



# WHITE COLLAR

Work Connects Us All!

Fall 2014 Issue

## YCS Drivers Win Yearlong Battle in Las Vegas



**Above Left:** International President Michael Goodwin (right), ITPEU/OPEIU Local 4873 President Dennis R. Arrington (second from left), Project Organizer Andom "Nati" Kahsay (far left) with YCS driver Samson Ayalew, the first driver to receive his vacation pay and safety bonus check from the union. **Above Right:** ITPEU President Arrington with driver Fikadu Adem and his children at the Las Vegas union office after Adem received his check.

Drivers at Yellow Checker Star Transportation taxi company in Las Vegas, Nevada, have won a yearlong battle with the company over vacation pay and a safety bonus that were denied to them following their eight-week strike in March and April 2013, reported ITPEU/OPEIU Local 4873 President and OPEIU Region III Vice President Dennis R. Arrington.

During the final meeting with the company at the Federal Mediation and Conciliation Service (FMCS) before the strike ended on May 2, 2013, the company agreed to count the strike period as time worked for purposes of the drivers meeting eligibility for vacation pay and a safety bonus. That agreement was reported to the drivers

at the contract ratification meeting on May 1, 2013. Based on representations that the contract reflected this agreement, the contract was signed on May 2, 2013.

When the drivers applied for their vacation pay and safety bonus upon their return to work, however, the company denied their request, alleging that "it's not in the contract." The union was shocked by this response and immediately filed a grievance on behalf of all the drivers affected, said Arrington.

It appears that the company, which drafted the contract, left out the specific details of the agreement on vacation pay and the safety bonus and the union missed the omission.

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# It's the Senate, Stupid!

By International President Michael Goodwin

In 1992, political strategist James Carville coined the phrase "It's the economy, stupid" for Bill Clinton's successful presidential campaign against sitting President George H. W. Bush. Bush's approval rating fell from a high of more than 90 percent in March 1991 to 36 percent in August 1992. The phrase became a popular theme that resonated with the public and made it difficult for the incumbent president to improve his approval ratings.

This year the theme should be "It's the Senate, stupid," because the party that controls the Senate is going to have a significant impact on a wide variety of issues important to workers. You see, there are 36 Senate seats up for reelection in 2014: 21 Democrats and 15 Republicans. In the current Senate, the Democrats are in control with 53 Democrats, 45 Republicans and 2 Independents who caucus with the Democrats. It will take a turnover of only six Senate seats for the Republicans to regain control of the Senate. The Democratic senatorial victories in 2008 were a pleasant surprise, as candidates rode into office on the coattails of the then-very-popular presidential candidate Barack Obama and in several cases won by very slim margins.

Now, in 2014, it is very much a different story, as the president's approval ratings have dropped to less than 40 percent. Democrats running at a time when presidential approval ratings are so low have a difficult time overcoming the negativity. As of this writing, there are very close races with a polling margin of less than 1 percent in Alaska, Arkansas, Colorado, Iowa and Kansas, so when combined with other races throughout the country, it's quite possible that a turnover of six Senate seats could happen.

With the House of Representatives firmly in control of the Republicans, losing control of the Senate would

mean that all the outrageous proposals in the House would now be passed by the Republican Senate and sent on to the president for signature. Consider that the House has already taken more than 50 votes to repeal Obamacare, refused to extend unemployment insurance benefits and blocked any effort to increase the minimum wage to \$10.10 an hour. The House has been so reluctant to pass anything that the president proposes that he has had to resort to issuing a myriad of executive orders to get things done. Examples of this are executive orders affecting immigration, fair pay and safe workplaces, equal employment opportunity, and minimum wage for federal contractors.

**“Every OPEIU member and his or her family must come out and vote on November 4.”**

Unfortunately, the president has limited authority in these areas and executive orders are not law – they can be repealed by a future president. So, the consequences of losing the Senate in 2014 will be that the president will be spending an inordinate amount of time vetoing all the outrageous legislation passed by Congress and harmful to the average worker. And to continue the nightmare, you can

imagine what would happen if a Republican president were elected in 2016 who would sign all the outrageous legislation passed by Congress into law. In addition, a new Republican president would more than likely repeal executive orders issued by President Obama. Perish the thought!

To ensure that this nightmare does not become a reality, it is critical for the Democrats to maintain control of the Senate. To accomplish this, we need your help. Every OPEIU member and his or her family **must come out and vote on November 4**. The stakes are too high to take any chances. Unfortunately, voters tend to stay home in a non-presidential election year, and if that happens, we will surely suffer the consequences. Please don't let the Senate fall under Republican control and set the scene for a disaster in 2016 with the election of a Republican president. We need to keep at least one of the three entities in the legislative process in Democratic hands.

So in 2014, "It's the Senate, stupid." Please keep this in mind, and make sure that you and your family come out and vote on November 4.

## Did You Know AFL-CIO President Emeritus Sweeney Is an OPEIU Member?



International President Michael Goodwin with longtime OPEIU member and AFL-CIO President Emeritus John J. Sweeney at the AFL-CIO Executive Council meeting held July 30-31, 2014, in Washington, D.C.

