

The Magazine of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO



92,155

BOLD, BRAVE, DETERMINED

*We're marching together
to grow our union*

PAGE 15

ELECTION PREVIEW

How **We WIN** in 2014

PAGE 10



Winning Strategy



What does it mean to be **Bold, Brave, Determined**? The theme of the 41st AFSCME International Convention is written all over the faces of the Volunteer Member Organizers (VMOs) on the cover of this issue of *WORKS* as they lead the charge to **Organize!**

In Chicago they rallied to support the city's taxi drivers, whose quest is to organize with Council 31. See more about the taxi drivers' campaign beginning on **Page 12**.

The delegates earlier learned that we nearly doubled our 50,000 Stronger campaign goal, adding 92,155 new members since February, thanks in large measure to the activism of our VMOs. You can read more about the convention beginning on **Page 15**, and more about how member organizing makes a difference on **Page 18**.

Our **Bold, Brave, Determined** spirit cannot be denied. Together we will win!

CONTENTS

FYI

It's simple: More unions mean a stronger working class. P6

ELECTION 2014

Critical votes across America. P10

FARES AND FAIRNESS

Cab drivers in New Orleans and Chicago organize. P12

COVER STORY

AFSCME marches boldly into the future. P15

WE ARE AFSCME

From RNs to COs, VMOs grow our mighty Green Machine. P18

AFSCME ACROSS AMERICA

Our sisters and brothers give back, salute hero veterans. P25



PRESIDENT
Lee Saunders

SECRETARY-TREASURER
Laura Reyes

INTERNATIONAL VICE PRESIDENTS

Ken Allen
PORTLAND, OREGON

Henry Bayer
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

Ken Deitz, RN
SAN DIMAS, CALIFORNIA

Greg Devereux
OLYMPIA, WASHINGTON

Danny Donohue
ALBANY, NEW YORK

David Fillman
HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA

Michael Fox
HARRISBURG, PENNSYLVANIA

Kathleen Garrison
LATHAM, NEW YORK

Raglan George Jr.
NEW YORK, NEW YORK

Mattie Harrell
WILLIAMSTOWN, NEW JERSEY

Johanna Puno Hester
SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA

Danny Homan
DES MOINES, IOWA

Melvin Hughes Sr.
HOUSTON, TEXAS

Salvatore Luciano
NEW BRITAIN, CONNECTICUT

John Lyall
WORTHINGTON, OHIO

Kathryn Lybarger
OAKLAND, CALIFORNIA

Roberta Lynch
CHICAGO, ILLINOIS

Christopher Mabe
WESTERVILLE, OHIO

Glenard Middleton Sr.
BALTIMORE, MARYLAND

Ralph Miller
LOS ANGELES, CALIFORNIA

Gary Mitchell
MADISON, WISCONSIN

Douglas Moore Jr.
SAN DIEGO, CALIFORNIA

Frank Moroney
BOSTON, MASSACHUSETTS

Henry Nicholas
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA

Randy Perreira
HONOLULU, HAWAII

Steven Quick
INDIANAPOLIS, INDIANA

Lillian Roberts
NEW YORK, NEW YORK

Eddie Rodriguez
NEW YORK, NEW YORK

Lawrence Roehrig
LANSING, MICHIGAN

Joseph Rugola
COLUMBUS, OHIO

Eliot Seide
SOUTH ST. PAUL, MINNESOTA

Mary Sullivan
ALBANY, NEW YORK

Braulio Torres
SAN JUAN, PUERTO RICO

Jeanette Wynn
TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA

Gary Tavormina, Chair
Retiree Council
WOODBOURNE, NEW YORK

Online

at AFSCME.org



50,000 Stronger

You have the power to help our union grow **50,000 Stronger**. It starts with just one small conversation with your coworker. Learn how you can help build AFSCME at AFSCME.org/50kstronger

“To be honest, it was tiring, but I think worth it. I ask everyone at work – make sure they’re signed up. We’re getting there.”

—Phyliss Pitts,
Special Education
Teaching Assistant,
Louisville, Kentucky
Local 4011, Council 962

EMS Professionals Go AFSCME

EMS professionals nationwide are coming together to improve their jobs and the critical services they provide. Check out this latest episode on AFSCME.TV



Like us on  facebook.com/afscme

Follow us on  twitter.com/afscme

Email us at  works@afscme.org

Update your info at  my.afscme.org

ONLINE EXCLUSIVE
Harris v. Quinn
AFSCME.org/HvQreport



Official Publication of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO

Subscription to members only.
Cover Photo: Khalid Naji-Allah

PRODUCED BY THE AFSCME COMMUNICATIONS DEPARTMENT

DIRECTOR
Christopher Policano
ASSOCIATE DIRECTOR
Cynthia McCabe
ASSISTANT DIRECTOR
Michael Byrne

WRITER/EDITORS

Joye Barksdale
David Card
Pablo Ros
Olivia Sandbothe
Clyde Weiss

EDITORIAL COORDINATOR

Tiffanie Bright
DESIGN
Groff Creative, LLC
www.groffcreative.com

AFSCMEWORKS

(ISSN 1072-9992) is published quarterly by the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO, 1625 L St., N.W., Washington, DC 20036-5687.
202.429.1145 Telephone
202.659.0446 TDD
202.429.1120 Fax

Facebook facebook.com/afscme
Twitter twitter.com/afscme
E-mail works@afscme.org
Website www.afscme.org

Periodical postage paid at Washington, DC, and additional mailing offices.

POSTMASTER, SEND ADDRESS CHANGES TO:
AFSCMEWORKS
1625 L Street, N.W.
Washington, DC 20036-5687



Job No. 1: Reaffirming American Values This Election Season



**“POLITICAL
ACTIVISM IS THE
CULTURE OF
OUR UNION; IT’S
IN OUR BONES.
THAT’S WHY OUR
MEMBERS STAND
UP, AND STAND
OUT.”**

We made news at our 41st Annual Convention this July by welcoming 92,000 new members, and flooding the streets of Chicago with an ocean of green in support of the city’s cab drivers. President Obama and Secretary of Labor Tom Perez reiterated their support of our efforts to organize and bargain collectively.

We also heard from many of our allies, and were riveted by an impassioned appeal from our good friend the Rev. Dr. William Barber to come together and defeat the forces of greed — the Koch brothers and the other billionaires who want to shake down our pension funds and destroy public service unions. “If we join together, we can win,” the Rev. Dr. Barber said. And we couldn’t agree more.

CRITICAL ELECTION SEASON

Job No. 1 coming out of the convention is to ensure that we defeat the union-busters in statehouses and Congress in November; elect candidates who will stand up for all working families by defending the right to bargain collectively; and help to fulfill the American Dream of retirement security.

At the convention, Mary Burke and Charlie Crist — running against Gov. Scott Walker in Wisconsin and Gov. Rick Scott in Florida — reminded us just how much is at stake in these off-year elections. Basic workers’ rights and the livelihood of every public employee are at stake. Too many politicians are out on the stump scapegoating public service workers. We need champions out there defending us. We need to elect candidates such as Mary Burke in Wisconsin and Charlie Crist in Florida.

There are critical elections in every part of our AFSCME nation — where you work and where you live. We have 36 governors’ races and 36 U.S. Senate races this year. All 435 seats in the U.S. House of Representatives are up for grabs. The vast majority of state legislative chambers also are in play.

WE HAVE THE POWER

With energized and motivated members in every corner of our country, AFSCME can make a difference — if we register and vote.

It’s that simple. We have the power. Political activism is the culture of our union; it’s in our bones. That’s why our members stand up, and stand out.

We don’t have to wait until Nov. 4, either. We can get involved now. Make sure you’re registered to vote and vote early if you can. We can also talk with our co-workers, friends, neighbors and relatives and get them involved. Our enemies are coming after us. We must be ready to fight back in the political arena.

Lee Saunders
President

Different Jobs, Common Cause

“We’re probably not what comes to mind when you think about a unionized workforce, but believe me anyone who wants a voice on the job, including those of us whose job is on four wheels, needs a union.”

That was the message Delores Montgomery, a New Orleans cab driver, delivered to delegates at the 41st AFSCME International Convention in July. She was joined by cab drivers from Chicago who began their own organizing drive. Together they told a powerful story about a different kind of workforce that is in desperate need of a union (see story, Page 12).

Cab drivers are not alone. More and more public service workers are organizing with AFSCME. Last year, home care providers in Vermont won the largest organizing victory in that state’s history. Medical interpreters in California are fighting for a voice on the job so that communication is clear during a medical emergency. Child care providers, too, are coming together to provide children with consistent, high-quality care from a stable workforce.

NON-TRADITIONAL WORKSITE

These workers provide a vital public service that our communities rely on, but, unlike most AFSCME members, they do not have a traditional worksite such as a government office or facility. Instead, they work in their homes or the homes of their clients, they are assigned to hospitals or doctors’ offices or, in the case of cab drivers, they work in cars on city streets.

The isolated nature of their jobs means they are especially vulnerable to unfair treatment, unsafe conditions, attacks and harassment from politicians. It also means they are workers in critical need of

the benefits and protections only found through a union.

As a former home care provider, I understand their struggle. My work kept me in my home for days at a time. I often felt isolated from my fellow providers and powerless against the attacks we faced. Working alone, it was difficult to see our collective strength.

I was connected to my sisters and brothers. Together, we had a powerful voice.

UNIONS WORK NO MATTER THE WORKPLACE

The same is true for cab drivers in Chicago, medical interpreters in Washington state, child care providers in Albany and for all AFSCME members in every sector. It does not matter if we work together in an office, independently at home or on our city streets.

This core belief was on display for all to see in Chicago when several thousand AFSCME members rallied, across from City Hall, in support of cab drivers’ efforts to organize and improve their working conditions. Corrections officers and emergency medical technicians, nurses and social workers, sanitation workers and bus drivers all came together to say we are a united family and we all deserve respect for the work we do and the services we provide. I could not be more proud of my sisters and brothers and our union.



Laura Reyes
Secretary-Treasurer



“WE ARE A UNITED FAMILY AND WE ALL DESERVE RESPECT.”

This Is How Strong Unions Help Fight Against Inequality

When workers stand together as union sisters and brothers, we are stronger than when we stand alone. That's why corporate-backed lawmakers, right-wing billionaires like the Koch brothers and anti-union organizations like the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC) want to destroy unions. They know strong unions cut into their enormous profits by ensuring that workers earn wages that can support their families, and that they have good benefits such as health care and retirement security.

Look at these charts at right, posted at unionswork.us. They demonstrate that when unions are strong (that is, when union density goes up), wealth is distributed more equally and income inequality declines. But there is a flipside. When union membership goes down, so does the middle class.

