



Local 8 Organizes for a Stronger Union

In less than a year, Local 8 has helped nearly 1,000 workers form a union in Home Care and Community Health Centers. Most recently, 425 home care workers at Senior Life Resources in eastern Washington voted by a landslide to join Local 8, headquartered in Seattle, Wash.

“This was a huge success for Local 8,” Organizing Director/Secretary-Treasurer Cindy Schu said. “Helping workers to organize in areas where we already have good contracts improves industry standards for all union workers and strengthens our current bargaining units. And this organizing couldn’t have happened without members who care about reaching out to non-union workers.”

“Local 8 members helped with phone calling, visiting workers at home, and distributing information at the worksite,” Schu said. “Talking union one on one and sharing what it means to work union, is the most important part of any organizing campaign.”

Local 8 members responsible for the organizing success include: Brenda Barquero, Rosa Granados, Cathy Kahn, Kim Wilmer, Dave Westphal, Lucinda Clark, Enriqueta Flores-Guevara, Angela Boehlke, Mary Fassnacht, Kathi Scott, Kelly McGuire, Christina Jensen, Jane Hines, JoAnn Kaye, Sherry Merryman, Pat Hutto, Carol Haythorne, Mary Gartner, Lydia Schlag, and Crystal McGill, as well as student intern, Diane Arnold and the Local 8 office and field staff.

Vancouver & Bellingham Home Care Workers Join Local 8

On August 22, 2005, 150 caregivers at CDM In-Home Services in Vancouver, Wash. voted overwhelmingly to join Local 8. Homecare workers provide essential tasks to enable frail older adults and disabled people to remain in their own homes.

The next step for the caregivers at CDM

is to negotiate a fair contract. “Now we’re looking forward to sitting down with our employer to work together for a contract that meets all

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Member Organizers Rosa Granados, Sea Mar Home Care, and Brenda Barquero, Coastal Community Action Program.

Registered Nurses Strike IRMC—Win Contract Improvements

On October 12, the Registered Nurses at Ingham Regional Medical Center (IRMC) in Lansing, Michigan, began a strike that would last 17 days and change the RNs and IRMC forever.

At issue was staffing levels, something

that had been a problem at IRMC for many years. Since being purchased by McLaren Health Care in 1997—a group with a history of hostile relations toward its employees—labor relations at IRMC had gone steadily downhill. In fact, Local 459, which

represents RNs at IRMC, has had to file more than 30 unfair labor practice charges against IRMC since the merger with McLaren.

So it was no surprise when the POST (Paraprofessional, Office and Skilled Trade)

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2005 Was a Good Year for Members

By Michael Goodwin, International President

On behalf of the Officers and staff of the International Union, I want to wish all of you the very best of health and happiness in the coming year. I also wish you and your family a very happy holiday season.

The International Union and Local Unions have been struggling to figure out the effects of several large unions disaffiliating from the AFL-CIO. As you know, the SEIU, Teamsters, UFCW, UNITE HERE, Laborers, and the United Farm Workers formed a new labor federation, “Change to Win,” which is reported on in this issue of *White Collar*. It appears that the dispute can be contained at the national level, since it is difficult for fellow trade unionists who have worked together for years to discontinue those relationships. The AFL-CIO has recognized the need for solidarity at the local level and has taken steps to allow full participation in State Federations of Labor and Central Labor Councils. Agreements have been reached between the AFL-CIO and the newly formed CTW on numerous issues on how the two federations can work together, including the right of CTW unions to run for office in state AFL-CIO and local central bodies.

While this development is disappointing, we should remember that at one time we had an AFL and a separate CIO. We also had the Teamsters, Auto Workers, Mine Workers, and Longshoremen’s union outside of the AFL-CIO at one time or another. By 1989, they all came back for one reason—they recognized the need for solidarity. I believe that history will repeat itself, and that in the near future these unions will return to the house of labor where they belong.

Meanwhile, the work of servicing members and organizing new members continues. As reported in this year’s editions of *White Collar*, you were informed of the great success that the International Union and the Local Unions have had with organizing in 2005. Highlights of that success were the victories by Local 8 in Seattle, Washington in organizing 1,000 homecare workers, Local 153 in New York with its success in winning recognition for 203 faculty staff at Interboro Institute, and Local 4873 in Savannah, Georgia signing up new members on military reservations. OPEIU is recognized as a growing union, and we will continue to dedicate ourselves to bringing the benefits of collective bargaining to as many people as possible. We thank all of you for your support of organizing programs and your willingness to provide volunteers to assist sister Local Unions in organizing campaigns.

In addition to organizing, the International Union staff spends a majority of its time on servicing and negotiating contracts. Here again, many of the most difficult negotiations and strikes are

reported in *White Collar*. The servicing staff of the International Union and the Local Unions are to be congratulated for aggressively pursuing the goals of the labor movement at the bargaining table—improved wages, hours, working conditions, and job security for all OPEIU members. I am very pleased with the militancy of our staff and the great results that they have achieved this year.

The International Union held four successful Area Educational Conferences in Chicago, Illinois, New York, N.Y., San Diego, California, and Orlando, Florida, attended by nearly 300 Local Union leaders and activists. At the end of each conference, participants are asked to complete a form commenting on the quality of instruction and subject matter. At every conference, members have given an excellent rating. We will continue to try and bring to all of our Local Union leaders the highest quality educational services available. All Local Unions should take note that at the 2004 OPEIU Convention, the subsidy for Local Unions attending an educational conference was increased to \$800 per Local Union. This amount should enable every Local Union to send at least one person. It is my hope that in the 2006 round of educational conferences that I see at least one representative from every Local Union attending.

2005 not only brought success, but also brought tragedy. As you know, Hurricane Katrina and other storms have devastated the southeast/southwest section of the United States. Hundreds of OPEIU members either lost their jobs or property. In response to this catastrophe, OPEIU members have done what they have always done in the face of a challenge—they responded by offering their help. OPEIU members sent more than \$65,000 to the OPEIU Relief Fund, which the International Executive Board quickly matched resulting in more than \$130,000 available for distribution to hurricane victims. As this issue went to press, a committee consisting of Vice Presidents John Conley (Chair), Philip Pope, Green Lewis, and Dan Dyer were meeting to decide on the neediest claims and to distribute the funds. I am very proud and grateful to all of you who have contributed to this worthy cause and can assure you that before the end of the year, every single penny donated will be in the hands of OPEIU members who are victims of these catastrophic events.

I want to inform you on the status of the “Canadian Autonomy” issue. As you know, the Canadians withdrew from the OPEIU at the June 2004 OPEIU Convention. Since that time, litigation has been put in motion in Florida and in British Columbia. The Florida action has been stayed pending a decision in the B.C. courts.

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Wohlforth Elected AFL-CIO Executive Council

OPEIU Secretary-Treasurer Nancy Wohlforth has been elected to the AFL-CIO Executive Council, the federation's top leadership body, increasing OPEIU representation on the council and the union's influence within the organization.

OPEIU now has two seats on the powerful Executive Council, as Wohlforth, elected during the AFL-CIO Convention in Chicago in August 2005, joins President Michael Goodwin as an AFL-CIO vice president.

"I'm extremely pleased to increase the representation of OPEIU members on the Executive Council," Wohlforth said, "and will use the opportunity to speak up about issues affecting our members. I look forward to working with President Goodwin and the other vice presidents of the Council to further the goals of organized labor, particularly during these times when the house of labor finds itself so divided."



Nancy Wohlforth

AFL-CIO Convention Makes Major Changes to Leadership Structure

The Convention radically changed the structure of the AFL-CIO, reducing the size of the Executive Council and reserving seats

to ensure a diverse leadership. The delegates also voted to empower an Executive Committee, which will allow 19 leaders – including those of the 10 biggest unions of the Federation – to share power with the officers. The new Executive Council is the most diverse in the history of the AFL-CIO, and brings energetic new leadership to the world's largest labor federation.

