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UNION UPDATE



Engaging our future member leaders

Local 1000 reaches out to young state workers and finds a group of members eager to work hard for social and economic justice.

The next generation of the labor movement may be led by the new activists Local 1000 is recruiting and investing in today.

Member leaders and organizers are discovering a wealth of enthusiasm among some of Local 1000's young professional members and are working to give them the tools and the training to continue building on the labor movement's legacy of social and economic justice.

"A key element of the Local 1000 Purpose Statement is to engage and develop new members," said Vice President for Organizing/Representation Tamekia N. Robinson. "Our goal is to demonstrate to our younger members that the Union offers them the structure and tools they need to make a big difference at work and in their communities. It is our responsibility to help them harness their grassroots power by working together."

Pioneering this effort is District Labor Council (DLC) 762 in Sacramento, where a group of nearly two



"The union is a microcosm of a bigger picture ..."

—Maurice James
Bargaining Unit 4

dozen members, ages 35 and under, came together to build a strong member network in their workplace. Discussions in their meetings range from topics such as student loan debt and career mobility, to strategizing the most effective way to broadly communicate Local 1000's values. They're already reaching out to other young members to help them organize in their own worksites.

Bargaining Unit 4 member Maurice James, age 30, is eager to mobilize his colleagues while working to become a steward. "I first became active in the union to get more information about issues like upward mobility," he said. "But my interest in the union really stems from my understanding of the need for power, for people to organize themselves to share information, speak to the powers that be as a unified voice and collaborate on campaigns,"

Bargaining Unit 1 member Robert Bayze is in his twenties and wants his coworkers to know that our work as a Union cannot afford to be limited to self-interests even if that's where it begins. "The union is a microcosm of a bigger picture of everyday people coming together for a common cause," he explained.

"I want to show that we care for our colleagues and our communities. I'm excited to share that message because unity makes it possible to tackle the larger issues like income inequality—a problem that exists because wealthy individuals in power want to stay in power and further divide the middle class."

Meetings are scheduled in February and March to continue young member outreach and engagement work and to expand efforts across the state.

To stay updated on this effort, visit our Member Strength web page at seiu1000.org

National anti-labor group seeks to **SILENCE** working families

The anti-union National Right to Work Foundation (NRTW) has filed a new lawsuit against Local 1000 and California Controller John Chiang that seeks to overturn decades of established labor law and legal precedent.

The federal suit is yet another attempt by right-wing billionaires to silence the voices of working families.

“This organization has targeted Local 1000 before, and by now, Californians should see these attacks for what they really are: a way to exploit the American court system to not only further a partisan ideology, but to eradicate labor unions and silence the voice of working families in our political system,” said Local 1000 President Yvonne R. Walker.

The plaintiffs’ argument asks the court to reverse the decades old standard of workers taking personal responsibility, if they wish to opt out of political dues and instead implement an “opt-in” system.

NRTW is backed by wealthy right-wing funders, including the billionaire Koch brothers. The organization is also behind two recent U.S. Supreme Court labor

cases – Knox v. SEIU Local 1000 and the Harris v. Quinn case currently awaiting a Supreme Court decision.

“For decades, American courts have supported the rights of working families to organize and unite their voices through a labor union; the fruits of those decisions include everything from landmark civil rights legislation, to the five-day work week,” Walker said. “The stakes are high for middle-class Americans in this lawsuit, whether they are in a union or not.”

“Local 1000 will continue to vigorously defend our members and all working Californians from these attacks, and we fully expect the courts to uphold long-standing legal precedent,” Walker added.

State Fund employees enjoy 2nd year of performance awards

Local 1000-negotiated award benefits most employees

Nearly all Local 1000-represented workers at the State Compensation Insurance Fund (SCIF) will receive a 2 percent performance award later this year thanks to an agreement Local 1000 negotiated with management at the state-owned worker’s compensation insurer.

Some members will receive a higher award of 5 percent based on exemplary service in 2013.

This is the second year that Local 1000-represented employees will receive performance awards under our agreement with SCIF. The performance award checks will

be issued by the State Controller’s Office, and the awards will be taxed as income.

SCIF management only planned to reward a small number of select employees originally – determined solely at management’s discretion. But Local 1000 members argued that all employees of SCIF should receive a performance award because our workers provided the hands-on resources that helped the insurer restructure.

“SCIF went through a challenging restructuring in recent years and has rebounded as a result of the

hard work of our members there,” said Brenda Modkins, chair of Bargaining Unit 1. “Members at SCIF organized to fight back and won a significant victory for their families, because we were unified in our belief that every member in the department should be rewarded for their service.”

SCIF is a quasi-independent state agency that functions much like a private business and is not funded through taxpayer dollars. SCIF is funded entirely through insurance premiums paid by its business customers.

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