

JAN 11
2012

UNION UPDATE

LOCAL 1000
SEIU
Stronger Together

STATE COMPENSATION INSURANCE FUND

Members obtain benefits & protections

Transition plan helps members avoid uncertainty

A unique Local 1000-negotiated transition package has helped 921 State Compensation Insurance Fund (SCIF) employees leave on their own terms, avoiding layoffs and continuing uncertainty regarding their department's dramatic restructuring.

"I'm happy that we were able to help so many members make this transition, but at the same time we will continue to fight vigorously for the rights of the thousands of workers we still represent at State Fund," said Margarita Maldonado, Local 1000 vice president for bargaining. "This department is going through major restructuring, and we will ensure that our members' rights are protected to the fullest extent possible."

The agreement provides for a monetary transition package, as well as relocation assistance for employees

who changed residences or are currently living in corporate housing as part of State Fund's "three-year strategic plan."

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—Margarita Maldonado,
Local 1000 Vice President for Bargaining

The transition payments are not drawn from taxpayer funds. State Fund, a quasi-public agency that offers workers compensation insurance to businesses, is wholly funded through client premiums and investments.

"This has been a difficult process, but I am very proud that so many of our members at SCIF stepped up and helped us negotiate this transition package," Maldonado said. "We are seeing more members there take an active role in their future as SCIF goes through a difficult transition."

Member activist passes away

REMEMBERING Leora Hill

Leora Hill, who spent decades helping state workers as a leader for Local 1000, volunteering for her community in the Crenshaw District of Los Angeles, and serving the people of California as a 23-year employee of the Bureau of Equalization, died on Jan. 1. She was 60.

Ms. Hill served as a DLC president and was a member of Local 1000's governing board. She worked tirelessly on behalf of working people and residents of south Los Angeles by attending hundreds of hours of community meetings, by lobbying elected officials, and by volunteering on dozens of political campaigns, including those of Gov. Jerry Brown and President Barack Obama, where she traveled on her own time to work for a month in Arizona.

Perhaps Ms. Hill's greatest contribution was that she recruited dozens of friends, neighbors, co-workers



and others as activists in political campaigns.

"Leora was a fierce advocate for what she believed in," said Local 1000 President Yvonne R. Walker. "She loved our state and our union. She was a shining star, but sometimes the heart just can't go on."

Services for Ms. Hill will be held at noon on Saturday, Jan. 14 at Simpson's Family Mortuary, 3443 W. Manchester Blvd., Inglewood, CA.

Maria Patterson

Member's journey: Growing into activism

Maria Patterson understands those state workers who make no effort to get involved in the union or become politically active.

She used to be one.

"I've worked 17 years for the state, but I never really felt inspired until 2008," said Patterson, a custodian for the Department of General Services in Stockton. "I heard President Yvonne Walker speak, and I decided to get involved a little."

Patterson doesn't do anything halfway – a little activity soon became a lot.

Relevant work

"I became involved within my own union, but I also realized that if we really want to change anything in this country, we need to reach out to other unions and community groups to be relevant," Patterson said. "We cannot be effective unless we build coalitions. We need to be a force in California."

Since 2008, Patterson has joined numerous committees in Local 1000, but some of her greatest pride comes from working with allied central labor councils in the Central Valley. "Whether you do a lot or you do a little, we need to do something."

"President Walker says we need to be a more expansive union, and I am doing what I can to make Local 1000 more relevant in the important struggles for middle-class families," Patterson said. "Of course I want to improve conditions where I work and protect our gains, but it really goes way past that. We need economic policies in this country that strengthen the middle class."

Health care hits home

The national debate over health care in 2009 really hit home for Patterson when her daughter became pregnant that year.

"My daughter was 22 then, just out of college with a job that didn't have health benefits, but she made a little too much money to qualify for Medicare," Patterson



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—Maria Patterson
Custodian, Department of General Services

said. "She was caught right in the middle. We were totally stressed. One reason I am so active is to improve life for my daughter and my granddaughter."

Patterson hurt her leg in a work-related injury and received a full knee replacement last July. While recuperating, she hasn't slowed down her activism. However, she picks her causes more carefully.

Santa's pickup truck

For several weeks last month, she helped organize a holiday party for less fortunate Local 1000 members and their families in the Sacramento area by collecting toys for their kids and arranging gift wrapping. At one point, she drove from Los Angeles to Sacramento with her pickup truck stuffed with donated toys.

"There are a million ways to be active whether it's playing Santa with my truck or protesting at a bank," Patterson said. "The important thing is to follow your beliefs and do something."

Resource Center

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