

ON THE

MOVE

Election 2018 VOTE!

**AFSCME VOTER'S
GUIDE** PAGES 8-9

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On The MOVE

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EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

Elections don't win themselves

Sign up now to help defeat Bruce Rauner



BY
ROBERTA LYNCH

PRITZKER AND STRATTON HAVE A STRONG CAMPAIGN, BUT WE HAVE TO DO OUR PART.

I was recently at my local pharmacy when one of the store employees came up and introduced himself to me as an AFSCME member. What was he doing working at the pharmacy, I wondered. It turns out he also works for the state Department of Human Services and has gone several years without getting any of his promised step increases, so he had to take a second job working evenings and weekends to make ends meet.

That's Bruce Rauner at work. A governor who has driven our state ever deeper into debt, cost Illinois taxpayers a small fortune in interest payments, forced nonprofit community service agencies to close their doors or lay off staff, destabilized our state universities, and proven himself stunningly ineffective at the basic task of managing state government operations.

So what exactly has Rauner been doing in the governor's office for nearly four years? The answer is all too plain, yet still heard to believe. He's been working tirelessly to pursue his vendetta against public service workers—particularly targeting state employees.

Employees like the nursing aides who care for our frail and ailing veterans, the mental health technicians who provide round-the-clock support for individuals with severe developmental disabilities, the child protective investigators who often put themselves at risk to rescue children from abusive homes, the correctional officers who go behind prison walls daily to keep the rest of us safe.

Why would a guy with untold personal wealth so ardently devote himself to inflicting harm on individuals who devote their working lives to helping others and to the betterment of our communities?

That's a question I've asked myself many times and cannot begin to answer. But the record speaks all too clearly for itself. The young man I encountered at the pharmacy had to work two jobs because one of Bruce Rauner's earliest acts in office was to halt all scheduled employee step increases—hitting the newest hires especially hard, many

of them saddled with college debt or with young families to support.

Bruce Rauner couldn't care less about the hardships they face. He has made it his mission to drive down public employee salaries and benefits. Here's a millionaire who made his riches in part by slashing the care in nursing homes and polluting the environment now fulminating about the modest salaries of public servants who keep Illinois working every day.

At the same time, Rauner is trying to make it harder for these employees to afford health care coverage, pushing to raise their premium contributions by 100%. And he's leading the charge to find ways to reduce employee pensions, making it harder to count on dignity and security in their retirement years.

And of course, it's not just state employees that Rauner's after. He wants to drive down the incomes and weaken the rights of every public employee—at state universities, city and county governments, and school districts.

All of the harm that's been done to our state's financial and social infrastructures by Rauner's two-year budget blockade was in the service of this overriding goal—to destroy the public employee unions that raised those incomes and established those rights.

Fortunately for those of us in AFSCME and other unions, the Democrats in the General Assembly refused to bow down to Rauner's demands. And fortunately for our state, a great majority of Illinoisans now understand what Bruce Rauner is really about. Polls show his approval rating below 30 percent.


Yet, despite his abysmal

record and his tanking polls, Rauner is running for another term as governor, pouring his immense wealth into the race and doing everything he can to smear his opponents. With no achievements to run on, he's trying to depress voter turnout, hoping enough folks will be so turned off by all the negativity he's spewing that they'll just stay home on Election Day.

JB Pritzker and Juliana Stratton offer a sharp contrast. They're running for public office because they want to help improve people's lives. They've travelled from one end of this state to the other, meeting many AFSCME members along the way. They believe in the importance of public services and value the work that public employees do. They know Illinois faces very difficult challenges, but they want to try to solve them, not shift the blame to those who keep our state working every day.

Bruce Rauner is not going down without a fight. So if we want new leadership in Springfield we have to be prepared to fight too. And that means going out and knocking on doors up and down the streets of our communities to talk to every single voter. Experience clearly demonstrates that there is no more important factor in bringing out voters than encouragement from someone in their own community.

Elections don't win themselves. It's not too late to get involved.

Go to afscme31.org/ volunteer right away and sign up now to do your part to defeat Bruce Rauner. We have just this one opportunity to end his reign of destruction. Let's make sure we get the job done. 

Standing strong in the wake of Supreme Court ruling

100% Union makes the difference

A FSCME members are more steadfast than ever in the wake of a US Supreme Court ruling that banned fair share fees and brought “right to work” to the public sector.

Tawny Proulx

**AFSCME Local 172
Jack Mabley Developmental Center**

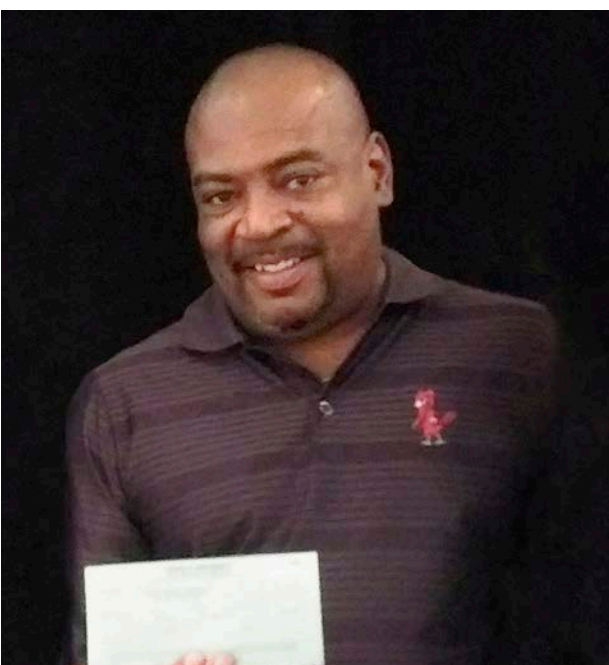
“OUR LOCAL IS AT 100% UNION. WE HAVE TO BE if we want to beat Rauner and keep our rights.”

“In order to ensure our members stay strong, we’ve had a lot of meetings to talk about what the Supreme Court ruling in the Janus case means and the battles that lie before us. Without the level playing field that a union provides, either you’re rich or you’re going to be left behind. There will be no middle class. And I think a lot of people are ready to fight for it.”

“Every new member is given a two-hour orientation where we go over everything our union has won, from wages that can provide for your family, to health care and retirement, to representation on the job.”

“I tell them, ‘Welcome to the most awesome opportunity you’re ever going to have in your life, to belong to a strong union that backs the employees not the employer.’ It’s really important to have that face-to-face conversation so they know you care about them, they aren’t a number.”

“Being 100% union means every one of us has signed a card saying we are committed. We are not opting out. We are in this together—we are the union.”



Tom Brown, AFSCME Local 3654

Tom Brown

**AFSCME Local 3654
Southwestern Illinois
Correctional Center**

“UNITY IS VERY IMPORTANT. MY GOAL IS TO MAKE sure that we’re keeping all the benefits that we have now—our health care, wages and retirement.”

“When I meet with new members or former fair share fee-payers, I give them the contract and let them read it. I let them see what we’ve fought for and won over the years. People we don’t even know fought to



Tawny Proulx and members of AFSCME Local 172 celebrate their 100% unity: “We are not opting out. We are in this together—we are the union.”

“The Janus case is about one thing—people wanting to take away our rights.”

get this contract and we gotta keep it going. We have to stay together. If we don’t fight for what we have, we won’t keep it.”

“Our local is doing great. We’re at 100% membership. But that doesn’t mean our work is done. We have to support the rest of the locals in the state and help them be 100% too. We need to get more people involved. And we need to educate our new members and make sure they’re ready to carry it on. Not just as members, but as activists.”

Terry Boone

**AFSCME Local 672
Moline-Coal Valley School District**

“I KNEW I WANTED TO BE PART OF A UNION AT MY next job after working as a mechanic at a car dealership for 27 years. When I started working for the school district, I immediately got involved in AFSCME and eventually became the local union president.”

“We are 100% union at Local 672 and I think that unity comes down to the conversations we have with one another. After Janus we have been stressing to our long-time members that we can’t take anything for granted. And for our new members, we make sure to connect with them from the day they are hired. It takes one-on-one communication. We sit down together to discuss the union and our contract, and encourage them to get involved and to contribute to our PEOPLE program.”

“If anyone hesitates to join the union, I point to the school district that’s just 20 miles away, where pay

and benefits are a third less than what we have here. This isn’t accidental. Because they do not have a union, they don’t have anyone going to bat for their benefits, wages and their dignity. We had to fight hard for our contract and it took time. The employer isn’t paying us more because they feel like it.”