# American Board of Multiple Specialties in Podiatry Approves Affiliation

The American Board of Multiple Specialties in Podiatry (ABMSP) Executive Board has approved its affiliation with OPEIU, effective August 1, 2014. The OPEIU Executive Board also approved the affiliation at its June meeting.

As first reported in the summer issue of *White Collar*, the ABMSP and OPEIU reached an agreement to recommend that the 1,000-member organization affiliate with Guild 45 Podiatry, effective August 1, pending approval by the ABMSP and OPEIU executive boards.

OPEIU again offers its congratulations to OPEIU Region II Vice President and Guild 45 President John Mattiacci, DPM, and Pennsylvania Podiatric Medical Association Executive Director Michael Davis for their efforts in making this affiliation possible.

## Need a Tow? Make Sure to Have This Information Handy

Members throughout the country are reporting great experiences using the OPEIU's towing/service calls program, which is administered by Nation Safe Drivers (NSD). The program offers up to two tows per year for a maximum of 25 miles to OPEIU members and their family living in the same household, valued at up to \$100 per tow.

It's important to note that this membership benefit is available only to family living in the same household as the member, not to family living elsewhere. Here are a few other things to keep in mind when calling for service – make sure to have this information ready to give to the dispatcher:

- **You will need to provide your name and Local Union number.** The dispatcher may also ask for the name of your employer. If members of your immediate family call for service, please instruct them to provide your name and this information. They will also have to tell the dispatcher what relation they are to you as the member and provide their address to confirm that they live in your household.
- **You will also need your car's license plate number and state where it is registered.** The dispatcher will also ask whether the car is registered in your name or, if not, in whose name it is registered.



As always, you will need to provide OPEIU's **Producer Code 74046** and **Plan Letter C** when calling for a tow or service. Your cooperation is greatly appreciated in helping the OPEIU's towing/service calls program run as smoothly and efficiently as possible.

## Local 1971 in Puerto Rico Receives Charter



President Edward Sanchez (left) of the *Unión Independiente de Empleados Telefónicos (UIET)*/OPEIU Local 1971, which represents approximately 1,900 workers at Claro Puerto Rico, joined the OPEIU Executive Board at its biannual meeting in June 2014 to discuss the unique challenges facing the union and to officially receive its charter from the International. UIET affiliated with OPEIU in August 2013. Joining President Sanchez was UIET Vice President José Acosta (middle), and José "Lole" Rodriguez Baez, president of the Puerto Rico AFL-CIO.

## OPEIU Shows Support for Farm Workers



United Farm Workers of America (UFW) President Arturo Rodriguez also visited the OPEIU Executive Board meeting to say thank you for all the support OPEIU has shown this year to UFW members. OPEIU and its Local Unions donated generously this year to aid the UFW in its mission to "provide farm workers and other working people with the inspiration and tools to share in society's bounty."

### Appreciation for YCS Strike Support

**Dear International President Michael Goodwin and ITPEU/OPEIU President Dennis R. Arrington:**

I got home about an hour ago and have been thinking of what I wanted to say to the both of you. What I've decided on is this: I have never been as proud of my union or the union leadership that I have the honor to work for than now. The way that this entire matter was handled from the beginning until now should show everyone who has anything to do with YCS drivers the importance of good union representation. I believe President Lincoln said only a fool would not join a union, and this shows why.

Again, thanks so much for all you have done for us; it is greatly appreciated. This is something that can never be repaid but will never be forgotten.

**Sam Moffitt, Chief Shop Steward  
Yellow Checker Star Transportation  
ITPEU/OPEIU Local 4873, Las Vegas, Nevada**

### Educational Conference Is "the Best!"

**Dear Editor:**

[OPEIU Director of Communication, Education and Research] Nicole Korkolis and Suzanne Fenech [of her office] did a fabulous job getting everything organized (and running!) for the educational conference. As someone who does "similar" work, I appreciate the time and effort put into the program! It's quite a task to get this type of thing together. I said to [Local 1937 President] Dottie Miller on the way home that this was by far the best conference I've attended - the attention to detail and the content were perfect, and the OPEIU group is by far one of the friendliest I've encountered. We both left feeling renewed and asking ourselves what we can do to better and to empower Local 1937.

**Frank F. Chapman, Grievance Committee  
Local 1937, Merck & Co., Inc.  
West Point, Pennsylvania**

### WHITE COLLAR

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### International Representative Assistance Appreciated

**Dear International President Goodwin:**

I would like to take this opportunity to express my sincere appreciation for the exemplary efforts and support of Mr. Paul Bohelski, senior international representative.

Mr. Bohelski not only gave me professional guidance; he gave me strong moral support in battling the unfair and unjust allegations in an investigation. He assisted me in filing an EEOC claim, which resulted in his superior efforts of gaining me an acceptable settlement from PHI.

Please extend my appreciation to him. His performance is reflective of his dedication and professionalism to the union. He has given me a new outlook on how important unions are, especially in this industry. He is definitely an asset to your organization. Thank you again for Paul; he was a lifesaver.

