living feature of Social Security did not track the true cost of living increases for seniors through the years. In 2018, family health coverage could have cost more than \$25,000 per year and the average price of a house was more than \$300,000. A gallon of gas cost more than \$2.30.

More than that has changed since 1972. Especially due to medical costs that have far outpaced the rate of inflation in the last three decades, America's seniors have faced much higher changes to their cost-of-living than the general population. All this while seniors attempt to live on fixed incomes. This means the annual Social Security COLA has not kept pace with the needs of the very people Social Security is intended to serve.

In 1972 it was possible, even common, to start and end your career with the same employer. Today people rarely work for the same employer throughout their career. This turnover factor means people have less opportunity to vest in or retire with an employer-provided pension plan. Add to this

the fact that a much smaller percentage of today's workforce is covered under an employer-provided defined benefit pension. Another stark difference from 1972 — now, far fewer employers provide any type of retiree healthcare to their employees.

All of these factors have left millions of Americans with a much smaller retirement nest egg than their 1972 counterparts. Clearly, this makes Social Security retirement benefits an absolute lifeline for so many of today's retired workers.

That's why it is so timely a bill, the Social Security 2100 Act, was introduced into Congress in February to enhance Social Security and Medicare by increasing the amount of the benefit and providing additional funding to ensure the programs' long-term stability. The proposed cost of this enhancement would be phased in over a period of years and without any increases in the FICA taxes paid by average American workers.

In the past, conservative legislators have been more inclined to reduce Social Security benefits. But in 2019, the need for an increase has never been clearer. If the new Congress really wants to show the American people it can work in a truly bipartisan way, this is perfect legislation for them to do so. ■



*Attention OPEIU Members:*

## You're invited to join a live stream from the 2019 OPEIU Convention

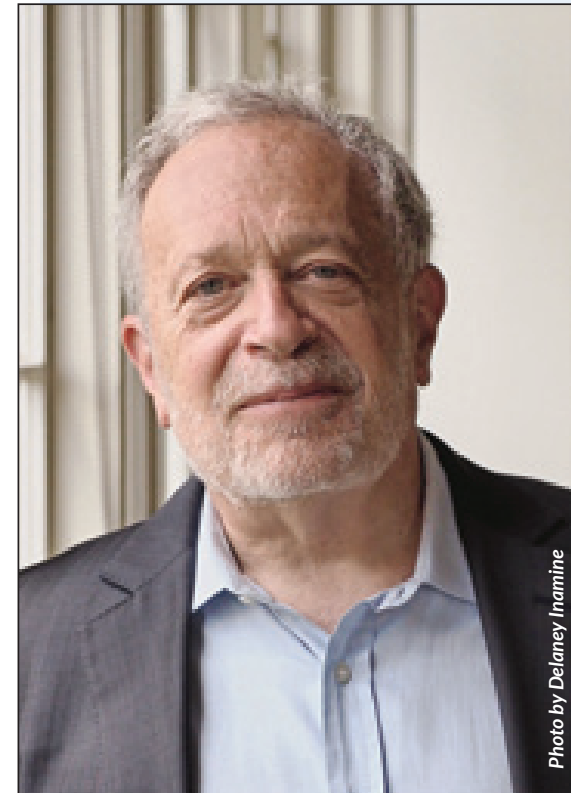


Photo by Delaney Inamine

Speakers to include Robert Reich, political commentator, professor and world-renowned author.

**Plan now to join us for the live stream 9 a.m. to 11 a.m. PST, June 10.**

This live stream will only be available to OPEIU members. Register at [opeiu.org/2019Convention](https://opeiu.org/2019Convention)

Join us for a union experience like no other; a chance to be part of the first-ever live stream from an OPEIU Convention.

With the theme, "A New Model for a New Union," OPEIU's 28th Convention will kick off with an exciting pre-convention look at the future of the American workplace, what it means to be a union member today and why greater activism is the key to meeting the challenges of the 21st century.

Register at [opeiu.org/2019Convention](https://opeiu.org/2019Convention)

**APALA Appreciates Support**

Thank you so much for your generous support of the Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance (APALA), AFL-CIO, and the Institute for Asian Pacific American Leadership & Advancement (IAPALA).

Last year was a milestone year for APALA as we celebrated our 25th anniversary and expanded our national network to include 20-plus chapters. Your contribution strengthens our work to build power for Asian-American and Pacific Islander (AAPI) workers and communities. Together, we can educate, organize and activate our communities around the important role that AAPI workers play in the United States.

As we continue to advance worker, immigrant and civil rights for the AAPI community as well as promote strategic partnerships, programs and policy, we look forward to your continued encouragement and support.

Again, thank you for your dedication to our movement.

In solidarity,

Monica Thammarath  
National President

Alvina Yeh  
Executive Director  
Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance (APALA)  
Washington, D.C.

**OPEIU Scholarships**

I am honored to be one of the recipients of the 2018 Howard Coughlin Memorial Scholarship. Thank you for your generous support.

I [am] beginning my undergraduate work at the University of Kansas...in pre-med. My plans are to continue on to medical school after completing my bachelor's degree. As a recipient of this scholarship, the funds will help tremendously in paying my tuition and housing expenses. Once again, thank you for helping to support my continued education.

