

Message from your Chapter President

As President of chapter, I take pride in representing our members and the community. We are leaders who, when we are called upon, we take action. When our members were called upon to take action in their current contract, we all stood up to protect our healthcare and our benefits. Those of us here in 2003 remember when Natividad Medical Center proposed \$14 million dollars in cuts and healthcare which would have:

- Shut down clinics
- Reduced beds at NMC by 15%
- Cut over 200 jobs
- Reduced and eliminated services to the community

Members stood up to protect our hospital and our healthcare. WE reversed the course of these devastating cuts. Looking back, all our members and non-members are reaping the benefits of our organizing efforts and advocacy. Now we must unite once again to fight and make sure we ALL continue to maintain our benefits like healthcare, pension, human rights and protect the vital services we provide to our community. Let us NEVER take this for granted.



In Unity,

Julie Filice

Chapter President

UPDATE: BILINGUAL PAY

SEIU 521 filed a group grievance against the County for their tardiness on implementing bilingual pay increases (applies to all Merit employees to get same bilingual pay as K unit members) that were supposed to be effective in early August 2016.

As a result, the Auditor's Office has completed implementing the increases, as reflected in employees' first check in February. What remains now is the status of when employees' can expect to retroactive pay for the months that went by without the increases being implemented. Because of this, our grievance remains active and we will continue to pursue this until employees receive the full amount that they are entitled to including penalties.

WORKERS FIGHT FOR A VOICE AT THE TABLE



Animal Service Members: L - Cathy Stanley
R - Joanie Compagno-Bruno

On Tuesday, February 7, employees from the County's Animal Services program addressed the Board of Supervisors and raised concerns and objections to the County's proposal to merge the County and City of Salinas' animal services programs without employee and stakeholder input.

The County had proposed to hire an administrator and supervisor, costing an additional \$132,000 over the next two years; the administrator would be responsible for investigating the feasibility of merging the two programs in the long-term, in addition to creating cost saving strategies by sharing services with the City of Salinas in the short-term. Employees pointed out that the costs the Board was considering far outweighed the projected \$52,000 in savings that could be implemented in the short-term, and called on the Board to instead address the short-staffing that currently exists in the animal shelter.

As a result, the Board decided to table their decision, and directed the County to begin meetings with animal services employees and other stakeholders to pursue short-term cost-savings as well as begin a more inclusive process on exploring any merger or sharing of services between the City and County's animal services programs.

MESSAGE FROM YOUR REGION 2 VICE PRESIDENT

2017 has started with the potential for big changes for ourselves as union members – both in the communities where we live and within our own union. A new administration in Washington threatens to disrupt or dismantle many of the programs we have worked to build, even while promising to lift the fortunes of the working and middle classes by producing good, new jobs. I say we need to pay attention to the actions and policies, not the theater and words. At the same time, our union, SEIU Local 521 has elected a new leader to help us meet these challenges. Riko Mendez, our new CEO represents a generational shift in leadership for Local 521.

The following issues are some of the biggest fights facing members in 2017:

Defending the Gains of the Affordable Care Act

Preserving healthcare access for ourselves and our community members, protecting the jobs created by health care expansion, and working towards full health care for all.

Protecting Our Retirement Security

Keeping existing pension systems strong and properly funded, preserving Social Security, and defeating the Congress's attempt to destroy California's new Secure Choice retirement program before it starts.

Ensuring the Basic Rights of All California Residents

Creating a realistic immigration system that keeps families together, prevents migrant workers from being exploited, and does not have our neighbors living in fear.

Maintaining the Right to Organize

Pending Supreme Court cases will likely eliminate union security (agency shop) clauses in public sector union contracts depleting union economic resources and weakening unions.

Creating Affordable Housing

Too many of our members face longer commutes, financial crises, or even homelessness as a result of the lack of affordable workforce housing.

Championing Public Services

Schools, libraries, water treatment, public safety, and public health, are examples of vital services performed by public agencies. We must continue to exclaim their importance and prevent further contracting out.

As a union, one of our biggest challenges is to link these and other critical issues that affect us to the “bread and butter” work of unionism, like negotiating wages and benefits, ensuring fairness in our jobs, maintaining reasonable working conditions, and building power in the workplace. As an elected officer of the union, and a member of our union's transformation committee, I have been a part of a group of members who are trying to chart a path forward. Over the next several months, we will try in writing to consider each of these issues in greater depth, to see how they relate to our work as union members, and how we as a union can make a real difference in people's lives.

-Matt Nathanson, Regional Vice President



GET YOUR 2017 UNION MEMBER BENEFIT CARD!

If you requested a Region 2 Union Member Benefit Card last year, your new card for 2017 was mailed to your home address in February. If you still have not received your card, send an email to salinas.rsvp@seiu521.org and we will mail a replacement as soon as possible.



If you did not request a card last year, and would like the 2017 card, go to 521.seiu.org/salinas-discounts and fill out the required information. Once your membership has been verified, we will contact you when your benefit card is available to pick up at the SEIU Local 521 Office (334 Monterey Street in Salinas).

MOU FINALIZED

The Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) for Monterey County Units J, H, K, F, and Temps have been signed and are in the process of getting printed.

Attend a worksite meeting in April to receive your copy. Go to www.seiu521.org/comonterey for a list of monthly worksite meetings.

The MOU can also be viewed online here: <http://521.seiu.org/comontereyMOU> (PDF)

*Please note: Large file - May take some time to load.