

# WHITE COLLAR



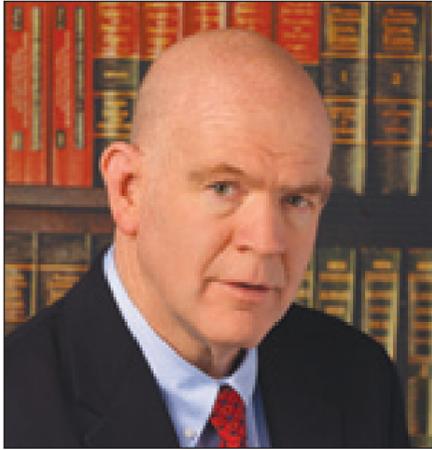
OFFICE AND PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEES INTERNATIONAL UNION, AFL-CIO, CLC ISSUE 540 | SPRING/SUMMER 2019

## We Can Prevent Workplace Violence

A new study examines the staggering occurrence of workplace violence, and calls for bold steps to be taken now to protect working people. See page 7 to learn how you can help.

# What's the Real National Emergency?

By Richard Lanigan  
President



As elected officials continue to consider whether circumstances at the U.S. southern border constitute a national emergency, other situations around the U.S. cry out for some form of federal intervention, yet go unanswered.

Consider the miles of corroded pipe the drinking water of Flint, Michigan, flows through, causing the exposure of American children to levels of lead in their water that are clearly unsafe. Isn't that an emergency?

After Hurricane Maria devastated Puerto Rico, forcing people to rely on generators for electricity, the response by government was to privatize schools and utility companies. Can we rely on the magic of the market and human greed to restore the commonwealth?

Each year, thousands of Americans at school, work, church or leisure have been gunned down in cold blood by assault rifles. No response so far.

All over the country, there are families whose lives have been devastated by opioid addiction. I personally have looked into the eyes of members of such families at wakes and funerals for their loved ones. With effective treatment available, shouldn't there be more government involvement?

Consider the more than one million Americans who worked hard, played by the rules, but whose pensions were invested in assets that crashed during the 2008 financial crisis through no fault of their own. These retirees have borne the brunt of an economy that failed them while a system of American banks was bailed out by U.S. taxpayers. Should the workers' pensions receive government support?

An entire generation of young Americans went to college and after completing their studies had no job to engage their newly minted education. Young people who now have no health care or retirement benefits work in low-wage jobs like indentured servants. They pay off their student loans while living in their parents' basements. Should the government help them?

Millions of Americans have health care that is inadequate or unaffordable. Every day, Americans are required to make choices on whether to save money for retirement or pay the cost of a needed prescription. Isn't this a national emergency?

I travel the country's crumbling roads, bridges, tunnels and airports. I think about the unfulfilled promises to rebuild our nation's public infra-

structure, a restoration that could put tens of thousands of Americans to work. Will the government help address the infrastructure crisis?

As many of you know, our union represents cab drivers. Millions of Americans work as drivers. On occasion, I ponder how one who drives a truck, cab, hearse, ambulance, bus or farm vehicle will be affected by driverless technology. Should the government begin to plan on how these Americans might transition to other productive work as driverless cars become more prevalent?

Having lived on Long Island for all my life, I remember just a few years ago that its south shore looked like a war zone after Hurricane Sandy. All predictions are that storms will increase in frequency and severity because of climate change. Should the government do research on how Americans will best acclimate to our changing world?

Thousands of Americans have lost control of their financial circumstances. They live from recession to recession, while the value of their homes bobs up and down like a small boat in a raging storm. Many people are one recession away from financial disaster.

With these thoughts in mind, I wonder what exactly is a national emergency and why we don't leave the decisions on spending hard-earned taxpayer money to the U.S. Congress, the entity exclusively delegated that duty by the U.S. Constitution? ■

**Attention OPEIU Members:**

## You're Invited to Join a Live Stream from the 2019 OPEIU Convention

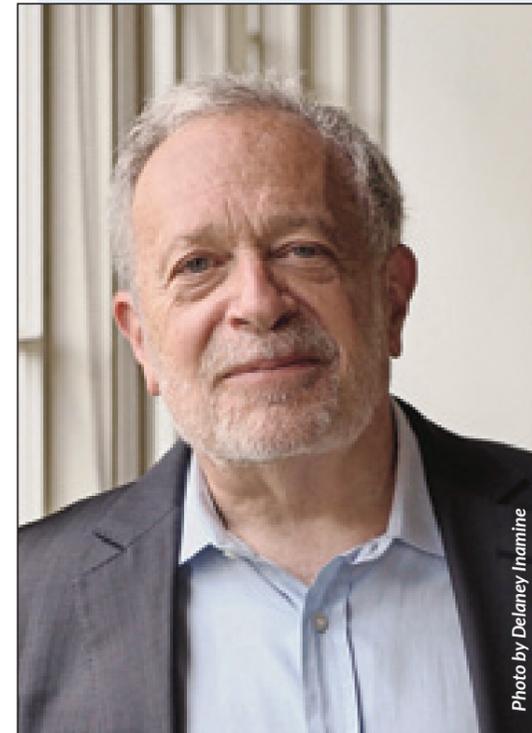


Photo by Delaney Inamine

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. PDT, 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)**



Clerical workers at WestRock paper mill in Panama City, Florida, receive OPEIU relief funds following Hurricane Michael. Also pictured is ITPEU/OPEIU Local 4873 Secretary-Treasurer John Brenton IV, center, who traveled to Panama City to hand-deliver the checks.