Sincerely,

Maura Garrison  
Daughter of Wendy Garrison  
Local 277  
Fort Worth, Texas

*Editor's Note: Applications are now being accepted for the 2019 OPEIU scholarships. See page 8 for more details or visit [opeiu.org](http://opeiu.org) and click on the Member Resources tab.*

**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).**

**On the Cover**

*Planned Parenthood Global employees in Miami have voted to join Local 153. Read more about OPEIU local unions' efforts to help nonprofit workers strengthen their workplaces in the cover story on page 12.*

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 OFFICE AND PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEES  
 INTERNATIONAL UNION  
 affiliated with the AFL-CIO, CLC  
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WHITE COLLAR (ISSN 0043-4876) is published quarterly by Office and Professional Employees International Union, 80 Eighth Avenue, 20th Floor, New York, NY 10011. Periodical postage paid at New York and additional mailing offices. POSTMASTER: Send address changes to Office and Professional Employees International Union, 80 Eighth Avenue, 6th Floor, New York, NY 10011.  
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# What My Union Means to Me and My Family

## OPEIU's Government Shutdown Relief Program Is Helping OPEIU Members Like Nicola Graziani

It was the longest government shutdown in U.S. history, leaving more than 800,000 federal employees — and hundreds of thousands more working for subcontractors — out of work or working without pay for 35 days.

The Congressional Budget Office estimates the shutdown cost the economy \$11 billion and has slowed projected economic growth for the year by a full 1 percent. More importantly, it took a tremendous toll on the working people and their families who were without pay for more than a month.

The shutdown has left many financially unstable, falling behind on bills and missing mortgage or rent payments. Many have had to rely on emergency or retirement savings. It's estimated that 42 percent took on new debt to pay for everyday expenses and bills.

And while legislation has been signed that ensures furloughed government workers will receive back pay, there is no such legislation to pay subcontractors and their employees.

Unlike most, however, OPEIU members affected by the furlough had their union behind them to help them meet expenses through the OPEIU Government Shutdown Relief Program.

The program provides for public workers whose employment is temporarily displaced by a shutdown at the federal, state, county or local level — including government contractors or subcontractors — to receive a weekly benefit to help them make ends meet.

Thanks to their union, OPEIU members who are furloughed have the peace of mind that comes from having a strong union in their workplace.

Nicola Graziani is an armed security guard with Federal Law Enforcement Training Centers (FLETC) in Charleston, South Carolina, and a member of the ITPEU/OPEIU Local 4873. She is a former member of the military and traffic enforcement officer. As a furloughed employee of a government contractor, she found the furlough benefit "very beneficial and helpful in paying the bills" during the shutdown for her and her firefighter husband and young daughter.

She also notes it was unexpected, as she is working in a so-called "right-to-work" state where it's harder to take advantage of the benefits of union membership.

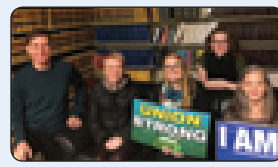
"Having the union behind me is like a safety blanket, a parachute," Graziani says. The experience has motivated her to learn more about her union, and she is now thinking about becoming a shop steward to help others at her worksite get all the protections and benefits they deserve as union members.



Nicola Graziani

*Thanks to their union, OPEIU members who are furloughed have the peace of mind that comes from having a strong union in their workplace.*

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## Local 11 President Barbara Melton Says Running for Office Was ‘Completely Worthwhile,’ Even if She Didn’t Win — This Time!



Barbara Melton

It was certainly a great showing for her first time running.

In November, Local 11 President Barbara Melton was defeated by an incumbent in a race for Clark County Clerk in Washington State. Melton ran as an advocate of both court employees and the county’s Facilitator’s Office, which helps low-income residents navigate the complexities of the court system.

Though the result was not what she had hoped for, Melton says running as a first-time candidate was “probably the most interesting thing” she has done in her life. “It was exhausting,” she said of the campaign, “but it was completely worthwhile, even if I didn’t win.”

In a post-Election Day interview with White Collar, Melton, who was endorsed in the race by OPEIU, was happy to divulge some of the lessons she learned on her first-ever campaign.

The most difficult part of the campaign, she said, was deciding to run in the first place, putting herself and her family into the public spotlight for the first time. If she could do it again, Melton would consider beginning her campaign sooner. “I officially started campaigning during the filing week, but a lot of people started their campaigns months before,” she said.

“To be honest, that was probably a lot smarter,” she added. “They had endorsements in place before that. They had money in place before that, and, they had name recognition before that.” But for a first-time candidate without high name recognition, securing 47 percent of the vote is extremely impressive.

Another point of advice Melton offered to aspiring candidates is to lock down a competent campaign manager and a skilled accountant as soon as possible. “Because I started so late,” she said, “I was told all the really good campaign managers were gone — and that was a place I struggled, not knowing in the beginning where to go.”

Even though she lost this time around, Melton said, she is more equipped than ever if she decides to run another campaign in the next election cycle. She also serves as an inspiration and a great example to any OPEIU member considering a run for public office.

## OPEIU Aviation Council Established

Representatives from 13 OPEIU local unions and aviation bargaining units in the U.S. and Canada’s helicopter and emergency rescue industry have voted to dissolve the Professional Helicopter Pilots Association (PHPA) and establish the OPEIU Aviation Council to include all bargaining units under one umbrella — pilots, search and rescue personnel (SARs), aviation medical examiners (AMEs), flight medical personnel, dispatchers, flight instructors and weather personnel, among others.

This new council will work to support OPEIU members employed in aviation regarding

collective bargaining, safety, job security, organizing new units and resources to meet challenges facing the industries. The group is energized and looking forward to working together to strengthen the representation of the members and fighting to improve the wages and working conditions of all people working in the represented groups.

“The recent dissolution of the PHPA was necessary to allow a new combined aviation council to represent pilots, mechanics, dispatchers, flight nurses and rescue specialists,” said Steve Pettie, a member of the steering committee and steward of

DAG 110s. “The new OPEIU Aviation Council better represents all aviation professionals and creates a stronger voice for all involved.”