**Lee T. Smith, LTC, U.S. Army (Ret.)  
Former Pilot, AE 32 Show Low  
Local 108  
Lakeside, Arizona**

### OPEIU Representation Means Political Clout

**Dear International President Goodwin:**

I'm writing this letter to you to let you know what a tremendous influence OPEIU membership has had for OPEIU Guild 62, the National Guild of Acupuncture & Oriental Medicine, which represents licensed acupuncturists across the country.

Because of your direct help and the concerted efforts of Connecticut AFL-CIO Executive Secretary-Treasurer Lori Pelletier, licensed acupuncturists have been given the full support and resources of the Connecticut AFL-CIO in our quest to have first-tier status within the workers' compensation system - that is, the ability to see patients directly as a point of entry within Connecticut workers' comp without the necessity for referral.

Acupuncture organizations have fought for the last 30 years to get solid representation and access to political power. It took unionization to make that access possible. OPEIU was responsible for me, as the president of Guild 62, becoming part of the political decision-making process by being appointed to the Connecticut Workers' Compensation Medical Advisory Panel, a strong voice for the rights of workers to receive the medical care they want and deserve.

**Steve Paine, OMD (Hong Kong), L.Ac. (CT, HI)  
President, National Guild of Acupuncture & Oriental  
Medicine/OPEIU Guild 62  
Simsbury, Connecticut**

# On Labor Day, President Goodwin Honors Workers of the Past

Labor Day, a creation of the labor movement that serves as a national tribute to the achievements of American workers, was recognized throughout the nation the first week of September 2014, including at one of the birthplaces of the modern labor movement.

At the American Labor Museum/Botto House National Landmark during the 2014 Labor Day parade held on August 31 in Haledon, New Jersey, International President Michael Goodwin remembered the many achievements that workers have made in the past century to improve both the social and economic lives of all Americans. The parade is co-sponsored by the ALM/Botto House, of which Goodwin is also president.

In his remarks, Goodwin remembered the historic 1913 Silk Industry Strike in Paterson, New Jersey, in which the Botto House played a key role. During that strike, Pietro and Maria Botto opened their home for rallies where leaders of the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) union spoke to the 15,000 striking workers. The Victorian home, built in 1908, became a symbol of free speech and assembly for workers, and was placed on the U.S. National Register of Historic Places in 1974 and named a National Historic Landmark in 1982. The ALM/Botto House National Landmark is now dedicated to teaching the history of workers and organized labor.

"The workers involved in that struggle laid the foundation for the establishment of the 40-hour work-week," Goodwin told those gathered for the parade. "How many of us today could withstand a 26-week strike with no pay or benefits?"

"But those workers did it and had the support of Maria and Pietro Botto,



International President Michael Goodwin, who serves as president of the American Labor Museum/Botto House National Landmark in Haledon, New Jersey, addressing the crowd at the 2014 Labor Day parade on August 31, 2014. Similar parades were held throughout the country to commemorate Labor Day. Also pictured are (left to right) artist and photographer Pamela Calore; Parade Grand Marshal and President of the Bergen County Central Trades & Labor Council Mike Schneider; unidentified local official; Passaic County Freeholder Theodore O. Best Jr. (blue shirt, behind Goodwin); American Labor Museum Director Angelica Santomauro, Ed.D.; Parade Grand Marshal and President of the Hudson County Central Labor Council Peter Busacca; American Labor Museum Trustee and International Union of Operating Engineers (IUOE) Local 68 Business Manager Thomas Giblin; and vocalist Chanise Renee Stoute.

the owners of the house and land of this historic site. Their hospitality was well appreciated, as they shared their home and property so that members could meet regularly at a place and in a town without fear of being arrested for illegal assembly. The greatest leaders of the time spoke from this very balcony, and it's a privilege to stand here today and to thank them posthumously for the great contributions that they made to improve the quality of life for working families.

"We honor the dedicated workers of the past who made the good working conditions of today possible," Goodwin concluded.

## Obama: I'd Join a Union

During a speech in Milwaukee, Wisconsin, for Labor Day, President Obama said something that hasn't been said by a sitting president since FDR - "I'd join a union."

Indeed, he said, "If I were looking for a good job that lets me build some security for my job, I'd join a union. If I were busting my butt in the service industry and wanted an honest day's pay for an honest day's work, I'd join a union."

