

SEIU LOCAL 521



**STANDING
STRONG
TOGETHER**

CLASS OF 2010



TOP OF THE CLASS

2010 LOCAL 521 EXECUTIVE BOARD

In an historic election, members chose our new Local 521 Executive Board (pictured here April 16 at the Asilomar Conference Center). The democratically elected Executive Board was officially installed Feb. 27 in Fresno. When we voted to become Local 521 in 2006, Executive Board members were appointed. Since then, members have voted on a new set of bylaws and held elections for our union leaders. More than 3,000 members participated in the historic Feb. 19 election. Executive Board members will serve three-year terms.



CHIEF ELECTED OFFICER

PRESIDENT

1ST VICE PRESIDENT

SECRETARY

TREASURER



Kristy Sermersheim
SEIU Local 521



Gwyn Harshaw
Fresno Unified School
District Chapter



Carmen Morales
Kern County Chapter



John Gutierrez
Santa Clara County
Chapter



RoseAnn Dominguez
Fresno Housing
Authority Chapter

PRESIDENTIAL VISIT



SEIU International President **Mary Kay Henry** was the Keynote Speaker for our Home Care Leadership Conference in December. *"You are the most important people in our Union ... The people that decide to take responsibility to educate themselves by coming here, and then to advocate for better services for your clients. And I am happy to come here and honor you!"*

POLITICAL ACTION

Protecting Jobs and Benefits

In a recession filled with layoffs, furloughs and budget cuts, members in 2010 took political action to protect jobs and services.

From the City of Arvin to the County of San Mateo, members walked precincts and called voters to help elect candidates who support working families.

Some members invited politicians to spend a day with them in the trenches to see first-hand public employees' work. Our hard work paid off. Throughout the Local, members helped elect city council members and board of supervisor members. We even helped elect a U.S. congressman and, of course, helped Jerry Brown trounce Meg Whitman in the race for governor.



Fresno County Chapter members **Lorenzo Lambaren** and **Brenda Flores** in September pose with Jerry Brown in Fresno during the governor's race.



"A lot of people think they don't have a voice, and they really do. Being involved in the political process keeps us from looking at democracy as a spectator sport."

— **Henry Ildefonso**, Region 3 Vice President
(Golden Valley Health Centers Chapter)

Matt Nathanson, Region 2 Vice President (Santa Cruz County Chapter) and Public Health Nurse II, shakes hands with Janice Hahn, candidate for Lt. Governor, at an SEIU Town Hall in March. Matt leads the 521 Pension Committee, formed to educate members about pension issues.



John Flores, City of Bakersfield Chapter shop steward and Public Works Engineer, speaks up at the Bakersfield City Council in February to help shoot down plans to put SEIU Local 521 members' pensions on the ballot.



Max Stone, Monterey County Chapter President, Unit K (left) and **Ben Franklin**, Monterey County Chapter President Units F, J and H (right), meet with Monterey County Supervisor Simon Salinas Feb. 4. Members were showing the supervisor the valuable services that public employees provide.



Members **Carol Garvey**, **Bill DeCourcy** and **Connie Chew** show their support for a proposition in San Jose on Aug. 3. During a local videoconference, members chose what state propositions our Union would support for the November election.

BARGAINING

IN THE TRENCHES

When times are tough, nothing good comes without effort. In 2010, SEIU Local 521 members worked hard and bargained about 70 contracts.

In some cases, autocratic managers tried to take advantage of the economy to score political points, forcing contract bargaining into impasse. As we head into 2011, two of our largest chapters – San Mateo and Kern counties – are engaged in tough fights against unresponsive managers.

But in many cases, members were able to show management the light. From Silicon Valley to the Central Coast to the Central Valley, SEIU 521 members saved jobs, prevented takeaways and preserved the public services that make California great.



Kern County - Members roll out a series of rallies and picket actions in November, including this one at the Department of Human Services, to tell the board of supervisors to return to the bargaining table.



Santa Clara County - Social Services employees speak out in February, calling on the Santa Clara County Board of Supervisors to order managers to stop retaliating against workers engaged in legal union activities.



San Benito County - Members attend the board of supervisors meeting Nov. 9 to oppose outsourcing 911 services to an outside agency. (L-R: **Nicole Ortega, Valerie Macedo, Jonell Ortega, Ed Krystal, Catherine Farnham, Crystal Higgins, Robbie Russell, Kelly Young and Jennifer Zander.**)

Scores of Monterey County, Courts and Salinas workers gather on the steps of the Superior Court May 12, sending a unified message of protecting services.





Santa Clara County Office of Education - Teacher's Aides successfully fight back layoffs in April.



Brian Chin, a Protective Services Officer in Santa Clara County Chapter, joins a noontime rally outside Valley Medical Center in June to fight back a proposal to have sheriff's deputies take over the work currently performed by PSOs.

Santa Cruz County - Workers and elected leaders converge on the steps of the Government Center to protect vital services amid drastic budget cuts May 11.



San Mateo County - Members and Home Care workers rally at a board of supervisors meeting in July, calling on management to pay its fair share to help close structural deficits.

MEMBERS IN THE MEDIA

Reaching out to the public

Whether it was contract negotiations or a political fight, members in 2010 were in the media, telling our side of the story on TV, radio and in print.