**Members Appreciate Hurricane Relief**

Thanks so much for the hurricane relief help that was given to me. I will forever be grateful. I feel very blessed to be a part of something so great!

Liana R. Hill  
OPEIU/ITPEU Local 4873  
Jacksonville, N.C.

Just a note to say thank you so much for the union relief checks we received as a result of Hurricane Michael.

We appreciate your concern for us during this difficult time, and it was especially nice that you came here to Panama City to deliver the checks. We are proud to be in a union that cares about its members as you have.

In solidarity,

Kathy Hennings  
Jane Hallman Mombi  
Angie Sherfield  
Lynne Windsor  
Mary Wilson  
OPEIU/ITPEU Local 4873  
Panama City, Fla.

*On the Cover: Members of the OPEIU Nurses Council at the U.S. Capitol in Washington, D.C.*

OPEIU members from throughout the country have generously donated to the OPEIU Relief Fund to help their fellow sisters and brothers affected by recent natural disasters. If you'd like to help, checks can be sent to:

Mary Mahoney  
Secretary-Treasurer  
OPEIU Relief Fund  
80 Eighth Avenue, 6th Floor  
New York, NY 10011

**WHITE COLLAR**  
Official Organ of  
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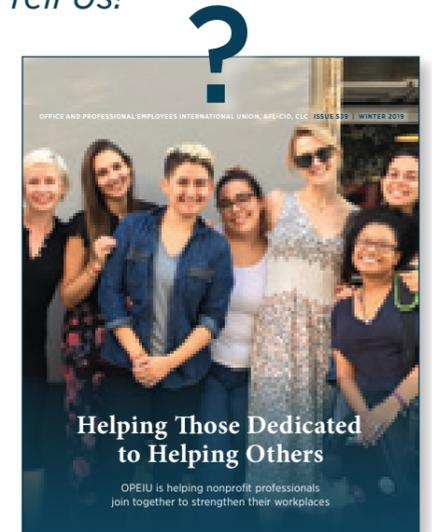
## OPEIU Considering White Collar Name Change

*Would a Rose by Any Other Name Smell as Sweet? You Tell Us!*

When OPEIU was chartered in 1945, its official membership publication was known as Office Worker. In 1954, the name was changed to White Collar.

Well, it's now 65 years later and OPEIU is considering if it is time to change our magazine's name once again to better reflect the times we're living in today. And we want to know what you think.

Help us make the decision by coming up with a great new name for White Collar. Email your suggestions to [frontdesk@opeiu.org](mailto:frontdesk@opeiu.org) with the subject line **White Collar Name Change**. OPEIU's executive board will review the suggestions and decide if one of them is right for the publication. If so, the official name change will be announced in an upcoming issue of the magazine, and the author of the winning suggestion will receive \$500 as thanks. All suggestions must be received by Aug. 1.



## Professional Union Membership Rose in 2018



More and more professional working people are recognizing the value of joining together in union, with professional union membership growing to 6.18 million in 2018, according to the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

This uptick continues a decades-long trend of professionals choosing to unionize. During

the past 13 years, unions have seen an increase of almost one million professional members. These professional working people recognize the value union membership brings, including the ability to "earn higher pay and better benefits, as well as preserve their professional expertise and standards," said Jennifer Dorning, president of the Department for Professional Employees, AFL-CIO, of which OPEIU is an affiliated union. "Professionals are growing the labor movement."

### Did You Know?

Stats show support for unions is way up! Sixty-million workers — the population of New York and California combined — would vote to join a union today if given the chance.

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Jobs Watch

## Women Workers: If You Want a Raise, Join the Union



Working women who are part of a union, like these Local 8 members at Solid Ground in Seattle, enjoy the benefits of a collective voice on the job.

and female, to pay parity with working men. And, they're far ahead of the median worker's weekly pay when you consider all workers combined, union and nonunion.

Here are the numbers, from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics calculations about union membership and pay in the U.S. in 2018. Bear in mind, these figures measure only pay. They don't measure the higher frequency of employer-paid health insurance, disability benefits, traditional pensions, 401(k) accounts, paid vacations, paid family leave, etc., that benefit union women — but not many of their nonunion sisters and brothers.

So, let's run the numbers and ratios, remembering the median pay of a working woman nationwide is 80 percent of the median of a working man in the same job and with the same qualifications. The median is the point where half a group of workers is above and half below:

- Median weekly earnings, all workers: union \$1,051; nonunion \$860 (82 percent).
- Median weekly earnings, male workers: union \$1,123; nonunion \$948 (84 percent).
- Median weekly earnings, female workers: union \$968 (86 percent of \$1,123); nonunion \$764 (68 percent).
- The pay gap is even smaller if you compare union women's median earnings to the median for all union workers, not just for all male unionists, as shown above. Then the ratio is \$968 (union women) to \$1,051 (all unionists), or 92 percent.

There's one final number you need to know to clinch the case for women joining unions: Median weekly earnings for all workers of all genders, races and ethnicities was \$886 last year. The weekly median for union women was \$968. That's 109 percent of the median for all workers. It's \$82 more a week, or \$4,264 yearly.

Who wouldn't like to have \$4,264 more per year in their pocket?

As an OPEIU member, you already enjoy the benefits of a collective voice at work and a negotiated salary. Tell your friends and co-workers who may not have joined the union about this union difference. *[PAI]*

### Did You Know?

More than half of all women in the U.S. are the primary breadwinners in their households.

As a member of OPEIU, you already know the best advice a working person can get, and that's to join your union! The data bears this out, especially if you're a working woman: If you want a raise in pay, join your union. And, if you don't have one, organize one.