# Congratulations to the 2014 OPEIU Scholarship Winners

Howard Coughlin Memorial Scholarship Fund



## Full-Time Winners (U.S.)



**Julanee Prince**  
Local 153, Region II



**Kelsei Schuster**  
Local 153, Region II



**Agata Waszczyk**  
Local 153, Region II



**Alexandrea Estall**  
Local 102, Region III



**Alyssa Harmon**  
Local 102, Region III



**Ashley Scott**  
ITPEU/OPEIU Local 4873,  
Region III



**Tyler Wilson**  
Local 251, Region IV



**Joseph Torres**  
Local 537, Region V



**Alexander Talancon**  
Local 29, Region V



**Amy Chhom**  
Local 8, Region VI



**Thelma Miller**  
Local 8, Region VI



**Dustin Olmstead**  
Local 459, Region VII

## Part-Time Winners



**Shaunda Jones**  
Local 2, Region II



**Donna White**  
Local 713, Region III



**Sharon Lawson**  
Local 251, Region IV



**Kathryn van de Goor**  
Local 174, Region V



**Mercedes Elizalde**  
Local 8, Region VI



**Mitchell Holder**  
Local 2002, Region VII

## Full-Time Winner (Canada)



**Dmitriy Alex Kalin**  
Local 103, Region I

## John Kelly Scholarship Winners



**Myra Hepburn**  
Local 153, Region II



**Kelley Allen**  
Local 251, Region IV



**Tracy Bowers**  
Local 29, Region V

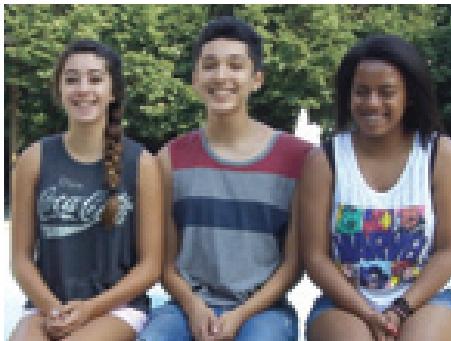


**Pharoah Stone**  
Local 29, Region V



**Dustin Teske**  
Local 30, Region V

# Summer Camp Winners Tour Missouri State House



**Top Left:** As part of the camp experience, elections are held for officers to lead the "local unions" during the week. Campers run for office, campaign and give speeches in order to be elected. The three elected officers were (left to right) Recording Secretary Isabel Nicole Escoto, President Adolpho Navarro and Vice President Yndia L. Parks-Dutt. Meetings are also held to negotiate camp rules and mission and to develop a collective bargaining agreement that is negotiated by the bargaining committee and voted on by all the campers.

**Top Right:** Campers at the Missouri State Capitol Building, touring Governor Jay Nixon's office.

**Bottom:** Campers pictured at the spot where a tree will be planted in October and dedicated to them as the 2014 Romeo Corbeil/Gilles Beauregard camp participants.

The winners of the 2014 Romeo Corbeil/Gilles Beauregard Scholarship Fund Summer Camp made the most of their experience, learning not only about the labor movement but also the political process by touring the Missouri State Capitol Building and meeting with top officials from the governor's office.

During their summer camp experience July 20-25, 2014, the scholarship winners, who were all 13 to 16-year-old children and grandchildren of OPEIU members from throughout the country, were invited to tour the capitol building and even visit Governor Jay Nixon's office. Though the governor was not in his office that day, his chief of staff held a question-and-answer session with the campers where they discussed everything from the history of the room to the responsibilities of the governor.

The camp is held each summer at the University of Missouri in Columbia, Missouri, and is an excellent opportunity for young people to learn the history of the labor movement, all while enjoying traditional camp experiences such as swimming,

boating, arts and crafts, and other outdoor activities, according to Secretary-Treasurer Mary Mahoney.

"Our primary goal of the camp is to help young kids understand the labor movement, what unions do and how they are run," said Paul Rainsberger, director of the university's Labor Education Program. "It's a fun, interactive learning experience, and through the program, it's our hope that we are building future leaders."

Attending the camp this year were Alison B. Beireis, Mike J. Beireis, Amelia Lynn Cerutti, Anthony G. Escoto, Isabel Nicole Escoto, Hannah M. McCarthy, Adolpho Navarro, Chidubem Michael Okoye, Nonyelum Merrit Okoye, Nnamdi Raphael Okoye, Yndia L. Parks-Dutt, Domonique M. Ramirez, Dontae Andrew Richmond, Kenden Lamar Robinson Jr., Maximillian R. Rodriguez, Gavin Spillard, Alyssa Marie Teske and Breanna Rae Vasquez.

Further information and applications for the 2015 summer camp and all OPEIU scholarships will be available at [www.opeiu.org](http://www.opeiu.org) in January 2015.

## Charlie Ponti Helps Pick Scholarship Winners



New York's Local 153 Retirees Association President Charlie Ponti Sr., who is 101 years old and has been an OPEIU member for more than 75 years, assists Ann McCormack, office manager of the OPEIU secretary-treasurer's office in New York City, in a raffle drawing for the winners of the 2014 OPEIU scholarships. Winners are chosen randomly through an annual drawing. Thanks, Brother Ponti, for your help in choosing these scholarship recipients.

## YCS Drivers Win Yearlong Battle in Las Vegas

Continued from page 1

During the grievance process, the union argued that the contract did contain specific references to, for example, pro rata vacation pay, and that the intention of negotiating pro rata annual pay, which is in the contract, also applied to vacation pay and the safety bonus. The company denied the grievance.

The union filed for arbitration, and a hearing was held before arbitrator Gary Axon on June 4, 2014, at Litigation Services in Las Vegas. ITPEU/OPEIU Local 4873 counsel Sidney Kalban did an excellent job preparing for the arbitration. After an exchange of arguments and motions, the company requested a sidebar meeting with the union and a settlement was reached. The total cost of providing eligible

drivers denied vacation pay and/or a safety bonus exceeded \$200,000. With the support of ITPEU/OPEIU Local 4873 and the OPEIU Executive Board, a pathway was found to provide the drivers with the full vacation pay and/or safety bonus to which they were entitled.