“Having a union isn’t just about our pay. It also means we set a high standard for our jobs. We live in this community, our kids go to the school district and we support our food banks, churches, fire and police. What we make in wages and benefits we turn around and spend here. We care about what’s best for everyone.”

“Right now our future is under attack. Despite



Terry Boone, AFSCME Local 672

what big business and rich politicians say, unions aren’t making anyone go broke. The reason they are attacking us is because they want to privatize our jobs so they can make money off them and they can’t do that with unions standing in the way.”

“The Janus case is about one thing—people wanting to take away our rights.”

It's time to opt in

After the Supreme Court ruling, a message to my fellow former fair-sharers

Two very nice union representatives knocked on my door last week. Anticipating an unfavorable ruling in *Janus v. AFSCME*, they asked me, a “fair share” state employee, to join the union. I didn’t have to think twice. Sign me up, I told them. I’m with you.

Although I don’t believe, as Mr. Janus does, that paying fair share dues – fees paid to the union by non-union employees – infringes on my First Amendment rights, I also don’t think that unions are perfect. I’ve heard all the arguments against unions: that they make this country less competitive. That higher costs of union salaries and benefits are passed on to consumers and taxpayers. That they unfairly protect incompetent workers.

And yet.

I joined the union because, despite its flaws, it is an organization that is dedicated to advocating for the rights and well-being of working people, and I am a working person. I am fully cognizant of the fact that the quality of my salary, benefits, health care and pension are 100 percent due to the fact that a union negotiated for them on my behalf, and that if I want to continue enjoying good benefits in the future, I will need a union to advocate for them each time the contract is up for renegotiation.

Immediately after the Janus decision was delivered, the state of Illinois sent an email to all its employees, myself included, telling us that we were no longer obligated to pay “fair share” dues and that “Illinois statute requires the State to provide health care benefits, retirement benefits and many other employment benefits. They do not depend on union membership or collective bargaining.”

That statement is misleading at best. Illinois might be required by statute to provide benefits, but the statute sure doesn’t mandate the quality of benefits it provides. Without the strength of a union behind me, the state could and probably would renegotiate my contract to increase the number of hours I am required to work, double my health care costs, decline to offer a cost-of-living raise, or otherwise cut back my benefits. If this were to happen, and I, as an individual, were to protest, my lone voice

and interests would be ignored. By teaming up with tens of thousands of other working people, however, our collective voice gives us power in negotiations. Hence, the importance of unions.

employees with Cadillac benefits grumbling over their contracts when they have it better than many in the private sector.

The thing is, unions help all workers, organized or not. According to the Economic Policy Institute, unions keep wages high for nonunion workers as well by setting pay and benefit standards that non-union employers follow. Labor unions brought us the weekend and 40-hour workweeks and the end of child labor and paid vacations and employer-sponsored health insurance and a host of other benefits we take

I urge you to join your union. Yes, your dues may go up by a couple of bucks each month. I’d be lying if I said I wasn’t briefly tempted by the idea of opting out of the union and putting that money in my pocket instead. But the benefits you reap with collective bargaining power – for example lower health care premiums and enforcement of step pay increases – are vast in comparison to the modest dues you pay.

I know that the state’s email said, “even if you opt-out of the union, you still receive the same employment benefits

collectively for millions of American workers, will go on to retire with a comfortable pension and full health care benefits negotiated for him by the very union he took to court (I hope he thinks about that every time he cashes a pension check).

In this day and age, when the middle class is being squeezed, wages are stagnant, prospects are shrinking, our collective wealth is being funneled upward to make the rich richer, and wealthy special interests are doing their best to undermine collective bargaining, it’s time for working people



AFSCME Local 1019 member Erika Holst and her husband, Chris Schnell of AFSCME Local 805, signed AFSCME Strong cards after the Janus ruling came down in June.

“I joined the union because it is dedicated to advocating for the rights and well-being of working people.”

I know what you’re thinking. I know because I used to think the same thing, before I started working for the state. You’re thinking that you’re sick of hearing well-paid state

so much for granted now that we forget there was even a struggle for them in the first place.

If you hold a position covered by collective bargaining,

as union members.” But think about it. If everybody opts out of the union, who will be left to, you know, be in the union? Who will speak for you? Who will negotiate a favorable contract on your behalf? Who will have your back if your job is unfairly threatened?

The union is there for working people. Even Mr. Janus, whose lawsuit weakened the ability to bargain

to be there for their unions. Labor unions aren’t just for you, they are you: your voice, amplified in collective strength with thousands of people just like you. It’s time to opt in.



This op-ed by Erika Holst, an employee of the State of Illinois, was published in the Illinois Times on July 5. Reprinted with permission.

AFSCME members win new contract in Cook County

Member solidarity prevails in tough fiscal climate

On September 5, after more than a year of very challenging negotiations, AFSCME reached a tentative agreement on a new contract between Cook County and 14 AFSCME local unions that represent nearly 5,000 county employees.

The county's very severe budget shortfall made for a tough fight for the union bargaining committee led by Council 31 Deputy Director Mike Newman and comprised of nearly 90 elected representatives from every local.

Negotiations took place on two tracks. Each local union


met with management representatives from different county offices or divisions for "local negotiations" over issues specific to the members of that local. And all 14 locals—1111, 1178, 1276, 1767, 2060, 2226, 3315, 3477, 3486, 3692, 3696, 3835, 3958, and 3969—came

together as one strong and unified force for "universal negotiations" over shared issues like wages and insurance.

Management came to the table with a long list of concessionary demands, including a three-year step freeze, big increases in health insurance premiums, reductions in overtime pay and much more. Determined to resist those unfair terms, the AFSCME bargaining committee never wavered in its commitment to secure a contract that continues to provide access to high-quality, affordable health care and builds on the economic gains made in previous contracts.

The committee was backed by the solidarity of AFSCME members who time and again showed their resolve. By standing together against long odds, the union reached an agreement that represents real economic progress for every member, as well as expanded rights on the job. This accomplishment would not have been possible without the support and solidarity shown by AFSCME members throughout county government.

As *On the Move* went to press, ratification meetings were being set at county worksites.

"We fought hard for a fair contract with the county," said Newman. "We understood the financial constraints, but we also ensured that county officials didn't balance their budget on the backs of hard-working AFSCME members." 



Members of the AFSCME bargaining team celebrate the night they reached a tentative agreement with Cook County.

"We ensured that county officials didn't balance their budget on the backs of AFSCME members."



City of Chicago bargaining continues

As *On the Move* went to press, bargaining continued for the six AFSCME local unions (505, 654, 1215, 1669, 2912 and 2946) representing more than 3,500 City of Chicago employees.

Comprised of four bargaining units, the membership encompasses employees with administrative and clerical, human services, inspection, professional and library titles.

Progress has been made in fending off management's demands for changes to overtime pay and compensatory time, but there are still key union goals on the table, especially with regard to fair pay

and keeping health care affordable. In addition, the union is seeking to expand promotional and educational opportunities for employees.

"Our bargaining committee is very unified and determined," said Council 31 Deputy Director Mike Newman, who leads the negotiations.

"We want to ensure that members earn fair wages and have access to quality health

care first and foremost. But we also know there are ways that the city could be fairer to its own employees—and we're trying to focus on those as well."

The current AFSCME contract expired at the end of June, but all terms and conditions of that contract remain in effect while bargaining for a new contract continues.

City explores pension bonds


CHICAGO'S FINANCIAL WOES, which cast large clouds over the contract negotiations, are due in large measure to the city's massive pension debt.

That debt also represents a real threat to the retirement security of tens of thousands of city employees.

To address the problem, the Emanuel Administration is exploring utilizing pension obligation bonds as a means of stabilizing the city's pension funds. AFSCME met with the city's financial team, which presented preliminary details of the plan while stressing that no final decision has been made as to whether to move forward with it.

The city's four pension funds collectively have only 26 percent of the assets needed to pay promised pension benefits, so financial prudence dictates some form of remedial action.

The advantage of pension obligation bonds is that they could allow the city to make a payment that would immediately bring the pension funds to more than 50 percent funding, thus allowing the funds more opportunity to grow through investment, and ultimately reducing the city's financial liability.