Wohlforth is also the first out lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgender person to serve on the Executive Council. "The only way for lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender workers to get and keep workplace protections and benefits that sustain our families is through a union contract," Wohlforth said. "In my new role as a member of the Executive Council, I will continue to spread this message and advocate for the full inclusion of all LGBT workers in the labor movement. We are workers, and we deserve a place at the table."

Local 11 Elects Mike Richards

In a hotly contested election, Mike Richards prevailed as the overwhelming victor in the recent OPEIU Local 11 election for the office of Executive Secretary-Treasurer.

The Election Committee counted the ballots on Friday, July 15 and certified Richards was the winner with 281 votes. His closest contender received 52 votes, with four other candidates having received a fewer number of votes.

Six candidates had competed for this top position in the union. The Local's Constitution provides that the Executive Secretary-Treasurer "shall be the official agent of the union in all matters affecting the progress, interest and welfare of the Union and its individual members..."

Duties of this office include not only the supervision of the day-to-day operation of the local, responsibility for all financial func-

tions and maintenance of records, but the employment and supervision of all necessary help to assist him/her in the performance of these duties. This position calls for an experienced, capable leader, and the members have made very clear their choice in having elected Richards to this top union post.

Richards has capably served the local for 22 years as a union representative, having organized, negotiated contracts and handled all phases of contract administration.

His plans for the local include organizing campaigns to recapture the nearly 1,000 members lost since 2002 due to the bankruptcy of Consolidated Freightways, the loss of CNF and raids on the union's membership by hostile organizations. His vision also includes exploring the feasibility of establishing an in-house paper for the members, hiring an additional Representative to

improve membership service and the expansion of Shop Steward/Membership educational and training programs.

With the continued support and cooperation of the Local 11 membership and Executive Board, these plans can become a reality.

Thanks were extended to all members of the Union's Election Committee. They worked diligently, impartially, and competently to conduct this special union election in a manner that meets the Union's constitutional requirements, as well as the regulations of the U.S. Department of Labor, Richards reported.



Mike Richards

"A union's greatest weakness is the indifference of its members to their own affairs."

—Author Unknown

**Don't Shop
Wal-Mart!**

Letters to the Editor

Dear Mr. Goodwin:

It is an honor to be selected to receive the Howard Coughlin Memorial Scholarship. I would like to thank you and OPEIU for this generous gift.

I attend Dartmouth College, where I run on the Cross Country and Track and Field teams. The academics are challenging and collegiate running is a great experience. The campus is amazing, but the winters are chilly. I have made some great friends and had some great experiences. I look forward to my final two years.

Going to Dartmouth is a great opportunity for me, but is very costly for my family. This scholarship will help my family and me further my education by reducing the financial burden of college tuition. My parents and I are very excited to receive this scholarship and would like to thank you again.

Sincerely,
Brandon M. Carballo
Hayward, California

To the Scholarship Committee and President Michael Goodwin:

I just wanted to thank you for awarding me the John Kelly Labor Studies Scholarship Fund and I am truly excited



Again, we reprint letters from our members on various issues. We invite our readers to continue to share their opinions with us, whether in support of or in opposition to our own. Debate is healthy and welcomed in this union. Letters are edited for length only, not content. Remember: anonymous letters will not be printed.

You can also reach us on the Web: <http://www.opeiu.org>

and proud to accept the award.

I will be forwarding the form letter of acceptance along with my photo.

Thank you again for your support and consideration.

Felisa Goldsmith
UAW Legal Services (Detroit)

A House Divided?

Editor:

In response to your article, "Irish-Americans Chime in On Labor Split," (August 3, 2005), as a union member for most of my working life, from Belfast to New York, I think a split can only be detrimental to working people. "Divide and conquer" and "a house divided will not stand" comes to mind.

The AFL-CIO is primarily a lobbyist group. Organizing is for the local unions. Tip O'Neill once said, "all politics is local." Also, I think that any working people voting for anti-labor politicians are like turkeys voting for Thanksgiving.

Liam Uprichard
Yonkers, N.Y.
Chief Shop Steward, Executive Board
Member
Local 153

(This letter originally appeared in The Irish Echo, August 10-16 issue.)

President Goodwin Meets with NYC Mayor Bloomberg

International President Michael Goodwin meets with New York City Mayor Michael Bloomberg. The OPEIU in New York endorsed the mayor for reelection; Bloomberg defeated challenger Fernando Ferrer by one of the largest margins in city history.



OPEIU Mobilizes to Help Members Affected by Hurricanes

OPEIU has been actively working to meet the needs of thousands of our members in Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama and Florida who have been left jobless or homeless in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. Immediate needs in the area continue to be safe drinking water, shelter and food for many OPEIU members.

In response to this tragedy, OPEIU established the OPEIU Relief Fund for Hurricane Katrina victims. Local Unions and members have responded generously and the fund has received about \$65,000. The International Union Executive Board voted to match this amount for a total available for distribution of about \$130,000.

An Executive Board subcommittee consisting of Vice Presidents John Conley (Chair), Philip Pope, Green Lewis, and Dan Dyer has been appointed to evaluate claims of members in need and to make a recommendation for distribution of funds. The committee has assured that every single penny will go to OPEIU members.

Union Plus Disaster Relief Fund

In addition to the OPEIU Relief Fund, union members impacted by Hurricane Katrina who participate in Union Plus programs are also eligible to apply for Disaster Relief Fund grants of \$500. The money does not have to be repaid. Other special assistance for cardholders includes lower

rates, fee waivers and other help. Free credit counseling with waived set-up fees for debt management plans through the Union Plus Credit Counseling Program is also available.

To apply for a Disaster Relief Fund grant, cardholders can call the **Credit Card Disaster Relief Helpline at 1-877-761-5028** to speak directly with a specially trained representative.

Political Pressure Forces Bush to Restore Davis-Bacon

Political pressure from moderate Republican representatives, concerned about re-election fights next year in their blue-state labor-influenced congressional districts, forced GOP President George W. Bush to restore the Davis-Bacon Act's prevailing wage rules for Hurricane Katrina-affected areas. The federal government had earlier enacted President Bush's executive order to repeal Davis-Bacon and allow contractors to pay substandard wages to construction workers in the affected areas.

Meanwhile, in a distressing turn of events, contractors are being awarded contracts in the hundreds of millions of dollars without a proper bidding process. The administration has found yet another way for its cronies at companies like Halliburton and Bechtel to profit.

Unions Establish New Federation

AFL-CIO and New Federation Agree to Terms for "Solidarity Charters"

In the largest shakeup in the history of organized labor, six unions have left the AFL-CIO over procedure disagreements on how to respond to the decline in labor's political and economic power.

The unions in the new "Change to Win" federation — the Service Employees International Union, International Brotherhood of Teamsters, United Food and Commercial Workers International Union, UNITE HERE, the Laborers' International Union of North America, and the United Farm Workers — completed their separation in September that began at the AFL-CIO Convention in August. A seventh union, the United Brotherhood of Carpenters and Joiners of America left the AFL-CIO several years ago.

"Obviously, we're not happy with a division in the house of labor," OPEIU President Michael Goodwin said, "but the AFL-CIO has pledged to work with the new federation to best represent and further the interests of working families. I'm certainly hopeful that all unions, whether they are in the AFL-CIO or the new federation, will work toward that one common goal."

At the AFL-CIO Convention, President John Sweeney criticized the unions for breaking away. "There's nothing the Change to Win unions are doing today they couldn't have done in unity with the entire union movement, from within the AFL-CIO," he said. "Instead, they've chosen a path that divides union members at a time when working people are under attack as never before.

Their way leaves all working people weakened and vulnerable, not stronger."