“This is going to be a good thing for all the locals involved, and is a solid step in the right direction,” said Mark Souza, a fellow steering committee member and president of Local 102. “Moving forward, we’ve positioned ourselves to strengthen all local unions representing all aviation job classifications. We’re going to take the best of what PHPA had to offer, make the council more inclusive and take it in a new and exciting direction.”

## OPEIU Members Support Striking Working People Throughout the Country

OPEIU members can always be counted on to stand in solidarity with their fellow working people around the country. Whether it is walking the picket line with hotel workers in San Diego striking against Marriott International, or with Charter Spectrum employees in New York, who have been on strike for nearly two years, OPEIU members stand shoulder to shoulder, walking the line and repeating the rallying cry, “Union Yes!”



Members of OPEIU Local 30 joined UNITE HERE Local 30 members fighting for a fair contract at the Westin San Diego Gaslamp Quarter. Left to right are Local 30 Business Agent Lolita Babaran, Director of Member Services Annette Baxter, Executive Director/CFO Marianne Giordano and Business Agent Angela Jensen. The 35-day strike against the hotel ended after a vote 100 percent in favor of ratifying the new contract. The San Diego strike was part of a nationwide job action involving 7,800 workers at hotels managed or owned by Marriott International across eight cities.



In Chicago, OPEIU local leaders in town for an OPEIU arbitration training join a picket line with striking hotel members of UNITE HERE Local 1.



Local 153 Secretary-Treasurer Myra Hepburn, center, bookkeeper Sandra Datnarain, right, and International Representative Jordan Budd show their solidarity for members of IBEW Local 3 in New York on strike against Charter Spectrum. They joined a huge rally held at the company’s Manhattan headquarters for the more than 1,800 workers who have been on strike for more than 20 months.

# OPEIU SCHOLARSHIPS

APPLICATION DEADLINE EXTENDED TO APRIL 30

## Apply Now for 2019 OPEIU Scholarships

Applications are now being accepted for the 2019 OPEIU educational scholarships, and all members are encouraged to apply. The deadline has been extended to April 30 to give you and your eligible family members plenty of time to apply.

Information and applications can be found at [opeiu.org](http://opeiu.org) under the Member Resources/Union Benefits link, as well as on the OPEIU app (available for free download for iPhones at the App Store and for Android devices at Google Play).

Scholarship opportunities include the Howard Coughlin Memorial Scholarship, which awards 12 full-time higher education scholarships of up to \$6,500 and seven part-time scholarships of up to \$2,650 to OPEIU members, associate members and dependents.

The John Kelly Labor Studies Scholarship awards 10 scholarships of up to \$3,250 for OPEIU members or associate members who are pursuing an undergraduate or graduate degree in labor studies, industrial relations and union leadership and administration.

The Romeo Corbeil/Gilles Beaugard Memorial Scholarship Fund offers a summer camp for 20 children, ages 13 to 16, of OPEIU members or associate members. The one-week camp will be July 14-19 at the University of Missouri in Columbia and will teach children how unions protect the interests of working people, all while providing fun summer activities, such as swimming, canoeing and volleyball.

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

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## Earn Your Degree for Free — Only Through Your Union!

The OPEIU Free College program is offering new courses for Spring 2019 to OPEIU members and their dependents. You can earn an associate's degree in an array of new fields, including:

- Cyber Security
- Data Science
- Digital and Social Media Marketing
- Advertising
- Programming and Development
- Hospitality/Event Management
- Hospitality/Hotel and Convention Management

Visit [freecollege.opeiu.org](http://freecollege.opeiu.org) today to learn more about other course offerings and start your path toward a FREE associate's degree with OPEIU.



To date, **963 students** have received about **\$2.35 million in scholarships** through the OPEIU Free College benefit.



## Do You Know the Benefits of OPEIU Membership?

Did you know that as a member of OPEIU, you are entitled to a number of valuable benefits at no cost to you? All are provided to you free of charge, including:

- \$2,000 Death Benefit
- \$2,000 Accidental Death and Dismemberment Benefit
- Identity Protection
- Student Debt Reduction
- Free College
- Towing/Service Calls
- Union Privilege
- As well as a host of benefits for Canadian members

Visit [opeiu.org](http://opeiu.org) and click the Member Resources tab for more information about all your free OPEIU membership benefits.

Your Money

# A Few Tips to Make Filing Your Taxes a Little Smoother

The first day of Spring is on the horizon, so Tax Day isn't far behind. To help make tax season a little less stressful, we've compiled a handful of tips to ensure things go a bit smoother this year (and next):

- **Free filing:** Taxpayers with an adjusted gross income (AGI) at or below \$66,000 per year are eligible to download free software to file taxes directly from the IRS. The Free File program lets you securely use a number of "brand-name" programs the IRS has authorized to help you file your taxes, at no cost to you. You can access this service on the [IRS.gov](https://www.irs.gov) homepage.
- **File ASAP:** If you're expecting a refund, there's no better time to file your taxes than the first day of tax season. After all, the sooner you file, the sooner you get your refund. And if you're expecting a tax bill, filing early is still a good idea, because you'll have more time to pay what you owe — or correct errors on your return — without having to apply for a tax deadline extension after Apr. 15.
- **Protect your tax return:** The IRS warns taxpayers every year about phishing schemes and tax-related scams — many of which stem from people pretending to be the IRS on the phone — that can jeopardize the security of your identity and your ability to receive your tax return. As an OPEIU member, you can protect yourself with OPEIU's free Identity Protection Benefit through InfoArmor, available at [opeiu.org](https://opeiu.org).
- **Adjust withholdings:** No one wants an unexpected tax bill. If it turns out you owe money to the IRS, make sure you adjust your withholdings on your

paystub, so next year you can be more confident that the government owes you money — not the other way around.