"At long last, the victory that we won in 2013 has finally been achieved," said International President Michael Goodwin. "The fact that the company was willing to settle is vindication that the union was right all along!" Goodwin expressed the union's gratitude to the staff for their work during the negotiations, strike and grievance process, and to International Representative Paul Huertas and Jana Huertas, who worked on the details for

driver eligibility for vacation pay and a safety bonus.

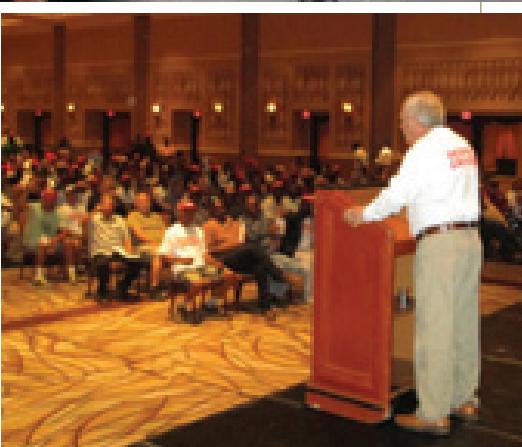
OPEIU would also like to thank ITPEU President Arrington for his leadership during this long ordeal and Representative T. Ruthie Jones, YCS Chief Shop Steward Sam Moffitt and staff member Andom "Nati" Kahsay for their work and support.

"I couldn't be happier with the result," said Arrington. "ITPEU/OPEIU Local 4873 provides excellent representation for the drivers in Las Vegas. The fact that the drivers at YCS were willing to fight with the full support of the union will lead to the organization of drivers at other taxi companies."

Checks were distributed to the happy drivers on July 12 and September 13, 2014, at the ITPEU/OPEIU Local 4873 office on Highland Drive in Las Vegas, Nevada.



**Top Left:** Driver Belayneh Muluneh and daughter with Project Organizer Andom "Nati" Kahsay after Muluneh received his check. **Top Right:** A sign posted at the Las Vegas office that thanks YCS drivers for their patience and support during the yearlong struggle with the employer. **Bottom Left:** OPEIU Representative Paul Huertas presents a check to driver Assefa Asemahegn while his children look on. **Bottom Right:** Happy drivers Edward Jones, Robert Hearing and Eyob Demissie.



**Photos, From Top Left to Bottom Right**

Countless demonstrations – including this one on March 18, 2013 – were held in Las Vegas during the three-month strike, which lasted from March 3 to May 2, 2013, that showed the drivers' perseverance and solidarity. Pictured are YCS Chief Shop Steward Sam Moffitt and ITPEU Representative T. Ruthie Jones, who were instrumental in serving the drivers during the strike as well as during the yearlong battle for vacation pay.

Drivers maintained a picket line outside YCS headquarters for 24 hours a day, seven days a week during the three-month strike.

Another day on the picket line for striking YCS drivers in 2013, protesting the company's unfair labor practices.

YCS drivers took their protest to the Las Vegas Strip and to McCarran Airport as a caravan of cars with signs reading "Respect Drivers, No Hiring Strike Breakers" and "On Strike in Protest of Unfair Labor Practice" rode through the streets to make the public aware of the YCS drivers' plight during the strike.

During the strike, ITPEU President Arrington held weekly membership meetings to keep the drivers informed and unified.

On April 22, 2013, drivers boarded a bus prepared by OPEIU that read "Don't Patronize Yellow Checker Star!" and headed to the state capital in Carson City, Nevada. Just 10 days later, the strike ended in victory for the YCS drivers.

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# OPEIU Attends White House Summit on Working Families

OPEIU was pleased to be invited to attend the 2014 White House Summit on Working Families on June 23, 2014, featuring remarks from President Barack Obama, First Lady Michelle Obama, Vice President Joe Biden and Dr. Jill Biden as well as from Secretary of Labor Thomas Perez and leaders from business and progressive and charitable organizations.

The summit, which was co-hosted by the Center for American Progress and the U.S. Department of Labor, focused on topics of importance to America's working families, including hourly workers, compensation, young women leaders and finding a 21st-century economy that works for both business and workers. The AFL-CIO also hosted a pre-summit event, Working Families Speak Up!, where a broad coalition of unions and worker organizations gathered to hear about the critical issues facing working families and the challenges to the economic security of women.

Representing OPEIU at the summit were Local 153 Representative Myra Hepburn, Local 2 First Vice President Linda Bridges and Local 29 Shop Steward Juanita Johnson. According to Hepburn, President Obama stressed the importance of improving the

economic status of working families, increasing the minimum wage, expanding retirement opportunities for eligible workers and protecting overtime pay. "He discussed how these efforts would affect both public- and private-sector employees and that he would pursue them with or without the support of Congress," said Hepburn. "The executive order will be his tool to circumvent any congressional obstacles."



The summit also included a discussion of proposed protections for pregnant workers and ways to reduce salary disparity, especially in nontraditional occupations. Also discussed were expanding access to higher-paying jobs for women, mobilizing colleges to improve access for underserved students, and launching a new public-/private-sector partnership to recruit and train women.

The White House also recognizes the importance of working with unions and labor-management partnerships to improve and expand pathways to better middle-class jobs and has made it a key part of its agenda, participants were told.