On October 17, however, the AFL-CIO reached an "agreement in principle" over the terms for local unions affiliated with the Change to Win federation to join AFL-CIO State Federations and Central Labor Councils via "Solidarity Charters" and enjoy full voting and participation rights. In a memo to AFL-CIO state and local bodies, Sweeney outlined the terms agreed to by officials of CTW:

"I am pleased to report that we have made progress in our discussions with the Change to Win unions concerning the terms of the Solidarity Charter program. With respect to the two major issues remaining in dispute, the AFL-CIO has agreed that members from CTW unions who have Solidarity Charters may run for and hold office in the state and central bodies; and for their part, the CTW unions have agreed with the concept of paying for cost sharing at the national level to support the work of the state federations and central labor councils, with the understanding that it remains to negotiate a mutually acceptable method of payment."

The agreement and the Solidarity Charters are aimed at helping to bring the American labor movement back together at the community level where its organizing, political and issues mobilization programs are implemented.

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MAGE Member Receives \$5,000 MAGE-OPEIU Scholarship

Each year, twelve full-time scholarships, valued at \$1,250 per year for four years, and six part-time scholarships valued at \$500 per year for four years, are awarded to applicants in each OPEIU region by the Howard Coughlin Memorial Scholarship Fund. Ellen Foot, daughter of MAGE member Dale Foot, has been awarded the highest scholarship.

Dale Foot is a Division Administrator in the Department of Human Services in Michigan. Ellen attended Marian High School in Bloomfield Hills. She maintained a 4.0 grade point average in spite of a rigorous schedule, and took multiple advanced honor classes in the areas of Spanish, Math and Science. She was awarded multiple student-of-the-year awards in Middle School and High School, and was president of the Spanish Honor Society. She worked on eight plays with the Marian Rice Players and was the stage manager for the last three. Ellen loves animals and has worked at a dog kennel for the past three years. She plans a double major studying Bio Chemistry and Spanish for her undergraduate studies at the University of Michigan in Ann Arbor, and is interested in eventually working in the medical field.

In recognition of Ellen's exceptional accomplishments, and in light of the fact that this is the first scholarship received as a result of MAGE's affiliation with OPEIU, the MAGE's Executive Committee has awarded Ellen with an additional check for \$500.

"I joined MAGE because I heard that they were a professional organization that was always there when you need them, but this is far more than anything we ever dreamed of," Dale Foot said. "With the cost of tuition skyrocketing, the \$5,000 scholarship is

sorely needed and the extra \$500 will go a long way to helping with the cost of books and other supplies."

"This is what it's all about," MAGE President Dale Threehouse said, "doing good things for our hard-working members."

Applications for the Howard Coughlin Memorial Scholarship Fund, as well as the John Kelly Labor Studies Scholarship Fund and Romeo Corbeil Memorial Fund "Summer Camp" are available each year at the MAGE office with a March 31 application deadline.



MAGE President Dale Threehouse presents the Howard Coughlin Memorial Scholarship to Ellen Foot.

Guild 45 Works for Passage of S.440, H.R. 699

New York Podiatrists, members of OPEIU Guild 45, met with Senator Charles Schumer (D-NY) on September 23, 2005 regarding important legislation, S.440, which would guarantee access to quality foot and ankle care for Medicaid patients throughout the United States. Sen. Schumer is a co-sponsor of S.440 (H.R. 699), which amends the definition of physicians in the Medicaid statute (Title XIX) to include podiatric physicians, aligning Medicaid with Medicare, which has always defined podiatrists as physicians. The bill is gaining support in the Senate as Guild 45 and APMA lobbyists on Capitol Hill work to gain additional support.



International President Michael Goodwin and members of OPEIU Guild 45 meet with Senator Charles Schumer (D-NY) to seek his support for podiatry legislation. Following the meeting, the Senator signed on in support of S.440. Pictured from left to right are NYPMA's President Elect Dr. Scott Altman, Executive Director Leonard Thaler, Senator Schumer, President Goodwin, and NYPMA President Dr. Edward A. Buro.

Union OKs 4-Year CUNA Mutual Pact

Approval Overwhelming

CUNA Mutual Group hopes its union's overwhelming approval of a new contract will enable the company and its workers to focus on building a stronger future together and put behind them more than 14 months of bitter labor strife.

CUNA Mutual employees represented by the Office and Professional Employees International Union Local 39 ratified the new contract by a 622-183 vote. The last contract expired on March 31, 2004, and the new four-year deal runs to March 31, 2008.

In April 2004, nearly 73 percent of employees casting ballots voted no on what the company at the time called its best and final offer.

The negotiating climate finally took a turn for the better this year when CUNA Mutual hired Jeff Post as president and CEO after firing Michael Kitchen, and Post hired Peter Hurtgen, an expert mediator and former chairman of the National Labor Relations Board, to provide an outside perspective on the situation.

John Peterson, business manager of Local 39, credited Post with "taking the bull by the horns" and hiring Hurtgen and getting the contract done.

CUNA Mutual spokeswoman Sydney Lindner said it was a "fair statement" to say that the company compromised on compensation in exchange for extended employee hours and outsourcing freedom.

Post said in a statement that the new contract "brings greater consistency and uniformity to a number of key business elements, including work hours and benefits," and "provides the company with productivity enhancements and the flexibility to manage our operations as we face a marketplace of increased change and competition."

CUNA Mutual said the contract has a total four-year value of about \$31.9 million, a 14.8 percent increase over the last year of the prior contract. The average union employee at CUNA Mutual made \$45,200 annually under the old contract, although the union called that figure skewed by highly paid IT workers.

"We're pleased that the contract has been ratified," Lindner said. "And the fact that it's a solid majority is very positive. We want our employees to be aligned and focused on the same outcomes. And that's certainly a sign that that's the case. One would hope that the bad feelings can remain in the past and that we can all look forward and start from here and align and focus on the same outcomes."

Peterson said new managers may be needed to rebuild the formerly strong relationship after "a period of time of beating up on us."

"We're going to have to build trust and that takes time," Peterson said. "Obviously, if we work together to solve problems it's going to be a much better outcome than fighting."

The contract includes a 15 percent pay



Nancy Lee (pink blouse) and Marci Watrud, administrative assistants at Local 39.

increase over the four years, with a 4 percent increase retroactive to Oct. 1, 2004; another 4 percent hike retroactive to April 1, 2005; 4 percent in April 2006, and 3 percent in April 2007.

Peterson said the biggest part of the compensation was that all employees would get a pay increase, whereas in the past some employees got only bonus money lump sum payments.

The contract that was rejected last year would have provided raises totaling 4 percent in each of the three years of the contract. In years two and three, one-half of the increase would have been allocated based upon individual performance.

"I remain committed to aligning our wages with the market," Post said. "The compromise was appropriate, though, to bring this matter to a satisfactory resolution."

Under the contract, effective Oct. 3, union workers who currently work 34.5 hours per week will work 37.5 hours per week. The extra hours include a daily 30-minute paid break that is being given up, and an additional 30 minutes per week of work. The workers retain 30 minutes of unpaid daily break, Lindner said.

The company's desire for the longer work week had been one of the most contentious issues in the negotiations.

The employees who will be working more hours will select from one of three compensation options: a \$2,000 lump sum payment, 3 percent added to their base salary, or a lump sum payment of 4 percent of what they earn.

"It's not a 40-hour work week but we did

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Local 39 members listen intently to report on contract negotiations.

Union OKs 4-Year CUNA Mutual Pact

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give the company three hours of additional productive time,” Peterson said.

Union IT employees and non-union employees already work a 40-hour week, Lindner said.

Workers also gave up two days of paid time-off, but the company’s vacation accrual program changes so that employees in total gain two days of vacation, Lindner said.

The company’s two bonus programs for union workers — longevity and Corporate Success Sharing — will not change with the new contract, which was a concession by management: The contract proposal the union rejected in 2004 included an increase in CSS and reductions in longevity, tying company bonuses more directly to the company’s bottom line.

CUNA Mutual said the average combined bonus for union workers was \$3,000 in 2004.

