You Are OPEIU

Join Us in Building a Strong and Powerful Union
The committee then spoke with fellow employees. The employer and their counsel would try to harass those who supported the union and hold individual meetings to persuade employees not to join the union. Finally, after witnessing continued abuse, one person, would reach out to Local 153, my local union in New York, because they were devastated. As before the campaign, the employer continued to treat its employees poorly and was sarcastic about the union effort. It harassed the employees not to join the union. Finally, many eligible employees could not vote. At the end of the strike, which went on for weeks, the people won their first contract. It provided many new benefits for the staff including tuition reimbursement, improved vacation and sick time, a pension plan, arbitration, seniority, severance pay in the event of layoff, better promotional opportunity and many other changes. In addition, the group could now speak to management about any work-related problems without worrying about retaliation.

The main reason the workplace improved is a few people... were persistent about changing their workplace.

In the years that followed, we met with people who worked for colleges, food service, health centers, hotels, as maintenance workers, teachers, insurance claims processors and in many other occupations. In some cases, the pattern followed the one outlined above. Many now work under good contracts. It’s easy to say that such improvements came about as a result of negotiations. In some ways you might be right. You could say all these changes came about because there was a union. Again, you could be partially right. The main reason the workplace improved is a few people were willing to make sacrifices for the group and were persistent about changing their workplace. The renowned anthropologist Margaret Mead once said: “Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful, committed citizens can change the world; indeed, it’s the only thing that ever has.”

My early experiences as an organizer seemed to follow a similar pattern. A small group of people, or occasionally one person, would reach out to Local 153, my local union in New York, because of changes in their workplace. After those initial meetings, employees would often form a committee. Then we would meet several times with the committee, making sure to answer all of its questions. The committee then spoke with fellow employees. Often, we would then go public with the group and keep them from joining a union. After that, proposals were submitted to the employees. Sometimes, the proposal was accepted. Most of the time, the employer continued to treat its employees poorly and was sarcastic about the union effort. It harassed the employees not to join the union. Finally, many eligible employees could not vote. At the end of the strike, which went on for weeks, the people won their first contract. It provided many new benefits for the staff including tuition reimbursement, improved vacation and sick time, a pension plan, arbitration, seniority, severance pay in the event of layoff, better promotional opportunity and many other changes. In addition, the group could now speak to management about any work-related problems without worrying about retaliation.

Are You Registered to Vote?

This November’s midterm elections will decide the future makeup of the House, Senate and several key governors’ races, not to mention the Supreme Court. Everything is on the line for working families, and the votes of working people could decide whether we have elected officials looking out for our interests or those more concerned with furthering the interests of corporate America. The margin in the Senate is extremely tight; if Democrats pick up two seats, they can flip the majority. There are great candidates on the side of working families, running in places such as Nevada, Arizona and Mississippi, who can make that power shift a reality. A shift in the House is even more possible.

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

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

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

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

Register now at opeiu.org or vote.gov

Small Groups of Committed People Can Change the World

By Richard Lanigan
International President

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

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The main reason the workplace improved is a few people... were persistent about changing their workplace.
Thank you so much for giving me the opportunity to attend the summer camp.

Thank you again for your thoughtful and generous gift to the Howard Coughlin Memorial Scholarship Fund. I am beyond appreciative for your continued support and contribution toward my education.

This money will not only relieve some of my financial stress, but it will also allow me to pursue my dreams. This scholarship will allow me to attend my dream school—Western State University—with less debt and enable me to graduate with minimal financial hardship.

Thank you for awarding me a scholarship from the Howard Coughlin Memorial Scholarship Fund. My family and I want to thank you for the financial assistance offered to my children. It was unexpected, but I can assure you, highly appreciated.

Josée Capuano, widow of Jacques Dupuy
Daughter of Edward Rusley
Local 174
Canyon Country, California

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

My daughter, Jade, and son, Gianni, are now respectively 19 and 17. Jade has started college and Gianni is more than halfway into high school. So, in a couple of years, university will be too big a goal for both of them. As a single mom, I can only tell you all THANK YOU for the financial assistance offered to my children. It was unexpected, but I can assure you, highly appreciated.

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Daughter of Edward Rusley
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Canyon Country, California

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

Anayelle Lopez
Local 8
Marysville, Washington

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

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

Natalie Lindemann
Daughter of Cara Lindemann
Local 11
Kaito, Washington

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Attention OPEIU Stewards:
Available at opeiu.org

The OPEIU Leadership/Shop Steward Guide provides training materials and resources to help its shop stewards best serve their members, OPEIU has developed a customized and adapted to fit the unique training needs of each local union. Go to opeiu.org and click on the Local Union Resources tab to check it out. Information on member benefits, new member orientations, how to talk to others about your union and other useful resources are also available.