Unions are one of our only counterbalances to big corporations and the super-rich who tilt the playing field in their favor so they can hoard more and more of our nation's wealth.

If you believe unions are important for a fair economy then please visit unionswork.us. Sign the petition and spread the word on Facebook and Twitter about how unions work for all of us.

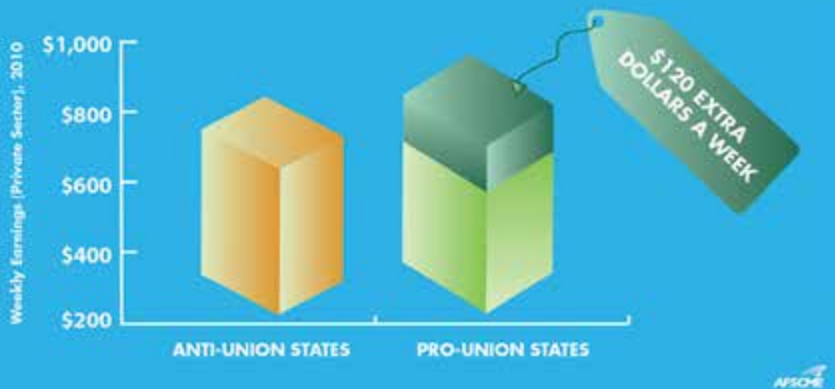
To read more, visit
UNIONSWORK.US

When Union Density Goes Down Income Inequality Goes Up



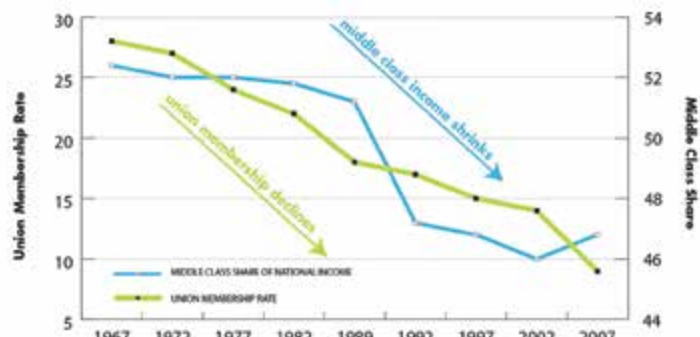
SOURCE: ECONOMIC POLICY INSTITUTE

All Workers Do Better in Pro-Union States



SOURCES: BARRY T. HIRCH, DAVID A. MACPHERSON AND WAYNE G. VROMAN, "ESTIMATES OF UNION DENSITY BY STATE," MONTHLY LABOR REVIEW (2001); AND U.S. CENSUS BUREAU.

When Union Density Declines So Does the Middle Class



SOURCE: U.S. BUREAU OF LABOR STATISTICS, U.S. CENSUS BUREAU

STATE LEGISLATIVE ROUNDUP

Public employees made waves in state capitals this year.

By Olivia Sandbothe

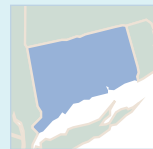
BREAKING NEW GROUND

MINNESOTA: “This was the best legislative session in a generation,” said Eliot Seide, director of AFSCME Council 5 and an AFSCME International vice president. “We showed working people that state government can improve their lives.” Minnesota made



important strides this session, including raising the hourly minimum wage to \$9.50. Another landmark bill was the Women’s Economic Security Act, which strengthens women’s rights in the workplace through a number of measures, including an enforcement process for existing equal pay laws, improved family leave, and better legal protections for pregnant women. This bill is a good model of how responsible legislative action can help strengthen middle-class families and help close the wage gap. The state also expanded voter access with an online voter registration system, another AFSCME priority.

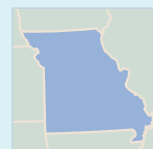
CONNECTICUT: One of AFSCME’s major priorities



right now is raising the minimum wage, and while lawmakers at the federal level are dragging their feet on the issue, it’s gaining traction in state capitals. In April, Connecticut became the first state to raise its minimum wage to \$10.10 per hour. The raise will take place in incremental steps but will be complete by 2017. The move will affect an estimated 228,000 workers who are currently earning less than \$10.10. The Legislature also passed an important retirement security measure.

TAKING A STAND

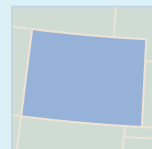
MISSOURI: While the Legislature threatened to pass right-to-work and



paycheck deception laws this session, both were defeated with strong bipartisan opposition. AFSCME and allies brought thousands of workers to the Capitol in Jefferson City,

where they were met by Republicans and Democrats alike who were willing to put workers’ interests ahead of House Speaker Tim Jones’ extremist agenda. The session wasn’t all good news, though. The state still won’t accept federal funds to allow poor Missourians access to Medicaid, and the Legislature passed an enormous tax cut, which will benefit wealthy Missourians while leaving many of the state’s public services in jeopardy.

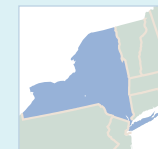
COLORADO: The union successfully defeated a number of bad bills this session, fending off right-to-work and a loosening of wage and hour protections.



The anti-retirement Arnold Foundation and its right-wing allies had the Colorado Public Employees Retirement Association in the crosshairs this session, but AFSCME managed to push back bills that would have reduced benefits and raised the retirement age. Unfortunately, the next step in protecting pensions will have to wait until next year. A coalition with groups like the AARP and the Denver Metro Chamber of Commerce wasn’t able to pass a bill creating the Colorado Retirement Security Task Force, but efforts will continue next session. On the positive side, the Legislature achieved an

important reform in the workers’ compensation system by expanding doctor choice for injured workers.

NEW YORK: AFSCME member activism made a bad budget a little better in this year’s legislative session. While Governor Cuomo’s



final budget still included giveaways to Wall Street and the wealthy at a time when revenues are badly needed for public services, AFSCME and allies were able to convince their senators and Assembly members to fend off the worst of the proposals. A plan to tighten the restrictions on local property tax revenue — which have already cost around 9,000 public sector jobs in the state — was averted with a compromise that will allow local governments to protect key services. There were also a few outright victories in Albany. The budget includes a \$500 million increase in state education funding and a raise for home care and direct care providers represented by DC 1707.

A Raise for Every Home Care Worker in Vermont!

By Kevin Hanes and Clyde Weiss

BURLINGTON, VT. — This June, the 7,500 home care providers across the state won their first contract victory, a historic agreement that calls for every home care provider to receive a well-deserved raise.

It took more than 18 months of hard work for the providers to build a union of their own. They got active, volunteering to knock on doors of fellow providers to inform them of what a union would mean to them, personally. They succeeded last October, when 71 percent voted for representation by AFSCME Vermont Homecare United. Theirs was the largest union vote and organizing win in the state's history, and it was also the largest organizing win in the nation in 2013.

Last November, the providers relaunched their union as Local 4802 (AFSCME Council 93).

Then they launched into a months-long process of negotiations with the state on a first contract. Once they reached a tentative agreement in May on a deal that provided a 30 percent raise to the lowest-paid members, they could hardly contain their enthusiasm.

"As a new member of AFSCME, it was amazing to sit across the table and negotiate on behalf of all home care providers," said Janelle Blake, a member of the Local 4802 bargaining committee. "For the first time, I feel like the work I do is respected and thousands of home care providers will receive a living wage."

"I was impressed by the resolve of Local 4802's bargaining committee," said Council 93 Exec. Dir. Frank Moroney, who is also an AFSCME International vice president. "They took their responsibility very seriously, gaining grievance language and a raise for every single provider in Vermont. This is a huge victory for these hard-working women and men, who for too long didn't get the respect and dignity they deserved."

The home care providers didn't stop at their contract victory. Members of this new local also took their message to the state Legislature, urging lawmakers to increase funding in the annual budget to fully fund their contract.

"Again, AFSCME Local 4802 jumped to action," said Moroney. "Their rapid-response calls put pressure on the Legislature to fully fund the budget and made all the difference. The Legislature was in the final hours of the budget process. This local is a model of how to build a union — big things lie ahead for them and we are glad to have them as part of Council 93."



Pres. Lee Saunders and members of Local 4802, Council 93, celebrate the signing of the providers' first contract in Burlington on June 12. Shown (left to right) are providers Mary Warren and Jairo Dechtiar; Jeb Spaulding, secretary of Administration; President Saunders and Gov. Peter Shumlin.

Workers are also organizing with AFSCME in other states. Here is a look at some recent victories:

CALIFORNIA

Five-hundred fifty EMS professionals employed at American Medical Response in Riverside County, California, voted to join AFSCME, forming Local 4911.

DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA

Forty-five employees of Dumbarton Oaks, a Harvard University research library and museum in Washington, DC, voted to join AFSCME Local 3650, the Harvard Union for Clerical and Technical Workers (HUCTW), based in Cambridge, Massachusetts.

ILLINOIS

Ninety direct care employees of Mosaic, a faith-based organization serving people with intellectual disabilities, located in Rockford, joined Council 31.

MINNESOTA

Sixty-two patient access representatives who provide reception, scheduling and clinical support for the Sanford Health Bemidji Area Clinic system in Northwest Minnesota, joined Council 65 through voluntary recognition. Also, 28 workers at Hennepin County Medical Center joined Council 5 through majority sign-up.

MISSOURI

Fifty-seven EMS employees of American Medical Response in Independence and South Platte voted to join EMS Workers United-AFSCME.

PENNSYLVANIA

One hundred and forty-five service and maintenance employees at Wesley Enhanced Living in Philadelphia voted overwhelmingly to join National Union of Hospital and Health Care Employees (NUHHC)/AFSCME District 1199C.

To read more, visit AFSCME.org/OFP



An Urgent Call to Action: 'We Cannot Have a Repeat of 2010'

AFSCME members must organize and get out the vote now in the 2014 elections to turn the political tide and regain our rights.

By Clyde Weiss

At a time of stagnant wages, mounting student debt and booming corporate welfare, the 2014 November "mid-term" elections are a crucial step toward leveling the playing field and providing an opportunity for working families to choose leaders whose views reflect our vision of a better America for all.

In 2010, too many working families reeling from the fallout of the Great Recession stayed away from the polls and empowered tea-party politicians to sweep into governors' mansions and congressional offices. Corporate interests and Wall Street financiers were footing the bills for the campaigns of these reactionary forces, and anti-worker extremists won the day in many states. These politicians turned their backs on working families with policies that favor corporate billionaires.

New governors like Scott Walker in Wisconsin, Rick Scott in Florida, and Rick Snyder in Michigan to name a few, moved laws to eliminate collective bargaining, enact "right-to-work," eliminate union dues collection and destroy employee pensions, even going so far as to declare bankruptcy. We can't forget and we can't allow it to happen again!