- **Save yourself the stress:** There's no better way to avoid a last-minute scramble to secure the documents you need to file than starting to organize your files for next year. Though it can be hard to get into the habit of active recordkeeping throughout the year, a more seamless tax season can be worth it.

Hi, it's  
OPEIU!

## Get Connected!

Receive text alerts by texting OPEIU to 97779\*

\*By providing your cell number, you understand OPEIU may send you auto-mated calls and/or text messages on a periodic basis. OPEIU will never charge for alerts, but carrier message and data rates may apply. Text HELP for more information and STOP to stop receiving messages to 97779 at any time.

## OPEIU's White Collar, Website Honored for Excellence

OPEIU's White Collar has been recognized for excellence by the International Labor Communications Association and the Metro New York Labor Communications Council, receiving top awards for general excellence, best editorial or column and best photo essay or gallery. OPEIU's website was also given top marks for design and informative content. Visit [opeiu.org](https://opeiu.org) to read past issues of White Collar. Tell us what you think by sending your comments to [frontdesk@opeiu.org](mailto:frontdesk@opeiu.org).

# OPEIU Honors the Legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King

OPEIU members, social justice activists and leaders gathered in Washington, D.C., Jan. 18-21 to honor the legacy and dream of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., at the annual AFL-CIO MLK Civil and Human Rights Conference.

In Dr. King's famous "I Have a Dream" speech at the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, he told a divided nation we need one another, and we are stronger when we march forward together. "We are now faced with the fact that tomorrow is today," said King. "We are confronted with the fierce urgency of now. In this unfolding conundrum of life and history, there *is* such a thing as being too late. This is no time for apathy or complacency. This is a time for vigorous and positive action."

Now, more than 50 years later, his words still ring true in these difficult times. Our nation is in the midst of great political and social unrest. We have witnessed devastating rollbacks and attacks on our rights in recent years. This year's conference, with the theme "The Fierce Urgency of Now," provided the opportunity for union members to come together, uplift one another and strategize collectively for the future of our dreams for a just and equal society, while discussing the most important economic policy issues that lie at the intersection of race and class.



Local 2 member Margaret Brown, Secretary-Treasurer Linda Bridges and Second Vice President Michael Spiller, Local 153 Secretary-Treasurer Myra Hepburn, Local 42 President and International Vice President Lisa Blake, and Local 2 Staff Representative Jessica Maiorca participate in the Women's March on Washington as part of the MLK conference.

## By standing up for America's workers, we stand out among banks

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# OPEIU Finds Success Organizing in Nonprofit Sector

People who work in the nonprofit sector are a special group who have dedicated their careers to helping those in their communities thrive and prosper. But they face many challenges, including low wages and benefits, and are often expected to work in dangerous conditions. This is the story of how OPEIU is helping strengthen the workplaces of those who are dedicated to helping others.



*Attorney Daniel Ediger, legal assistant Catie Holcroft, attorney Chelsea Hicks, legal assistant Ashley Beeman and attorney Elizabeth Flavin are among the 180 employees of the Northwest Justice Project who recently chose to become members of Local 8.*

OPEIU local unions are continuing their success bringing the benefits of collective action to working people in the nonprofit advocacy and human services sector, organizing new groups such as Planned Parenthood in Miami, Casa Latina in Seattle and the National Democratic Institute in Washington, D.C.



Three new Local 8 members at Casa Latina include, left to right, Labor Standards Outreach Associate Colleen Fontana, Homeless Employment Coordinator Amanda Chavez and Labor Standards Outreach Coordinator Cariño Barragán.

“Social service and housing workers have devoted their professional lives to helping everyone in their communities reach their full potential,” explains Cindy Schu, OPEIU director of organizing. “Although this type of work requires a unique set of skills and specialized training, it’s, unfortunately, often characterized by substandard wages, benefits and working conditions that threaten the well-being of the employees and their families.

“Through unionization, OPEIU local unions are working to build a foundation for labor standards in the industry that reflect the value of this work, help these organizations succeed in their efforts to best serve their clients and, ultimately, strengthen our communities,” she adds.

These dedicated employees work diligently to better the lives of others. They deserve to be paid a living wage and benefits, have safe working conditions and the dignity and respect on the job that all working people deserve. And they are turning to OPEIU to help make that a reality.

OPEIU local unions are also using their collective strength to influence change outside of the workplace, holding their elected leaders accountable for providing necessary funding to keep these vital organizations operational.

### Planned Parenthood, Casa Latina and Others Join OPEIU

Local 153 in New York has reached a first agreement after organizing employees at Planned Parenthood Global, based in Miami, Florida. “The contract we’ve negotiated is strong,” says Local 153 Business Representative Nick Galipeau, adding the agreement establishes a number of important procedures and protections regarding layoffs, comp time and work from home policies, among others, and a guarantee of an annual cost-of-living salary adjustment.

The contract also includes an important inclusion rider, a step toward holding Planned Parenthood accountable to its stated values of inclusion and diversity.

Local 8 in Seattle has made organizing in the nonprofit sector a priority for years, recently organizing 20 employees of Casa Latina, a nonprofit community organization whose mission is to advance the well-being of Latino immigrants through employment, education and community organizing.