Two New Areas of Study Added to OPEIU Free College Benefit

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

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

Fall I 2018: Aug 17, 2018
Fall II 2018: Oct 12, 2018

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

Richard Lanigan Honored by Peggy Browning Fund

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

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

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

Free College Benefit Available to Help Minimize the Threat

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

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

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

• Enroll in OPEIU’s complimentary identity theft member benefit by visiting opeiuProtexte.com (Canadian members, call 888-295-7966)
• Create strong passwords and update them frequently
• Be aware of what you share
• Keep sensitive personal and financial documents secure
• Protect your mobile device
• Check your credit report
• Don’t fall for phishing scams

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

If you are a victim of identity theft or have any questions, call InfoArmor at 1-855-990-0994. InfoArmor is available 24 hours a day, 7 days a week.

In Canada, OPEIU provides an identity protection benefit through General Global Assistance. Please call 866-295-7966 for assistance.

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

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

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It’s About Freedom!

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

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

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

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

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

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

PAI contributed to this story.
Building a Strong and Powerful Union

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

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

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

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

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

From left, Local 277’s Trustee Tonia Storum, Vice President DeAura Cephus and Lockheed Martin Steward Debra Johnson.

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

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

Local 201’s President Jeremiah Edmond and Secretary Tracey Woodrupp.

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

From left, Local 8’s President Kellie McGuire, Organizer Corrine Casentino, Vice President John Adams and Membership Support Representative Nakely Flores.

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

OPEIU/310-S President Cody Neal.

International Vice President and OPEIU/OPEIU Local 4873 President Dennis R. Arrington.
OPEIU members gathered in Memphis to honor the slain civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and remember those union members who stood up and declared “I Am a Man,” during the 1968 Memphis sanitation workers strike. Carrying signs that read “I Am OPEIU,” these union members demonstrated the struggle for economic and racial equality, on and off the job, continues today.
I Am OPEIU!

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

According to the Bureau of Labor Statistics, female union members typically earn $242 more per week than women not represented by a union. It’s clear protecting and strengthening the rights of working people to come together and form unions is the key to achieving equal pay for all.

OPEIU is committed to building a stronger, more powerful union that can best represent our members and spread the benefits of union membership to as many working people as possible. We are equally committed to empowering local unions to create effective organizing programs to increase our membership, strengthen existing bargaining units and develop future leaders. OPEIU has launched a new large-scale initiative aimed at doing that. The OPEIU Apprentice Organizer Program provides an opportunity for OPEIU local unions to build organizing capacity with assistance from the International. The International will provide both financial support and guidance in hiring, directing, mentoring and training a full-time organizer apprentice with the understanding that the local union will commit fully to an ongoing staff position dedicated solely to organizing. The goal is for the local union to eventually operate a self-sustaining organizing program.

To interest new members in our union, the foundations of our union must be safe and affordable healthcare. OPEIU has launched a new large-scale initiative, Generation Next, to build a stronger, more powerful union.

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

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

“With more than 2,000 local unions to choose from, the opportunity to be part of an ongoing, full-time, full-time program is a rare opportunity,” Schu said. “We’re focusing organizing resources in the communities and regions of our local unions to create sustainable organizing programs,” Schu said. “It’s encouraging so many of our leaders are willing to commit fully to building organizing capacity and, in turn, a stronger, more powerful union.”

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

Continued on page 22

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

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

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

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

Safe staffing is a nationwide problem, as safe-staffing ratios and limits on mandatory overtime.

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

Local 40 supports a number of bills pending in the Michigan legislature that address the issues of RN-to-patient staffing ratios, that require hospitals to inform the public of their actual staffing ratios and that limit overtime for hospital registered nurses,” said Local 40 President Jeff Morawski, RN.

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

Nurses also suffer as a result. Recently, assaults have occurred at the two hospitals where Local 40 represents nurses. McClaren Macomb and Ascension Crittenton. Yet, the hospitals refuse to address the issue. It has not deterred overcrowded nurses, pushed into long hours and overtime — and subject to assault — can’t provide the highest level of care possible for their patients.

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

Local 40 claims it’s also challenging to properly care for their patients — and be safe on the job. “More and more, healthcare workers are in danger when they’re working,” Morawski said.

(All contributed to this story.)
Local 459 Nurses Honored by Lansing State Journal

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

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

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

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

OPEIU Nurses Take DC

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

Local 381 Supports Striking Teachers

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

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

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

Local 129 Has New Contract at NASA

Local 129 in Lake Jackson, Texas, has ratified a five-year contract for customer service representatives employed at NASA’s Johnson Space Center in Houston, Texas, which means wage increases of 1.5 percent in the first three years of the contract with wage openers in 2020 and 2021. Additionally, Local 129 was able to secure senior pay for anyone who invested 15 years of service or more. The contract with Chenega Security Solutions at NASA also provides zero fringe benefits cuts.