Under the new contract, CUNA Mutual gained the right to outsource positions without negotiating the effects or decision with the union, which gave up the right to file a grievance and cannot take outsourcing decisions to arbitration.

The union gained a doubling in the maximum amount of severance pay from six months to one year — workers get two weeks of severance pay for every year they’ve worked for CUNA Mutual, making the change a benefit for employees who have worked for the company for more than 13 years.

In addition, employees with more than five years of service gain the right to bump any employee with less seniority. Previously, bumping was done only within business divi-

sions or solution groups.

Asked if outsourcing was inevitable, Lindner said: “I cannot predict the future nor can anyone else relative to jobs at the CUNA Mutual Group or any other company. Companies and unions don’t provide job security, customers do.”

Peterson said he hoped the company would recognize that it has “the best workforce in the area” and it won’t benefit by outsourcing.

“We’ve had 15 months where employees did their jobs,” he said. “They didn’t strike and they focused on the customer. We hope we can work anything out.”

The contract also calls for workers’ health insurance to become the same as management over a phased-in period; the company had wanted the change to happen at a set date.

The health insurance agreement has a 15 percent annual cap on employee premium increases, with increases above that subject to negotiation between CUNA Mutual and the union, with the union having the right to strike over the issue.

The contract has three health insurance options:

- An HMO with monthly employee contributions of \$25 for single, \$127 for family.
- A PPO with monthly employee contributions of \$80 for single, \$247 for family.
- A Consumer Directed Health Plan with monthly employee contributions of \$18.10 for single, \$96 for family.

Peterson said the health package has pluses and minuses, with the loss of Dean as a carrier a key negative.

“I think the membership accepts this,” he

said. “We may have to negotiate to tweak this in the future. Hopefully, we can work on this together instead of management just deciding what to do.”

One union member said Thursday afternoon that he voted against the deal as a matter of principle on his way to work that morning because union members were not able to see the actual contract before the vote, and because he and some co-workers he talked to were confused about some of the terms.

“They just sent out a 3-page summary,” said Mark Jacobson, a systems programmer. “I’m not going to vote for something where I don’t know what I’m voting for.”

Jacobson said he didn’t understand why the vote couldn’t have been delayed to give workers a chance to study the contract, as well as giving workers who may be on vacation a chance to return for the vote.

“I think this whole thing is being handled very poorly by the union,” Jacobson said. “We have been working for a year and a half without a contract. We should be able to take an extra week to do this right.”

However, Jacobson expected that the contract would pass easily and said he wouldn’t be upset if it did.

“A lot of people just want it over with,” said Jacobson, who said he voted against the 2004 contract. “And they’re not losing a lot. The contract does seem to be pretty good, especially for the people who have been here more than 10 years.”

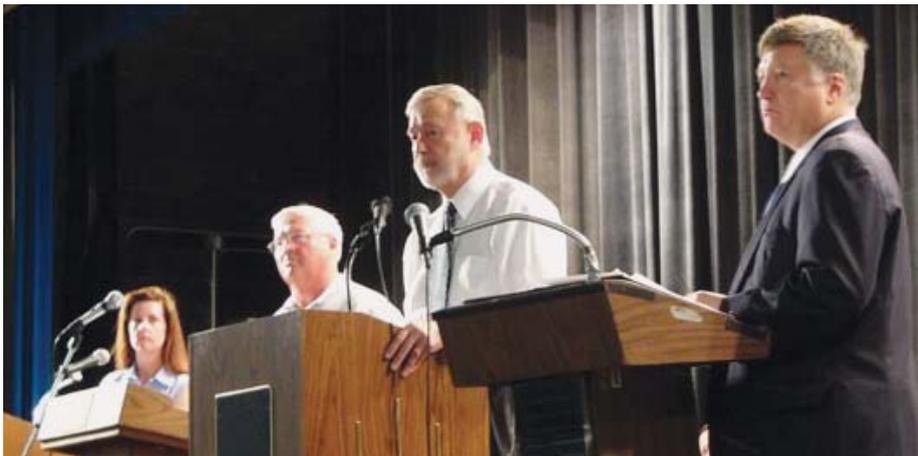
Peterson said he would have preferred to have more time but that the June 20 vote was a condition of the settlement.

Lindner said the company already had extended its deadline from June 6 to June 20 because progress was being made in negotiations.

“It was an agreed upon date,” she said. “We felt that a swift resolution to this was in the best interest of both parties.”

CUNA Mutual Group, which also employs about 1,200 nonunion employees locally and about 6,000 total employees worldwide, provides insurance and financial services to credit unions worldwide. The company is the second largest private sector employer in Madison.

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Left to right are Chief Steward Kathryn Bartlett-Mulvihill, Local 39 Business Manager John Peterson, OPEIU President Michael Goodwin, and OPEIU Director of Organization and Field Services Kevin Kistler.

WASHINGTON UPDATE

Following is an update on the status of key pieces of legislation:

Medicaid. Congress recently took a step that could add millions of Americans to the 45 million who now are without any kind of health care coverage when it adopted a \$2.56 trillion FY 2006 budget resolution. Although non-binding, the resolution provides an economic blueprint legislators can use to pass specific tax and spending legislation later this year.

The document calls for a \$10 billion cut in Medicaid, the federal program that provides coverage for the poor and disabled.

Earlier this year, the U.S. Senate

voted to restore some \$15 billion in Medicaid cuts in an amendment to the budget resolution. A House version of the document slashes the program by \$14 billion. The two legislative bodies will have to meet in conference to resolve their difference.

Minimum Wage. Despite labor lobbying, the Senate again voted on Oct. 19 not to raise the minimum wage. The 51-47 vote against the \$1.10-per-hour hike overcame unanimous Democratic support. Three Republicans also voted for the raise: Senate Labor Appropriations subcommittee chairman Arlen Specter (R-Pa.), and Sens. Michael DeWine (R-Ohio) and Rick Santorum (R-Pa.).

The latest plan, offered by Sen. Edward M. Kennedy (D-Mass.), would have raised the minimum wage, which

has been \$5.15 an hour for eight years, in three installments over two years. Kennedy and his allies said the hike would help working women with children, families and minority-group members in particular.

Earlier this year, Kennedy tried for a \$2.10-over-two-years hike in the minimum wage but lost on a party-line vote.

Overtime. Organized labor is gearing up for another attack on the Fair Labor Standards Act. Capitol Hill sources expect that the Family Time Flexibility Act, which failed to make it through the last Congress, will be introduced later this year. The proposal would provide for an 80-hour, two-week work period. Under this scenario, employees who work 50 hours one week and 30 hours the next would not qualify for overtime pay.

Local 30 Elects Officers

In an election held by mail ballot during August and September 2005, Local 30 has elected new officers. Congratulations are extended to the following newly elected officers:

Executive Director/Chief Financial Officer, Walter Allen Jr.; President, Marianne Tegio; Vice President, Catherine Young; Recording Secretary, Diane Nunez; Executive Board Members, Los Angeles, Eddie L. Taylor and Ruth Porchas; Executive Board Members, San Diego, Carmen Corral, Hector Peralta and Susan Smith; Executive Board Members, California Service Center, Larry Petrea and Trustees, Kathleen Doyle, Iva D. Guthwright and Anne K. Watson.

OPEIU Member Receives APRI Award



At the A. Philip Randolph Institute (APRI) Convention in New Orleans, August 3-7, OPEIU member Wanda Shelton-Martin (second from right) receives the Maida Springer-Kemp award for consistent participation in APRI. Also pictured are her sister, LaVerne Hazley (left), husband Zachary Martin and daughter Ashley Shelton (far right).

Sol Stetin Memorial Held at American Labor Museum

On Wednesday, July 13, 200 people gathered in the Old World Gardens of the American Labor Museum/Botto House National Landmark to reflect upon the life and contributions of its founder and president-emeritus, Sol Stetin. Brother Stetin, former president of the Textile Workers Union of America, passed away in St. Louis on May 21 at the age of 95.