During the recession we saw repeated attacks on jobs and services, and members took their message of “protecting services” to the airwaves and straight to the public.

From smaller chapters like First Student in Fresno (with about 200 members), to larger chapters like San Mateo County (with almost 2,000 members), it was members who were in the spotlight and in the public eye.



James Hackett, Region 4 Vice President, holds a TV interview in Fresno in June. James was a leader in SEIU Local 521’s campaign to convince our Congressional representatives to vote for meaningful healthcare reforms.



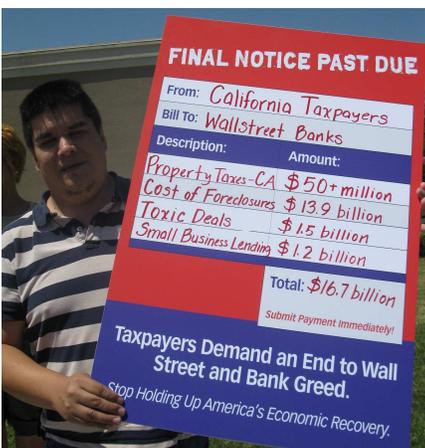
“Our members are in the workplace and we know the issues first-hand better than anyone. We communicate to the media so that the public hears directly from us and sees that our passion and emotions are heartfelt and real.”

— **Cynthia Howard**, San Mateo County Chapter Chair



Bus drivers and mechanics from **Fresno’s First Student Chapter** pave over potholes April 30 to highlight unsafe working conditions. The action was part of a contract campaign that resulted in a June win.

Rigo Ramos, joined by dozens of members in the **City of Arvin Chapter**, bravely stands up to confront the city manager, who had been abusing his power and harassing workers.



Greg Gomez, Region 5 Vice President, holds up a bill that SEIU 521 members brought to a Chase Bank in Visalia Aug. 10. It was part of a statewide campaign calling on banks to stop illegal home foreclosures.



Muriel Frederick, Region 1 Vice President, gives a press statement in Menlo Park June 22. She and others announced a lawsuit challenging an initiative that attacked future employees’ pensions. Workers also called on the city to fix a bad bank deal that cost the city about \$2.5 million a year.



Ray Montemayor, Chapter President for the City of Salinas, speaks at a press conference Feb. 24. Members blasted a report by a mayor-appointed committee that emphasized severe cuts over community services.



Regina Kane, Kern County Chapter President, was a frequent presence on Bakersfield-area television in 2010, defending her fellow workers from nonsensical attacks by county supervisors.



Members **Scott Baly** and **Sergio Benavides** announce in July that SEIU Local 521 would sue the County of Fresno over illegal staff cuts in the Public Defender's Office.

Matt Bauleke, Santa Cruz Wastewater Treatment Facility worker (on right), invited Mayor Mike Rotkin (on left) to walk a day in his shoes April 2. Reporters covered the story of the mayor rolling up his sleeves and seeing first-hand the valuable work of front-line workers. ↓



Annette Ruiz-Vides, Fiscal Office Specialist for San Mateo County Courts, speaks at a press conference Jan. 20. San Mateo County and Courts workers protested harmful court closures and cuts to other county services. Workers in Kern County held a similar rally the same day. ↓



Ester Santiago, a Home Care worker from Santa Clara County, tells her personal story of home foreclosure at a press conference in Gilroy Oct. 13. Ester and local elected leaders called on banks to fix foreclosures that blight neighborhoods and drain public funds.



BEST OF 2010...

BEST RALLY/PRESS EVENT

Dubbed the "Fair Share Express," San Mateo County Home Care workers in August shuttled to all five county supervisors' districts in one day. They called on managers to help close the budget gap, instead of unfairly targeting the lowest paid workers.



BEST TATTOO

San Mateo County worker **Karen Nakatani** got a tattoo of the SEIU logo, illustrating that her dedication to workers' rights is more than skin deep.



BEST WAY TO GROW THE UNION

Nearly 70 SEIU Local 521 members joined the National Organizing Corps, our volunteer effort to bring the benefits of union membership to those who work without protection. Members reach out to non-union workers through phone banking, letter writing, social networking and house visits.



BEST FIGHT BACK

In 2010, SEIU Local 521 members fought back workplace violations by filing more than 320 grievances that resulted in more than \$5 million in judgments and settlements. Dozens of unjustly treated workers won their jobs back, had disciplines reversed and were repaid for wrongly withheld wages.

"The Contract Enforcement Department was by my side the whole time. It felt like a weight was lifted off my shoulders when the discipline was reversed."
 – **Maria Gonzalez**, Nursing Assistant (Natividad Medical Center, Salinas)



BEST SUMMIT

Members of Local 521 Social Economic Justice (SEJ) held their first summit in Fresno Sept. 18. SEJ is composed of the various Local 521 caucuses, including AFRAM, APALA, Latino Caucus, Lavender Caucus, People with Disabilities, and the Women's Caucus.

(Pictured left to right: Top row: **Salia Copeland, Myrna Bravo, Yong ok Soung, Sue Manley, Robert Castillo, Cathy Martinez-Rogers, Dolly Clemente, Ray Baeza, Linda Lopez, Ellen Rollins.** Bottom row: **Irma Compton, Annette Ruiz-Vides, Florida Clemente, Hermenegilda Santiago, and Rachel Welch.**)