"AFSCME Council 31 will consult with the national union and other affiliates around the country to make an assessment of whether these bonds represent the best path to greater stability for the pension funds," Newman said. "We must find a solution to ensure the hard-earned pensions of city workers are honored in full." 

Rauner keeps up attacks on state employees

AFSCME keeps beating him back

Since he took office nearly four years ago, billionaire Governor Bruce Rauner has been unrelenting in his efforts to devalue the work and diminish the living standards of state employees.

But all his attempts to knock them down have failed—because they never quit fighting as a union.

Now, even as he faces a daunting re-election campaign, Rauner's war on his own workers continues unabated.

Rauner tries to evade steps ruling

AFTER AN APPELLATE COURT agreed with AFSCME that the Rauner administration had illegally withheld state employee step increases since July 2015, the case was remanded back to the Illinois Labor Relations Board (ILRB) to order a remedy.

In July, the board gave Rauner 20 days to submit a plan to restore employees to their rightful steps. But instead Rauner submitted a plan trying to delay and deprive state employees of full restitution.

Specifically, the Rauner administration claimed that:

- It is only obligated to pay steps from July 1, 2015, until January 8, 2016, when the administration walked away from contract negotiations, claiming impasse;
- Step increases are subject to appropriations (improperly citing the Illinois Supreme Court's ruling in the 2011 back pay case) and no funds have been appropriated;
- No payments at all should be made until the impasse dispute—currently before the Fourth District Appellate Court—is decided.

AFSCME strongly disagrees with the Rauner administration's submission and the union filed a petition for compliance with the ILRB arguing that all employees should be immediately restored to their proper step and paid the back wages owed.

In response, a labor board compliance officer directed the Rauner administration to place all employees on their proper step by October 1 and to provide detailed information on the total cost for back wages owed.

Pushing employees out of union

WHEN THE US SUPREME Court ruled in *Janus v. AFSCME Council 31*, Bruce Rauner was on the steps of the court to claim the case as his own. He had previously asserted that thousands of employees would leave the union when the court ruled that fair share fees were not constitutional.

But the overwhelming majority of state employees have rejected that course, recognizing the critical importance of having a strong union that enables them to stand together for their rights, their safety on the job and their economic security.

So now Rauner's trying to force employees out of the union if they won't leave of their own volition. He's filed petitions at the ILRB to strip more than 1,000 current union members of their collective bargaining rights.

While these employees have been included in the bargaining unit with full contractual rights for many years, the Rauner Administration is suddenly alleging that their positions meet one or more of the statutory exclusion definitions under the Illinois Public Labor Relations Act.

AFSCME members see through Rauner's ploy. It's a deliberate attempt to force employees out of their union and leave them without any guarantees regarding wages, health insurance costs, promotional opportunities, job security or other essential rights.

When there is a dispute as to whether specific positions should be excluded from a bargaining unit, the labor board holds a fact-finding hearing to determine eligibility. CMS is pressing for those hearings to get underway immediately.

Many of the affected employees have contacted AFSCME to express their anger and frustration at Rauner's attempt to strip them of the protections of a union contract.

Learn more about the Illinois Policy Institute at AFSCME31.org/TheRealIPI

The Illinois Policy Institute: Public Employee Enemy Number One



The Illinois Policy Institute recently sent out a mailing to 400,000 public employees in Illinois—teachers, firefighters, correctional officers, social workers, nurses, and so many others—pushing all of them to drop out of their union.

The IPI claims they just want to help public employees by making them aware of their rights. But the real IPI is a shadowy, billionaire-backed front group—Rauner's biggest cheerleaders—that is single-mindedly devoted to dismantling the rights, wages and benefits that public employees have worked so hard to earn. They were behind the recent Janus case, and in fact Mark Janus is now on their payroll.

So when the IPI says you can keep your current wages and benefits if you drop out of the union, don't buy it. If members drop out of the union, then the union won't have the resources to stave off the big-money forces that are trying to drive down our standard of living. That's exactly what Bruce Rauner and the IPI want.

If you want to continue to have decent wages, affordable health care, sick and vacation time, benefits that improve your life, safe working conditions, protections against unfair treatment on the job, access to promotions, and all the other vital rights provided by your union contract and by the laws unions have helped to enact, put the IPI mailer right where it belongs—in your trash bin.

Be sure you've signed an AFSCME Strong card pledging to remain a union member.

AFSCME will represent these employees at the labor board and will fight on every front to safeguard their right to union representation.

Impasse case goes on

THE 4TH DISTRICT APPELLATE Court heard oral arguments on June 13 in AFSCME Council 31's appeal of the Labor Board's decision backing Gov. Bruce Rauner's claim of impasse in negotiations


between the state of Illinois and AFSCME.

This case dates to January 2016 when the Rauner administration walked away from bargaining and sought to impose its terms, including a 100% increase in employee costs for health care and an end to basic safeguards against irresponsible privatization schemes.

In March 2017, the appellate court granted the union's request to put the labor board's decision on hold—and stay Rauner's hand—until the

appeal is decided because the union demonstrated a "reasonable likelihood" of prevailing.

"There isn't and never has been any impasse," AFSCME Council 31 Executive Director Roberta Lynch said. "This case is about whether an employer, in this case Gov. Rauner, can refuse to comply with his legal duty to bargain in good faith."

Now that oral arguments are completed, the court will issue a decision. There is no time frame for a decision, which can typically take months to be issued. 

Uniting to win in November

Union members will work to defeat Bruce Rauner and his allies

Bruce Rauner's assault on public employees has been unrelenting for the past three years. Now AFSCME members are hitting the pavement to defeat him in the November general election.

Hundreds of delegates from local unions across the state came together for the AFSCME PEOPLE Conference on August 18 to chart a pathway to victory for working families, starting with early voting which begins in locations statewide on September 27.

The conference capped a months-long grassroots process in which local union and retiree delegates in 11 PEOPLE regions met to review legislative voting records and responses to the union's candidate questionnaire, as well as conduct candidate interviews in state legislative races.

The recommendations from those regional meetings

commitment to workers' rights.

"Bruce Rauner walked out of negotiations with AFSCME in 2016 and he never returned," Stratton said. "But JB and I strongly believe in the collective bargaining process and that our hard-working public employees deserve a fair contract.

"My mother was an AFSCME member," she continued. "Public employees have been Bruce Rauner's scapegoats for far too long. Together we can defeat him in November!"

Council 31 Executive Director Roberta Lynch urged AFSCME members to work to get out the vote in their communities and usher Rauner out of office.



"Public employees have been Rauner's scapegoats for too long. Together we can defeat him in November!"

were submitted to the statewide PEOPLE Executive Committee, which met on August 17 and unanimously voted to endorse all recommended state legislative candidates.

AFSCME Council 31 endorsed JB Pritzker for governor and Juliana Stratton for lieutenant governor in April. Delegates to the conference made endorsements in key federal and statewide races and discussed campaign strategy by region (see the full list of recommendations on page 8).

Stratton, keynote speaker at the conference, inspired the packed room with her

"Rauner's goal when elected was to defeat us, but AFSCME members have blocked Bruce Rauner's anti-union attacks at every turn since he took office," Lynch said. "Now we need to vote him out in November."

The election is a critical moment for the labor movement in Illinois and beyond, Lynch told the crowd. But the fight will not end in November.

"We cannot take our rights for granted—the fundamental right to unite, to unify, to come together as a union is something that must be fought for over and over again. We must rise up and keep on rising!"



AFSCME members vote to endorse candidates who will stand with working families.

Volunteers Make the Difference



Don Wanack
AFSCME Local 943, Pinckneyville
Correctional Center

After 20 years in state corrections, I've realized that the only way we'll get true change is to elect people who will come to the table and work with us. I understand exactly how much politics affect me and my family. So I make sure to volunteer in every election.

When Bruce "Ruiner" is speaking, he's lying. It's been a nonstop onslaught since his oath of office, from executive orders to illegal acts against employees. He hates unions—so this election is more personal than ever.

I've met JB Pritzker. He really has a good sense of what's going on in this state. And I am totally impressed with Juliana Stratton, his running mate.

Pritzker and Stratton know what our true problems are—and they know that paying state employees their due wages and benefits is not what's breaking Illinois. That's why I've been out volunteering for them since the beginning of May.

It's always tough knocking on doors the first time. Go with a friend to start. When the person comes to the door, I always say that I'm out volunteering because I believe in these candidates. If you're genuine, you can open people's eyes.



