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# UNION UPDATE

LOCAL 1000  
**SEIU**  
Stronger Together



Franchise Tax Board Executive Officer Selvi Stanislaus (center) pictured with Local 1000 Statewide Officers and twenty Local 1000 Stewards from FTB

## Stewards, officers meet with FTB Executive Officer

### Building relationships to build a better workplace

At a first-time meeting between Franchise Tax Board (FTB) Executive Officer Selvi Stanislaus and 20 Local 1000 stewards from that department, the union set out our road map to creating a cooperative, mutually-beneficial environment for workers and management.

“We’re here to build a relationship with FTB leadership based on support and collaboration,” said Yvonne R. Walker, Local 1000 president. “We can accomplish a lot together by communicating on critical issues and working together to find solutions.”

Stanislaus heard from Local 1000 stewards on a range of crucial topics that included upward mobility, disciplinary actions and improving relationships between supervisors and rank-and-file employees. FTB’s executive officer promised close examination



of the issues and committed to follow up with Local 1000.

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*“We can accomplish a lot together by communicating on critical issues and working together to find solutions.”*

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—Yvonne R. Walker  
Local 1000 President

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The meeting was held at FTB offices in Sacramento, home to more than 4,000 Local 1000-represented employees. More work in branch offices up and down California, and all are represented by the stewards in attendance.

“These are long-time stewards, averaging more than 20 years of state service,” observed Tamekia N. Robinson, vice president for organizing/representation. “They are on the front lines, representing

our members, and they have the wisdom FTB needs.”

The meeting with FTB’s Stanislaus was another in a series of meetings between Local 1000 and key leaders of state agencies. Earlier this year, our stewards at the State Controller’s office met with Controller Betty Yee. In 2013, newly appointed Employment Development Department Director Patrick Henning toured a number of EDD facilities around the state and met with Local 1000 officers, stewards and frontline members.

“It’s a great opportunity for stewards to have this kind of access to top management at FTB,” said Eve Dickson, who works in Sacramento as a principal compliance representative. “We’re in a good position to be more effective in improving workplace conditions for our members.”

# Fighting workplace bullying



## Joel Chan uses the tools of representation to take on abusive managers

There's a word for managers who yell, play favorites, deny hard-earned working conditions and trample the rights of workers who engage in union activities: bullies. And when your boss is a bully, you need someone to be a champion for you. For an increasing number of our members, that champion is Joel Chan.

Chan, a business tax specialist at the Board of Equalization in Oakland who's been in state service for over ten years, became a steward last year after he completed the Leadership Apprenticeship Program for Stewards (LAPS) and learned the tools of member representation. Since that time, he has found numerous ways to stand up for the members in his DLC—especially when they find themselves facing harassment from a manager.

Our members at the Department of General Services (DGS) building in Oakland had just such a manager; he had a long history of humiliating and abusive behavior toward the workers. Members

report he was a chronic yeller, that he would try to take pictures of them while they were not looking and that he would wait weeks before approving vacation schedules.

The hostile work environment came to a boiling point at DGS when the supervisor unleashed a torrent of verbal abuse on a handful of custodians speaking Chinese and tried to convince them, erroneously, that there was an "English Only" policy.

**"At job sites where almost everybody is a union member, supervisors follow the contract by the letter; they don't mess around."**

—Joel Chan, BOE Oakland

"That was the last straw," said Chan. "Our custodians came to me and another steward named Christine Soo. They explained their situation to us, and we formulated a game plan."

Chan, Soo and Local 1000 filed a grievance and circulated a petition

which they delivered—along with a warning that any retaliation would violate our contract as well as state and federal law—to the boss' office.

After all the pressure and attention, the abusive supervisor is now holding his tongue and the custodians are speaking to each other in whatever language they choose.

"Now people are actually standing up to him," Chan said. "It's an uncomfortable situation for him."

Chan pointed out that having strong union membership in the workplace is the best insurance policy against management bullying.

"Supervisors understand who is a union member and who is not," said Chan, who recently became Chief Steward of DLC 744. "They walk by the cubicles every day. They

see the people who have union posters. They see the people who wear purple on Wednesdays. They see people who are active. At job sites where almost everybody is a union member, supervisors follow the contract by the letter; they don't mess around."

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