Locals 32 and 153 Train Stewards to Meet Coming Challenges

New Jersey’s Local 32 and Local 153 in New York recently held in-depth training for its shop stewards to help them meet the challenges of today’s worksites and learn how to build union power in the workplace. OPEIU’s Bargaining Coordinator Sandy Pope and staff members of both locals led the full-day training.
Local 40 Affiliates Radiologic Employees Association

A long-standing independent union of about 50 radiology technology technicians at Ascension Crittenton Hospital in Rochester, Michigan, has affiliated with Local 40. The Rochester Crittenton Radiologic Employees Association (RCREA) joins Local 40’s almost 1,000 healthcare professionals at Ascension Crittenton and McLaren Macomb Hospitals for greater bargaining strength and to increase growth capacity. Former RCREA leaders will hold positions on the Local 40 executive board. Recently, Local 40 voted to expand their bylaws to include not only licensed nurses, but also other medical professionals. “Both organizations recognize it is in the best interests of our respective memberships to enter into this agreement to maximize our collective bargaining and representation strength and to increase our capacity to grow our union membership,” reads the affiliation agreement.

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

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

New Local 6 members have proudly signed their first contract with the Massachusetts Board of Bar Overseers (BBO), which provides three wages increases of 2.5 percent, a system of predictable and consistent wage scales and steps, a $90 signing bonus, paid vacation, retirement contributions, a formal grievance procedure to guarantee due process and fairness and muchmore. The new contract incorporates attorneys’ and administrative staff’s employer contributions to the Massachusetts Board of Bar Counsel (OIC). “This first contract is the culmination of a lot of hard work that began when management suspected these professionals to arbitrary, unnecessary and damaging changes to their workplace,” said George Noel, Local 6 business manager. “These brave professionals determined overwhelmingly that coming together in a union provided them the best avenue for achieving a fair resolution and for preventing further arbitrary action,” Noel said. “They shared a goal to create a better workplace for themselves and for those who follow, while preserving the mission and integrity of their office.”

Local 6 reaches Three-Year Agreement with Massachusetts Trial Court

After months of difficult negotiations, the members of Local 6 employed by the Trial Court of Massachusetts voted to ratify a new three-year agreement, which includes a 5 percent wage increase and a number of other significant benefit improvements. The contract, which is retroactive to July 1, 2017, covers the 2,800 clerical and other significant benefit improvements. The contract, which is retroactive to July 1, 2017, covers the 2,800 clerical and professional employees represented by Local 6 who work for the Trial Court across the Commonwealth.

The negotiating team focused on improving wages and working conditions, achieving a 5 percent wage increase over the term of the contract, with the possibility of an additional 1 percent if 2018 tax revenues equal or exceed $270.7 billion, an increase in bereavement leave, tuition remission for members’ spouses, electronic dues authorization, mutual respect language and many other language improvements.

“We had a large and diverse negotiating team representing a variety of court departments and regions of the state,” said Chief Negotiator and Local 6 Business Manager George Noel, “and I want to recognize and thank each of them for their hard work and dedication to the members.”

Negotiating team members included Secretary-Treasurer and Probation Operations Supervisor Patti Pellicer, Recording Secretary and Probation Operations Supervisor Deborah Puspolo, Executive Board Member and Accounting Coordinator Cara Madaredes, Head Account Clerk Michelle Latimer, Assistant Electronic Monitoring Coordinator Phil Lang, Research Attorney Arthur Fenno, Head Account Clerk Sonya Rothman, Assistant Court Service Coordinator Shawn Wright, Head Law Librarian Robin Bates, Staff Interpreter Mary Martinez, Case Coordinator Kathaleen Siebert, Judicial Secretary Susan Henderson, Sessions Clerks Kathy Hamlin, Carmen Lozada-Carroll and Erin Grassetti, and Business Agents Garrett Mahoney, Dick Russell, Phil Basile and Dan Totten. Special Assistant to the President Dick Martin was particularly helpful to the negotiating team, offering his vast knowledge and experience in the court system.

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

OPEIU Launches Apprentice Organizer Initiative

Continued from page 16

“I’ve found it valuable as an apprentice organizer to be able to bring workers, their families and community partners together to fight, defend and create one strong voice that will help pave the way for change,” said Carolina Aceves, an apprentice organizer with Local 30 in San Diego. “Organizing at this moment is especially necessary when there is such uncertainty. We’re all been daring the Janus decision, and although this will definitely impact our labor movement, organizing has taught me that even against odds, the power of unity will always prevail.”

“The Organizer Apprentice Program has provided me with the amazing opportunity to learn exactly how important the role of the organizer is, and how significant it can be to help people unite and create a voice for themselves in their workplace,” said Martinique Phillips-Sotka, an apprentice organizer with Local 29 in Oakland. “I am so grateful for this experience and all of the information I’ve learned.”

Local 8’s Shannon Bono Celebrates 30 Years of Service

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

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

Local 29 Officers and Executive Board Installed for New Term

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

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

OPEIU Podiatrists Celebrate Major Legislative Victory

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

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

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