The data, despite what the administration, big business and anti-worker forces say, doesn't lie. While working women as a group are far from pay parity with working men, union working women are closer to parity than any other group.

Further, those same union working women are closer than all groups of nonunion workers, male

## Contact Your Representative and Urge Support of the Workplace Violence Prevention Act

The AFL-CIO has released its annual report on workplace deaths in the United States, and the findings are startling. Nearly 50 years since the passage of the Occupational Safety and Health Act (OSHA) of 1970, the report shows much still needs to be done to improve health and safety conditions to protect all working Americans.

Organized labor is taking on one of the biggest threats facing working people — death and injury due to violence and unsafe conditions on the job — and is calling on all working people to urge their elected officials to support legislation aimed at curbing violence on the job.

According to the AFL-CIO's report, *Death on the Job: The Toll of Neglect*, in 2017, 5,147 working people were killed on the job and an estimated 95,000 died from occupational diseases. Every day, on average, 275 U.S. workers die from hazardous working conditions. Perhaps most alarming, workplace violence is the third-leading cause of workplace death, accounting for 807 deaths, including 458 homicides in 2017 alone. For the third year in a row, workplace violence injuries increased, with nearly 29,000 workers suffering serious violence-related injuries due to assault on the job. Health care and social service workers — two sectors where many OPEIU members work — are among those most at risk due to their direct contact with patient and client care.

The report also showed women are at greatest risk, as two out of three workplace violence events were suffered by women.

Despite these disturbing statistics, the Trump administration has sidelined developing and issuing an OSHA workplace violence standard.

It's clear the time is overdue for our elected officials to take action. U.S. Rep. Joe Courtney (D-Conn.) has introduced legislation to protect working people from violence on the job for these high-risk sectors, the Workplace Violence Prevention for Health Care and Social Service Workers Act (H.R. 1309). The bill would provide an enforceable OSHA standard to prevent foreseeable, serious and life-altering violence against workers in hospitals, nursing homes and social service settings.

The report also showed women are at greatest risk, as two out of three workplace violence events were suffered by women.

**OPEIU urges all members to please write your representative now and ask them to co-sponsor H.R. 1309. Tell Congress to support an OSHA workplace violence standard. Visit [aflcio.org](http://aflcio.org) for a quick and easy way to contact your representatives online.**

## Paycheck Fairness Act Reintroduced

Backed by a wide coalition of women's groups and labor unions, including OPEIU, veteran U.S. Rep. Rosa DeLauro (D-Conn.), and U.S. Sen. Patty Murray (D-Wash.), have reintroduced the Paycheck Fairness Act — a measure designed to put enforcement "teeth" into the nation's 56-year-old equal pay law.

The measure has passed the House, but it may be tougher in the GOP-controlled Senate. Every Democrat in the House and Senate signed on as a co-sponsor to the Paycheck Fairness Act (H.R. 7) before DeLauro introduced it Jan. 30.

The Paycheck Fairness Act would reverse court and agency decisions that have chipped away at workers' rights to equal pay for equal work ever since the original law was enacted in 1963.

The measure "would strengthen and close loopholes in" that law "by holding employers accountable for discriminatory practices, ending the practice of pay secrecy, easing workers' ability to individually or jointly challenge pay discrimination, and strengthening the available remedies for wronged employees," DeLauro's summary says.

"Women and men in the same job should have the same pay, and the Paycheck Fairness Act is a strong step forward in ensuring that we close the wage gap once and for all," she said.

"Congress passed the Equal Pay Act more than 50 years ago, but the sad reality is that today women, on average, still only make 80 cents for every dollar men make," Murray said. "For women of color, the pay gap is even worse. African-American women working fulltime only make 61 cents for every dollar white men make and Latinas on average are paid 53 cents for every dollar their white male colleagues make. The gender wage gap

doesn't just hurt women. It hurts families, communities and our economy."

Union contracts go a long way — though not all the way — toward closing the pay gap. The latest federal data on union density show median weekly pay for union women is 86 percent of that for union men, who have the highest median weekly pay. The median for union women is also more than the median for every category of non-union workers, men included. *[PAI]*

Young Workers

# Millennials Struggle Under Flat Wages, Massive Student Debt

*Many Turn to Organizing as the Key to a Better Life*

More than one-in-three U.S. workers are millennials, making the group the largest single generation in the American workforce. Struggling under a mountain of student debt and laboring under stagnant wages, many are organizing for a better life.

Millennials, defined by Pew Research as those born between 1981 and 1996, have lived their entire lives against a backdrop of economic uneasiness. Wages have stagnated for decades as corporate profits have skyrocketed. Economic inequality has risen steadily while tax cuts for the ultra-wealthy have been justified by slashing the budgets of social programs. A Wall Street-bred housing crisis wrecked the economy as many millennials came of age and began to enter an increasingly precarious labor force.

And as more and more of their parents' and grandparents' good-paying union jobs were shifted overseas by profit-hungry corporations, millennials — the most educated generation



in American history — were sold on the promise that going to college would be their ticket to the stable middle-class lifestyle earlier generations enjoyed. But, the price of higher education rapidly soared as incomes remained flat; as a result, U.S. student loan debt is now a full-blown \$1.5 trillion crisis. That crisis is one of the main reasons millennials are putting off getting married, having children and

purchasing a home — a pillar of the so-called American Dream. A recent study conducted by Bank of America found 72 percent of millennials consider owning a home a “top priority.” But, in large part, because of pricey student loan payments, most millennials are forced into renting. A significant portion of their incomes are paid to landlords and student loan servicers — not into their savings, which they could use for a down payment on a home, or into their local economies.