“I have a good job with good benefits,” says Fredi Dubon, employment coordinator at Casa Latina. “I wanted to join the union because I want to be part of something bigger than me. I want to belong to a movement, feel proud of having a union member bumper sticker and, most importantly, help others to have the same or better benefits than me.”

“Since 1994, working people at Casa Latina have been running programs to empower Seattle’s Latino immigrants, but by forming a union, they’ve now empowered themselves,” observes Local 8 Organizer Corinne Cosentino.

Local 8 also recently ratified by an overwhelming majority its first union contract for 180 members employed at the Northwest Justice Project (NJP), a statewide law firm committed to combating injustice and improving access to the civil justice system. “Workers still organize, bargain and win, despite all obstacles,” observes Valarie Peaphon, Local 8 union representative. “The hard work of the OPEIU negotiating team, backed by the vision and solidarity of the entire bargaining unit, made this agreement possible. Collective bargaining works!”

NJP’s attorneys, paralegals, legal assistants, screeners, outreach workers and receptionists began fighting for their first contract with concrete goals in mind: increased pay more in line with their peers at other nonprofit legal organizations, updating of an archaic benefits model and securing just cause provisions.



Some of the Planned Parenthood Global employees in Miami who voted to join Local 153 include, left to right, Ksenia Varlyguina, Daily Garcia, Kamila Przytula, Daniela Martins, May Sifuentes, Blanca Torres, Kate Elliott, Kimmie O’Neill, Sara Gallo and Dayhana Hernandez.

After a hard-fought 11-month bargaining process, they obtained all that and more. “At NJP, we work every day to ensure our clients receive due process and are treated fairly,” says Elizabeth Flavin, NJP attorney and bargaining team member. “Our union contract now brings those same principles home to us.”

NJP employees voted by an overwhelming 97 percent majority to form a union with Local 8 in August 2017, continuing the national trend of increased unionization among professionals such as doctors, lawyers, nurses and teachers. Local 8 also represents similar

professionals at the Northwest Immigrant Rights Project.

Local 2 in the Washington, D.C. metropolitan area has been equally successful, organizing 146 employees at the National Democratic Institute (NDI) in 2018, reports Local 2 Second Vice President Michael Spiller and Staff Representative Jessica Maiorca, who both ran the campaign for the union. They are currently negotiating for a first contract.

NDI works with local partners to promote openness and accountability in government by building political and civic organizations, safeguarding elections and promoting citizen

participation. It brings together individuals and groups to share ideas, experiences and expertise that can be adapted to the needs of individual countries.

Eighty-five percent of voting employees voted to join the union to improve their bargaining power over a range of workplace benefits, including some unique to the international development industry such as international travel policies.

“Over the years, there had been issues at the workplace they had attempted to address by approaching individual managers [or] human resources, and felt their issues were either partially addressed or, frankly, weren’t addressed at all,” Maiorca tells Devex.com. They realized “it’s going to take a collective to get any sort of change, and so the idea of forming a union was a natural next step.

“What is so perfect about this particular campaign at NDI is that unions are inherently democratic,” Maiorca continues. “They are a building block of democracy in any country.” The unionization of its employees, she notes, is a way for NDI to live its mission to promote democracy around the world.

Maiorca also points out a common myth that exists in the nonprofit sector, that employees should have to sacrifice fair pay, decent working conditions and benefits because they work for a nonprofit. “The other part of that myth is that if you work for a nonprofit, that organization does not have money,” Maiorca says. “That’s not necessarily true.”



Members of the National Democratic Institute’s elected representative committee, left to right, are Program Manager Sarah Welsh, Manager of Software Development Dean Valentine, Indicator Database Analyst Natasha Wheatley, Political Party Development Program Officer Sarah Travis and Central and Eastern Europe Program Assistant Jeff Wheeler. Not pictured is Senior Program Manager Adam Nelson.



# LOCAL UNION NEWS

## BookPeople Employees Vote to Join Local 277

Employees at the largest independent bookstore in Texas, BookPeople, seeking a dignified living and strong voice in the workplace, have voted for representation by Local 277.

The group of booksellers, event staff and inventory managers at the Austin bookstore are devoted to creating a thriving business for their community and to ensuring all its employees are treated fairly.

“BookPeople has been part of my life since 1998,” said employee Staci Gray. “It is a magical place that has provided me with so many amazing people who are a part of my family. I want BookPeople to thrive so these wonderful people can also make a living wage.”

The campaign was led by a strong organizing committee comprised of BookPeople employees who spent weeks building public support for the union, including the circulation of a petition that gathered more than 600 signatures at the Texas Book Festival and a Community Support Day that brought out dozens of Austinites wearing the union’s signature “Keep Austin Paid” button.

“I’m feeling proud of my sisters and brothers today,” said Mat Clouser, bookseller, after the vote. “What we’ve already accomplished is no small feat, but we won’t be satisfied until we show Austin the power of a union. A healthy workforce makes a healthy workplace. The vote is truly a win for all.”

The campaign also had the support of the members of the Austin City Council and the Texas labor community. “We want to recognize Local 277 for their commitment to organizing the unorganized in an innovative way, and for recognizing that investing in Texas workers is the best way to grow our movement and change our state,” said Texas AFL-CIO President Rick Levy.

Employees will now work with Local 277 to secure their first contract with BookPeople through collective bargaining. “We are grateful to finally be a union store in one of the most progressive cities in Texas,” said Salvador Samudio, bookseller. “Our negotiating team looks forward to making BookPeople an even more special place than it already is. Many thanks to OPEIU for their unbelievably generous support throughout this campaign.”

