



SERVICE EMPLOYEES INTERNATIONAL UNION, SEIU LOCAL 521

# HeadStart May 2011

831-824-9255

www.seiu521.org

## Contract Negotiations Have Begun!

Contract negotiations began on April 18<sup>th</sup>. The parties agreed on negotiation Ground Rules and set future dates of negotiations. We have scheduled the next session to discuss Head Start budget on April 25<sup>th</sup>, and we have agreed to negotiate on May 3<sup>rd</sup> and May 10<sup>th</sup>. Our plan is to have an agreement to present to the membership on May 16<sup>th</sup>. So, it is very important that you make plans to attend our next chapter meeting on May 9<sup>th</sup> and mark your calendars to attend our May 16<sup>th</sup> Chapter Meeting.

The SEIU Head Start Negotiation Team would like to thank all the employees who turned in the Quick Survey. There was a very good response from the workers and we will present a report on May 9<sup>th</sup> and how this survey data will be used in the negotiations.

## Chapter Meeting

**Date:** May 9, @ 5:30 pm

**Location:** SEIU-ULTCW  
10 Alexander St.  
Watsonville

**Room:** Conference Room



## Meet Your New Contract Enforcement Specialist



My name is Christopher Cox and for the past three years I worked as an extra help employee for the County of Santa Cruz in the Clerk/Elections Department where I was the Lead staff person for the County's Accessibility Program. I served on the Chapter's Executive Board and was a two time member on the County's Negotiation Team. I am very excited that I have recently been hired by SEIU 521 as a Contract Enforcement Specialist Assistant in the Santa Cruz office. I encourage the membership to educate themselves in the language of their respective contracts. However, if you need any help or guidance please don't hesitate to contact me at 831-824-9268 or [Christopher.Cox@seiu521.org](mailto:Christopher.Cox@seiu521.org). I look forward to serving the needs of our members and engaging in civil discourse with our respective employers.

# The Steward Training Experience

On Saturday, April 15<sup>th</sup> I completed Module 4 of 5 part series of Shop Steward training. This has been a very good learning experience. The training provides an opportunity for me to draw from others in the class. It really helps in preparing me for what to state and presenting issues on behalf of workers. I am looking forward to completing the last shop steward training Module 5 and representing my co-workers.

-Rosa Vega



## What Have We Done?

### **At the National Level:**

An SEIU lobbyist who is paid in part by our union dues has been hard at work in Washington D.C. meeting with members of Congress to persuade them that it is in their own best interests and that of the American people to continue to fund Head Start and Early Head Start programs. The efforts have been very valuable in Head Start's success in receiving funding for program year 2011-2012.

### **At the State Level:**

SEIU lobbyists have been meeting with state leaders advocating for not cutting funds for state preschool programs and other programs and services which are used by many Head Start and Early Head Start families.

### **At the SEIU 521 Regional Level:**

The Executive Board, made up of officers and delegates elected by members in 17 California Counties has been focused on determining the best use of the membership dues money, which is declining in amount as many workers in SEIU 521 have been furloughed and/or laid off.

Due to Diane Goldwasser's report to the Executive Board concerning the problems of our terrible and high cost health insurance, the Executive Board is exploring the possibility of some kind of alternative system of health insurance for SEIU 521 members who work for non-profit agencies.

We will provide in our next newsletter a report on our own  
SEIU 521 Chapter Level – What Have We Done?