To pay tribute to this great labor leader, an exhibit was displayed and a video presented at the museum on the day of his memorial. Twelve speakers representing different facets of Stetin's life spoke about how deeply he had impacted their lives. OPEIU and American Labor Museum President Michael Goodwin opened the ceremony, followed by Stetin's daughters

Sondra Gash and Myra Levine.

Gash, a poet, expressed her feelings through a poem to her father. "Old father, still the peddler of wings, still writing letters to friends all over the country, still saying, 'If you don't like the way things are, go out and change them.' Still your bold heart...you have always been our bright lamp of hope," she said.

Levine wrote a letter, which included, "How can I pay tribute to you Dad? By cherishing your principles... your energy, your drive, your commitment to life's causes..." Other speakers included UNITE HERE President Bruce Raynor, former CLUW President Joyce Miller and Museum Director Angelica Santomauro, who read an acceptance speech that Stetin wrote and delivered after his retirement. It included the following: "I shall never forget the honor

you have given me today. I've had a labor of love these past 50 years and in some small measure I hope to pay you all and society in general and the labor movement by dedicating myself to continue this labor of love through the Botto House American Labor Museum."

The memorial program ended with a musical tribute by the NJ IUC Solidarity Singers led by labor troubadour, Joe Glazer. It was a memorable day for a memorable man.



Sol Stetin, president emeritus of the American Labor Museum, at the museum in 2003.



Botto House



OPEIU President and President of the American Labor Museum Michael Goodwin speaking at the Sol Stetin Memorial held at the museum on July 13, 2005.



Sondra Gash, daughter of Sol Stetin, speaking at the Memorial.



Myra Levine, daughter of Sol Stetin, speaking at the Memorial.

WHITE COLLAR

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MICHAEL GOODWIN
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AFL-CIO Recognizes Contribution of Vice President Gloria Johnson

The AFL-CIO convention recognized the many years of dedicated service of Vice President Gloria Johnson by passing the following resolution:

Vice President Gloria Johnson

Vice President Gloria Johnson is a dedicated trade unionist who has been a tireless, forceful advocate for removing the economic and social barriers confronted by women and people of color in the labor movement and society while working to ensure equal access to economic opportunities. Throughout her career, she has been at the forefront of the battles to protect the civil rights and human rights of workers.

She was elected president of CLUW (Coalition of Labor Union Women) in 1993. Under her leadership, CLUW focused attention on women's and children's health care, family and medical leave, labor law reform, sweatshops, workers' and human rights, voter education and participation, organizing and political education. She promoted debate and insisted on action to achieve full representation and participation in every aspect of union governance.

Since stepping down as president of CLUW, she has focused her attention on leading the Labor Coalition for Community Action, a new umbrella organization comprised of all AFL-CIO constituency groups, which hosted town hall meetings in 25 communities throughout the spring until Election Day.

Prior to her retirement from the IUE, she was a vice president and director of the union's Department of Social Action and chair of the IUE Women's Council.

She was elected an AFL-CIO Vice President in 1993 and contributed to the Executive Council as Chair of the Committee on Women Workers and as a member of the committees on Civil and Human Rights, Legislative/Public Policy, Member Education and Training, International Affairs, Political Education, Strategic Approaches and Finance. She

serves on the board of directors of the National Labor College.

On behalf of the men and women of the unions of the AFL-CIO, the Executive Council expresses its gratitude and appreciation to Gloria Johnson for her service and devotion to the members of her union, to CLUW and to the labor movement.



President Michael Goodwin pictured with Local 153 Executive Board Member, Wanda Shelton-Martin (left) and Sheila Love, president of the D.C. Metro CLUW Chapter, at the AFL-CIO Convention in Chicago in August 2005.



Former CLUW President Gloria Johnson speaks at the CLUW Convention held September 14-17 in Detroit, Michigan. OPEIU Vice President Theresa Kandt (far right) is also congratulated on her election as CLUW Vice President, succeeding OPEIU Vice President Kathleen Kinnick.

Local 8 Organizes for a Stronger Union

(Continued from page 1)

concerns, and now we're doing that with one voice," said long-time caregiver Ruth Tubbs.

Local 8 represents approximately 1,000 caregivers at eight other non-profit homecare agencies. In June, more than 200 workers at Visiting Nurse Personal Services (VNPS) in the Bellingham area joined with Local 8 through a card check procedure. They are in the process of negotiating their first union contract.

"We're also going to start planning to go to Olympia this year to make sure workers at small non-profit agencies get recognition," said Roger Hutchens, a caregiver at VNPS. "This will be great for all of us. Now it's time to put together our first contract."



CDM Caregivers Julie Vergara, Marie Scott and Lynne Johnson react to winning their election on August 22.

Local 459 Achieves Contract for 670 Members

After eight months of bargaining, 670 Paraprofessional, Office and Skilled Trades (POST) members at Ingham Regional Medical Center (IRMC) in Lansing, Mich., ratified a new 3-year agreement by a vote of 417 to 8 on April 14, 2005. The overwhelming vote makes it sound as though it was easy, but it took a lot of hard work. When the process began, the seven-member Local 459 team of Sunni Lira, Charles Terry, LoRita Baker, Robert Potts, Margaret Johnson, Jill Weber, and Heidi Christie-Artz didn't envision what was to come — leading the bargaining unit through more than eight months of bargaining, a seven-month contract extension, a ten-day strike notice and a last minute settlement.

IRMC used to be a community owned and operated hospital. In 1997 it was purchased by McLaren Health Care Corporation. Although it never comes to the bargaining table, that corporation has exhibited more and more control over the Hospital. McLaren has a history of poor relations with unions. Since McLaren took over IRMC, Local 459 has been forced to file more than 30 unfair labor practice charges against them. At the same time, McLaren and IRMC have been giving their executives large bonuses including a \$1 million dollar bonus to the CEO.

The POST team proposed increases in wages, maintaining affordable healthcare, an enhanced short-term disability plan, a retiree healthcare fund, and no subcontracting of union jobs. Negotiations immediately went down hill when management countered with major concessions in benefits including cuts in healthcare, paid time off, and elimination of holiday pay. No wage increases and a 6 percent reduction to all wage scales was also part of their proposal. IRMC had a profitable year in 2004 and the first quarter of 2005, yet in February 2005 management was still proposing all the concessions. The team decided it was time to take a strike

vote. A resounding voter turnout of 83 percent of the unit gave the team a 93 percent support vote to strike if necessary.

Management responded by hiring a new attorney that boasts on his firm's website about his union-busting activities. His strategy was to ridicule the membership, strong arm the team and try to force the concessions. This made the POST unit draw even tighter in solidarity to stand firm on their demands.

On April 1, 2005 the team served a 10-day strike notice. The employer sent out flyers saying it would cancel healthcare and made innuendos of permanent replacement workers. But the members stood strong and proud in the face of these threats. They had prepared for the strike since February and were ready to do what they had to do and let management know that. A few days before the strike deadline the employer blinked and a tentative agreement was reached.

Highlights of the new three-year contract include wage increases of 2.5 percent retroactive to October 2004, 3 percent the second year, and 3 percent the third year. Employees at the top of the wage scale receive an additional 1.5 percent lump sum payment the first year of the contract and a 1 percent payment the second and third years. The contract includes an enhanced short-term disability plan (from 50 percent

to 70 percent benefit), enhanced long-term disability plan (from 60 percent to 70 percent benefit), increased shift differential and increased on-call pay. Modest revisions to healthcare were made, adding another tier to the McLaren health plan that has a lower premium co-pay. The contract does increase all prescription co-pays, but adds a retiree healthcare plan for eligible employees that will give them a subsidy of \$150 per month to use toward the purchase of healthcare from the employer or elsewhere. In addition, the CEO of IRMC gave a written letter guaranteeing no subcontracting of POST jobs during the life of the agreement. Numerous non-economic gains were made.