'It's not enough just to complain about these people and their harmful policies,' warns Pres. Lee Saunders. "If

we get our people out, we strike a blow for the values that make our country the greatest on earth. If we don't, the deep-pocketed special interests will feel free to continue marking the cards to their benefit and at the expense of the millions of hardworking Americans."

PUBLIC SERVICE IN THE BALANCE

The enormity of the challenge and the importance of voter turnout can be seen in the rhetoric of politicians who are scapegoating public service workers. Bruce Rauner, for example, running for governor in Illinois against Pat Quinn, said that he would fire public employees and shut down the government to close the budget deficit. Instead of closing a \$100 billion pension shortfall, Rauner said he would abolish the pension program and use the savings for tax cuts.

Rauner is not alone. Pennsylvania Gov. Tom Corbett is trying to do the same thing in his state. Politicians want to blame hardworking public service workers for their own failings, and we can't let them get away with it. That's why AFSCME will get out the vote for Tom Wolf to unseat Corbett, who (besides threatening pensions) supported a bill to deny public workers the right to bargain collectively.

In November, voters can give the boot to Wisconsin Governor Walker, who also supported pension and health care cuts for public service

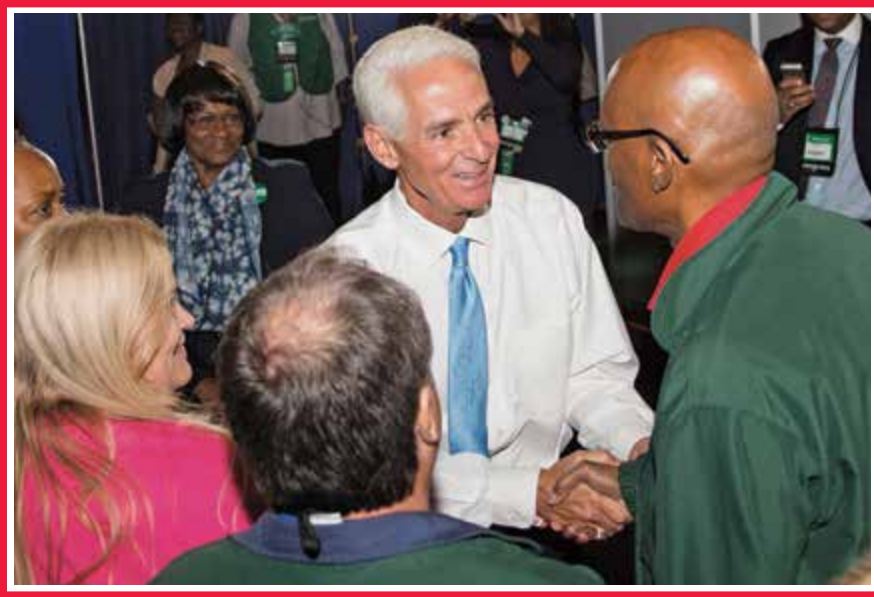
workers, and an 8 percent payroll cut. Then, by pushing through a law that ended collective bargaining in the public sector, he stripped workers of their voice and ability to fight back. We will elect as the next governor Mary Burke, who served as the state's Secretary of Commerce.

We will hit the streets of Michigan to help former Rep. Mark Schauer unseat Snyder, whose support for tax giveaways to corporations and billionaires helped push Detroit into bankruptcy and who also took aim at public service workers and their pensions.

And we're aiming to unseat Governor Scott (Florida), an extremist elected in November 2010 who tried to privatize half the state's prison system, pushing legislation that would have eliminated 25,000 public service jobs. We will get out the vote to replace him with a friend of labor, former Gov. Charlie Crist.

We need to rid Ohio citizens of the pro-big business policies of Gov. John Kasich, who followed Walker's playbook and sought to eliminate bargaining rights for public service workers. We will get out the vote for his pro-worker opponent, Ed FitzGerald.

In Maine, we support progressive gubernatorial candidate Mike Michaud in his bid to unseat Gov. Paul LePage, whose anti-worker agenda includes the creation of "right-to-work zones" that exempt new businesses from collective bargaining requirements. We'll engage



Former governor Charlie Crist, running against anti-union Gov. Rick Scott, meets with Florida delegates after addressing the 41st International Convention, July 15.

in many other states with important governor's races, including Georgia, Hawaii, Iowa, Kansas, Massachusetts and others.

If we're to hold onto our gains and prevent worse things from happening, we've got to protect governors like Mark Dayton (Minnesota), who signed a bill this April raising the state's minimum wage for the first time since 2005; and Dan Malloy (Connecticut), who also raised the state's minimum hourly wage to \$10.10 by 2017 — the highest rate for any state in the country.

Meanwhile, the governors' partners in crime in the state assault on us are state legislators, too many of whom vote in lockstep with the anti-worker American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC). ALEC is funded by corporations and billionaires like the Koch brothers to write model legislation that benefits corporations at the expense of the general public.

So the state legislative elections are equally important, since state lawmakers control budgets that determine our wages and benefits and whether our jobs are outsourced to corporations. The communities we serve are depending on us being involved in these races.

WASHINGTON MATTERS

Extremists also seized control of the U.S. House of Representatives in 2010, with results that were devastating. Speaker John Boehner presided over a chamber of horrors, including 54 failed attempts to unravel or outright repeal the Affordable Care Act. The House right-wing majority would cut Medicare and Medicaid in order to give tax breaks to corporations and the wealthy.

The danger this year is that we could lose our defenders in the Senate if just a few races swing toward the extremists. The "tea party" faction of the Senate is already salivating over that possibility. Among the first bills that could come up would be national "right-to-work," requiring unions to represent workers who refused to pay "fair share" fees to cover their share of collective bargaining costs.

That's why we're putting resources and manpower into Senate races throughout the country, including Iowa, where Rep. Bruce Braley is fighting a smear campaign to succeed retiring Sen. Tom Harkin, and in Michigan, where Gary Peters is trying to succeed another retiring ally, Sen. Carl Levin.

Unions also will work to de-

fend Sens. Mark Begich (Alaska), David Pryor (Arkansas), Mark Udall (Colorado), Mary Landrieu (Louisiana) and Kay Hagan (North Carolina), among others.

It's also vital that we try to unseat U.S. Sen. Mitch McConnell (Kentucky), now leader of the right-wing faction of the Senate whose remark last year that "public sector unions are a 50-year mistake" shows his true sentiments about workers' rights to form a union. He's running against Alison Lundergan Grimes, who asks, "aren't we ready for a United States senator who says collective bargaining is a fundamental right for our American workers and that right-to-work is just another word for union busting?"

Yes! Grimes is the kind of candidate who respects workers' rights and the kind of candidate we support.

WE MUST GET OUT THE VOTE

This November, AFSCME will work overtime, from coast to coast in every region of the country, to support candidates who will protect collective bargaining rights, preserve retirement security, ensure that every American has decent health care coverage and stand up against the corporate billionaire-backed, tea-party agenda.

In every state where AFSCME members live and work, we need volunteers to get out the vote for candidates who stand for collective bargaining rights and other issues important to working families. We will hit the streets through Nov. 4 to make sure that Congress does not turn us even further in the direction the tea party pushed us in 2010. This is a call for all hands on deck!

To win, we must vote in greater numbers than our opponents. It's that simple. It's time to register to vote and vote early where available. We must reach out immediately to our coworkers, friends and neighbors.

To volunteer, please visit AFSCME.org/volunteer2014. If you get involved, we have the power.

Of Fares *AND* Fairness

From Chicago to New Orleans, taxi drivers organize for power

By Pablo Ros and Olivia Sandbothe

Taxi drivers are perhaps the least cohesive group of employees – working in isolation each day in their cabs, sometimes even competing against each other for fares. But like many other employees in nontraditional workplaces, they are learning that they have many common concerns that can only be solved by coming together in a union.

In Chicago, for example, drivers are following the path of taxi drivers in New Orleans who organized with AFSCME and are working together to build political power, electing candidates who will support them in their struggles. The road may be difficult, but they are determined.

Consider Ezzedin Abdelmagid who starts his day around 6 a.m., hopping into his cab in the far north end of Chicago, where he lives, and driving south in search of passengers. Every minute

counts in this business, especially now that the rate to lease a cab rose to \$700 per week. “Unfortunately, there seems to be fewer and fewer street hails available these days,” he says. That means increasing amounts of gas and time spent without a passenger.

As Abdelmagid drives into the downtown loop, he starts to find a few customers — but that doesn’t mean that it’s all smooth sailing. “Whenever a cab driver works downtown, you always have to be concerned about

being ticketed for any number of violations. There are fewer cab stands now, and that means more opportunities to be ticketed and fined for overcrowding a stand.”

On top of that, most of his customers now pay on the credit card machine that he was required to install in his vehicle a few years ago. Credit card companies deduct 5 percent of all of Abdelmagid’s credit card revenue as a processing fee.

Abdelmagid keeps driving until 7 or 8 p.m. But after more than 12 hours on the job, he’s still got fees and regulations to worry about. Commercial vehicles aren’t allowed to park on residential streets in Chicago, so he’s got to pay to leave it at a meter. He guesses that meter fees cost him about \$40 or \$50 each week.

“We don’t have our rights. We don’t have due process. The city does whatever it wants. There is a double standard, and so many

regulations, it just goes on and on,” says Boulem Tchekrabi, who has been driving a cab in Chicago for 18 years. “With AFSCME we have a chance to get organized and have a voice. We need

to have the union to have our voices heard.”



ORGANIZING ON THE STREETS

Drivers in New Orleans found themselves out thousands of dollars after the city government there overhauled cab regulations in 2012. The new rules forced them to take out loans to pay



Niran Gunasekara



for equipment such as security cameras and credit card machines that were only available from favored contractors.

Drivers are proud of their roles as “ambassadors” of New Orleans, and they decided not to take this threat to their financial stability and retirement security without a fight. If they were to continue serving local residents and the thousands of tourists that visit the city each year, they would have to organize. So NOLA cab drivers formed Cab Drivers for Justice/AFSCME Local 234. Their slogan is “Driving New Orleans Forward.”

“I tell people, unions have been in this country for 300 years,” says Niran Gunasekara, who has driven a cab in New Orleans for 30 years and is president of the new local. “American unions started in New York, Detroit, big cities with big industries.”

New Orleans, too, has a big industry: the tourism sector. The NOLA tourism industry brings in more than \$5 billion annually and accounts for 40 percent of the city’s tax revenue. A tourist’s first point of contact is often with a cab driver. From the pick-up area at Louis Armstrong New Orleans International Airport to the French Quarter and Bourbon Street, the business life of New Orleans relies heavily on a quality cab ride. But in both New Orleans and Chicago, the friendly faces of cab drivers are being swept away in the pursuit of profit.