“We are so excited to get this win,” agreed Patrick Watson, inventory manager. “Now we’re ready to go into negotiations with the same energy and passion we’ve had since the beginning.”

Texas, a so-called “right-to-work” state, is one of the least unionized states in the U.S. Federal calculations show 4.7



Some of the enthusiastic members of the BookPeople organizing committee.



Happy BookPeople employees after the vote, with International Lead Organizer Jennifer Levine, standing, third from left.

percent — 543,000 of Texas workers — were union members in 2017. The numbers dropped to 4.3 percent in 2018.

The BookPeople win is “a breakthrough” in retail, overall and especially in the Lone Star state, Levy said. Only 4.5 percent of retail workers nationwide are unionized. “These brave employees stood up for themselves, their families and our whole community by joining Local 277,” added city council member Greg Casar. “The BookPeople staff are protecting the values we love in Austin: fairness, creativity and opportunity.”

## Myra Hepburn Makes History at Local 153

History was made recently as Myra Hepburn was unanimously elected secretary-treasurer of Local 153 in New York, becoming the first African-American and first woman elected to serve in that position.

“We are extremely pleased to have someone as experienced and enthusiastic to serve as Myra,” said OPEIU President Richard Lanigan, who was also elected Local 153 business manager. “She’s bringing a fresh perspective and an organizer’s mindset to the post, and she’s committed to seeing Local 153 expand and grow. She’s also well aware of the many challenges facing working people today, and is ready to face them head on. It’s an exciting time for our local union, and for our members.”

From her time as an organizer in the San Francisco Bay Area to a senior business representative and organizer at Local 153, Hepburn’s wealth of knowledge earned over decades in the labor movement have uniquely qualified her to best represent the interests of the members in this new position.

Hepburn has deep ties in the labor community, serving as a past executive board member and current member of the NAACP, and as a member of the Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW), member of the A. Philip Randolph Institute (APRI) and delegate to the New York Central Labor Council. And with all that, she still finds time to pursue labor studies at the City University of New York’s Murphy Institute.

Re-elected were President Steve Turkeltaub, Vice President Gwendolyn Rushing and Recording Secretary Wilma

Artau-Banda. The administration will serve a three-year term.

After a long and extremely successful career at both the International and Local 153, Michael Goodwin also announced he was retiring as business manager.

“We thank Mike so much for his many years of dedication to OPEIU and to Local 153 and its members,” Lanigan said. “He spent his entire career working for Local 153 and the members of OPEIU, and we are forever in his debt for his incredible contributions.”

Goodwin began his career in labor in 1960, as a member of Local 153 working for the Seafarers International Union. He rose through the ranks, becoming a Local 153 organizer in 1967 and a business representative in 1968, eventually rising to the positions of business manager and then president of OPEIU.

In his retirement, Goodwin will act as a consultant for Local 153 and continue to serve as president of the American Labor Museum/Botto House National Landmark.

Looking back on his career, Goodwin said he is most proud of introducing to the labor movement the concept of union-provided benefits at no charge to members and their families, which has become a very successful OPEIU program. He also is very proud of his work to foster diversity and inclusion in the administration of OPEIU and Local 153.



Michael Goodwin is saluted by the members as he announces his retirement from Local 153.



Members of the newly elected Local 153 Executive Board include Business Manager Richard Lanigan, Secretary-Treasurer Myra Hepburn, Vice President Gwendolyn Rushing, President Steve Turkeltaub, Executive Director of the Organization of New York State Management/Confidential Employees (OMCE) Joe Sano, who chaired the nominations, and Recording Secretary Wilma Artau-Banda.

### Local 153 Reaches Agreement with BlueCross

Local 153 members have overwhelmingly ratified a contract with BlueCross BlueShield of Western New York that includes annual wage increases and maintains current benefits.

The agreement, which runs through 2021 and covers approximately 450 office and clerical staff at the company’s Buffalo headquarters, was reached more than five months before the current agreement was set to expire.

## Catholic Teachers Rally for Fair Contract

The Federation of Catholic Teachers (FCT), members of OPEIU Local 153, are in negotiations with the Association of Catholic Schools (ACS) to replace an expired contract covering the majority of Catholic schools in the Archdiocese of New York and affecting more than 2,000 teachers.

To draw the public's attention to the ACS's position that no salary increases are possible for these hardworking teachers, FCT members rallied outside the annual Alfred E. Smith Dinner, a renowned event in New York City that often draws presidential candidates and other political heavyweights, and a great deal of media attention.

The strategy worked, with the protest garnering local TV and newspaper coverage. "We know much hard work lies ahead for us," said FCT President Julia Pignataro at the rally, "but we are determined to get fair contracts for our members even if it means more rallies like this one."

FCT/OPEIU Local 153 is also negotiating contracts with several Catholic high schools that are not part of the ACS.



FCT members protesting at the Alfred E. Smith Dinner in New York.

## Local 251 Elects New Executive Board



Members of the new Local 251 Executive Board, left to right, are Trustees Antoinette "Toni" Lynch, Marie Miller and Angeleen Saiz, Vice President Phyllis Rutka, Treasurer Marian Dorn, Recording Secretary Becky McIntyre-Pacheco, President Kelley Allen and ABF Freight Ad Hoc Member Judy Otero. Not pictured are IBEW 611 Ad Hoc Member Judi Burkhalter and Sandia Ad Hoc Member Selma Cuellar.



Newly appointed Recording Secretary Kristen Lujan.