It’s no wonder, then, that millennials are now turning to the same strategy previous generations used to build comfortable middle-class lifestyles: organizing. In 2017, 76 percent of newly-organized union members were under the age of 35, according to the Economic Policy Institute. A recent AFL-CIO survey found 64 percent of nonunion white-collar millennials would support a union at their current job.

Why? Because they know there is power in a union. Union members earn, on average, \$200 more per week than their nonunion counterparts. They’re more likely to have health care

benefits, paid sick time, severance packages and parental leave than workers without the protection of a union contract. By coming together in union, millennials are seizing the opportunity to have a unified voice at work, and a say over wages, benefits and rules in their workplaces.

Organizing is the most direct and effective way for working people to get a fair deal in an increasingly unequal economy. It was true at the height of the American middle-class when, in 1953, 35 percent of U.S. workers were union members. In the midst of a massive student debt crisis, the unwelcome rise of precarious work, and the decimation of the safety net, millennials are realizing it’s still true today.

**It’s no wonder, then, that millennials are now turning to the same strategy previous generations used to build comfortable middle-class lifestyles: organizing.**

# Meet the Newest OPEIU Apprentice Organizers

More and more OPEIU local unions are recognizing the importance of building power through organizing and are joining the Apprentice Organizer Program to help spread the benefits of union membership to all working families. Meet the newest apprentices, Haylee Hilton of Local 12 in Minnesota and Shelby Herrera of Local 277 in Texas.



Haylee Hilton

As a second-generation OPEIU member and a fifth-generation Teamster, Haylee Hilton has been active in the labor movement since birth. Hilton has worked on both political campaigns at all levels and for labor unions to better the lives of working families. While she was with the Teamsters, she was involved in various external and internal organizing campaigns, registered hundreds of members to vote, walked on numerous picket lines and attended many rallies.

At 22, Hilton is excited to find creative new ways of organizing to help grow the next generation of young union members and labor leaders. She’s also excited to be working as an apprentice organizer at Local 12 in Roseville, Minnesota, to help as many working families as possible enjoy the benefits of OPEIU membership.

Shelby Herrera is a Texas native who grew up in the Rio Grande Valley. She attended Texas A&M University-College Station to pursue a degree in psychology with minors in sociology and neuroscience.

While a student, she took on community organizing fulltime, organizing for Latinx spaces around immigration advocacy. After her graduation in December 2017, she became an assistant director at Grassroots Campaigns where she led fundraising efforts for the Southern Poverty Law Center, Planned Parenthood, the ACLU and Doctors without Borders, among others. Herrera then joined Beto O’Rourke’s team as a field organizer, but felt the pull toward the labor movement and joined the field team of the AFL-CIO as a campaign coordinator working in Missouri on the successful defeat of the so-called “right-to-work” law that would have made it more difficult for Missourians to join a union. After working in field positions in Minnesota and Pennsylvania, she joined Local 277 in Ft. Worth, Texas, as an apprentice organizer.

Herrera is also a national women’s commissioner and District 7 deputy director for Young Adults for LULAC (League of United Latin American Citizens).



Shelby Herrera

## Student Debt Reduction Applications Now Being Accepted

Are you an OPEIU member burdened with student debt? Your union can help! Applications are now being accepted for the OPEIU Student Debt Reduction Program to help members repay their student debt. The application deadline is June 30.

OPEIU will provide five awards of \$2,500 to OPEIU members who have at least \$10,000 in student debt and are able to prove their account is current. A member can be awarded only once in a lifetime, and must have completed an associate or undergraduate degree.

Complete rules and an application can be found at [opeiu.org](http://opeiu.org), under the Member Resources tab and by clicking on OPEIU Membership Benefits.



Maria Aranda, left, a member of Local 29 employed at the law offices of Weinberg, Roger and Rosenfeld, accepts the OPEIU Howard Coughlin Memorial Scholarship awarded to her daughter, Janel. Also pictured is Local 29 Secretary-Treasurer Kelly Gschwend. Local 29 is based in Oakland, California.

## Two New Areas of Study Added to Free College Benefit

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

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

Fall I Aug. 19

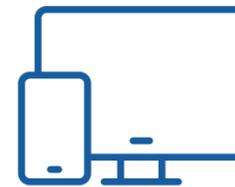
Fall II Oct. 14

Members can earn a two-year online degree and certificates with absolutely no out-of-pocket costs for tuition, fees or e-books. Visit [freecollege.opeiu.org](http://freecollege.opeiu.org) or call 888-590-9009 to learn more about course offerings and start your path toward a free associate degree with OPEIU. Canadian members, please contact Luis Rosa at [lrosa@egcc.edu](mailto:lrosa@egcc.edu) for assistance.

# Know the Many Benefits of OPEIU Membership

As an OPEIU member, 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
- OPEIU Scholarships
- Union Plus
- 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.



### Keep in the Know!

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



# Together, We Are OPEIU

Since 1945, the Office and Professional Employees International Union has stood at the forefront of white-collar unionism, helping professionals attain the wages, benefits and workplace conditions all working people need and deserve. OPEIU nurses, clerks, government workers, accountants, librarians, manufacturing workers, bank tellers, museum and university employees, engineers, pilots, umpires, teachers, social workers, podiatrists and more are leading the fight for a decent standard of living in the industries in which we work.