The POST bargaining unit and team exhibited an amazing display of determination, strength and solidarity. The support of the team was tremendous. The contract is a true victory for the POST membership and team, which, according to the ratification results, is one of which they are extremely happy and proud.

The message sent to management and corporate is that if they come to the table next time with the same philosophy, the POST members will stand firm and do what it takes to obtain a fair contract.

The team and membership were assisted by Service Representative Cindy Jeffries and the entire Local 459 staff.



Local 459 Paraprofessional, Office and Skilled Trades (POST) members achieve a new three-year contract following eight months of bargaining and a ten-day strike.

News from Local 6, Quincy, Mass.

East Hartford Board of Education: After six months of challenging negotiations, the Local 6 negotiating committee and East Hartford Board of Education completed negotiations on June 7. On June 20, 60 members of the 88-member unit overwhelmingly voted in favor of the new contract, and on June 27, the Board of Education voted in favor as well. The negotiating committee was determined and focused during negotiations, with a large committee of seven members. Executive Assistant Dina Tedeschi was the chief negotiator and worked with a phenomenal team of committee members who were dedicated and gave much of their own personal time to the negotiation process. Several preparation meetings were held, beginning in late fall 2004; negotiations with management began on February 7 and finalized with the Board's ratification on June 27—three days before the contract expired on June 30! Thank you to the committee members: Deanna Breton (Chief Steward), Kathy Connolly, Cheryl LaRochelle (Chief Steward), Shelly Ranney, Anna Smith (Chief Steward), David Viera (Shop Steward), and Gail Zoppa.

Trial Court of Massachusetts: The funding request for the contract with the Trial Court, on behalf of more than 3,000 clerical and professional members, was submitted on February 16, 2005 by Chief Justice for Administration and Management Robert A. Mulligan to the Massachusetts legislature. Unfortunately, his request was not in time for the spring fiscal year 2005 (FY05) supplemental budget processing. It will be included in the final FY05 supplemental budget. The three-year contract that was negotiat-

ed and ratified provides a 3 percent wage increase for each year of the contract beginning July 1, 2004. The funding request includes the retroactive wage increases back to July 1, 2004. Local 6 has contacted all Massachusetts state senators and representatives asking for their support of the contract. We have received favorable responses from a number of legislators, and we expect more when the legislature returns from break.

Annual Golf Tournament: There were 91 golfers, 33 sponsors, numerous donations for the raffle, and gorgeous weather for the Scholarship Golf Classic held on June 9 at the River Bend Country Club. The tournament is the primary fundraiser for Local 6's annual scholarships. Thanks to Senior Business Agent Tracy Monahan for her extensive work and planning on the event and a special thanks to the sponsors.

Annual Local 6 Scholarships: At the May 10 General Membership meeting, the 2005 Local 6 Scholarship drawing was held. Five \$1,000 scholarships, funded by the Annual Golf Tournament Fundraiser, were awarded to Shayla Savageau, Samantha Lynch, Joseph Tuzzolo, Jeffery Dias, Zachary Santamaria, all children or relatives of Local 6 members. *Congratulations to all and best wishes for their future!*

Local 6 is chartered in Boston, Massachusetts with its main office located in Quincy, Massachusetts. The President, Mary Mahoney, also serves as an OPEIU Vice President for Region II. Mary not only works tirelessly for Local 6 members, she is also an invaluable asset to the International Union working on other issues concerning OPEIU members in the state.

CAFTA Culprits!

Fourteen congressional democrats, along with 202 GOPers, voted for the anti-worker Central American Free Trade Agreement (CAFTA), acting as "sellouts of working men and women" by pushing a measure that lacks labor rights for U.S. workers and weakens labor rights for Latin American workers it would impact. The measure also opens a new market of exploitable workers for multi-national corporations.

CAFTA is patterned closely on NAFTA — the North American Free Trade Agreement between Mexico, Canada and the United States — which took effect 11 years ago. And just like with CAFTA, we were promised increased jobs, prosperity and economic growth through North America.

Of course, it didn't work out like that. And now CAFTA is poised to have the same affect on workers in Latin America.

CAFTA's implementing legislation passed 217-215. Congress doesn't vote on the treaty itself; it could take only an up-or-down vote on the legislation to implement CAFTA.

The following House Democrats voted in favor of CAFTA:

Bean, Melissa L., Illinois, 8th
 Cooper, Jim, Tennessee, 5th
 Cuellar, Henry, Texas, 28th
 Dicks, Norman D., Washington, 6th
 Hinojosa, Rubén, Texas, 15th
 Jefferson, William J., Louisiana, 2nd
 Matheson, Jim, Utah, 2nd
 Meeks, Gregory W., New York, 6th
 Moore, Dennis, Kansas, 3rd
 Moran, Jim, Virginia, 8th
 Ortiz, Solomon P., Texas, 27th
 Snyder, Vic, Arkansas, 2nd
 Tanner, John, Tennessee, 8th
 Towns, Edolphus, New York, 10th

If you live in any of these districts, make sure you write your congressional representative and let them know how you feel about their vote against workers' rights.

Update from Locals 29 and 537

Local 29 Goes Global!

A delegation from Thailand, the Tripartite Delegation, recently observed Local 29 to learn more about the United States' system of labor relations. The purpose was for the delegation to learn vital information to aid in the process of achieving Thailand's compliance with labor standards. The delegation consisted of two labor representatives, two government representatives and two management representatives.

The Thailand delegation observed the Local 29 bargaining team working through the Interest Based Negotiations process. After the session a question and answer session was held for clarification and to further explain the process.



Local 29 President/Business Manager, and Region V International Vice President Tamara R. Rubyn; Secretary-Treasurer Patricia G. Sanchez; Business Representative Terry Keller; and the Kaiser local bargaining committee with members of the Thailand Delegation.

Local 537 Celebrates New Headquarters

A fabulous grand opening of OPEIU 537's new headquarters building and retirement farewell for Business Manager Pat Bautista was held and attended

by various union sisters and brothers and OPEIU members. Business Manager Stacey Cue presented a plaque dedicating the new building to the retiring Bautista.

OPEIU 29 President/Business Manager, Tamara R. Rubyn and Secretary-Treasurer Patricia Sanchez were honored to attend this important and historical event.



Local 537's new headquarters building.



Pictured are Local 29 Secretary-Treasurer Patricia Sanchez and President/Business Manager Tamara R. Rubyn, Local 537 Business Manager Stacey Cue, and retiring Local 537 Business Manager Patricia Bautista.

2005 Was a Good Year for Members

(Continued from page 2)

While we are awaiting a court date, I invited the Canadian leadership and select Local Union officers to attend a meeting that I called for December 7, 2005, in Toronto, Ontario, to "extend an olive branch and develop a process where the parties can have a dialogue on the issues facing us all." I recently received a call from Jerri New

informing me that the Canadian Executive plans to attend subject to working out the details for the meeting. I have asked the Amalgamated Transit Union (ATU) Vice President and General Executive Board member Randy Graham to chair the meeting. Brother Graham is a Canadian citizen based in the province of Ontario. I will give you further details on the results of the meet-

ing in the next edition of *White Collar*.

Despite all the challenges facing OPEIU and its members, I am optimistic that 2006 will bring even greater success and prosperity to you and your families. I look forward to working with you in the coming year in our struggle for fair employment and improved working conditions. Thank you and God bless.

Work and Health

Shift Work Sleep Disorder

Submitted by Jeffrey S. Freed, M.D.
Associate Clinical Professor, Department of Surgery,
The Mount Sinai School of Medicine, NYC
OPEIU Local 153 Health Fund Medical Director

As many as 20 percent of workers in Western countries, including the United States, are shift workers – in other words, people who work either at night or on rotating shifts. Shift-work sleep disorder (SWSD), defined as a primary complaint of insomnia or excessive sleepiness temporarily associated with a work period that occurs during normal times of sleep, has been diagnosed in as many as 10 percent of shift workers. Shift workers also appear to have an increased risk for ulcer problems, heart disease, sleep deprivation, depression, sleepiness-related accidents and curtailed family and social activities.