HIGH TECH, LOW STANDARDS

While Ezzedin Abdelmagid’s cab sits at the meter overnight, his livelihood is threatened by a new business model that grows in Chicago. Apps like UberX and Lyft, which allow customers to order a taxi on their smartphones, are taking up an increasing share of the taxi market. They’re convenient and they come with the sheen of Silicon Valley innovation. But the real reason these services are gaining on the traditional taxi model is that their drivers aren’t subject to the same regulations and protections. Most of these new drivers work part time, and they don’t have to meet the safety, insurance and licensing requirements that certified taxi drivers must adhere to.

This is Mayor Rahm Emanuel’s Chicago, where start-ups with shaky business models are left effectively unsupervised while they dismantle public services in the name of entrepreneurship. Emanuel has already spent years pushing to replace the city’s public schools with private charters, a model that drew public outrage for reducing accountability

“We walked miles and miles knocking on doors and talking to people. As a cab driver you meet a lot of people, but this campaign brought me to their neighborhoods. And you hear their stories and their concerns, and they are similar to yours.”

—NIRAN GUNASEKARA

in education and lowering teaching standards. Now the city takes the same approach to the taxi industry, offering the public a shoddier service that puts profits ahead of public safety and a living wage for drivers.

Even as Chicago embraces unregulated taxi services, it piles licensed taxi drivers with punitive restrictions, from higher lease rates to increased ticketing by over-eager “traffic aides” who

Ezzedin Abdelmagid





work on commission. And while all of these changes make it more expensive to operate a cab, fares have been frozen since 2005.

SPEAKING OUT IN CITY POLITICS

Cab drivers are self-employed, but their working conditions are determined by the city. That's why they're organizing with AFSCME. Following in the footsteps of Cab Drivers for Justice in New Orleans, Council 31 now works with drivers across Chicago who are eager to speak up in a system where they often feel like they have no voice.

By building partnerships with community and faith groups, and rallying frequently to bring injustice into public view, Cab Drivers for Justice in New Orleans pushed back against unsafe and unfair working conditions. And although the union faced opposition from Mayor Mitch Landrieu, the drivers continued to grow their political power. In March, they helped elect Nadine Ramsey, a pro-labor candidate, to the City Council. The mayor took notice and is responding to the political pressure brought by Cab Drivers for Justice.

"It was wonderful," says Gunasekara, recalling the experience of rallying voters to elect Ramsey. "We walked miles and miles knocking on doors and talking to people. As a cab driver you meet a lot of people, but this campaign brought me to their neighborhoods. And you hear their stories and their concerns, and they are similar to yours."

In a modest union hall on Chicago's south side, another group of workers is making the first step toward that kind of change. It won't be easy, but these drivers know that the struggle will be worth it.

WISCONSIN TO CONNECTICUT: 2011 COULD HAPPEN TO YOU

Ken Weaver, a Wisconsin AFSCME member who fought with thousands of others in 2011 to try to preserve workers' collective bargaining rights, addressed hundreds of Connecticut union members in April, warning them that the same could happen to them if they're not vigilant.

Weaver, a retired Wisconsin Department of Transportation construction inspector and member of AFSCME Local 758, Council 24, spoke at the "We Are Not Wisconsin" forum held in Middletown, Connecticut, and sponsored by the State Employees Bargaining Agent Coalition (SEBAC), of which Connecticut Council 4 is a member.

Despite its name, the forum is meant to bring home the reality that Connecticut, like any other state, could lose its union rights if right-wing lawmakers gain control of the Statehouse and the governor's mansion.

Weaver noted that Wisconsin was once a union-friendly state. Then elections in 2010 turned the tables on workers, bringing in a right-wing governor, Scott Walker, and tipping the balance of power in the Legislature to favor anti-union forces.

"That is all this is — politics," Weaver said.

Weaver told his Connecticut sisters and brothers that though workers in Wisconsin "may have been knocked down, we're fighting every day. The war is long from over. It never ends."

Dawn Tyson, president of Connecticut Local 538 (Council 4), was among those impressed by Weaver's message. A processing technician for the Department of Social Services, she said Weaver's comments "really brought it home for me. They made me feel energized. But they also awakened me and made me realize the threat is very real. It is an ever-present danger."

TOGETHER, WE HAVE THE POWER TO CHANGE



At a time of unprecedented attacks against public employees, it is more important than ever that we exercise our democratic voice. That's why AFSCME members are volunteering to help us get out the vote and elect candidates who stand with working families. Many donate to our political action fund — PEOPLE — to help us raise money to support our allies.

The November elections are fast approaching, so the first thing is to make sure that you are registered to vote. Each state has different deadlines and rules, so contact your registrar or look up the information online. If you can, vote early. Don't wait until the last minute.

Visit AFSCME.org/members/afscme-people and become a PEOPLE MVP.



Allies like Paul Moist, president of the Canadian Union of Public Employees, celebrating solidarity with Secretary-Treasurer Reyes and President Saunders, are critical to our success.



We Are 92,155 Stronger!

Volunteer Member Organizers lead a 'Bold, Brave, Determined' display at AFSCME's 41st International Convention.

By Clyde Weiss

Today, we are 92,155 members stronger, with new members from EMTs to home care providers, and we will continue our fight for the middle class and the future of this country," Pres. Lee Saunders announced at the start of our 41st International Convention in Chicago in July.

The historic news — that AFSCME's Volunteer Member Organizers (VMOs) since February nearly doubled our goal of adding 50,000 new members by the start of our Convention — comes at a critical time for unions. President Saunders cited the U.S. Supreme Court's June ruling, in the

case of *Harris v. Quinn*, which "made it more challenging for us to represent home care workers and child care providers. But the impact goes even deeper."

"The decision could undermine those workers' ability to engage in meaningful collective bargaining with their public employer, just because they don't fit someone else's definition of a public employee," President Saunders said. "But if anybody thinks we'll give up because things just got a little harder, they are wrong."

BOLD, BRAVE AND DETERMINED ENOUGH.

In a message from the White House, President Obama congratulated AFSCME on our organizing success, and explained why building union power matters.

"AFSCME, whether you're caring for patients, responding to 911 calls or keeping our streets clean and our cities safe, it's men and women like you who make America work," the President told convention delegates in a video address. "And it's unions like yours that helped build the greatest middle class the world has ever known."

The President said all Americans deserve “wages you can live on, savings you can retire on, and workplace flexibility you can count on.” Citing our convention theme, Obama added, “That’s what we can achieve together, if we are bold, brave and determined enough.”

U.S. Secretary of Labor Tom E. Perez told delegates that the Obama administration and, in particular, the Labor Department, is “working side by side with AFSCME members” to pass such measures as comprehensive immigration reform, a minimum wage increase and an extension of emergency unemployment insurance that will improve the economy and grow the middle class. “Too many people still don’t have a job,” he said. “Too many people are working a full-time job and living in poverty.”

Maricruz Manzanarez, a custodian at the University of California-Berkeley and a member of AFSCME Local 3299, delivered impassioned words relating her family’s story. They are struggling to stay together and achieve the American Dream in the face of harsh immigration laws.

“No matter your politics, no matter your birthplace, we are all human,” she said. “And the human dignities of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness have no boundaries.”

SUCCESS STORIES SHARED. Bold, Brave, Determined — our Convention theme — reflects the spirit of AFSCME members who get tougher in the face of those who “want to deplete the labor movement of resources, steal our power and silence our voices and cripple us,” President

Saunders said.

It also reflects the spirit of our army of VMOs who signed up new members, and other AFSCME activists who fought to preserve collective bargaining, oppose outsourcing and elect pro-worker candidates.

VMOs took center stage several times during the Convention. They shared stories of efforts to strengthen local unions through capacity building and internal organizing, which helped us achieve — and exceed — our goal of 50,000 new members by the start of the Convention.

Deloris Wells, a personnel technician for the Miami-Dade Transit department, was among them. A shop steward and member of Local 199 (Council 79), she related how the county slashed worker pay by 5 percent and forced public employees to take unpaid days off.

“Our dignity and morale in the workplace were taken from us, and we were defenseless,” she said. So they fought back, growing the local by more than 1,000 new members. “Thanks to our determination and the power of organizing, we got our 5 percent restored!”

ELECTIONS MATTER. Sec.-Treas. Laura Reyes took the lead on the day devoted to building political power. A former home care provider who became president of UDW Homecare Providers Union (UDW/AFSCME), Reyes said that once she “found my UDW sisters and brothers, I was literally saved.”

Being a member of a union made her realize “that we all deserve better and that our families should not have to

‘Get Together and Win!’

In an electrifying address that had Convention delegates on their feet and cheering repeatedly, the Rev. Dr. William Barber underscored a message of coalition building and solidarity with references pulled from the civil rights and labor movements, as well as Scripture.

“We are all trade unionists. We are all civil rights activists. And it’s about time for all of us to get together and organize America like never before!” he thundered. “It’s time to say to America, ‘We will not turn back now!’” declared the reverend. He is also president of the North Carolina NAACP and founder of the Moral

Mondays-Forward Together movement that is sweeping the nation.

Reverend Barber charged that political extremists, backed by corporate billionaires like the Koch brothers, are pushing “an immoral agenda” that includes denying rights to workers, immigrants, women, African Americans, the LGBTQ community and others.

“And all these agendas intersect because all the same people fighting labor rights are fighting civil rights. So if they are together, by God, we ought to get together and fight them back!”

See his full speech and others at 2014.AFSCME.org



Rev. Dr. William Barber



VMOs and convention delegates rally on behalf of Chicago's cab drivers. At right, Department of Labor Secretary Tom Perez fires up delegates.

sacrifice anymore," Secretary-Treasurer Reyes said. "Brothers and sisters, we all must reach out and open that door for others and help guide them through. We must lead others so they too can lead, and benefit from employment possibilities unhindered by those who oppose our policies."

Florida gubernatorial candidate Charlie Crist and Wisconsin gubernatorial candidate Mary Burke also addressed the delegates, aligning themselves with AFSCME's efforts to empower workers to build the middle class.

"When I was governor before, it was never about right versus left," Crist said. "It was about right versus wrong. That's why I refused to lower retirement programs for state employees," and why he vetoed other anti-worker bills.

Speaking of her campaign against Wisconsin's anti-union Gov. Scott Walker, Burke said, "I'm fighting for people who are making the minimum wage. I'm fighting for women who don't want politicians messing with our health care decisions ... and I am fighting for workers who were disrespected with the loss of collective bargaining."

Delegates also were treated to examples of successful political activism. In Colorado, Council 76 members stood up against radical right-wing lawmakers who wanted to suppress the vote to favor their own candidates.

