Chapter President’s Message

Sisters and Brothers,

It has been an exciting first quarter of the New Year! We’ve already accomplished so much together.

1. We lobbied hard and won an increase of $50 each pay period towards our health plans!
2. We fought back and stopped a proposed increase of $250 towards emergency room visit co-pays!
3. Several represented positions will be receiving salary adjustments!
4. Many of you added your voice to thousands of fellow Union Sisters and Brothers across the country in calling for a NO VOTE on the repeal and replace of the Affordable Care Act!

This is only a fraction of the many things that we have done together. I am thankful for your support and willingness to make our union strong! As we enjoy the spring weather, I hope that you are feeling a renewed spirit and pride in our Union! Your work continues to positively impact the lives of every member in our chapter!

Sincerely,
Riley Talford
Fresno County Chapter President
SEIU Local 521 Fresno

General Membership and Executive Board Meeting

Tuesday, July 11
6-8 p.m.

Union Office
5228 E. Pine Ave., Fresno

Future Meeting: Oct. 10
2nd Tuesday of every quarter

Please RSVP your attendance at (559) 447-2579

Contract Enforcement Department is HERE FOR YOU!

Contract Questions? Discipline? Need to file a grievance?

Call Rachel Tudor,
Contract Enforcement Specialist Assistant
at (559) 447-2560 from 9 a.m.-4 p.m.
Dozens of member-leaders from Region 4 came together on April 8 to make new connections, grow and share ideas. The six-hour summit provided inspiration and nuts-and-bolts training on building our power and building resistance in the workplace and in the community. There were pieces on politics, communications, and goal setting and planning.

Unions are under attack across the country. The Supreme Court now has a majority that will likely rule against workers’ rights and the right to organize. The majorities in both Congress and the Senate are not favorable to the rights of working people. American workers stand to lose not just their unions, but the rights necessary to build and grow them. If we are going to stand up and fight back, now is the time.

SEIU Local 521 Chief Elected Officer Riko Mendez shared his powerful vision for the future of our union. The union of the future will be more dynamic more responsive. “We’re making big changes in the way our union works. We’re rethinking the way we build steward capacity, revamping how we communicate with members, rebuilding our community relationships and returning to our core values.”

“All of these ideas I’m presenting came from members. These are not my ideas. They came from the conversations I’ve had across the local with members like you.”

Members came away from the event energized and ready to build power. Jennifer Jensen, a long-time SEIU leader and activist, told the group she is less than two months away from retirement. Her commitment isn’t going to end when she stops working for the county. “I’m not going anywhere. I’m going to be here fighting for working families and building power for a just society. I’m just getting started.”

April is National Alcohol Awareness Month

Drinking too much alcohol increases people’s risk of injuries, violence, drowning, liver disease, and some types of cancer. This April during National Alcohol Awareness Month, SEIU Local 521 encourages you to educate yourself and your loved ones about the dangers of alcohol abuse.

If you are drinking too much, you can improve your health by cutting back or quitting. Here are some strategies to help you cut back or stop drinking:

- Limit your drinking to no more than 1 drink a day for women or 2 drinks a day for men
- Keep track of how much you drink
- Choose a day each week when you will not drink
- Don’t drink when you are upset
- Limit the amount of alcohol you keep at home
- Avoid places where people drink a lot
- Make a list of reasons not to drink

If you are concerned about someone else’s drinking, offer to help.
Fresno County Chapter Leaders Meet with Supervisor Quintero to Discuss Member Priorities

Chapter President Talford and First Vice President Bonner met with Board of Supervisor Sal Quintero to discuss his vision for the next four years for Fresno County and to share with him concerns from our membership. We shared with Supervisor Quintero hardships members face due to the low wages that are not comparable to surrounding counties and the increasing cost of health care. Quintero committed to having an open relationship with SEIU Local 521 by having quarterly meetings so that we can continue discussing issues that are important to members. We have reached out to the other Board of Supervisors to set up meetings in the near future.

“Things seem to be moving in a positive direction and we hope to continue to develop a relationship with our newly elected Board of Supervisor.”
- Alysia Bonner, Fresno County Chapter First Vice President

“The Health of the county is representative of the Health of the workers. We must continue to invest in our workforce to make sure they can provide the best services to the community.”
- Riley Talford, Fresno County Chapter President

Informed Stay
Sanctuary County
"We go into people’s homes to do nursing assessments. Our initial visits are the longest ones because we want to develop rapport with our patients. Otherwise, we can’t be effective. If the environment becomes more anti-immigrant, it will become more difficult for me to do my job. Trust is a huge part of my work."

- Marilyn Mara, Public Health Nurse, Santa Clara County

Read more about our union's amicus brief in support of Santa Clara County being a "sanctuary" jurisdiction: www.seiu521.org/sanctuary

Potential Honorary Members

7,041,413

April is National Volunteer Month. Over 7 million Californians volunteer every year according to the Corporation for National Community Service. Many of these people volunteer to support libraries, Animal Services, and other public agencies.

Did you know the volunteers you work with can also become Honorary SEIU Local 521 members? Volunteers that help us deliver quality public services already support our mission. During National Volunteer Month, you can help them take their activism to the next level by signing up here: www.seiu521.org/htamembers

Build Political and Community Power

How many days it took for “repeal and replace” to become “reveal and retreat.” The healthcare bill intended to replace the Affordable Care Act crashed and burned on March 24. In the end, the Republican leadership didn’t even let the bill come to a vote. The marches we led, the candlelight vigils across Local 521, the phone calls and digital activism all played a part in this victory. Let’s stay vigilant and continue to #fight4ourhealth. #CareNotChaos. Join the fight at www.SEIU521.org/f4oh

Upcoming Events

April 3: Immigration Lobby Day in Sacramento
April 15: Immigration KYR workshop in San Jose
April 17-22: International Week of Action
April 29: People’s Climate March
May 1: International Worker’s Day March and Rally

Get synced with all the events on our website at www.seiu521.org/events

Develop Leaders

Number of new activist members whose bilingual chants filled the air at Encompass Community Services’ first unity rally on March 27. The rally kicked off the beginning of Encompass workers’ fight for a contract that invests in our community. Encompass workers provide vital Head Start and preschool childcare services in Santa Cruz County. Over the years, these childcare providers have been working to improve the quality of early education in Santa Cruz and Watsonville, but as parents themselves, Encompass workers have struggled to afford the same quality of care for their own children.