Local 251 also has ratified a new three-year agreement for members employed at IBEW 611 in Albuquerque, successfully negotiating a 100 percent employer-paid contribution to their health and welfare and pension plans for the life of the contract. The union also was able to remove a wage cap at 36 months for all job categories, and members were pleased to receive a \$500 signing bonus for the first time in the unit's history. Pictured, left to right, are Kimberly Condit, President Kelley Allen, Judi Burkhalter, Pam Wilburn, Mary Hopper and Raquel Vasquez.

## Local 8 Mourns Former President Verlene Jones Davis

Verlene Jones Davis, who served as president of Local 8 and a longtime labor and community leader in Seattle, died Sept. 22. She was 63.

Davis served as president of the Seattle chapter of the A. Philip Randolph Institute (APRI), president of the Washington chapter of the Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW), director of the MLK Labor's Union Cities program, and as Washington State Labor Council vice president.

"We were very sad to learn of the passing of Verlene, our Local 8 president for more than 10 years," said Local 8 Business Manager and



Verlene Jones Davis

International Vice President Suzanne Mode. "She visited our WPAS picket line several times in August 2017, always leading the group in joyous song and prayer. Verlene will be greatly missed."

## Local 494's Darcy Smith Celebrates 25 Years with OPEIU



Local 494 Steward Darcy Smith, third from left, receives her 25-year OPEIU membership pin from Alternate Steward Kathy Battaglia, second from right, and Trustee Laura Winiarski, far right, at a luncheon commemorating her years of service at UAW Region 9 in Amherst, N.Y. Also pictured is UAW Region 9 Director Jeff Binz, third from right.

## Hawai'i Nurses' Association/OPEIU Local 50 Elects New Leadership



Members of the Hawai'i Nurses' Association (HNA)/OPEIU Local 50 newly elected executive board, left to right, includes Directors Robert Coombes and Ginna Ross, President Daniel Ross, Trustees Jill Teruya and Wendy Yoshika, Directors Billy Craft and Joan Kutzer, Treasurer Joan Craft, Directors Kari DeLude, Patrick Magbulos and Rory Ramos and Secretary Cheryl Lynn Miller. Not pictured are Vice President Larson Layugan, Trustee Jennifer Trinh-Ng, and Directors Keoki Medeiros, Elijah Rasco, Colette Gaceta, Pohaikaloha Keliikipi, Rosalee Agas-Yuu, Sharon Matsui, Mike Minami, John Castillo, Carolyn Uehara, Kimm Goshi and Becky Farinas.

## OPEIU Nurses Council Examines How to Increase Bargaining Leverage



The OPEIU Nurses Council meets in New York City to explore urgent issues facing the nursing profession, including bullying and harassment in the workplace and how to use information about hospital funding for leverage when bargaining a union contract.

## Local 22 Nurses Fight Back Against Closing of Hospital Unit

Local 22 registered nurses in Little Rock, Arkansas, are fighting back against CHI St. Vincent Hospital management's decision to close its labor and delivery unit, waging a media and community involvement campaign to shed light on the dangers posed by the closing to the local community.

"The nurses are outraged by management's decision to close the 130-year-old labor and delivery department and NICU, and the rush to do so with very little advance warning," said Paige Yates, RN, president of Local 22 and chair of the OPEIU Nurses Council. "Management offered a range of conflicting reasons for the closing, but has not provided the Little Rock community a definitive answer as to why it is shuttering the unit.

"The closing leaves our community and the families who depend on the labor and delivery unit, including the many inductions and caesarean births already scheduled for the coming months, in an extremely vulnerable position," Yates continued.

The nurses collected hundreds of signatures from the Little Rock community on a petition demanding transparency about the decision to close the unit. Unlike previous changes made to the hospital's structure, administrators made no effort to consult with the Little Rock community, whose services will be disrupted, nor the 65 nurses whose jobs will be uprooted by this short-sighted decision.

"In the past, management was up front about massive changes like this," Yates said. "This time, they are keeping us in the dark and giving conflicting answers on their reasons for the closure, depending on who is asking.

"The community, including all the families who depend upon St. Vincent — many of them underinsured and reliant on Medicaid — deserve to know why the hospital is making the decision to close the labor and delivery unit at this time," Yates continued.

Despite the petitions and negative coverage of the closing in the Arkansas Democrat-Gazette and by local CBS and NBC news affiliates, as of this writing the hospital is going ahead with the planned closing. Local 22 reports it was able to secure positions in other units at the hospital for all the nurses and bargain fair separation terms for those who chose to leave.

Since 1888, St. Vincent has provided quality care to expectant and new mothers in the Little Rock area. "The closure is inconsistent with the values supposedly championed by a Catholic hospital, and runs contrary to its stated mission to care for the well-being of the community, especially those who are poor and vulnerable," Yates concluded.

## Rutland Contract Means 13 Percent Wage Bump for Local 6 Nurses

After months of negotiation, nurses represented by Local 6 overwhelmingly ratified a contract with Rutland Regional Medical Center in Vermont that will mean whopping 13 percent wage increases over the life of the three-year agreement.

The contract, which was ratified by a vote of 144-1, also includes increases in shift differentials, call back pay, tuition reimbursement, combined time-off pay and many other language improvements.

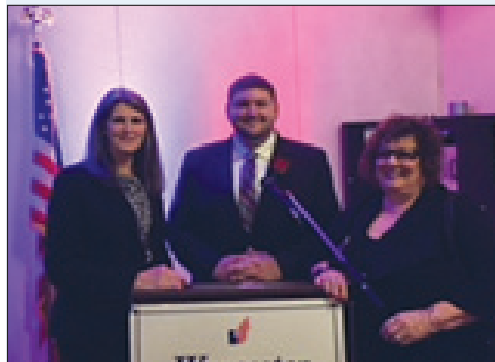
The negotiating committee was comprised of Karen St. Marie, Robert Bassalin, John Dyer, Fritz Asuncion, Kasey Gallo, Kristy Putorti, Mike Malone, Nancy Blair, Connie Flanders, Colleen Beayon, Juli Kimball and Local 6 Business Manager George Noel.