Ed Johnson
AFSCME Local 1669, City of Chicago
Department of Human Services

We've had four years of Bruce Rauner. Everybody knows what that has meant for us and workers around the country. It's simple. We've got to make a change.

I volunteer so I can look in the mirror and say I did all I could to make sure this guy doesn't stay in office. It starts with one person taking action and I want to do my share.

Some people are leery of knocking on doors. But you have to turn that fear into positivity and hope that you can do some good. Maybe you will convince someone who wasn't going to vote to come out and vote in this election.

If Rauner gets another term, he's going to be devastating. It's self-preservation at this point. We need what we have right now and we don't want to lose it.

We can talk to JB and he'll listen to us. We can't talk to Rauner. That means we have to support JB. There is no other choice.

Every AFSCME member should be working full blast to make sure JB gets in office. We've got to take a stand.

AFSCME Recommendations: 2018 General Election

The Illinois General Election in November is critical for the defense of workers' rights in our state and beyond.

Make your voice heard and VOTE!

Need to know:

- **September 27:** Early voting begins in most locations.
- **November 6:** Election Day!
- **Visit elections.il.gov** for specific early voting information in your community.

The following candidates are recommended by AFSCME Illinois:*

NATIONAL

Congressional District 1 – Bobby Rush
Congressional District 2 – Robin Kelly
Congressional District 3 – Dan Lipinski
Congressional District 4 – Jesus “Chuy” Garcia
Congressional District 5 – Mike Quigley
Congressional District 6 – Sean Casten
Congressional District 7 – Danny Davis
Congressional District 8 – Raja Krishnamoorthi
Congressional District 9 – Jan Schakowsky
Congressional District 10 – Brad Schneider
Congressional District 11 – Bill Foster
Congressional District 12 – Brendan Kelly
Congressional District 13 – Betsy Londrigan
Congressional District 14 – Lauren Underwood
Congressional District 16 – Sara Dady
Congressional District 17 – Cheri Bustos

APPELLATE COURT

Appellate Court District 5 – Kevin Hoerner

STATE LEGISLATURE

State Senate

Senate 9 – Laura Fine
Senate 21 – Laura Ellman
Senate 23 – Tom Cullerton
Senate 24 – Suzanne Glowiak
Senate 27 – Ann Gillespie
Senate 29 – Julie Morrison
Senate 30 – Terry Link
Senate 33 – Nancy Zettler
Senate 36 – Gregg Johnson
Senate 38 – Heidi Henry
Senate 41 – Bridget Fitzgerald
Senate 45 – David Simpson
Senate 48 – Andy Manar
Senate 54 – Brian Stout
Senate 56 – Rachelle Aud Crowe
Senate 57 – Christopher Belt
Senate 59 – Steve Webb

State House

House 17 – Jennifer Gong-Gershowitz
House 18 – Robyn Gabel
House 19 – Robert Martwick
House 35 – Frances Ann Hurley
House 37 – Matthew Hunt
House 42 – Kathy Carrier
House 43 – Anna Moeller
House 44 – Fred Crespo
House 45 – Diane Pappas
House 46 – Deb Conroy
House 48 – Terra Costa Howard
House 49 – Karina Villa
House 50 – James Leslie
House 51 – Mary Edly-Allen
House 53 – Mark Walker
House 54 – Maggie Trevor
House 55 – Marty Moylan
House 56 – Michelle Mussman
House 57 – Jonathan Carroll
House 58 – Bob Morgan
House 59 – Daniel Didech
House 61 – Joyce Mason

House 62 – Sam Yingling
House 64 – Trisha Zubert
House 65 – Richard Johnson
House 68 – Jake Castanza
House 69 – Angelique Bodine
House 70 – Paul Stoddard
House 71 – Joan Padilla
House 72 – Mike Halpin
House 76 – Lance Yednock
House 77 – Kathleen Willis
House 79 – Lisa Dugan
House 81 – Anne Stava-Murray
House 84 – Stephanie Kifowit
House 86 – Larry Walsh
House 88 – Jill Blair
House 89 – Nick Hyde
House 90 – Amy Davis
House 91 – Carolyn Blodgett
House 93 – John Curtis
House 95 – Dillon Clark
House 96 – Sue Scherer
House 97 – Mica Freeman
House 98 – Natalie Manley

AFSCME members get behind JB Pritzker and Juliana Stratton

“I believe JB Pritzker will stand by the union. He strikes me as someone with integrity. He’s told us he’s going to work with us and that’s a [heck] of a lot better than we got with Rauner. If you’re not voting, you’re giving a yes vote to Rauner. We need every vote we can get. Protect your future and your children’s future—vote for JB and Juliana.”

—Tawny Proulx, AFSCME Local 172

“I’m supporting JB Pritzker and Juliana Stratton because our current governor has failed working families of Illinois. We want a governor that will advocate for working families and not attack us like the current governor has done. It’s time for a change in Illinois.”

—Cherone Gladney-Morris, AFSCME Local 505

*Note: AFSCME does not make endorsements in uncontested races.

✓ **WORKERS'
RIGHTS**

✓ **AFFORDABLE
HEALTH CARE**

✓ **RETIREMENT
SECURITY**

House 99 – Marc Bell
House 104 – Cindy Cunningham
House 105 – Ben Webb
House 111 – Monica Bristow
House 112 – Katie Stuart
House 113 – Jay Hoffman
House 114 – LaToya Greenwood
House 115 – Marsha Griffin
House 116 – Jerry Costello
House 117 – Jason Woolard
House 118 – Natalie Phelps Finnie

COUNTY

Champaign

Clerk – Aaron Ammons
County Board #4 – Cathy Emanuel
County Board #5 – Leah Taylor
County Board #6 – Mike Ingram
County Board #9 – Pranjal Vachaspati
County Board #10 – Tanisha King-Taylor

Cook

Clerk – Karen Yarbrough
Assessor – “Fritz” Kaegi
County Board #3 – Bill Lowry
County Board #5 – Deborah Sims
County Board #8 – Luis Arroyo Jr.
County Board #9 – Peter Silvestri
County Board #11 – John Daley
County Board #13 – Larry Suffredin
County Board #14 – Scott Britton
County Board #15 – Kevin Morrison
County Board #17 – Abdelnasser Rashid

Grundy

Sheriff – Kevin Callahan

Jackson

Clerk – Frank Byrd
Treasurer – Sharon Johnson
County Board #2 – Charles Brandon Brown

Kankakee

County Board #2 – Marta Perales
County Board #14 – Danny Williams
County Board #22 – Charlene Eads
County Board #24 – Kazys Kupcikeius

Lake

County Board #3 – Ed Gallagher
County Board #6 – John Wasik
County Board #10 – Jessica Vealitzek
County Board #15 – Jennifer Clark
County Board #17 – Maria Peterson
County Board #20 – Adam Didech

LaSalle

County Board #27 – Michele Hansen

Macon

Clerk – Amy Rueff

Madison

Clerk – Debbie Ming-Mendoza
Regional Superintendent of Schools –
Andrew Reinking
County Board #5 – Jessica Thomas
County Board #10 – Bruce Malone
County Board #13 – Matt King
County Board #14 – Timothy Tweedy
County Board #15 – Mike Sabolo

McHenry

County Board #5 – Carlos Acosta

Peoria

Sheriff – Brian Fengel
Auditor – Jessica Thomas

Randolph

Sheriff – Shannon Wolff

Rock Island

Clerk – Karen Kinney
County Board #12 – David Adams
County Board #14 – Angie Normoyle
County Board #21 – Dorothy Beck

Saline

State’s Attorney – Jayson Clark

Sangamon

County Board #22 – Tony DelGiorno

Shelby

Treasurer – Beth Musser

Will

County Board #4 – Jacqueline Traynere
County Board #5 – Meta Mueller
County Board #6 – Joe Van Duyne
County Board #7 – Kyle Killacky
County Board #9 – Annette Parker
County Board #9 – Rachel Ventura

Winnebago

Sheriff – Gary Caruana
Clerk – Paul Gorski
County Board #3 – Jay Ferraro
County Board #15 – Burt Gerl
County Board #20 – David Soll

STATEWIDE



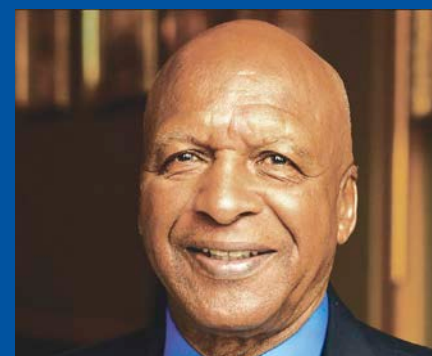
Governor – JB Pritzker



Lieutenant Governor –
Juliana Stratton



Illinois Attorney General –
Kwame Raoul



Secretary of State –
Jesse White



Comptroller –
Susana Mendoza



Treasurer –
Michael Frerichs

Rise Up: AFSCME International Convention



More than 5,000 delegates and alternates gathered in Boston for AFSCME’s 43rd International Convention in July, including 360 from Council 31 local unions.