Nearly 75 years ago, we received our charter from the American Federation of Labor, establishing what was then called OEIU as the premier union for white-collar professionals. Today, the 103,000 members of OPEIU work in all 50 states, Canada and Puerto Rico.

OPEIU's demonstrated, decades-long commitment to working people in technical, professional and clerical roles is driven by members like you.

By working together to expand our ranks to more working people — many of whom have never previously considered the tangible benefits of coming together in union — we can more effectively serve our existing members and help create a better life for those who we've not yet helped to organize. Together, sisters and brothers, we are strong, proud, and working together as never before to confront the challenges ahead of us. Together, we are OPEIU.

## A Brief History of OPEIU



OPEIU expands in the nonprofit sector by launching Nonprofit Employees United, which serves as a central hub for existing and new members to coordinate, educate and strategize.

OPEIU Aviation Council established to support members employed in the aviation sector.



OPEIU introduces the Apprentice Organizer Program, devoting significant resources to the goal of organizing the unorganized.

2019

OPEIU offers national 401(k) plan to provide a reliable retirement savings option for participating members.



Employees at BookPeople, Texas' largest independent bookstore, vote to join Local 277.

2018



OPEIU members gather in Memphis in May to honor civil rights leader and champion of workers' rights Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

2010



The Association of Professional Minor League Umpires (AMLU) overwhelmingly votes to affiliate with OPEIU, becoming Guild 322.

The Hawai'i Nurses' Association (HNA) affiliates with OPEIU, adding 4,000 nursing professionals to our ranks, becoming Local 50, as Hawai'i is the 50th state.

2009

Passage of the Employee Free Choice Act — which would have made card check, rather than NLRB elections, the standard for union representation certification — fails in the Senate, in part due to the Obama administration's lack of vocal support and congressional muscling. It also would have strengthened enforcement mechanisms against employers' unfair labor practices.

2016



Richard Lanigan is elected president, and Mary Mahoney is re-elected secretary-treasurer of OPEIU. Mahoney was first elected in 2010.



Local 8 joins historic coalition of Kaiser-Permanente unions.

2017



Local 8 member Teresa Mosqueda is elected to Seattle City Council.

OPEIU extends defense fund benefit to furloughed government employees and introduces new identity protection membership benefit for all members.



OPEIU Nurses Council lobbies on Capitol Hill for safe staffing requirements.

OPEIU members across the United States participate in historic Women's March.

2003



Nancy Wohlforth is named OPEIU secretary-treasurer, becoming the first openly gay woman to hold international office in any U.S. labor union.



Dr. Martin Luther King and A. Philip Randolph, in coordination with a broad coalition of civil rights and labor rights advocates, organize and execute the historic March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom.

1963

President John F. Kennedy, who by executive order the previous year recognized federal employees' right to bargain collectively, is assassinated in Dallas, Texas.

1961

OPEIU's political action fund — Voice of the Electorate (VOTE) — is established.

Our union holds its convention in New York City, where the International headquarters is moved.

1959

The Landrum-Griffin Act is signed into law. Its provisions require unions to submit annual financial reports to the Department of Labor, prevents communists and convicted felons from holding union office (the former of which was ruled unconstitutional in 1965), and guarantees to union members a bill of rights.

1997

Thousands of podiatrists form within OPEIU the first-ever American union for doctors: the First National Guild for Healthcare Providers of the Lower Extremity.  
221 helicopter pilots join OPEIU, beginning OPEIU's representation in the aviation sector.

1995



The Federation of Catholic Teachers (FCT), comprised of 3,000 teachers, affiliates with Local 153.

OPEIU celebrates its 50th birthday.

1965

At our 10th convention in San Francisco, OPEIU changes its name to the Office and Professional Employees International Union (OPEIU). Delegates vote to create International strike fund.



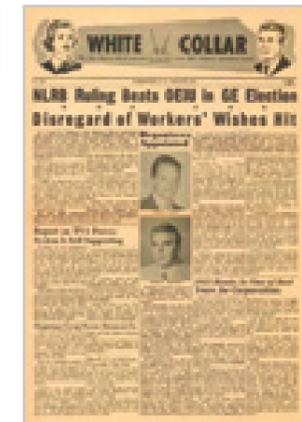
The American Federation of Labor and the Congress of Industrial Organizations merge after a nearly two-decade-long split over strategic differences, forming the AFL-CIO.

1955

1957

OPEIU wins Supreme Court case guaranteeing the right to bargain on behalf of Local 46. Our union records membership of more than 50,000 members. The International Pension Fund is established.

1954



OPEIU's official publication changes its name to *White Collar*.

1953

U.S. union density reaches all-time high; about 35 percent of all U.S. workers are union members.

1981

President Ronald Reagan, a former union president himself, fires 13,000 striking air traffic controllers in PATCO, effectively endorsing union-busting, which emboldens employers, industry groups and anti-union politicians to launch sustained attacks on labor unions nationwide.

1951

The first contract is reached with the Tennessee Valley Authority, a federally-owned corporation created to provide flood control, electricity and economic development to the Tennessee Valley during and after the Great Depression.

1947

Congress overrides President Harry Truman's veto of the Taft-Hartley Act, which severely restricts many of the rights granted to working people by the National Labor Relations Act of 1935. The bill, passed in concert by both parties, allows states to enact so-called "right-to-work" laws, forces union officers to sign non-communist affidavits with the federal government, and heavily restricts legal rights of strikers.

1945



On January 8, AFL President William Green officially issues a charter to the Office Employees International Union (OEIU), which begins with 22,000 members. Its first convention is held in Cincinnati, with 90 delegates attending from 54 local unions. Paul Hutchings is elected first president of OEIU and Howard Hicks is elected secretary-treasurer.