A recent study of the problem using drug therapy to overcome the symptoms concluded that modafinil (a stimulant) significantly improved symptoms of sleepiness and sleep interference. The drug decreased the incidence of falling asleep at rest and showed reduced attention lapses. The results of the study suggest that the drug did not completely reverse SWSD, and study subjects still had problems with sleepiness and decreased attention at work, although improved.

Reduction of sleepiness and improvement of attention are clearly a major therapeutic goal to improve the symptoms of SWSD in shift workers, but modafinil is only of limited help and cannot be considered the final answer to the problem. It will be some time before the drug has sufficient testing to be sure it is safe and effective long term. Many other drugs are being tested for the same purpose, although no definitive answers are yet available about these other drugs.

What is definite is that SWSD is a real problem among shift workers. The study serves as a wake-up call for the healthcare community to recognize this problem, and further develop new techniques and drugs

to deal with this problem. We must do this because this serious health and safety disorder is imposing itself on increasing numbers of workers, as we become more and more a shift-work society.

If you feel that you may be a victim of shift-work sleep disorder, it is imperative that you address it with your physician.

First, the symptoms may be related to some other physical problem. Second, recognition of the problem may prevent a major health-related or accident-related incident.

Jeffrey S. Freed, M.D., P.C. specializes in general surgery/proctology. He can be reached at (212) 396-0050.

Unions Establish New Federation

(Continued from page 5)

Final terms of the agreement will be provided in the next issue of *White Collar*.

CTW Federation Focuses on Organizing

The new federation promises to unionize hundreds of thousands of America's workers whose jobs cannot be sent overseas or replaced by machines. At its founding convention in St. Louis on September 27, the group heralded the theme that unions are the best tool to improve wages and benefits for all workers, including those earning low wages. The federation announced its plans to spend at least \$750 million on organizing during the next 12 months. Federation Organizing Director Tom Woodruff identified groups of workers that

each of the founding unions would pursue: They include retail workers (10.5 million unorganized), leisure and hospitality workers (10.5 million), transportation (3.5 million), construction (5.5 million), food manufacturing (2.5 million), utilities (500,000), laundry workers (300,000), and health care and social assistance workers (12.5 million).

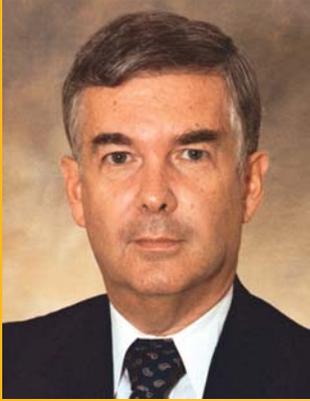
Anna Burger was designated by the Change to Win federation delegates to lead the organization, and is the first woman in the history of the American labor movement to lead a labor federation. Burger, who will chair the monthly meetings of the new group's 10-person board, will keep her post as the SEIU secretary-treasurer. Edgar Romney was designated as secretary-treasurer. Greg Tarpanian moves from the New York-based Labor Research Association to become Change to Win's full-time executive director.

PHPA Mourns Loss of Pilots

OPEIU's Professional Helicopter Pilots Association (PHPA) mourns the loss of instructor and good friend, Mike Lee, who was tragically killed on June 23 in a helicopter crash at Ft. Rucker, Alabama. "Mike was one of the really good guys and we all will miss him terribly," said PHPA President

Butch Grafton. The cause of the accident has not been determined. Lee was a member of PHPA Local 102.

PHPA also mourns the death of Local 107 member James Wolford on July 11, 2005. Wolford was killed when his helicopter ran out of fuel on a trip out to an oil drilling platform in the Gulf of Mexico.



Office and Professional Employees International Union

John Kelly Labor Studies Scholarship Fund

ELIGIBILITY:

Ten (10) scholarships per year will be awarded on the basis of at least one (1) per region and not to exceed one (1) per family for a lifetime. Applications are open to members or associate members in good standing for at least two (2) years. All applicants must meet the eligibility requirements and comply with the Rules and Regulations as established by the OPEIU Executive Board. Each scholarship has a total maximum value of \$2,000.00.

The applicant must be:

- a member or associate member of OPEIU in good standing; and
- either an undergraduate or graduate in one of the following areas of study:
 - Labor Studies
 - Industrial Relations
 - Social Science or a related field
- Non-degree Programs sponsored by the National Labor College at the George Meany Center or similar institution

PROCEDURES:

Each applicant must file an official John Kelly Labor Studies Scholarship Fund application. **Application forms must be endorsed by the Local Union President or Secretary-Treasurer attesting that the MEMBER or ASSOCIATE MEMBER is in good standing. Such endorsement must be obtained before the application is submitted.**

FORMS:

Application forms may be obtained at your Local Union office or at the Secretary-Treasurer's office of the International Union.

REQUIREMENTS:

High School Transcript: All applicants are required to submit their High School transcript. Does not have to be an official transcript; copies are acceptable.

Rank in Class: High School Transcript must show rank in class or rank in class must be provided. **In the event the High School does not rank students, approximate rank or percentile and class size must be provided.**

College Transcript: If presently enrolled in a College, University or a recognized Technical or Vocational Post-Secondary School, applicant is required to submit College transcript, along with their High School transcript. Does not have to be an official transcript, copies are acceptable.

Essay: All applicants shall be required to submit an essay on their occupational goals (300 to 500 words). This essay should be double-spaced and typed on 8½" x 11" paper.

Statement of Intent: All applicants shall be required to execute the Statement of Intent to remain within the OPEIU for a period of at least two (2) years.

APPLICATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS:

All applications, High School transcripts, Rank in Class or approximate rank or percentile and class size must be provided, College Transcripts (if applicable) and Essays must be received at the Secretary-Treasurer's office of the International Union, 1660 L Street, NW, Suite 801, Washington, DC 20036, no later than **March 31st** of each year.

SELECTION OF SCHOLARSHIP:

The selections shall be based on recommendations of an academic scholarship committee. Announcement of the winners will be made during the month of **June** of each year.

Office and Professional Employees International Union

Howard Coughlin Memorial

Scholarship Fund

ELIGIBILITY:

FULL-TIME SCHOLARSHIPS

Twelve (12) full-time scholarships will be awarded on the basis of at least one (1) per region and not to exceed one (1) per family for a lifetime. Applications are open to members in good standing, associate members, or to their children, all of whom must meet the eligibility requirements and comply with the Rules and Regulations as established by the OPEIU Executive Board. Each scholarship is \$1,250.00 per year for a total maximum value of \$5,000.00.

PART-TIME SCHOLARSHIPS

Six (6) part-time scholarships will be awarded on the basis of at least one (1) per region in order to reach a greater number of members, as full-time scholarships are generally awarded to children of members, and not to exceed one (1) per family for a lifetime. Applications are open to members in good standing, associate members, or to their children, all of whom must meet the eligibility requirements and comply with the Rules and Regulations as established by the OPEIU Executive Board. Each part-time scholarship is \$500.00 per year for a total maximum value of \$2,000.00.

Part-time scholarships are defined as a minimum of three (3) credits and no more than two (2) courses.

If a part-time student does not attend a college/university each semester, they have two (2) years maximum to use the part-time scholarship.

If the student becomes a full-time student, while receiving a part-time student scholarship, the scholarship will be revoked, and they will be able to apply for a full-time scholarship.

Part-time scholarship awards shall be subject to all other eligibility rules under this Scholarship Fund.