"It was both an honor and a privilege to be an attendee at a symposium that will enrich my collective bargaining skills and expand my knowledge about working families and their plight," said Hepburn.

## OPEIU Rallies With Alaska Nurses Association

OPEIU representatives joined officers of the Alaska Nurses Association (AaNA), including AaNA Labor Council Chair Donna Phillips, BSN, RN, in support of protesting employees at the Sheraton Anchorage Hotel & Spa in Anchorage, Alaska, on September 10, 2014.

The employees are represented by UNITE HERE and have been fighting for a contract for more than six years. The Sheraton hotel is owned by the Remington Hotel Corporation (RHC), which has engaged in a vicious anti-union campaign against both the hotel's workers and their union. The National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) has determined that the RHC at the Sheraton hotel has committed numerous unfair labor practices. The demonstration, attended by more than 200 trade unionists in the Anchorage area, was sponsored by the Alaska AFL-CIO under the leadership of President Vince Beltrami.



**Top:** Rallying in support of workers at the Sheraton hotel in Anchorage, Alaska, are OPEIU Nurses Council (ONC) Chair and Local 22 President Paige Yates RN; ONC Vice Chair and Hawai'i Nurses' Association (HNA)/OPEIU Local 50 President Joan Craft RN, who also serves as OPEIU Region V Vice President; Rick Erickson, firefighter for the Municipality of Anchorage; Alaska Nurses Association Vice President Jane Erickson, ADN, RN, CCRN; AaNA Vice President Janet Pasternak, BA, BSN, RN, who also is vice president of the Providence Registered Nurses; OPEIU Director of Organization and Field Services Kevin Kistler; and general counsel Melvin Schwarzwald. Also attending the rally from OPEIU, but not pictured, were OPEIU Region VI Vice President and Local 8 Business Manager Suzanne Mode and OPEIU Director of Communication, Education and Research Nicole Korkolis. **Bottom:** International President Michael Goodwin, Alaska AFL-CIO President Vince Beltrami and Alaska Nurses Association Vice President Jane Erickson, ADN, RN, CCRN, at the rally.

## Gabriel Retires as Pignataro Elected New FCT Leader

After more than 27 years of dedicated service to New York's Catholic school system, Patricia Gabriel has retired as president of the Federation of Catholic Teachers (FCT)/OPEIU Local 153. FCT Vice President Julia Pignataro has been elected the new president.

"It has been a pleasure and an honor to work with Pat Gabriel all these years, and OPEIU and Local 153 look forward to working with Julia Pignataro and the FCT administration," said International President and Local 153 Business Manager Michael Goodwin.

"Pat and I worked together in many contract negotiations, and I know from that experience how much she has cared for the members of FCT," said OPEIU Region II Vice President and Local 153 Secretary-Treasurer Richard Lanigan. "I also know that Julia and the entire FCT administration share Pat's devotion to the FCT membership, and for that reason alone I think Catholic school teachers in the New York Archdiocese can expect the continuation of fierce and determined representation by their union."

Gabriel's career as a Catholic school teacher began at St. Teresa in Staten Island in 1987. She taught at St. Sylvester, another Staten Island Catholic school, from 1990 until 2002. In 1995, she became a member of the FCT's Executive Council; she became the union's treasurer in 1996 and was elected vice president in 2002 when Mary-Ann Perry was elected president. Gabriel became president on July 1, 2008.

She has been involved in all FCT contract negotiations since 1995, but she believes that this is only part of the job as a union official. Helping members is the absolute priority, she said, and they are extremely deserving of this assistance.

"Nobody realizes how much Catholic school teachers do," Gabriel said. "They are dedicated, hardworking instructors who always put their students first."

Gabriel went on to say that she was proud to advocate and fight for FCT members, who teach in schools that



Retiring FCT President Pat Gabriel (second from right) and newly elected President Julia Pignataro (far right) with International President and Local 153 Business Manager Michael Goodwin, retired FCT Vice President Eileen Sweeney, and OPEIU Region II Vice President and Local 153 Secretary-Treasurer Richard Lanigan.

are within the boundaries of the Archdiocese of New York. "Being a union officer is very difficult, but it is also very rewarding. A teacher with a problem should never say to a union official, 'I am sorry to bother you,' because it is never a bother. It is our job to serve the members," said Gabriel.

Recently elected by acclamation, Pignataro replaces Gabriel as president, MaryLou Colucci is the new vice president and Joanne Perrotta remains as secretary-treasurer. Also elected by acclamation were members of the FCT's Executive Council: Theresa L. Amarosa, Maureen L. DeMeo, Jennifer Farrell, Venice K. Hunter, Daniel A. Linehan, Kenneth J. Martineau, Mary Mulderrig and Gloria N. Reyes. Council members Mary Ann Driscoll and Jennifer Fleckenstein have retired.

Pignataro praised Gabriel's service to FCT members, saying, "She did a great job for our members, and we will miss

her terribly." Pignataro was reminded of a comment frequently made by Local 153 Secretary-Treasurer Lanigan: "We build on the shoulders of those who precede us."

"That comment certainly applies here," Pignataro said. "Pat was the glue that held us together. She was such a knowledgeable leader that I found working for her to be an educational experience. I realize these are difficult shoes to fill, but I and the entire FCT administration are determined to see the union remain strong for the membership."