1993

NAFTA signed into law by President Bill Clinton, accelerating outsourcing from industrial regions in the U.S. to Mexico.

1987

Sex discrimination lawsuit filed by OPEIU in 1984 leads to a settlement in which thousands of female OPEIU members at the Tennessee Valley Authority receive a total of \$5 million in pay equity raises.

# LOCAL UNION NEWS

## Sodexo Employees at Sharp Chula Vista Vote to Join Local 30

Sodexo Environmental Services staff employed at Sharp Chula Vista Medical Center have voted overwhelmingly to join Local 30 in San Diego, and are now looking forward to bargaining a fair contract for improved working conditions.

The landslide vote, held May 2 and conducted by the National Labor Relations Board, is a clear mandate for the union to negotiate for fair and transparent wages, recognition of seniority and for employees to be treated with the respect and dignity they deserve.

The new members chose to have a united voice at work, despite a prolonged and intensive anti-union campaign waged by the employer. They were forced to attend meetings where they were barraged with employer pleas to vote no to the union, and were subjected to other intimidating and aggressive employer tactics.

But, as is always the case in successful organizing efforts, solidarity was key. The 15-member organizing committee made sure their co-workers stayed united and focused on their goals. Ultimately, the employees had faith in each other over their employer's empty promises and threats.

"Our strength came from staying together over these months," said Martha Carrillo, a housekeeping attendant at Chula Vista and a member of the organizing team. "When we felt down, we shook it off, stood up and continued forward, never giving up."

Local 30 currently represents Sodexo environmental and food service workers at two other Sharp Medical Centers in the San Diego area. Member activists at these facilities first reached out to their nonunion counterparts at Chula Vista to encourage them to consider organizing as well.

"This campaign was an overwhelming success because of the amazing organizing committee's close relationships with their co-workers," said Carolina Aceves, Local 30 apprentice organizer. "Throughout the campaign, they made sure to have one-on-one conversations with co-workers, despite being constantly watched. They also made phone calls and home visits and met every week."



Members of the Chula Vista Organizing Committee celebrate after the election vote count. Left to right are Lorenzo Diaz, Local 30 Apprentice Organizer Carolina Aceves, Martha Carrillo, Yolanda Ramirez, Carmela Jimenez and International Lead Organizer David Flores.

## After a Lifetime of Dedication to Working People, Walter Allen Jr. Retires

After more than three decades of activism and dedication to the members of OPEIU, International Vice President and Local 30 Executive Director and CFO Walter Allen Jr. is retiring.

Marianne Giordano, a longtime Local 30 leader, has been elected the new executive director and CFO. "It's been an incredible journey," Giordano said. "Walter has been my mentor, my friend and an inspiration. He is the kind of leader and person I can only aspire to be! He has changed my life in so many ways. It's because of his vision, conviction and selflessness that I am here today."

Allen began his career in the labor movement at Local 6 in Boston, where he served for many years as business agent and manager, before his appointment in 2001 to oversee the reorganization of Local 30 in San Diego.

He's also served on the International Executive Board since 1995. "Walter's contribution as a member of the executive board is incalculable," said OPEIU President Richard Lanigan. "On behalf of our members, OPEIU extends its deepest appreciation to Walter for his many years of service and commitment to the union and for his work to better the lives of all working people."

Allen will continue to provide guidance as a consultant to Local 30.

Also elected were President Roger Lester, Vice President Michael Ramey, Recording Secretary Catherine Engler, executive board members Jamie Campbell, Margie Chavez, Ezequiel Diaz, Raymond Gallardo, Gayle Noon, Manuel Santillan, Annie Watson and Linda Winters and trustees Soralla Arellano, Jon Larson and Diane Nunez.



Walter Allen Jr. and Marianne Giordano.

## University Employees Stand in Solidarity with Local 502



Local 32 members show solidarity with Local 502 members at Oberlin.

OPEIU university employees throughout the country are sending messages of solidarity and posting photos on social media in support of Local 502's contract campaign with Oberlin College in Ohio.

"We're in a tough fight with Oberlin," said Local 502 President Diane Lee. "The college has already eliminated 30 positions and has plans for additional cuts to union staff. Many remaining staff are doing the work of two or three people, and the college has announced recommendations to consolidate 32 academic departments into five or six offices, and replace all the administrative assistants with non-bargaining unit positions."

Local 502's contract expires June 30, and Lee says these messages of support are being shared throughout the Oberlin campus and are "going a long way to helping motivate our membership and helping us build our community coalition in advance of what we anticipate will be extremely difficult negotiations.

"We are showing both our members and the college administration we are not fighting alone," Lee says.

And they're not fighting alone! Among those showing support are Local 30 members in San Diego employed by Kaiser Permanente, California Service Center and Sodexo at Grossmont Hospital, as well as Local 32 members at Lafayette College in Pennsylvania, Monmouth University and the New Jersey Institute of Technology in New Jersey who have all sent messages that they are standing with Local 502.



Local 30 members stand with Oberlin College employees.

## Local 6 Calls for Law to Strengthen Rights of Working People

Local 6 Business Manager George Noel and Local 453 President Tim Lasker joined more than 30 Massachusetts union leaders to demand from state legislators the passage of a law strengthening unions statewide after the Supreme Court’s Janus decision last year weakening the rights of working people to join unions.



Photo by Matt Murphy/State House News Service

Local 6 Business Manager George Noel, standing directly behind Massachusetts AFL-CIO President Steve Tolman, seated, and Local 453 President Tim Lasker, wearing red tie, fight for legislation strengthening unions.