"We knew we had to stand up," said Josette Jaramillo, a member of Local 1335 (Council 76) in Pueblo. "Instead of waiting for them to turn us away at the polls, we spearheaded a statewide coalition," including the League of Women Voters. They won their electoral reform legislation.

TAKING IT TO THE STREETS. Helping others to find their voice through a union — organizing the unorganized — has always been an AFSCME strength. Highlights of recent campaigns included efforts by Vermont home care providers and New Orleans taxicab drivers to build a union with AFSCME.



At our Convention, we stood in solidarity with Chicago's 13,000 licensed cab drivers, who also are fighting for their rights and a voice on the job. Ezzedin Abdelmagid of Chicago's Cab Drivers United, told delegates about their challenges including "unreasonable regulations and overhead expenses that make it impossible for us to make a decent living."

Later, more than 1,000 delegates rallied downtown with the Windy City's cab drivers. (For more on the campaign, see Page 12.)

ALLIES = STRENGTH. Working with allies is the foundation for effective campaigns. Demonstrating how we strengthen our union through coalition building were AFSCME members who joined on the stage with leaders of groups that helped them achieve political successes.



Such was the case of New York's Civil Service Employees Association (CSEA)/AFSCME Local 1000 and its ally, New Yorkers for Fiscal Fairness (NYFF). Preventing the down-

sizing of New York's State University of New York Health Science Center was their mission. "CSEA led the charge to build a broad coalition" that included faith leaders and community-based groups, said NYFF Exec. Dir. Ronald Deutsch.

Deutsch said they needed help to win the fight. Hospital staff joined patients and preachers to make public demonstrations to save the institution. "Legislators couldn't shake us," said Deutsch. The state backed down and "threats of cuts, outsourcing and closings stopped," Crockett added. "And for now, SUNY Downstate Medical Center remains the community institution it has been for over 100 years."

Delegates from the Southwestern Legislative District also elected a new International Vice President, Melvin Hughes, president (and a founding member) of the Houston Organization of Public employees (HOPE)/AFSCME Local 123.

Members also honored retiring Council 31 Exec. Dir. and International Vice Pres. Henry Bayer, and International Vice Pres. Lillian Roberts. President Saunders presented Roberts, the executive director of New York's District Council 37, with the AFSCME Lifetime Achievement Award.

Check out electrifying video excerpts of the Convention online at 2014.AFSCME.org.

MEMBER TO

HOW WE BUILD A STRONGER UNION



VMOs and new members have the same goal: winning good contracts and a stronger voice

By Clyde Weiss

From coast to coast, AFSCME Volunteer Member Organizers (VMOs) are knocking on doors, and talking to coworkers about what it means to be an AFSCME member. They've been explaining how a strong union lifts the working class, improves contracts and helps us all have a powerful voice on the job.

These women and men have taken time out of their weekends to participate in our 50,000 Stronger campaign

to build strength in the workplace by organizing new members. For many, becoming an AFSCME member is a no-brainer. But some of our co-workers need to be introduced to the idea of what being part of a strong union means. They may not even be aware that they are not fully participating members. That's why VMOs are so important. Let's meet some of the folks who make our union 50,000 Stronger.

MEMBER

VMO Nadja Robot URBANA, ILLINOIS

As a steward of Local 3700 (Council 31) and a member of her local's contract bargaining team, Nadja Robot knew she needed to become a VMO to increase her union's negotiating strength. Their last contract took 14 months to negotiate. With more workers standing in solidarity, she hoped they would be able to accomplish their task better and quicker when new contract talks began this year.

"Having a show of numbers is going to be very important," said Robot, an office support associate for La Casa Cultural Latina, one of several student cultural centers at the University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.

That's why Robot joined a group of other Local 3700 members one weekend in April to learn how to become a VMO. Also, she figured it would be "a good way for me to connect with people" in her unit.

Some of her university colleagues had not signed up to join AFSCME, even though they received the same contract benefits that she does. Signing up these so-called "fair-share payers" to become members of the union was her goal, and she even surprised herself, signing up two new members even before the weekend blitz got underway. One of them also agreed to become a VMO and went out door-knocking, too.

By the end of the weekend blitz, Robot had signed up

four new members, and the entire group of VMOs signed up about 50, "which I think is amazing," she said.

Robot remains optimistic about those she met who didn't sign up that weekend. "Even if the card wasn't signed that day, they know my name now," she explained. "They'll be more likely to sign in the future."

NEW MEMBER Derwin Kalani Gilman OAHU, HAWAII

For the past 12 years, Deputy Sheriff Derwin Kalani Gilman was covered by good contracts negotiated by the Hawaii Government Employees Association (HGEA/AFSCME Local 152). Recently, he signed up for an AFSCME program called the Public Safety Protection Program, which provides legal representation to officers like him if they ever have the need to use it.

But when he tried to apply for the program, he said, "I found out I wasn't in the system. I was shocked. I thought I had been paying union dues for 12 years."

What Deputy Gilman didn't realize was that he had never signed up to become a member of his union. The dues he thought he was paying were actually so-called "fair share" fees, which are used for union



representation. But fee payers are not entitled to all benefits of an AFSCME member.

He hadn't given his union membership much thought until he got interested in the Public Safety Police Protection Program, a members-only benefit. He also realized that there might be other members-only benefits he'd be interested in. That's when he contacted his union representative.

"I thought it was about time to sign up," he said. This spring, he did.

"Maybe others who are not aware of the program, should sign up too," he added. "I know there are a lot of deputy sheriffs in my unit who are fee payers, and I don't think they're really aware of what's out there for them" in the union.

"Now that I'm a contributing member, I can actually get out there and spread the word," Deputy Gilman said. "You're missing a lot of stuff if you're not taking advantage" of full union membership.

VMO Willma (Buffy) Buffington HUNTINGTON, TEXAS

After her husband transferred from his job in Ohio, Willma 'Buffy' Buffington took a job as a corrections officer for the Texas Department of Criminal Justice — Huntsville Unit. Coming from such a strong labor state, she said, "I knew how important being union was. Day one, I signed up."

And since that day, Buffington has been active in her union, Local 3807, AFSCME Texas Correctional Employees Council. Recently, she signed up as a VMO to make the union more powerful.



MEMBER TO MEMBER:

HOW WE BUILD A STRONGER UNION

She's not shy about meeting people to talk about why it's important to join AFSCME.

"When signing up people, you need someone with a big mouth, and I've got that," she boasted. "I love talking to people, getting to know them. I knew that growing the union was the key to making things better."



When faced with reluctant colleagues, Buffington isn't afraid of telling her co-workers what's really at stake. "If someone says, 'Well, I don't know, it's a lot of money,' I ask them how much money they'll have if they don't have a job? I ask them if things will be better if we go private. I've worked at a private prison, making \$9.80 an hour with no benefits. When you lay out what's at stake, you start to see their eyes open."

New Member **Wanda Murry** PINE BLUFF, ARKANSAS

The call from an AFSCME VMO came as an answer to her prayer, says Wanda Murry of Pine Bluff, Arkansas. A member from another state had called to tell her about the union, and she was more than ready to listen.

She was ready to sign up.

The VMO offered Murry hope. A home care provider employed for the past three years with the Arkansas Department of Health's in-home care program, Murry helps elderly people remain at home by assisting with bathing, personal hygiene, dressing, meals, cleaning and companionship. "They depend on us to come every day," she said. "They have someone to

talk to. Otherwise they'd be home by themselves."

For all the important services she provides, she gets paid only \$7.25 an hour, for a limited number of hours a day. She wrote a letter to management to request a raise, to a minimum \$8.30 an hour, noting the increased cost of living. Her pleas were dismissed, and with no union to represent her or other workers at her department, there was nothing else she could do. "I waited and prayed, and it happened," she said. "A man called."

An organizer from AFSCME had traveled from Florida last September to help organize a union at her workplace. "We got to talking and I said, 'Yes, I want to join this union, because we're not getting raises, we're not getting 401Ks, we're not getting any kind of benefits.'"

She signed up and is now a member of Local 1388 (Council 38). During that time, she's persuaded some of her colleagues to join AFSCME as well. "A lot of them are kind of scared," she said. But she keeps trying to convince them there's nothing to fear.

VMO **Tammi Renner** TOLEDO, OHIO

Tammi Renner, a registered nurse at the University of Toledo Medical Center in Ohio, personally signed up 100 percent of those she approached — approximately 20 people in her cardiovascular unit.

As an executive board member of Local 2415 (Council 8), Renner

understood that strength lies in numbers. That's why, in the midst of negotiating a new contract last spring, she began reaching out to fair share fee payers to encourage them to become members of their union.

"I always tried to get them to understand that every person matters," she says. By becoming a member, she told them, "at least you'll have a voice when it comes to the contract. You can either ratify it or turn it down. It's your right."

Council 8's campaign to increase

membership within already represented units began in January under the direction of Pres. John A. Lyall, also an AFSCME International vice president. Since then, the union grew by more than 1,500 new members, including more than 400 who were fair share fee payers.

There is no secret to their success. It's all about

VMOs like Renner meeting face-to-face with colleagues to explain why joining the union is in their own best interest.

"It empowers them to want to get involved in the union, and be knowledgeable about what issues we're taking to the table, and what conditions we're trying to resolve," says Renner. "That's the only way we're going to resolve bad working conditions — by negotiating them."



**New Members
Aubreeanna Dolan (left)
and Samantha Bragg
MITCHELLVILLE, IOWA**

Corrections officers Aubreeanna Dolan and Samantha Bragg, who work at the Iowa Correctional Institution for Women in Mitchellville, recently walked in together to the office of Local 451 (AFSCME Iowa Council 61). They both wanted to sign up as members.



It was a decision they never doubted.

Bragg, whose father (an ironworker) and mother (a county deputy sheriff) are both union members, said it was natural that she become a union member, too. Besides the benefits of joining, she also wanted to help her union unseat Gov. Terry Branstad because his fiscal policies are bad for workers. "I thought it was a good thing to do."

For Dolan, signing up meant taking a stand. "Once I got into my career field and realized that they (right-wing extremists) were trying to make budget cuts to the corrections department, I thought, 'that's wrong'." Being understaffed and "working overtime all the time" made no sense to her and further budget cuts would make that problem even worse. "So I decided to stick up for my facility. I thought, if they're going to cut the budget, I'm going to sign up with the union."

**Retiree VMO
Michael Arken
PORTLAND, OREGON**

Michael Arken may be retired from his job as a Water Bureau storekeeper for the city of Portland, but he's not retired from his union. As president of Oregon Retiree Chapter 75, he is committed to ensuring that AFSCME Council 75 remains strong. That's why he recently set out one weekend in May to increase its membership.

"We had a half a day of training and then we all went out in pairs and knocked on doors" of employees of Oregon Health and Science University. "We knocked on 19 doors. We had seven or eight conversations and we got five cards. It was amazing."