The strength and solidarity of union members from across the country was clear and so was their message: Together we will rise up even in the face of our challenges, and we will never quit our union. If the wealthy special interests think they have us on the ropes, if they think they can divide us from one another, they can forget about it.

Facing a wave of unprecedented attacks, the 43rd International Convention provided innovative strategies to meet those attacks head on.

Throughout the week, participants learned new union-building skills, discussed organizing strategies, re-committed to one-on-one conversations with

co-workers, and learned how to fight back against corporate-funded campaigns to get workers to quit their unions. The convention also graduated the first class of the Rise

tion elected Elissa McBride as International Secretary-Treasurer by an overwhelming margin. And delegates approved a slate of resolutions to prepare the union for the future.

Council 31 Deputy Director Mike Newman said that convention delegates were resolute in the wake of the Supreme Court’s Janus decision.

“AFSCME members are fearless and unwavering. In the face of these threats, our union is more emboldened and ener-

“Together we will rise up even in the face of our challenges, and we will never quit our union.”

Up Institute, a more than 5,000-member army of activists, organizers and communicators who returned home armed to defend union rights. Delegates to the Conven-

gized than ever,” Newman said. “They can try to steal our freedom, but if we remain united then there is no obstacle we can’t overcome. We are ready to rise up.”

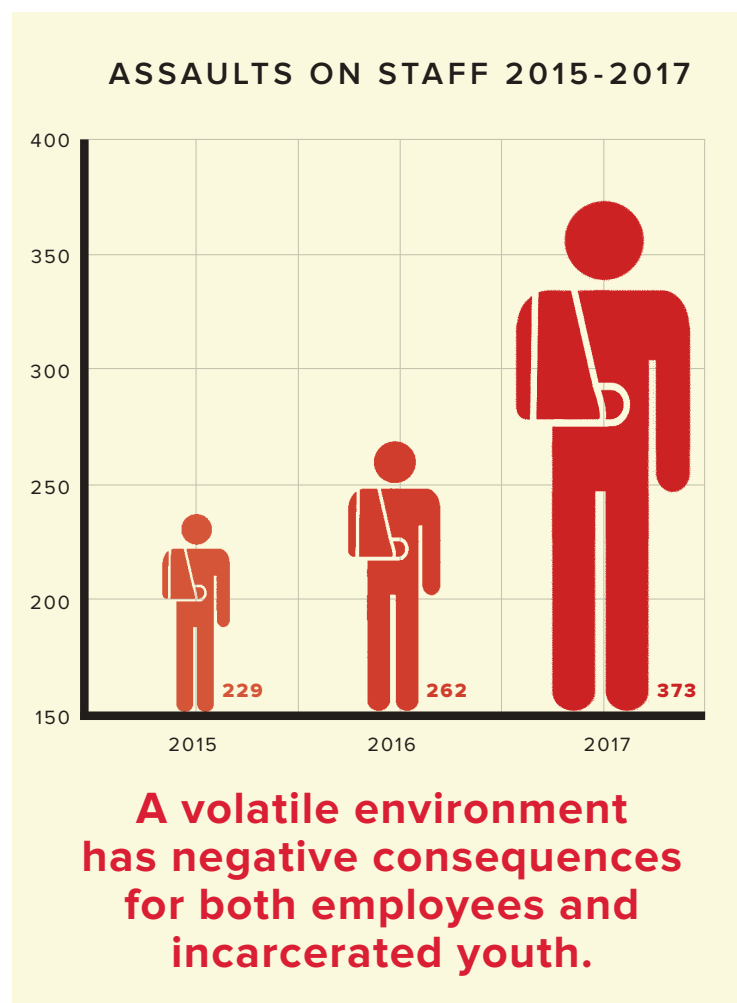
AFSCME issues report on youth center violence

A new report published by AFSCME Council 31 highlights the serious problem of increased violence in the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice and recommends ways to reverse the trend.

The report, *Rising Violence in Illinois Youth Centers: Causes & Cures*, offers statistical detail and first-hand accounts of recent incidents that powerfully convey the significant uptick in youth assaults on staff in those centers, as well as the consequences this volatile environment has for both employees and incarcerated youth. Some of those consequences include:

- Severe injuries to employees causing both physical and emotional trauma;
- Extreme staff demoralization;
- Loss of experienced staff and increased staff turnover, as well the inability to recruit and retain

- qualified and specially-trained staff;
- Persistent short-staffing and excessive overtime due to the large number of employees off work on service-connected leave, directly restricting the services and rehabilitative programming provided to youth;
- A growing atmosphere of violence and disruption that negatively affects treatment, education and other daily activities in the centers;
- Inconsistent and poorly-implemented behavioral standards for youth that hamper effective rehabilitation strategies;



- and
- The failure of agency management to achieve the core goals of DJJ in providing a safe environment for youth and successfully reintegrating them into their communities.

Intended to emphasize the urgency of the problem and spur action within the agency—or, if necessary, by the legislature—the report concludes with a comprehensive list of recommendations based on front-line experience to reduce violence, increase safety and improve outcomes for youth.

Among those recommendations are establishing and consistently applying standards for behavior and consequences for infractions, improved training, increased staff, focus on problematic behaviors, court involvement and, most fundamentally, heeding input from employees.

IDOC employee gets position he deserves

AFSCME grievance restores fairness

After a two-year “roller coaster ride” AFSCME Local 3649 member Dustin York won his grievance and was placed in the position he worked hard to achieve at Robinson Correctional Center.

“I got hired at the prison with a degree in machine shop technology,” York said. “My goal was to use the skills I went to school for and become a maintenance craftsman.”

Two years ago the job he wanted so badly opened and York applied with a B grade. Hoping to improve his grade to an A, he submitted the proper paperwork to CMS—but the agency changed his grade from B to ineligible.

As a result of the agency’s error, someone with less seniority was given the position. York was beyond frustrated.

“CMS made the error but they just ignored me,” York recalled. “I can’t tell you how many times I called CMS after they took my grade away and another person got hired.”

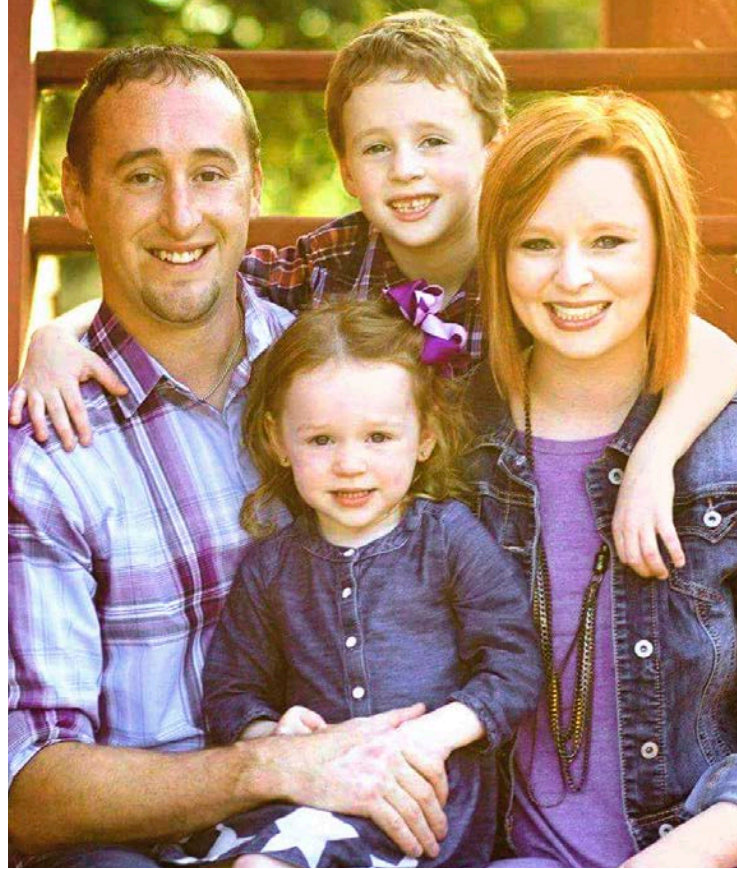
The power of a union contract

WITH THE HELP OF HIS STEWARDS, York filed a grievance and had his grade rightfully restored to a B. But he still didn’t have the job. So AFSCME took his grievance to arbitration in order to try and secure the position he earned.