"I'm very confident that I'm leaving the FCT in very good hands," said Gabriel. "Knowing that we have such good people in the FCT's administration made it easier for me to make the decision to retire, which I am doing so that I can spend more time with my family," which includes her husband, Jack, five children, and nine grandchildren.

## AMLU Elects New Officers

The members of the Association of Minor League Umpires (AMLU)/OPEIU Guild 322 recently held elections and voted for Clint Fagan to serve as president after Shaun Francis stepped down to assume the position of executive director.

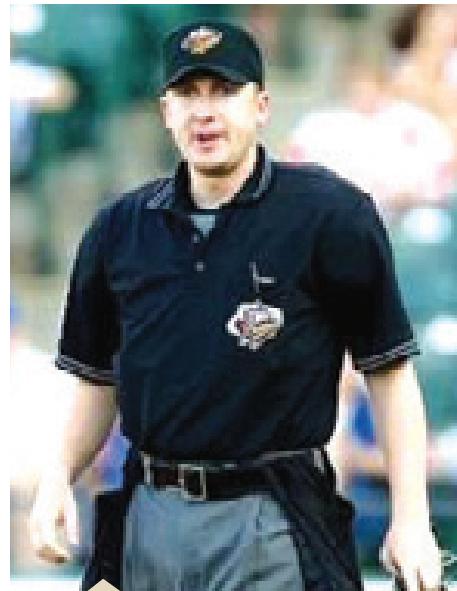
Also elected were First Vice President Chris Tipton, Second Vice President Jeff Gorman, Recording Secretary Brett Terry and Treasurer Mike Wiseman, who will hold office until December 31, 2016.

"The AMLU is a strong union with several bright ideas to strengthen our profession," said Fagan.

"I want to thank you for letting me serve as your president," said Francis

in a note to the membership. "I believe that we accomplished so much in the last seven years ... and this time around we made so many gains because of the support and strength of having OPEIU on our side.

"I look forward to continuing to serve as the executive director of AMLU and continuing to move this union forward and fighting for the umpires."



Shaun Francis, who will now serve as executive director.

## Local 106 Settles Contract With Charter Oak Federal Credit Union

On July 14, 2014, the members of Local 106 in Groton, Connecticut, voted to ratify an agreement with Charter Oak Federal Credit Union that includes a \$1,000 signing bonus for each employee, paid by check on August 1.

The contract also includes significant improvement in wages, totaling 14 percent over the four-year agreement while protecting other priorities such as seniority, medical coverage and profit sharing. The negotiating committee ensured that the contract

made gains in accidental and sickness insurance, sick leave, and profit sharing, among other improvements.

"This contract is the direct result of the hard work and tremendous job of the negotiation committee members - Vice President Patricia Mehlenbacher, Secretary-Treasurer Dana Wightman and Steward Pola VonFaulkenberg," said Local 106 President and Chief Steward Paul Bruno Jr. "They are to be congratulated and thanked for their dedication to the members and

for achieving a fair contract for the members."

The contract "substantially exceeds the wage and benefits packages of the major financial institutions as well as major financial agreements negotiated nationally," said the negotiation committee in a letter to the members. "We believe this agreement will provide greater job security and stability for our membership."

## Local 109 Membership Ratifies Contract With AMC

The members of Local 109 have ratified a new contract with Air Methods Corporation (AMC) that includes a 9 percent wage increase over the life of the three-year agreement, pay steps of 1.6 percent for each of the three years and a number of other improvements.

In a mail vote of 475 to 217, with 692 out of a possible 1,148 pilots

voting, the contract was ratified and is effective retroactively to January 1, 2014. Among other highlights are the retention of geographic differential pay and the addition of credit for sick and vacation time for relief pilots. Pilots will also now receive leave-of-absence protection when the FAA delays issuing medical certificates, and

pilots in temporary positions will now become permanent after 12 months. Medical and dental coverage also will be extended in layoffs or furloughs.

The Local 109 negotiating committee was comprised of Trustee Steve Rush, and pilots Patrick Mahany and Max Martin.

## Labor Secretary Perez Meets With Local 502

After speaking at Oberlin College's commencement this spring, Secretary of Labor Thomas Perez attended a reception held in his honor by OCOPE (Oberlin College Office and Professional Employees) Local 502 that included members and a few faculty, staff, and guests to discuss job creation and preparation, education, and other issues of concern to the union.

"We were very honored to have the opportunity to talk to the secretary in such an intimate setting," said Local 502 President Anne Sprague. "Mr. Perez's commencement address encouraged everyone to put community values before individualism and help fill 'opportunity gaps' in America and around the world. He said 'true progress is possible if you keep an open mind, listen to all sides and focus on results.'"



Local 502 President Anne Sprague (fourth from left) with Secretary of Labor Thomas Perez (third from left), Local 502 First Vice President Diane Lee and Secretary Greg Solow (second row), and members Elizabeth Gilmour and Brenda Snell (first and second from right). Also pictured from OCSA (Oberlin College Security Association, members of Local 19) are President Dave Cannon Jr. (far left) and Local 19 President Carolyn Stafford (second from left).