Arken said he even got a sign-up from a woman who said she was leaving her job in October because her husband was being transferred by the Air Force to Alaska. "She signed the card anyway," Arken said. "My jaw dropped."

Arken had been a VMO before, but this was the first time he had gone door-knocking to organize fair share payers. Either way, he said, being a VMO is far more satisfying than other kinds of union volunteering that he's done.

"I've phone banked and canvassed, and as you know, when you do those things, some people say, 'Of course I'll vote for them,' but when you leave,



you don't know.

"But when you go out as an internal organizer and you ask people to sign a card and they

do it — and you take a card back to the office — that's really a great sense of accomplishment," he explained. "You've got that card in your hand and you know that they are a member. I really like that feeling: instant gratification!"

**New Member
Theresa Martin
PHILADELPHIA, PENNSYLVANIA**

Theresa Martin, a court programmer analyst for the First Judicial District of Pennsylvania, never gave much thought to her union membership until she applied to her bank to refinance her mortgage.

Then she learned the truth. She was not a member at all.

This news came as a surprise because she had been paying what she thought were union dues for years, ever since the probation department's employees became part of AFSCME Local 810 (Philadelphia District Council 47).

Only she wasn't because she had never actually signed up. Instead, she had been paying "fair share" fees for the union to

represent her. When she went to her bank in April to discuss a refinance, she was told she might qualify for a union discount. She quickly went to a union officer to get the paperwork signed.

"She said it's just a matter of signing a union card. Then you can get this benefit. I said, 'I'll definitely sign a card.'"

Her union also sent over a representative to see if any other fair share fee payers in her department wanted to become members. Four more signed up, making her entire unit AFSCME members.



**DO YOU WANT TO
BE A VMO?**

Call the Organizing and Field Services Department at (202) 429-1260 or email Sabeela Ally at sally@afscme.org.

—Michael Bookman contributed to this story



Every hour, every day, AFSCME members are making America happen. We've photographed public workers in action, from coast to coast, from morn'ing 'til night and all the way until dawn.

Your Pics...

Inspired by a 12-page spread showing AFSCME members across the nation working around the clock, members sent in their own photos of life at work. You can submit your photos at AFSCME24-7.tumblr.com

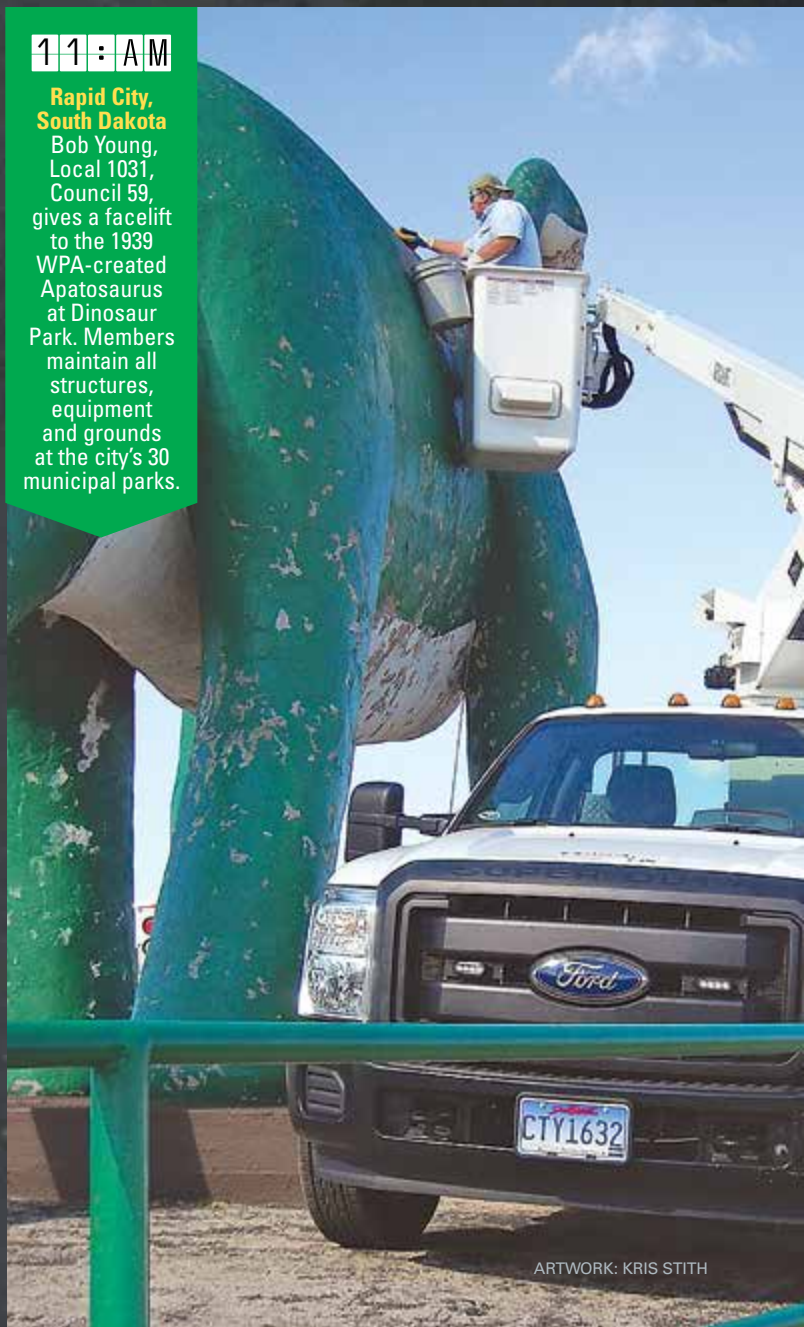
07:AM

Cerritos, California
Creating healthy meals under the Happy, Hunger Free Kids Act of 2010 is a labor of love for Linda Harbin, Local 2229 president and food service cafeteria manager at Gahr High School in Cerritos.



11:AM

Rapid City, South Dakota
Bob Young, Local 1031, Council 59, gives a facelift to the 1939 WPA-created Apatosaurus at Dinosaur Park. Members maintain all structures, equipment and grounds at the city's 30 municipal parks.



10:AM

Mt. Tremper, New York
Keeping campers and pets safe is all in a day's work for Elizabeth Herman, CSEA Local 1000, assistant caretaker at the Kenneth L. Wilson State Campground in the Catskill mountains.





“My whole team makes America better by keeping criminals off the street and giving them wisps of wisdom that may make them rethink their choices ...”

— Sgt. Brad Sandefur

02:AM

Woodland Hills, California

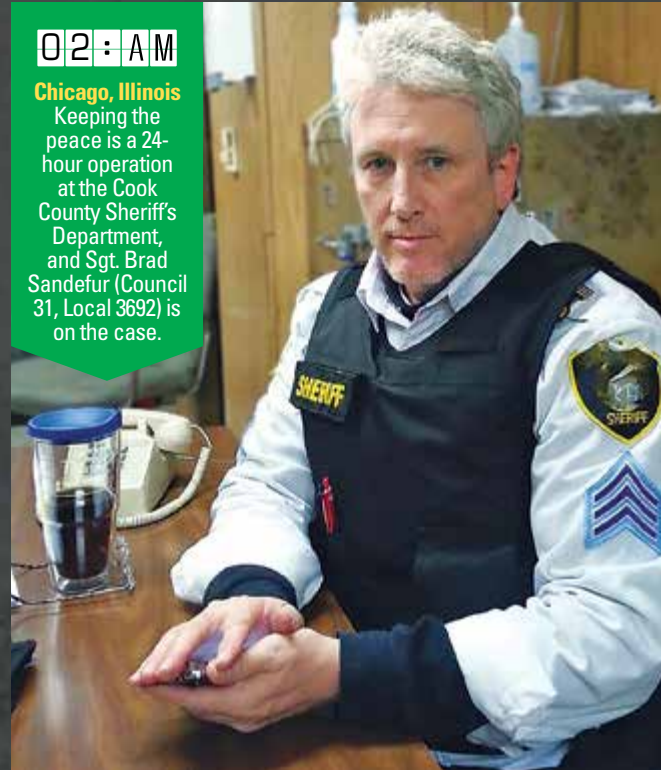
Patients recovering from stroke or head injury need care 24/7, and Gabriel de Souza, a UNAC/UHCP registered nurse in the telemetry/neuro department at Kaiser Woodland Hills is happy to oblige.



02:AM

Chicago, Illinois

Keeping the peace is a 24-hour operation at the Cook County Sheriff's Department, and Sgt. Brad Sandefur (Council 31, Local 3692) is on the case.



AFRICAN

01:PM

Jacksonville, Florida

Alfreda Whitfield of Council 79, Local 1279, is proud to help new readers find a book in the Jacksonville Public Library.



04:PM

Rockford, Illinois

Stopping to smell the flowers at Rock Cut State Park in Rockford is site assistant superintendent Dave Beccue, a member of AFSCME Local 448.



HUNGRY?

Have a Picnic!

Find your summer AFSCME gear, like a six-pack cooler, tote bags, caps and T-shirts and more at the web store!

(Food and beverages not offered.)



afscme.org/store
(800) 408-2388

291-14



Resources

AFSCME membership has many advantages

Tuition Trouble?

AFSCME scholarships put college in reach

Are you thinking about going back to school? Worried about how you'll pay to send a child to college? AFSCME offers scholarships for members who want to further their education. Right now we're taking applications for the **Gerald W. McEntee Scholarship** and the **AFSCME Family Scholarship**. The deadline to apply is Jan. 31.

The \$5,000 **McEntee Scholarship**, awarded in honor of the former AFSCME president, will go to the union member who best exemplifies President McEntee's commitment to strengthening our union through organizing, building political power for working families, defending workers' rights, and supporting public services. Applicants must complete a short essay to apply.

AFSCME also offers scholarships for the children and dependents of union members. The **AFSCME Family Scholarship** is offered to 10 high school seniors each year and covers \$2,000 of tuition at any accredited institution. The scholarship is renewable for up to four years. The deadline to apply is Dec. 31.

To learn more about advancing your education with the help of your union, visit AFSCME.org/members/scholarships or call (202) 429-5066.



Take hold of more opportunities with our new Credit Access card

A new credit card choice is now available for AFSCME members. The new AFSCME Advantage Credit Access card is designed for members with average credit; those with excellent credit can earn unlimited 1.5 percent cash back earned on every purchase.