Monica Carrell, a correctional counselor and president of the local, was a steward at the time and helped York through his grievance. She kept York informed throughout the lengthy process.

“In a grievance like this it’s important to explain each step and have open communication,” Carrell said.

Finally, at the beginning



Dustin York and his family.

of 2018—more than two years after the grievance was filed—York’s case went to arbitration. And he won.

On March 1, he started

his new job. The other AFSCME member was able to retain his position and now there are two maintenance craftsmen at the correctional

center.

Carrell credits the happy ending to the power of the union contract.

“The contract doesn’t recognize a particular person,” Carrell said. “It’s there in black and white for everybody. The feeling of being able to enforce that contract and see the joy in Dustin’s face, and in his wife’s face, and know how it will help his family, there are no words for it.”

Winning goes a long way

YORK LOVES HIS NEW JOB, and so does his young family.

“I’m home on the weekends and I get to spend time with them,” York said. “And I’m a lot happier with my job. I’m actually doing something I want to do. It’s more than a job to me.”

And he knows AFSCME made the difference.

“Without my union I would never have had any luck getting this job.”

“Perseverance paid off”

State employees receive back pay owed since 2011

The state finally paid its oldest debt this August—back wages owed to more than 24,000 state employees.

After seven years of legal and legislative battles, AFSCME succeeded in gaining the appropriation needed to ensure dedicated employees were finally paid the wages they earned years ago.

After a slow start where Gov. Bruce Rauner dragged his feet on submitting vouchers to the comptroller’s office, the Department of Public Health was the first agency to release the remaining payments of a negotiated pay increase illegally withheld since 2011.

And a few weeks later, the other four agencies owing wages—the departments of Corrections, Juvenile Justice, Human Services and Natural Resources—issued paper checks or direct deposits to employees.

Employees in the five

agencies are now paid in full, after receiving nearly half the amount of back wages they were owed in 2014. Other agencies had already paid out the full amount owed to employees, most in 2011 or 2012.

AFSCME members celebrated the victory that was so long and hard-fought.

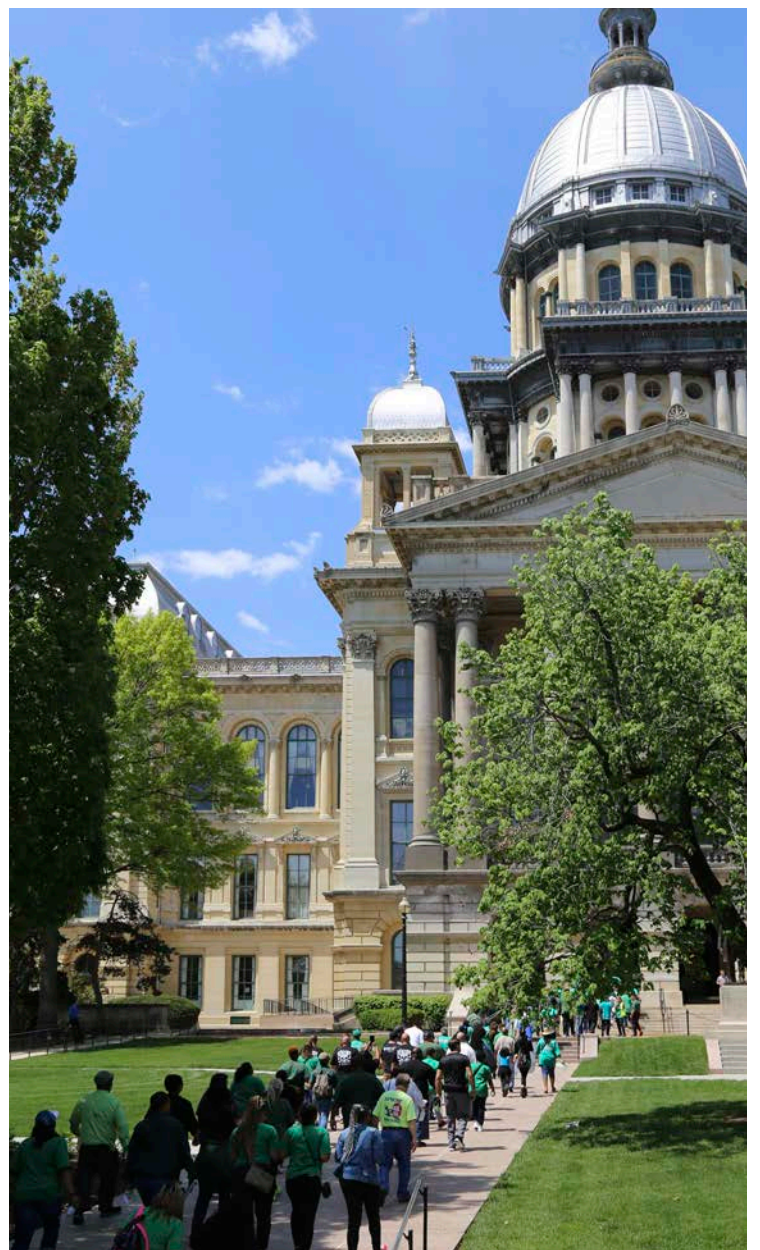
“It wasn’t just about the money, it was bigger than that,” said Tim Worker, president of AFSCME Local 993 at Vandalia Correctional Center. “It was about something that they should have done. It’s about the fact that the money was ours and should have been paid.”

“It’s been a long time coming, but our perseverance has paid off,” said Sara Holtgrave, president of AFSCME Local 401 at Warren G. Murray

Mental Health Center. “We’re proud to know that we did not stop fighting and we got what we deserved. We knew that AFSCME wouldn’t let us down. It wasn’t easy after seven years of fighting, but we kept the faith.”

“This fight was a test of our resolve and it proved our tenacity,” said Shaun Dawson, president of AFSCME Local 2073 at Logan Correctional Center. “If there’s an obstacle before us we’re going to overcome it. This win shows our younger members who are waiting on the steps they were promised that no matter how long the battle takes, we are going to persevere and we are going to win.”

NOTE: If employees have questions about whether they received the proper amount, they should contact their agency payroll department and request the relevant documentation. If they have questions related to their pensions, they should contact SERS.



AFSCME members march to the Capitol for back pay.

ON THE LOCAL LEVEL

Making strides at U of I

THIS SPRING, AFSCME LOCALS 698 and 3700 at the University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign reached contract settlements that ensure a better future for more than 1,600 employees.

Local 698 represents more than 400 employees, including library staff, laboratory mechanics, research farm employees, lab animal caretakers, veterinary technicians, crash rescuers at the airport, storekeepers, computer technicians and more. They reached their agreement in March.

Local 3700 reached its agreement in June. The local includes more than 1,000 clerical, administrative and child development staff, as well as cooperative extension employees throughout the state.

AFSCME LOCAL 698

COUNCIL 31 STAFF REPRESENTATIVE David Beck and President Kristi Donze led the bargaining team for Local 698, along with Heidi Schwarz, Ben Riegler, Benjamin Stone, Reid McClure, Angie Gruendl, Mike Kobel, Zach Tammen, Jan Harper, David Jahn, Jamar Brown and Dustin Sears.

The team won a four-year agreement that included guaranteed one-percent raises across the board in each of the first three years and a 1.25% raise in the fourth year—or the campus-wide wage increase, whichever is higher—and new shift differentials for different groups of employees.

Donze said it was a big win for Local 698 members to get a guaranteed raise for the first time in two contracts



situation, we felt this was a very good step forward.”

The union won higher wages for some of the most underpaid employees, including veterinary technicians, the newest group in the unit.

“We’ve been fighting for wage increases since we joined the union, so this was a good win for us,” said Donze, who has worked as a veterinary technician in emergency and

who are trained and prepared for rescue emergencies with aircraft, and the Krannert Center theatrical stitchers who make all the costumes

for performances at the university.