## Local 6 Knows You Can’t Build a Strong Union Without Strong Stewards

Local 6 in Massachusetts held a steward training for employees of the Trial Court and Worcester Registry of Deeds focusing on the roles and responsibilities of stewards, including the importance of getting to know your members and how to conduct grievances, among other topics.

The training, led by Local 6 Business Manager George Noel, Business Agents Phil Basile, Dan Totten and Garrett Mahoney and Apprentice Organizer Mariah Painter, was open to stewards and any interested members.

Feedback from the training was extremely positive, as stewards said they enjoyed having the opportunity to ask questions, share their experiences and learn from others. The experience was so positive that several members have expressed interest in also serving as stewards as a result.

“Strong stewards make a strong union, and they help us as organizers to organize similar industries,” Painter said. “You can’t build a strong union without strong stewards.”



The Local 6 training resulted in several members stepping forward and becoming new stewards.

## Solidarity Works as Local 182 Members Unite to Win



The Local 182 negotiating team included, left to right, member Sandra McKee, Financial Secretary Katrina Burnette, Trustee Ben Myrick and President Melanie Adams.

Members employed by the USW Benefit Funds and represented by Local 182 in Nashville have a new contract that contains improved wages and no takeaways from the previous contract.

Members of the negotiating team set their goals long before bargaining began, surveying members to ensure their proposals reflected the goals and priorities of the unit. They also recognized the importance of building strong leaders within the local, which meant ensuring the contract included paid union release time. “From our training at the OPEIU Educational Conference in Memphis last year, we learned that many locals have paid time off to attend union trainings, so, for the first time, we bargained to have paid days off to attend trainings and conventions,” said Local 182 President Melanie Adams.

Member solidarity was the key to getting this contract, noted Adams, who is proud how the members “stepped out of their comfort zones and put signs up in their workspaces, made t-shirts and wore stickers,” and turned the union bulletin board into what they called a “shout-out” board filled with messages demanding fair wage increases.

All of this pressure, including a petition that similarly called for fair wages for these members who ensure that USW retirees are paid their pension benefits every month, resulted in a contract with 3 percent wage increases in the first year of the contract, followed by 1 percent in the second and 2.5 percent in the third.

And remember the issue of union paid leave? The negotiating team was able to secure 20 days of paid union leave, allowing leaders to attend trainings and conventions to learn how to build the strength of the local union to meet the challenges of the future.

## PartnersGlobal Employees Join Local 2

OPEIU local unions continue to increase our representation of nonprofit employees as employees at PartnersGlobal have elected to join Local 2 in Washington, D.C.

The unit of 15, comprised primarily of program officers and finance staff, “spent months building up power amongst their colleagues before making a request for voluntary recognition in January,” said Grace Reckers, Local 2 apprentice organizer. “After hearing from each of their colleagues

about their stance on the union and improvements they’d like to see in their workplace, the organizing committee successfully signed up the 15 members in the unit.” The new unit is now preparing to bargain a first contract.



New Local 2 members at PartnersGlobal include, back row, left to right, organizing and negotiations committee member Jeffrey Zimmer, negotiations committee member Kyle Shrivastava, and members Leigh McBain, Kelli Kaesberg and Nina Tapsoba; and front row, left to right, organizing and negotiations committee member Daphne Assimakopoulos, member Yu Chen, organizing committee member Kate Ravin and member Bridget O’Loughlin.

PartnersGlobal, based in Washington, D.C., works internally with grassroots organizations to fund sustainable peacemaking efforts and support local democratic initiatives. The campaign follows other recent Local 2 organizing successes at the Center for American Progress (CAP) and the National Democratic Institute (NDI). “As the staff of other DC-area nonprofit and social service organizations begin to recognize the value of forming a union and empowerment gained from bargaining a first contract, we expect to see more employees attempting to do the same,” Reckers said.

## Local 98's Jeanette Mauk Recognized for Conservation Efforts

Jeanette Mauk, a Local 98 steward, was recently recognized by the Union Sportsmen's Alliance (USA) for her outstanding conservation work in the state of Ohio.

Mauk lives in Dayton, Ohio, and is the state's AFL-CIO field director. She has shepherded and grown the USA's Ohio State Conservation Dinner in Columbus for the past seven years, and has organized multiple projects including the installation of a new fishing pier at Dayton's Lakeside Lake and Ohio's first Take Kids Fishing Day in Marietta. She is also planning a youth fishing event to be held this spring in Dayton.

"This is awesome, and means a lot," Mauk said of receiving the award. "But the real rewards of being involved in the labor movement and working with the USA include giving back to our communities, fostering solidarity among union members and building bridges between unions and the public.

"When you see what can be accomplished when everyone pulls together, it just makes you want to do more," she concluded.

The USA is a union-dedicated, nonprofit organization that seeks to unite the union community through conservation to preserve North America's outdoor heritage.



Jeanette Mauk with Union Sportsmen's Alliance Union Relations Manager Walt Ingram.

## Local 306 Proves We Can Do It!

Local 306 in Amarillo, Texas, demonstrated that standing together in solidarity can mean big wins at the bargaining table after ratifying a new agreement with Consolidated Nuclear Security, reports President Rob Briggs.

Local 306 negotiates its contracts with nine other unions under the umbrella of the Metal Trades Council. After stalled negotiations led to a difficult six-week strike in 2015 that affected about 1,350 members, the unions knew they had to be prepared this time and get all the members involved if they hoped to secure a fair and reasonable agreement with a company with a history of using anti-union tactics.