The committee credits the successful contract to solid planning before going to the bargaining table, which involved surveying the members and listening to their concerns. "It was clear to the committee the members wanted fairness and equality, and we think we succeeded in fulfilling that mandate with this contract," Noel said.

## Local 6's Kevin Brousseau Receives Kennedy Award

Local 6 member Kevin Brousseau was recently honored by the Worcester Democratic City Committee in Massachusetts with its Edward M. Kennedy Labor Award. Brousseau is a fourth-generation union member who has dedicated his career to fighting for workers' rights and social and economic justice. He currently serves as political director of the Massachusetts AFL-CIO, where he works to help elect candidates at the municipal, state and federal level who have the interests of working people at heart.

The Worcester DCC strives to build an open, just and strong society where all citizens have equal rights and opportunities by working for transparent, honest and responsive government accountable to the needs and will of the people.



Kevin Brousseau with International Secretary-Treasurer and Local 6 President Mary Mahoney, left, and Local 6 Vice President Lois Ciuffredo.



Local 6 member Elena Inangelo, left, who is employed by the Massachusetts Trial Court in the Worcester District Court Clerk's Office and sang the National Anthem at the event, with Ciuffredo.

## Local 2 Family Finds a New Favorite Gadget with AT&T Accessories Discount



Local 2 member Keith Anderko and his daughter, Daphne.

Starting off his career in labor as an organizer, Local 2 member Keith Anderko touted Union Plus benefits to current and prospective union members.

"I used the Union Plus discounts as an organizing tool, particularly in so-called 'right-to-work' states," Anderko recalls.

Anderko has been a member of Local 2 for the last five years and lives in the Washington, D.C., suburbs with his wife and their two children. He has benefited from a number of Union Plus programs, but only recently discovered a discount that has since become one of his family's favorite perks. He spotted a Bluetooth speaker at the AT&T table at a union event and couldn't pass up the good deal — 20 percent off the regular price \$100 speaker, thanks to the AT&T Signature Program Discounts through Union Plus.

He emphasizes he appreciates the AT&T discount program for reasons beyond his new speaker, and says, "supporting union employers is part of our mission of solidarity as a labor movement. And it's just one more reminder that my union isn't just for my job, it's for my family."

AT&T, the only nationwide unionized wireless carrier, offers a variety of discounts for union members, including a 15 percent discount on the monthly service charge of qualified plans, a waived activation fee on select devices for new lines of service, and 20 percent off on select accessories. Visit [unionplus.org/att](http://unionplus.org/att) for more details.

## Nancy Wohlforth Honored for Work on Behalf of LGBTQ Community



Local 2 LGBTQIA+ Chair Chelsea Bland, left, member Jorae Williams, right, with OPEIU Secretary-Treasurer Emerita Nancy Wohlforth at the Pride at Work convention. Wohlforth, who is also Pride at Work's president emerita, was honored at the organization's 2018 Solidarity Awards Banquet. Pride at Work is a nonprofit organization and AFL-CIO constituency group that represents LGBTQ union members and their allies in the cause of social and economic justice.



Download the OPEIU app by searching OPEIU on the App Store and Google Play.



## Notice to Employees Subject to Union Security Clauses

This notice is for all private sector 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 employed by public employers 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 2019, and continuing until a new percentage is issued, is 11.25 percent. The major portion of a Local Union's expenditures is for items other than the per capita to OPEIU. Studies show the final percentage of rebates for non-chargeable Local Union expenditures ranges between 0 percent 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, N.Y. 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 members 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, N.Y. 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.



# Everyday Savings

Save every day with union member-only discounts on everything from fashion and beauty to electronics and everyday household items. And whether it's date night or a fun family night out, enjoy delicious, union family discounts at select restaurants.

Find out more about this and other great Union Plus programs by visiting [unionplus.org](http://unionplus.org).



Learn more at [unionplus.org](http://unionplus.org)





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

## Join a Live Stream from the 2019 OPEIU Convention

It's going to be a union experience like no other; a chance to be part of the first-ever live stream from an OPEIU Convention. Speakers to include world-renowned author and political commentator Robert Reich.

**Join the live stream  
9 a.m. to 11 a.m. PST, June 10**

**This live stream will only be available to OPEIU members.**

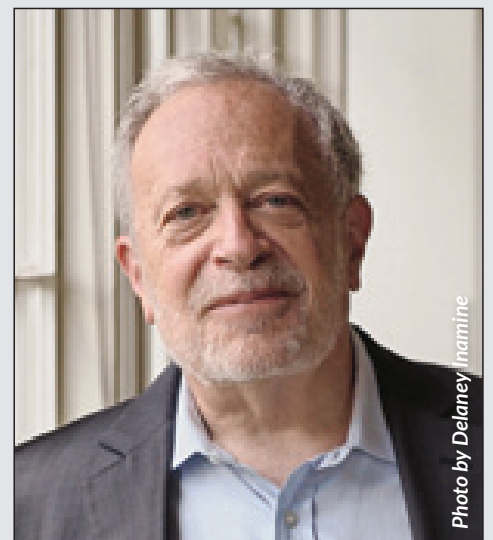


Photo by Delaney Inamine

**Register at [opeiu.org/2019Convention](https://opeiu.org/2019Convention)**