An applicant must be either:

- A member or an associate member of OPEIU in good standing on the date of award, unless a member loses employment to study on a full-time basis, has retired as a member in good standing, becomes disabled or terminated from employer layoffs and plant closing.
- The son, daughter, stepchild or legally adopted child of an OPEIU member in good standing or an associate member.
- High School senior or High School graduate entering a College, University or a recognized Technical or Vocational Post Secondary School as a full-time or part-time student.
- Presently in a College, University, or a recognized technical or Vocational Post Secondary school as a full-time or part-time student.

PROCEDURES:

Each applicant must file an official OPEIU scholarship fund application. Application forms must be endorsed by the Local Union President or Secretary-Treasurer attesting that a member, a parent of an applicant, or an associate member is in good standing on the date of award. The application form must also be endorsed if a member loses employment to study on a full-time basis, retires, is disabled, or is terminated from employer layoffs and plant closings. **Such endorsement must be obtained before the application is submitted.**

FORMS:

Application forms may be obtained at your Local Union office or at the Secretary-Treasurer's office of the International Union.

REQUIREMENTS:

High School Transcript: All applicants are required to submit their High School transcript. Does not have to be an official transcript; copies are acceptable.

Rank in Class: High School transcript must show rank in class or rank in class must be provided. **In the event the High School does not rank students, approximate rank or percentile and class size must be provided.**

College Transcript: If presently enrolled in a College, University or a recognized Technical or Vocational Post-Secondary School as a full/part-time student, applicant is required to submit College transcript, along with their High School transcript. Does not have to be an official transcript; copies are acceptable.

Test: All applicants are required to take a Scholastic Aptitude Test - SAT - (the admissions Testing Program Examination of the College Entrance Examination Board), American College Testing Program - ACT - or equivalent examination by a recognized Technical or Vocational Post-Secondary School. If you have already taken any of the above tests, you should request your school to forward the results of your test to the Secretary-Treasurer's office of the International Union. Does not have to be official test scores; copies are acceptable.

APPLICATIONS AND REQUIREMENTS:

All applications, High School Transcripts, Rank in Class or approximate rank or percentile and class size, College Transcripts and Test Scores are due in the Secretary-Treasurer's office no later than **March 31st** of each year.

SELECTION OF SCHOLARSHIP:

The selections shall be based on recommendations of an academic scholarship committee. Announcement of the winners will be made during the month of **June** each year.

**Office and Professional Employees International Union
Howard Coughlin Memorial Scholarship Fund Application Form
Application Deadline: March 31, 2006**

I AM APPLYING FOR A FULL-TIME SCHOLARSHIP YES ___ NO ___

I AM APPLYING FOR A PART-TIME SCHOLARSHIP YES ___ NO ___

PLEASE NOTE: MUST BE FULL-TIME OR PART-TIME, CANNOT APPLY FOR BOTH

Name of Applicant _____
Last First Middle

Home Address _____
Street

City State Zip Code

Date of Birth _____ Sex M _____ F _____

Social Security Number _____ Telephone Number _____

Member/Associate Member Name _____
Last First Middle

Home Address _____
Street

City State Zip Code

Member/Associate Member Employed By _____

OPEIU Local Union Number _____

Relationship to Member/Associate Member: Son _____ Daughter _____ Other _____

Name of School you are currently attending _____

Date of Graduation _____

What College, University, Technical, or Vocational School do you plan to attend?

First Choice _____ Location _____

Second Choice _____ Location _____

Third Choice _____ Location _____

Have you been accepted by a College, University, Technical, or Vocational School, as of this date? YES _____ NO _____

If you answered yes, at what College, University, Technical, or Vocational School were you accepted? _____

If selected for this scholarship, I fully agree to adhere to the rules that have been established by the Scholarship Committee of the OPEIU Howard Coughlin Memorial Scholarship Fund.

Signature of Applicant _____ Date _____

Signature of Local Union President or Secretary-Treasurer: _____

Local Union Number _____ Date _____

_____ (Print Name of Signing Officer)

Send Application to: **Howard Coughlin Memorial Scholarship Fund, Office & Professional Employees International Union, 1660 L Street, NW, Suite 801, Washington, DC 20036. Phone: (202) 393-4464 Fax: (202) 347-0649**

Registered Nurses Strike IRMC—Win Contract Improvements

(Continued from page 1)

group at IRMC had to give a ten-day strike notice to get their contract settled in the spring of 2005. Negotiations began smoothly in June, and over the next few months agreement was reached on almost all non-economic issues. The parties were even able to get close to agreement regarding most benefit and wage issues. But IRMC's position on staffing and pension issues prevented an agreement from being reached. IRMC refused to even discuss staffing at the bargaining table.

Regarding the pension, the union team proposed an increase to the current traditional pension plan offered to employees—a mediocre plan, but yet better than the plan that McLaren had developed and was trying to force on its employees. The new McLaren plan offered a small contribution after two years of employment, and was one of the worst such plans for any hospital in Michigan.

Despite continuing negotiations, IRMC did not change its proposals for more than a month. With the contract set to expire on September 30, the Union team called a vote for authority to call a strike, and the bargaining unit voted 270 to 27 in favor of a strike, if necessary. With still no movement from IRMC, the Union team gave notice that it would be calling a strike on October 12. IRMC responded by terminating the current contract, ending arbitration and dues deductions and unilaterally implementing its last two proposals.

The employer's move made a strike unavoidable.

Strike Brings Big Rewards

The Lansing community showed tremen-

dous support for the strike that began on October 12, with union members from all over town flocking to the picket lines and sending donations to the striking nurses. Employees at the hospital in other bargaining units were required to keep working, but many came out after work to picket with the nurses.

While prior to the strike IRMC claimed it could not find any more nurses to hire, once the strike began it staffed the hospital with out-of-state nurses receiving salaries almost double those of the regular nurses. Ironically, with the scab nurses bussed in during the strike, the staffing levels at many units at IRMC were improved to the levels the union nurses were demanding or better!

After five days of the strike, the IRMC finally made a staffing proposal, still not agreeing to maintain higher staffing levels, but agreeing to forming a staffing committee once the strike ended. The nurses rejected the offer, insisting on immediate changes to end the strike. IRMC tried to circumvent the Union—setting up informational meetings for all striking RNs, hoping to persuade nurses to go back to work.

The meeting was overwhelmingly boycotted with the exception of a few union activists sent to give the message loud and clear—they told the administration to get back to bargaining and fix the staffing problems.

Within two days, the employer made a real staffing proposal—close to those proposed by the union team. When negotiations resumed, all issues were finally resolved and the strike was settled. The RNs new contract will expire in September 2008, the same

month of expiration of the McLaren RNs contract at the Flint hospital. Having both contracts expire at the same time will increase the bargaining power for both groups.

On October 30, the contract was ratified by the bargaining unit by a vote of 282 to 23, and the nurses returned to work two days later. In addition to the staffing changes, a number of other improvements were made, including strengthening of the job bidding language so that the employer can no longer hire an outside person or per diem employee as long as there is a qualified union applicant. There were also big improvements in the economic package. The top rate was increased by 8.8 percent the first year. The clinical career ladder was abolished and now employees will automatically move up the scale. Certified RNs will earn an additional 50 cents per hour; call pay was increased to \$3.50 per hour; a retention bonus was added that will pay RNs with ten years or more of service up to \$1.18 per hour; short-term disability was improved; employees who are mandated to work will be paid double time; and employees pulled out of their sister units will receive \$2 per hour.

The Union team was comprised of Mary Jo Beggs, Elizabeth Gray, Tasinda Ridsdale, Kurt Smith, Chris Veldman, and Kelly Wilcox. They were assisted by Local 459 Service Representatives Cindy Jeffries and Joseph Marutiak. "Strikes in the healthcare industry can divide a group," said Jeffries. "The Local 459 nurses showed an intense amount of solidarity. Their unity was only strengthened by the strike and closeness was developed between departments and campuses that did not exist before," Jeffries said.

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