Three Union Plus Credit Cards are now available for AFSCME members to choose from:

- * **The new Credit Access card**, for members with average credit, provides the opportunity to earn access to a higher credit line after making the first five monthly minimum payments on time and a low intro annual percentage rate (APR) on purchases for the first nine months.
- * **The Cash Rewards card**, for members with excellent credit, earns unlimited 1.5 percent cash back on every purchase. It's great for those who want rewards every time they make a purchase. It also comes with a low intro APR on purchases and balance transfers for the first 12 months.
- * **The Rate Advantage card**, for members with excellent credit, offers a low intro APR on purchases and balance transfers for the first 15 months. After 15 months, the purchase and balance transfer APRs are lower than the APRs for the other two cards.

To apply for the Credit Access card, call (800) 318-4821 or visit the AFSCME Advantage Credit Card website, AFSCMEcard.com.

Oakland and Solano County CALIFORNIA

UC, EMS Workers Win Great Contracts

Two groups of AFSCME members, employees of the University of California (UC) and a group of emergency medical service (EMS) professionals, set out to win contracts they could be proud of. This spring, both succeeded.

The UC employees, members of AFSCME Local 3299, negotiated with management for 21 months, a contentious fight that nearly led to a five-day strike before reaching a new four-year contract agreement covering 13,000 patient care technical workers, including respiratory therapists, nursing aides, MRI techs, pharmacy techs and operating room techs.

The agreement, ratified in April, includes fair wage increases, secure benefits, and critical safety and staffing protections. Regressive 11th-hour demands for sweeping new layoff powers prompted the Public Employment Relations Board to issue unfair labor practice complaints against UC and brought the patient care workers to the brink of their third strike in less than a year.

Local 3299 Pres. Kathryn Lybarger, also an AFSCME International vice president, said the agreement “reflects compromise on both sides, improves safety in UC hospitals, and honors the important contributions that patient care technical workers make to the UC health system every day.”



Demonstrations by members of AFSCME Local 3299 helped win a new four-year contract that covers 13,000 patient care technical workers at the University of California.

The EMS professionals, who work with Medic Ambulance in Solano County, also achieved victory through tough bargaining. But when it was over, they ratified their new contract with 98.6 percent support.

The contract increases wages by 18 percent in its first year. Wages will rise by an average of 52.5 percent during a seven-year period.

“I’ve been a paramedic for a long time, and this is one of the best contracts we’ve had,” says Michael Fenwick, a member of United EMS Workers/AFSCME Local 4911.

The unit also secured much-needed improvements to working conditions and job security. This kind of progress only happens when workers stand united.

Monroe LOUISIANA

A City’s Turnaround Point, Led by Its Public Workers

When Monroe City Attorney Nancy Summersgill announced this spring that she would terminate the contract of city workers represented by Local 2388 (Council 17), she was not prepared for the push back they gave her.

The AFSCME members stood up to this latest attack on their community’s wellbeing and immediately rallied to protect public services and their contract.

The workers pointed out major contract violations and

convinced Summersgill and Mayor Jamie Mayo to reverse their union-busting position.

Now members of the local are fighting to increase city personnel. In recent years, staff reductions deteriorated public services. Just a few years ago, 13 sanitation trucks served local residents. Now, only five do.

They’re also working to get an across-the-board \$1-an-hour raise. They want all workers to make at least a living wage of \$10 an hour.

Their experience standing up for their rights has emboldened these AFSCME members. “Now that we’ve protected our rights, we can do anything,” said Robert Johnson, president of Local 2388. “We’ve doubled the size of our union since this fight began. We’re always stronger if we stand together on behalf of the community and the workers.”

Jersey City NEW JERSEY

Medical Center Workers Fight off Attacks, Ratify Contract

Workers at the Jersey City Medical Center (JCMC) voted to ratify their contracts by overwhelming majorities, an achievement that resulted from standing strong in the face of more than a year of threats and attacks from management and its union-busting attorneys.

In doing so, more than 600 center employees, who are members of Locals 2254 and 3680 (District Council 52), cemented their desire to preserve a long collective bargaining history.

The JCMC workers were subjected to intimidation and harassment, and several union leaders were terminated and disciplined. These unprecedented attacks did not deter our sisters and brothers from the fight to protect their collective bargaining rights. They voted to authorize strikes and filed charge after charge of illegal activity with the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), which sided with the AFSCME members.

Later, several of the leaders were reinstated and a process was approved to address the final case.

“By approving and signing their contract, workers at JCMC made clear that bully tactics and illegal acts will not silence the workers,” said Rich Gollin, executive director of District Council 52. “They stood strong, preserved 40 years of collective bargaining rights and sent a clear message that workers’ rights cannot be bought and sold.”

With the help of DC 52 and AFSCME, the two locals will rebuild to strengthen their resolve to prevent future union-busting attacks.

Santa Fe NEW MEXICO

\$30 Million Victory from a Simple Grievance

While the workers’ contract provided for wage increases over three years, Gov. Bill Richardson and his successor, Gov. Susana Martinez, refused to properly implement it. Governor Martinez spent taxpayer money to twice appeal court decisions ordering the state to make restitution.

The fight back began with a simple grievance filed by Joel Villarreal, then the president of Albuquerque-area state Local 1211. His suit worked its way all the way to the state Supreme Court. Following the court’s decision in May 2013, AFSCME Council 18 leadership met with the administration to ensure the ruling would be carried out. Now, more than 10,000 state workers will finally be compensated for their stolen wages.

The plan required the state to adjust the bargaining unit employees’ hourly wage upward by the June 20 paycheck and to mail checks for back wages to workers by August. Approximately \$30 million worth of state workers’ wages have been stolen since 2009.

“This tremendous victory for AFSCME members shows not only

the value of a collective bargaining agreement,” said Connie Derr, executive director of AFSCME Council 18, “but the tenacity of our union to fight until the job is done. This has been a five-year battle and until all of our members are paid, we will continue to hold this administration’s feet to the fire.”



Council 18 members rally for back pay wages.

Atlanta GEORGIA

Bus Drivers Win Raises, Full-Time Positions

A year of activism paid off for Atlanta public school bus drivers and monitors, members of Local 1644, with an agreement that provides for across-the-board raises and fair pay for a 2013 dispute.

In addition, all part-time workers were transferred to permanent full-time employee status, giving them access to much needed benefits and retirement security.

The 2013 dispute was a result of Atlanta Public Schools (APS) withholding pay and/or time off when workers were called in early for training. In violation of their contract, the bus drivers and monitors were not paid for the five days they worked. After an agreement reached in July, all bus drivers and monitors will receive fair pay checks closing out the fiscal year in August.

Members also received a 5 percent pay increase, the first increase in seven years. The agreement to extend permanent full-time status to part-time bus drivers and monitors, some of whom were considered part-time since as early as 2007, means they now have access to benefits and retirement security.



Bus drivers and AFSCME Local 1644 members Gwen Johnson (third from right) and Susan McCaskill (far right) join Atlanta city officials after the deal was struck.

Since last summer, Local 1644 marched on APS headquarters, the home of Superintendent Erroll B. Davis and to bus yards, held labor-management meetings, helped elect Board of Education members who support them, and hosted political forums to air potential innovative solutions for APS officials and Board of Education members.

During a July town hall meeting, bus driver Patience Taylor said, "We're getting treated with more respect than ever before and it's because we demanded it. We care so much about Atlanta's kids and now we're able to do our jobs without some unnecessary stressors. This is the beginning of a new era in Atlanta and the only place to go is up."

Mahoning County OHIO

Members Protest Pay Discrimination

Public employees of Mahoning County Child Support Enforcement Agency (CSEA), excluded from a pay increase given to other county workers, demand to be treated fairly.

The child support workers, mem-

bers of Local 3577 (Council 8), saw their county colleagues get raises in exchange for agreeing to pay more in pension contribution costs. They, too, would like to make the same deal.

"We're not against paying our share of pension costs," said Local 3577 Pres. Jeannette Droney. "We just want to have the county make up the difference to our members like they did with everyone else, including CSEA's management.

"We are not asking to be rewarded," said Droney. "CSEA employees are only asking to be treated the same as other

Mahoning County employees."

David Arquilla, vice president of Local 3577, said it was an issue of fairness. "We want to know why our members are singled out," he said.

In 18 other county agencies, including the county commissioner's office, all affected employees received a cost-neutral pay adjustment that makes up for the increase in individual pension costs. The so-called "pension flip" places the full pension contribution costs on the employee and ends the county's past practice of covering a significant portion of them.

Las Vegas NEVADA

AFSCME Retirees Build Solidarity at ARA Convention

AFSCME retirees formed the largest delegation — more than 150 activists — at the convention of the Alliance for Retired Americans (ARA) in Las Vegas.

During four days this spring, the retirees learned the latest updates on Social Security and Medicare, and heard reports on the November elections and labor's fight to protect the middle class. The retirees also brushed up on their communications and organizing skills at a series of workshops and training sessions.

AFSCME Pres. Lee Saunders talked about the ongoing attacks on public pensions. He described how AFSCME fights back and builds new allies through Retirement Security for All, the AFSCME-led coalition that works to enhance Social Security benefits and extend pension coverage to every American.

"Together we must continue to stand up for the idea that after a lifetime of working hard and playing by the rules, we all deserve to live out our years with the dignity and respect that comes from financial independence," President Saunders

said. "And we must go on the offense instead of always being forced to protect our pensions. The question is not, 'Why do you still have pensions?' but 'Why don't all workers have pensions?'"

AFL-CIO Sec.-Treas. Elizabeth Shuler also addressed the retirees, along with J. David Cox, president of the American Federation of Government Employees; and Carolyn Colvin, acting commissioner of the Social Security Administration.

The Alliance for Retired Americans seeks to ensure social and economic justice and full civil rights for all citizens. AFSCME is a strong supporter of the ARA, and every AFSCME retiree-member is also a member of the ARA.



Pres. Lee Saunders addresses the ARA Retirees Convention in Las Vegas.

Coralville IOWA

Iowa Corrections Officers Recognize Our Veterans

In recognition of the veterans who served our country and the state of Iowa so proudly, Local 2985 (Council 61) donated funds this spring to the Iowa Veterans Welcome Center in Coralville.

"We owe a debt of gratitude to

every veteran," said Local 2985 Pres. Marty Hathaway. "We hope that our donation will help the center further its cause of veterans helping veterans, by providing ongoing outreach and activity services, and supplying resource information as veterans continue to adjust to civilian life."

"You're working with a lot of different people with a lot of different backgrounds who have a lot of issues," said corrections officer Mary Hulme. "So you learn to deal with a lot of different stuff that comes up."

Local 2985 represents nearly 400 workers inside the Iowa Medical

and Classification Center. Many of those union members are vets. Some members say their military training transfers well to the role of a corrections officer. Local 2985's memorial fund was established years ago to honor the memory of union workers' family members who passed away. The money in the fund is donated at the end of every year.