“When negotiating, we’re dealing with the university as a whole and many different

departments and colleges,” Donze said. “It’s challenging. But we’re proud of the strides we made and next time around we’ll come back and fight again.”

AFSCME LOCAL 3700

ALONG WITH DAVID BECK, Local President Nadja Robot led the local 3700 bargaining team, which also included Denise Hogan, Buffy Vance, Jill Ouellette, Katrina Smith, Cathy Keltz, Tobi Wilder, Jerri Lyn Beck, June Clark-Eubanks, Josh McNattin, Sylvia Crowell, Brett Peugh, Paula Luesse and Robin Baird.

The team won one-percent guaranteed wage increases in each year of the four-year agreement, unless the campus-wide raise is higher, as it will be in 2018. But the most significant victory in these negotiations was the first advancement in step increases since they were frozen in 2013. Steps will increase by two percent, a 10 percent increase over the life of the agreement, and starting pay will go up at least eight percent, with slightly different wage scales for child development and community workers.

“We are most proud of getting our step program back,” said Robot, an office support specialist in the student affairs department. “It will provide wage increases to a great number of our members that haven’t seen a raise in years. We also removed the

“We’re proud of the strides we made and next time around we’ll come back and fight again.”

instead of only relying on the campus wage increase.

“We were glad to get a guaranteed raise,” Donze said, “because you never know what’s going to happen with the campus wage program. It might not seem like much, but looking at the last couple contracts and the state financial

critical care for 15 years. “We have about 70 vet techs on campus and we pressured the university to finally increase the starting minimum of each classification for the next three years.”

The contract includes hourly raises for the crash rescuers at the Willard airport,



lowest steps so that new hires will start at a higher rate.”

Robot credits the victories to the fact that Local 3700 diversified their tactics on campus, targeting different decision makers with creative actions and pickets. At the same time, the graduate employees went on strike during AFSCME's bargaining sessions, which helped ramp up tension.

“Seeing other labor groups on campus willing to take it to that level helped us immensely,” Robot said.

Robot is happy with the gains they made but she says the local is far from sitting back and relaxing.

“We didn't get everybody what we wanted,” she said. “Now we'll focus on getting our lowest-paid members significant raises. They are our priority for the next contract.”

Robot believes that the local made the gains it did because of strong member support.

“Now that we all live in a right-to-work environment, member activism is more important than ever,” Robot said. “So far the response has been more people asking how to sign up than how to drop out. As long as we can keep that momentum, we'll have a good chance to negotiate an even better contract in 2021.”

Persistent action brings big gains

MEMBERS OF AFSCME LOCAL 2399 at Stephenson County Nursing Home recently secured their second union contract, but they've been working for years to spur the county to address the staffing crisis at the home.

The staffing problem includes not just medical care providers, but also housekeeping, laundry, activities and ancillary staff.

During negotiations, the AFSCME bargaining committee focused on the critical need for a safe staffing plan. The local had already laid the groundwork by ensuring the nursing home and county boards were well aware that the staffing shortage had reached crisis levels. They called board members every day, every shift, when staffing was short.

Council 31 Staff



Local 2399 Vice President Melissa Piggues and member Cheri Galor.



Local 1173 bargaining team: Jason Asbury, Eric Heiden and Jeff Markley (Marc McMahon not pictured).

“The big gains we made are a direct reflection of [our] hard work.”

Representative Sara Dorner said the members finally got through to the boards that the nursing home has to be competitive to attract and retain staff. The new contract demonstrates that commitment.

All staff will get a two-percent guaranteed wage increase every year of the three-year agreement. Nursing staff received a significant increase in starting wages and step increases. The new wage plan will make a big difference in the lives of the existing workforce and help attract and retain new, qualified employees. The bargaining team was also able to increase the starting wage for other staff.

After blocking a mandatory overtime policy, the team won an increased shift differential, added a stay-after bonus for those who work beyond their scheduled shift, and secured an on-call bonus. Employees who refer a new hire will receive bonuses as well.

Local 2399 is proud of its accomplishments and will continue to fight for what's best for their membership and the residents of the nursing home. Led by Dorner, the bargaining team included President Marylon Brooks, Vice President

Melissa Piggues and executive board members Alicia Jones and Terri Townsend.

“The big gains we made in this second contract are a direct reflection of the hard work AFSCME members did to educate and engage the board and the community in the home's future,” Dorner said.

Galesburg union wins fair contract

BEATING BACK MANAGEMENT-driven contract changes and making gains in compensation, AFSCME Local 1173 members at the city of Galesburg won a solid three-year agreement.

Led by Council 31 Staff Representatives Kyle Spencer and Randy Lynch, the bargaining team included Local 1173 President Eric Heiden, Marc McMahon, Jason Asbury and Jeff Markley. Heiden said that while negotiations are never easy, and the local was working on an expired contract for several months, he and his team were happy with the end result of their work.

All employees will receive a 7.5 percent wage increase

over the life of the three-year contract, a sick-time bonus and standby pay.

Electricians who complete the apprenticeship program will receive a five-percent increase to their base rate of pay. Communications dispatchers who are doing assigned certified training dispatch work will receive compensatory time for that assignment. And Handivan drivers, who provide transportation for the elderly and disabled, received a pay-grade increase.

All these gains were made

they provide.

Management wanted to be able to lay off staff by department, instead of the current language that ensures part-time and seasonal help must be laid off before full-time positions.

“We couldn't agree to that because some departments have a lot of seasonal help and some have none,” Heiden said. “We'd be giving up a big protection and we weren't going to do that.”

Management also wanted the power to move employees to any position in the

“We fought for high-quality public services.”

possible due to the commitment of the bargaining team to mitigate any losses experienced by an anticipated increase in insurance premiums.

“Walking out of it, we thought it was pretty fair,” Heiden said, “and since then the city has changed insurance companies and our premiums will actually be quite a bit lower. So now a few months down the road we feel even better about it.”

Heiden said the union also rejected management proposals that would have been harmful not only to employees, but to the public services

city, whereas right now they only have the right to move staff within their current department.

Heiden is a senior water plant operator in the productive division, which is responsible for water treatment and pumping safe water out to residents and businesses.

“We were never going to agree to an interchangeable ‘maintenance pool’ either,” Heiden said. “We have people that are trained and highly experienced in specific skill sets, so we fought to keep them where they are. It's just a much better practice for high-quality public services.”

SHORT REPORTS

Missouri voters say no to “right to work”

DEFEATING A CORE GOAL OF anti-worker forces, Missouri voters overwhelmingly rejected the state’s new so-called Right-to-Work statute by referendum on August 7.

The measure lost by a whopping 35 points, making clear that voters strongly oppose right-to-work (for less).

Missouri Republicans who control both houses of the state’s legislature and the governorship passed the law early in 2017, but its implementation was blocked when union members collected more than 300,000 signatures, three times the number required, to trigger the referendum.

For the August election, unions and community groups took every opportunity to get out the vote in opposition to the anti-worker law.

Not only did unions outspend the anti-worker groups backing the law, they also beat them with good old fashioned shoe leather.

More than 2,000 volunteers worked on the campaign, knocking on more than 800,000 doors and making more than a million phone calls



Workers rally in Missouri to oppose right-to-work (for less) law.

urging people to vote no on the proposition. As a result, the election had an unusually high turnout for an August primary.

“We would attribute a lot of that to how much energy we had and our supporters had,” said Erin Schrimpf of We Are Missouri, the group that led the “no” campaign. “The loudest proponents of the laws tend to be out-of-state

conservative groups like the National Right to Work Foundation, which have plenty of pull with state legislators, but not as much with regular voters.”

Demolishing this measure sends a message to legislators across the country: Voters don’t support policies that push working people down. In states with right-to-work

laws, all workers have lower wages, less access to benefits like affordable health care and experience higher rates of workplace fatalities.

Missouri showed the country that by working together to educate and mobilize voters, union members and their allies can stop right-to-work (for less) laws from expanding beyond the current 27 states and even take some of those states back.

is not alone.