## Local 277 Tells ALEC: Don't Mess With Texas!

Local 277 in Fort Worth, Texas, joined other labor unions and community, civil rights, and faith organizations in Tarrant and Dallas counties to protest the annual meeting of the American Legislative Exchange Conference (ALEC) on July 30, 2014, in Dallas.

According to Local 277 President and Business Manager Becky Turner, more than 500 concerned citizens let ALEC know "they cannot come to Texas and expect to get by with their secret meetings to outsource jobs and make laws that are against working families and the labor movement."

"The July 30 protest was one of the largest protests in the last few years that let politicians know they should be working for us and not billionaires like the Koch brothers and corporate lobbyists," said Turner, who also serves as OPEIU Region IV vice president.

Local 277 accepted the challenge of the Tarrant County Central Labor Council to have the most members at the protest event and had 25 members and associate members show up. As it turned out, Local 277 tied with the International Association of Machinists Local 776 for the most protestors from labor in the county.



**Left:** Local 277 Recording Secretary Tyler Turner and Chief Steward of AIL Home Office and a Trustee on the Local 277 Executive Board DeAundra Cephus protest in front of the Anatole Hotel in Dallas, Texas, where the annual meeting of ALEC was taking place.

**Bottom:** Local 277 members at the protest.



## Local 6 Vice President Cuiffredo Honored as Female Democrat of the Year

Local 6 Vice President Lois Cuiffredo was named Female Democrat of the Year at the Worcester Democratic City Committee's John F. Kennedy Awards Dinner for her strong belief in the principles of the Democratic Party and her personal sense of fairness for all people, driving her to make a difference every day.

Cuiffredo's involvement in Democratic politics began four decades ago with the campaign of former State Representative Andrew Collaro, and she has remained active ever since. She grew up in a family where Democratic politics and union activism were a way of life. Her late father, Matteo Cuiffredo, was a longtime union leader with the United Steelworkers of America, and he impressed upon his children the importance of participation in government.

Professionally, Cuiffredo has worked at the Massachusetts Trial Courts Worcester Division Probation Department for the past 45 years and currently serves as office manager. She is also an active member of Local 6, serving in many capacities over the past 30 years, including her current office of vice president.

"Lois gives 100 percent to everything she does, whether it be as a union leader, as a force within the Democratic Party, in her involvement in a number of charitable



Local 6 Secretary-Treasurer Donna Barrette (left) and International Secretary-Treasurer and Local 6 President/Business Manager Mary Mahoney (right) with honoree Lois Cuiffredo at the Worcester Democratic City Committee's JFK Awards Dinner.

and civic causes in the community, or on the job in the court system," said OPEIU Secretary-Treasurer and Local 6 President/Business Manager Mary Mahoney. "Local 6 is proud to have her representing us as vice president and extends its sincere congratulations on this wonderful honor."

## Local 459 Wins Election at Hurley Medical Center

Sharon Taylor



OPEIU Region VII Vice President and Local 459 President Sharon Taylor reports that the union has won an election among nurse practitioners and physician assistants at Hurley Medical Center in Flint, Michigan, by a vote of 30 to 7 in a unit of 46 employees.

"Congratulations to Local 459 on their success, once again proving that OPEIU is a leader in the representation of healthcare workers," said International President Michael Goodwin.

The organizing drive was led by Local 459 Senior Service Representatives Jeffrey Fleming and Lance Rhines.

## Fish Elected President of Guild 17



The National Association of Professional Allstate Agents (NAPAA)/OPEIU Guild 17 held its annual elections for officers and directors, and members voted overwhelmingly to elect retiring Executive Director Jim Fish as president, a position he also held from 2000 to 2003.

Other election winners were Debe Campos-Fleenor, executive vice president; Judy Ost, secretary; Greg Thompson, treasurer; and Dale Revels and Michael Haines, directors. Continuing in the second year of their terms are Al Bullard and Lezlee Liljenberg. Outgoing President Bob Isacsen now serves as immediate past president.

"We congratulate Jim Fish on his victory and are looking forward to working with him and the rest of the officers and directors of NAPAA," said International President Michael Goodwin. "We would also like to thank Bob Isacsen for his many years of service and commitment to the organization and to the members of Allstate."

NAPAA/OPEIU Guild 17 would like to recognize the outgoing Treasurer, Ish Melendez, for his loyal and dedicated service over the past several years.

NAPAA, whose membership consists of agents under contract with the Allstate Insurance Company, was founded in 1990 as a nonprofit organization. NAPAA affiliated with OPEIU on September 1, 2011, as Guild 17.



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## WHITE COLLAR



### Secretary-Treasurer Mahoney Meets With President Obama

A small group of labor leaders, among them OPEIU Secretary-Treasurer Mary Mahoney, recently met with President Obama at a Senate Majority PAC Roundtable event in New York City.

"The power of the J.B. Moss Voice of the Electorate (VOTE) Fund ensures that OPEIU is involved in high-level discussions like these with the president," said Mahoney. "It demonstrates the importance of the VOTE Fund, how it provides access and a voice at the table to help shape national policy that affects working people."

**Vote on November 4!**  
Working America's Future Hangs in the Balance