While not exactly the same, the military and union fellowship are similar. "Everybody tends to work well together, and you see a lot of that both in the military and in the union," Hulme said.

Davenport IOWA

AFSCME Member Is a Hall of Famer

Phyllis Thede, a member of Local 751 (Council 61), was inducted in August into the Iowa African American Hall of Fame for her efforts as a state legislator and member of Iowa's Human Rights Board.

The Iowa African American Hall of Fame (IAAHF), housed in Iowa State University's Black Cultural Center, "recognizes the outstanding achievements of African Americans who have enhanced the quality of life for all."

Thede said being inducted into the Iowa African American Hall of Fame is "overwhelming."

Thede is an attendance secretary at Williams Intermediate School, located in Davenport. She is also an active member of AFSCME, serving in past years as her local's president, vice president, contract negotiator and grievance chair.

Thede also is one of four African Americans serving as a member of the Iowa House of Representatives, first



Phyllis Thede

elected in 2008. She serves on the House Appropriations Committee, an important panel responsible for all expenditures in the state budget. She is also ranking member of the Ethics Committee and sits on the Government Oversight Committee, the Local Government Committee and the Natural Resources Committee.

As a legislative representative on Iowa's Human Rights Board, Thede says she endeavored to "help people of diverse groups to be successful in their communities, whether African American or Indian or Asian."

Thede says she hopes her induction will serve as encouragement to young people across Iowa and people of diverse backgrounds. "If one of us wins something like this, it serves as a message to all young people that they can be successful as well," she said.

"Phyllis Thede is an inspiration to her AFSCME sisters and brothers," said Danny Homan, president of AFSCME Iowa Council 61, and an AFSCME International vice president. "Her work has made Iowa a better place to live, work and raise a family."

Tallahassee FLORIDA

Public Employees Victorious in Challenge to Drug Testing Policy

The U.S. Supreme Court stood with Florida state employees, this spring, in a lower court ruling that Gov. Rick Scott's random drug testing policy is unconstitutional because it violates Fourth Amendment rights against unreasonable searches.

The high court let stand the 11th Circuit Court's decision by refusing to consider Governor Scott's appeal. The governor in 2011 signed an executive order that mandated all 85,000 state employees submit to invasive drug testing, without any suspicion of drug use. That led to a challenge by AFSCME Council 79, which represents 40,000 public workers.

"The public servants who would be impacted by this executive order have been working under a needless cloud of suspicion, treating them like suspected criminals ever since the executive order was signed by Governor Scott," said Council 79 Pres. Jeanette D. Wynn, who is also an AFSCME International vice president.

She said the high court's decision "lifts that cloud once and for all and says that people don't lose their constitutional rights simply because they work for the public. We hope the governor finally reads the writing on the wall and stops demonizing the tens of thousands of public workers who, under his executive order, would be required to sacrifice their right to be free from invasive searches as a condition of their employment."

The decision is the latest in a series of victories for the privacy rights of state employees. The Scott administration wasted hundreds of thousands of taxpayer dollars trying to defend unconstitutional drug testing policies.

Independence MISSOURI

Paramedic Honored for Saving Couple Shot 11 Times

As a paramedic, Jennifer Nance sees high-stakes situations every day. But the 911 call she answered early on the morning of Jan. 21 was something else. That day, a couple was attacked by a neighbor in their driveway in Independence. They were shot a total of 11 times.

“When I left that call, I had no idea if they would survive,” Nance says.

Both victims, Pamela and Carl Bryant, were doing well, thanks in no small part to the bravery of the first responders on the scene. In May, Nance was finally able to meet the couple she helped save.

The Independence Chamber of Commerce honored Nance and three others at their Annual First Responders Awards Breakfast in June. Nance received the Dedication Award for her strong commitment to the public she serves.

Nance was featured on the AFSCME blog in May when she joined with other EMS workers to raise money for the homeless services agency that helped her get off the streets



Jennifer Nance (far right) receives the Dedication Award from the Independence, Missouri, Chamber of Commerce.

and find a career in EMS more than a decade ago. She says receiving the award puts her own life experiences in perspective.

“It doesn’t change how I think about my job, but it reaffirms my decision to become a paramedic,” Nance says. “I faced a lot of obstacles. I was homeless and I needed training and I wasn’t even sure I could do the job. But this affirms that what I’m doing is valuable and appreciated.”

Seattle WASHINGTON

Hospital Workers Gain Community Support

Harborview Medical Center has served the Seattle community for 137 years, and during that time it was both a leader in medicine and an important resource for citizens of all backgrounds and income levels. But in the past few years, hospital employees with Council

28 noticed troubling patterns in the way the hospital is managed.

Because of their advocacy, the county government is starting to take action.

Harborview is managed by the University of Washington (UW), which recently provoked public outcry when it announced a plan to close some of its critical care clinics and move them to parts of the city that were less accessible to lower-income residents.

UW rescinded that plan following backlash from AFSCME and other community groups, but major issues with its treatment of employees

remain unresolved. The university administration moved call center employees to an offsite location, and refused to follow through on a previously negotiated raise owed to custodians. When the employees sought to correct the situation, UW dragged out the process with multiple appeals.

Council 28 took its concerns directly to the King County Council. In July, the council released a blueprint for contract negotiations that urges fair treatment of employees as a requirement for future operation of the hospital.

Madison WISCONSIN

Heroic Efforts Win Praise for Water Utility Crew

This winter's "polar vortex" left cities throughout the country struggling with many burst water mains, forcing utility crews to perform already difficult tasks in sub-zero conditions. In Madison, Wisconsin, the city noticed, honoring its local heroes (many of them AFSCME members) with a resolution of thanks.

The city's resolution covers all 128 employees and managers of the Madison Water Utility. Most of the crew are members of AFSCME Local 60 (Council 40). The resolution recognized "the dedication, excellence, and hard work of the men and women of the Madison Water Utility who carry out and support emergency repairs on our water system during the 2013-2014 winter season."

The employees repaired 306 water main breaks, "the highest number of main breaks since the Utility began keeping records in



Madison Water Utility workers pose with their city resolution: (left to right) Don Russell, leadworker and AFSCME member; Tom Heikkinen, Water Utility general manager; Jim Garde, equipment operator and AFSCME member; Steve Kelso, leadworker and AFSCME member; and Don Smith, equipment operator and AFSCME Local 60 steward.

1980," the resolution said.

Don Russell, a 23-year-employee of the Madison Water Utility whose job title is leadworker, called the winter water main breaks unprecedented. "One way to put it in perspective is that I was only home for supper two times in the six-week span from Jan. 1 through mid-February," he said. "That includes weekends. I was a stranger to my family."

When many mains break at once, workers have to prioritize. Then they need to figure out exactly where the rupture occurred, no easy task in freezing temperatures. Russell calls it "detective work," using machines and experience to figure out where to dig. "You don't want to dig a hole and miss the break, and have to dig another hole," he explains. "It's demoralizing" when that happens, especially late at night.

District of Columbia

Standing Up for Children

Pam Wells, a family child care provider in Hudson Falls, New York, testified before Congress this Spring to support increased funding for the Child Care and Development Block Grant (CCDBG) program.

"Every day my child care colleagues and I see how invaluable child care assistance, through the CCDBG, is to families struggling to make ends meet," said Wells, president of Local 100A CSEA/VOICE, an AFSCME affiliate. "Without CCDBG assistance, many parents would not be able to afford child care at all and could not go to work."

Wells, one of 20,000 CSEA child care providers statewide, urged the lawmakers to increase funding by \$807 million to maintain the number of children cared for with federal assistance. Additional money is also needed to improve quality and prepare for new requirements included in draft regula-



Pam Wells, president of Local 100A CSEA/VOICE, calls on Congress to increase child care funding.

tions and legislation, and to improve provider payment rates.

Child care is an enormous expense for most families. Wells explained that many parents would not be able to afford child care and could not go to work without subsidies made possible through CCDBG. Currently, only one in six eligible children receives a subsidy. Without additional funding, some 20,000 to 50,000 children in New York could lose assistance.

To cultivate and sustain a system of high-quality child care programs, it is essential to pay child care providers a living wage, Wells stressed. But the median income of child care providers is only \$19,512, so low that many of them are eligible for federal assistance, and New York just dropped their rates below the recommended level. Hardworking child care providers deserve better than poverty wages.

Join Wells in urging Congress to help low-income, working families by supporting an increase in child care funding. Call your representative toll-free today at (855) 712-8590.



AFSCME Women Preparing for Leadership Roles

The 2014 Women's Leadership Academy kicked off in early June in Indianapolis. Women members from across the union honed their leadership and organizing skills during the week-long orientation, which launches the six-month program. They crafted impromptu speeches, planned a union-building project, and were mentored by seasoned AFSCME women leaders. Participants also conducted worksite and home visits with members of the Indiana-Kentucky Organizing Committee 962 and signed up 32 new AFSCME members as part of the 50,000 Stronger campaign. Learn more about education and training opportunities at AFSC.ME/membertraining.

And this spring, members of Child Care Providers Together (CCPT)/AFSCME Local 3400 came to St. Cloud, Minnesota, for their convention to do what AFSCME members do best: gather together as professionals to strategize and develop skills to better serve our communities. Providers came to invest their time and energy to elevate the child care profession. They participated in autism and CPR training, networked with other providers, and learned how their union helps them strengthen their voice on the job. And they found time for a little fun, with a "Rosie the Riveter" look-alike contest. With AFSCME women, we can do it!

—Clyde Weiss



Stay up to date on the
news that affects you at
AFSCME.org/blog.

AFSCME WORKS

The Magazine of the American Federation of State,
County and Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO



AFSCME Women

Preparing for Leadership Roles

The 2014 Women's Leadership Academy kicked off in early June in Indianapolis. Women members from across the union honed their leadership and organizing skills during the week-long orientation, which launches the six-month program. They crafted impromptu speeches, planned a union-building project, and were mentored by seasoned AFSCME women leaders. Participants also conducted worksite and home visits with members of the Indiana-Kentucky Organizing Committee 962 and signed up 32 new AFSCME members as part of the 50,000 Stronger campaign. Learn more about education and training opportunities at AFSC.ME/membertraining.

And this spring, members of Child Care Providers Together (CCPT)/AFSCME Local 3400 came to St. Cloud, Minnesota, for

their convention to do what AFSCME members do best: gather together as professionals to strategize and develop skills to better serve our communities. Providers came to invest their time and energy to elevate the child care profession. They participated in autism and CPR training, networked with other providers, and learned how their union helps them strengthen their voice on the job. And they found time for a little fun, with a "Rosie the Riveter" look-alike contest. With AFSCME women, we can do it!

—Clyde Weiss



Stay up to date on the news that affects you at AFSCME.org/blog.

PHOTO: DAVID KREISMAN