

STEPPING INTO THEIR LEADERSHIP TO MAKE CHANGE

Inspired by past struggles, members are making our Purpose Statement come alive



(L-R) Tonya Bealey, Regina Johnson, Sharon Goudeau

Our celebration of African American leaders who've shaped our society is just part of the story behind Black History Month. Today, we have leaders in our union who walk among us and are creating a better life at work, at home, and in their communities through their dedicated activism.

At a recent meeting of our Statewide Bargaining Advisory Committee (SBAC), three of today's leaders shared their values, their motivations, and what they're doing to make our Local 1000 Purpose Statement come alive.

Tonya Bealey, the Chair of our African American Committee, is a member leader who sees the struggles of the past as paving the way to remedy the challenges we face today.

Three years ago, Tonya joined with her fellow members to support the Poor People's Campaign, the very same campaign championed by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Marian Wright Edelman. Then, as now, "It's all about coming together to make change," she says. "How do we fight injustice if we can't come together, despite our differences?"

Regina Johnson, Secretary of DLC 723, looks to history-making events and our shared humanity. "They were dedicated to their values and to fighting for what they believed, no matter the cost."

"They taught me that you have to be committed, to take ownership and to step into leadership," Regina said. But that's just the beginning. "You have to be willing to step into an uncomfortable place to identify a problem and find solutions," she added.

Sharon Goudeau became a union steward because "it gave me an opportunity to learn and share values with my coworkers." Beyond her work as a union activist, she's also involved with the Poor People's Campaign, focusing her energy on "something far greater than myself."

"To make change, vision isn't optional, and leadership isn't a position; it's a lifestyle," Tonya reflected. "To move forward, you need to move to places of discomfort," Regina added. And according to Sharon, the time for change is now. "We can't wait for others, this is about us, today."

The Fight for voting rights continues today

Every February, we celebrate Black History Month to highlight the achievements and legacy of African Americans and to focus on the ongoing struggle. Today, one of the primary challenges we face centers around the right to vote, which has been withheld from black Americans for hundreds of years.

After the passage of the Voting Rights Act in 1965, the Civil Rights Division of the Justice Department was created to enforce it. However, since 2000, the Civil Rights Division has become a tool to suppress votes and restrict the political voice of minority voters.

Voters have been suppressed at the ballot box by the Supreme Court, purged from voting rolls by individual states, and blocked

from voting altogether due to ID restrictions and criminal records.

Numerous organizations are fighting back, and you can, too. The ACLU and the Andrew Goodman Foundation are working on student rights. Stacey Abrams founded an organization called Fair Fight, while Let America Vote has been fighting for voter rights for years.

As Fredrick Douglass said, "Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did, and it never will." That means we have to take the power, spread the word, support these organizations, and volunteer to help register voters.

FOCUSING ON IMPLEMENTING OUR NEW CONTRACT RIGHTS

Statewide bargaining representatives gear up For 2020

Building on the member-driven success in winning an historic contract in 2019, more than 200 members of our Statewide Bargaining Advisory Council met in Sacramento Feb. 7-8 to take the important next step of implementing and enforcing our hard-earned rights.

Our new contract went into effect on Jan. 2, and includes a 7% wage increase over three years and a \$260 monthly health care stipend. We also won more than 150 classification salary adjustments, new and increased skill differentials, and a \$250 monthly GeoPay differential in four California counties.

"This weekend, our member leaders shifted their focus to holding the state accountable so that each of the 96,000 state workers we represent enjoy the full measure of the new benefits we've won together," said Yvonne R. Walker, Local 1000 President.

Those 200 member-elected bargaining representatives serve as our liaisons between the bargaining team and their colleagues in the workplace. Along with hundreds more union stewards, they're charged with ensuring our contract rights are respected and followed.



"We won a contract that reflects our values of worker and family justice, and we're making sure each of our members will enjoy those benefits to the fullest."

- President Walker

New opportunities available in our LVN-RN apprentice program

Have you thought about enhancing your nursing and leadership skills by continuing your path to become a Registered Nurse? Have you heard about our LVN-to-RN Apprenticeship Program at Sacramento City College?

Local 1000 is reopening the LVN-to-RN Apprenticeship application period for Sacramento City College. We have secured grant funding for this apprenticeship program that will allow you to become a Registered Nurse for the State of California while still working as an LVN. Your tuition will be covered by the grant, and you will be granted up to 20 hours per week off work to attend school while still receiving your full pay. Over time, this program will be offered to LVNs working at San Quentin State Prison, California Medical Facility, CSP Sacramento, CSP Solano, Folsom State Prison, California Health Care Facility, Deuel Vocational Institution, Sierra Conservation Center, and Mule Creek State Prison. More information about our apprentice programs, which include financial services and information technology, is available online.

To learn more, visit seiu1000.org/grow

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