Local 306 united the members under the theme that Pantex workers do what no else in the country does, working under very dangerous conditions at the only final assembly and disassembly plant for all nuclear weapons for the United States and some allied treaty countries. During the four months of interest-based bargaining, it was a daily battle to maintain the contract's hard-fought gains and to keep spirits up among the members. So, the local had shirts made with the slogan "Pantex Women Rock" and "We Can Do It," and held Red Shirt Thursdays to get the members motivated and united.

With a five-year agreement in place, the slogans proved true. The members at Pantex proved they could do it, against all odds!



Members of Local 306 on a Red Shirt Thursday show their support for the union.

## Local 29 Members at Anthem BlueCross Ratify Contract

After months of contract negotiations with Anthem BlueCross in the San Francisco Bay Area, an agreement has been ratified by the membership that includes a 3 percent wage increase each year of the agreement, two additional grades for future advancement opportunities, a reduced health care contribution rate, an improvement to parental and critical care leave benefits, the elimination of the 401(k) match waiting period and a signing bonus, among other improvements.

According to International Vice President and Local 29 President/Business Manager Tamara Rubyn, the company proposed several takeaways, but the members stood in solidarity and demonstrated to the company through weekly actions they were not going to settle for a substandard contract.

## Locals 9 and 35 Merge for Greater Strength

Knowing there is strength in numbers, and in the spirit of true collaboration, the members of Locals 9 and 35 voted unanimously to merge. Local 9 now represents 900 members in Wisconsin, Illinois, Iowa, Indiana and Ohio.

"The members of Locals 9 and 35 have said it best by voting unanimously to accept a merger," said Local 9 President Candy Johnson. "Both our locals worked hard to achieve this merger that will move us forward in a positive direction. Together, we're now an improved local union with more strength to get things done and better represent our members."

"Locals 35 and 9 have worked diligently toward a merger agreement that is in the best interest of our respective memberships," said Alesha Monk, former Local 35 president and newly elected Local 9 vice president. "The leaders of each local recognize the importance of a strong union. Since Wisconsin has become a so-called 'right-to-work' state, our locals have been affected by declining membership numbers. By merging, we send a message to management and local governments that we stand together to fight for the rights of the working class."

The merger provides an opportunity to better negotiate strong union-standard wages, hours and working conditions and, when necessary, implement contract campaigns. It also provides resources for improved member and external communication efforts, greater steward training and member education, and increased power for political action, visibility and influence in the community.

The merged locals will consolidate their offices in Milwaukee. "We're now a local that will support one another and will benefit financially, politically and contractually for a brighter future," Johnson added.



Leaders of Locals 9 and 35 after the successful merger vote, left to right, are Local 35 Vice President Charles Campbell, Recording Secretary Barbara Jene, Executive Board Member Alexandra Raethke, Secretary-Treasurer Henrietta Long, Trustee Jaqueline Gilliam and President Alesha Monk, and Local 9 President Candy Johnson and Business Manager Dave Rehberg.

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## Local 179 Members at Coca-Cola Bottling Are Union Strong!

Members employed at Chattanooga Coca-Cola Bottling Co. in Tennessee ratified a new contract that means wage increases in each of the contract's four years, a fairer absentee program and expanded use of sick time, among a number of other big improvements.

Membership unity during bargaining was key to securing a strong agreement. Members turned out in record numbers at meetings to be updated about the negotiations and proudly displayed their "Union Strong" windshield signs, turning the employee parking lot into a very powerful show of solidarity. This solidarity was crucial to beating back a number of unfair proposals from the company, including the threat of no raises for 70 forklift operators in the unit. With the support of the rest of the unit, the bargaining committee was able to secure the same wage increases for those operators as the rest of the production staff.

There was also a huge turnout for the contract vote on May 5, with members voting to accept the contract, which also includes an increase in an equipment and tool allowance and the addition of two personal days.

The bargaining committee began planning and training more than a year before bargaining began and did a

great job both at the negotiating table and in keeping members informed, energized and unified.

Congratulations to the bargaining committee of President Devin York, Trustees Darren Haskett, Jeff Hart and Jerry Metcalf, Vice President Ron Freeman, Shop Steward Seth Claire, Secretary-Treasurer Steve Coffman, Sergeant-at-Arms Warren Hullender, Shop Steward Branden Sewell, member Eddie Scott and Shop Steward Dustin Suites. International Bargaining Coordinator Sandy Pope and Senior Representative Dana MacPherson assisted the committee during negotiations.

Membership unity during bargaining was key to securing a strong agreement.



Local 179 members at Coca-Cola Bottling Co. rally for a fair contract.

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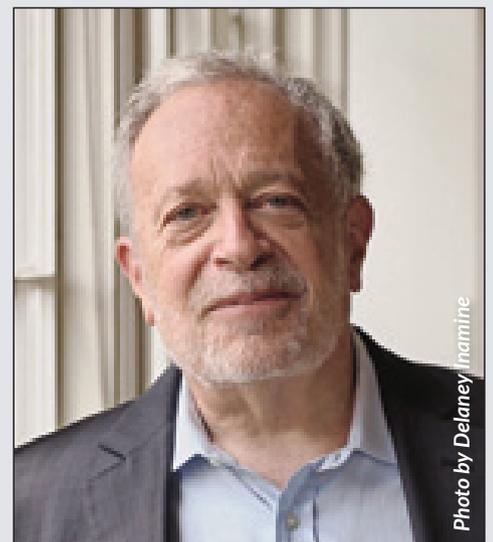


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