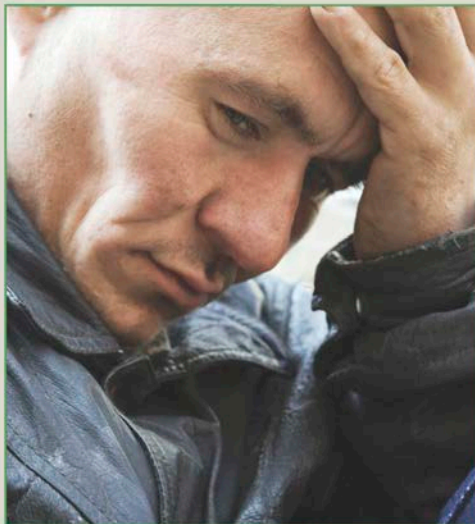
Middle class workers on the other hand have watched their real wages fall by 1.8 percent since the cuts were enacted. Worker pay isn’t rising because a tax cut for the wealthy has never seemed to trickle down to the people who create that wealth.

Corporations have plenty of money—they just have no reason to pass it on to their employees.

Worried? Overwhelmed? PSP can help!

AFSCME’s Personal Support Program (PSP) offers free, professional, confidential assistance to represented employees and their covered dependents.

For help, call
800-647-8776



PSP services are available to all state of Illinois, city of Chicago and Cook County AFSCME members. Other members may be eligible depending on their union contract. Check with your local union for more information.

Tax cuts mean more for wealthy not workers

THE BIG WINNERS OF THE \$1.5 trillion Trump-Republican tax cuts of 2017 are not the everyday workers who were promised big wage boosts but corporate executives and shareholders.

The tax cut package signed into law in December slashed the corporate tax rate from 35 to 21 percent. These big companies, already benefiting from tax cuts, have bought back a record amount of their own stock—a financial practice that rewards shareholders by making their shares more valuable.


In just one example, since the tax cuts were enacted, Oracle Corporation CEO Safra Catz sold \$250 million worth of shares in her company—giving her the largest executive payday in 2018. And a review of Securities and Exchange Commission filings shows that Catz

Unions reduce inequality

A NEW REPORT BY FOUR ECONOMISTS confirms the strong role that unions play in reducing income inequality for all workers, not just union members.

Henry Farber, Daniel Herbst and Ilyana Kuziemko of Princeton and Suresh Naidu of Columbia wrote “Unions and Inequality Over the Twentieth Century: New Evidence from Survey Data,” which used data from surveys of American households going back to the 1930s.

While unions peaked in the 1950s and 60s, the fact that union workers earn about 20 percent more than non-union workers in similar jobs has remained steady for the last 90 years.

As union membership has declined, incomes in the US are as unequal as they were before the rise of unions a century ago. Unions are needed more than ever. 

RETIREE NOTES



Retirees gathered at the 2018 PEOPLE Conference in Springfield, including Judi Riordan, Terri Biddle and Jay Ferraro.

Retirees gear up for 2018 election

CHAPTER 31 RETIREES ARE lacing up their boots and working to elect labor-friendly candidates this November.

"Sure, this election is important to me, but it's crucial for my kids and grandkids," said Bill Warhausan, Chapter 31 executive board member. "I want them to grow up in a state where they can have a shot at the American dream. This election will determine that for generations to come. We must get out and work."

AFSCME retirees understand the significance of this election and how important it is to reach out to active and retired union members about candidates who stand up for workers' and retirees' rights.

"Some people might not want to volunteer at certain times, like on weekends, but if Rauner gets another term, we won't be able to afford weekends," said Teri Biddle, Sub-chapter 86 executive board member. "We will have to go back to work to afford necessities!"

Retiree Sub-chapters are organizing volunteers to walk doors and make phone calls.

"Our plan is to help as much as possible," said Don Todd, president of Sub-chapter 86. "Our volunteers are fired up and ready to knock on doors and participate in phone banks."

And retirees from every corner of the state agree.

"I volunteer to knock on doors and drive seniors to the polls because the senior vote has to get out," said Judi Riordan, PEOPLE chair of Sub-chapter 162. "Double check your registration and make sure you can vote. The ones that don't vote can be the ones who decide the election and we can't let that happen."

Every election is important, but after the US Supreme Court's decision in *Janus v. AFSCME*, Illinoisans can't risk another four years under Bruce Rauner.

"This is the most important election I have ever seen," Todd emphasized. "We are fighting for our union and our democracy this November."

Union strong—reflecting on our triumphs and legacy

EACH AFSCME RETIREE member's story is different, but with one common theme: If we stand in solidarity, our union can survive and thrive in any climate.

"I have been a union man since 1962. Before the

union came to my workplace in corrections, the boss man could fire you without any notice," recalled Robert Jones, Sub-chapter 92 member. "The boss would talk to you like you were a kid. Management respected us more after the union was established at our workplace. We finally had a voice."


"The union gave us the 40-hour work week, time and a half, and employer health insurance," said Jay Ferraro, Chapter 31 executive board member and candidate for the Winnebago County Board. "These benefits changed everything. Without these wins we wouldn't have had a roof over our heads."

AFSCME continues to thrive and fight for what is owed, even under Rauner's destructive governing. By fighting together, the union won back pay owed to thousands of state workers and retirees.

"It was a long fight;

but the union won," said Gary Mazzotti, Sub-chapter 86 member. "It was the union who took the fight for back pay all the way to the Supreme Court. It was union members who went to the legislators and pushed to get our money. If it wasn't for the union, we would never have seen that money. We wouldn't even be talking about back pay."

To keep this momentum going, retirees and working members alike will have to bring unrelenting solidarity to the movement.

"If you have the union at 60 percent solidarity when approaching the bargaining table, the union is already starting at a 40 percent disadvantage," Ferraro said. "That makes it difficult to get what's necessary, like better wages and working conditions. The stronger we are together, the more protection we will be able to give ourselves." 



Did you know?

To be an AFSCME Retiree Chapter 31 member, sign an AFSCME Chapter 31 membership card!

Retiree dues are only \$3.00 a month and will be deducted directly from your pension check upon your authorization.

By joining AFSCME Retiree Chapter 31, you'll be taking a stand for retiree rights and improved benefits. You've earned your retirement benefits; now join the fight to protect them. Become a member of AFSCME Illinois Retiree Chapter 31 today—it's the best investment a retiree can make!

For more information or to request a membership card, please contact Kate Morthland, AFSCME Council 31 Retiree Coordinator, at 217.788.2800



my co-workers. I'm a voice for my union brothers and sisters and I'm fearless. If I see a wrong I want to make it right.

Why are you active in your union?

I've been a union activist for well over 20 years. I made sure I was at every meeting and I ended up getting on the local executive board. The only way to make things right is to become involved. Change starts within.

How does the union improve public services?

Having a union means we know our jobs have value. Contractors are just doing a job for someone else. But in Rockford, we have ownership of our jobs and we take ownership of our work. Everybody in my department eats, breathes and lives trees. And that's the same across every department. When you take ownership of the service you provide then you tend to care a lot more about the quality of work you do each day for the community.

Christina Loudermilk

AFSCME Local 1058

TREE TRIMMER, CITY OF ROCKFORD

Tell us about your job in the Rockford Public Works department.

As a tree trimmer, I do tree removals and trim high and low branching. I also work to protect the tree population. Right now I'm treating ash trees for the emerald ash borer epidemic. These little pests have killed a lot of trees in Rockford and we're running a six-year program to keep the borer off the trees so they remain healthy. In the winter months I plow snow.

How did you get into this public service career?

I worked for the Rockford public school district as a bus driver. I worked for the city in the summer because they needed people with CDL licenses, and I really liked working for the public out in the field. So I applied and I came over to the public works department. I was a heavy equipment operator and now I've been trimming trees for five years.

How does your job serve the community?

Rockford is known as the Forest City. When we remove trees, we plant trees. So we are helping keep our Forest City beautiful and healthy.

We are also first responders during weather emergencies. If you have a winter storm come in, you have to clear the roadways of snow and ice for police and fire, and for the public to get around safely. Or if trees fall, they end up in the roadways, on homes and cars, and we'll come and clear the right of way. We keep people safe.

What inspires you on the job?

My favorite part of the job is serving the public, making everything safe and taking care of the trees. I love the outdoors, being out in nature.

But I'm also inspired by being there for



How has your union job helped your family?

I worked many jobs before I got a union job. Being an African-American, a minority, I know that you aren't protected even if you get great reviews. Being in the union, I don't have to worry about somebody using me to fill a quota and then downsizing by one. As long as I'm doing my job, doing what I'm supposed to do, I know I'll keep my job.

I have eight children and I've been with the city for 20 years now. That stability has provided health benefits for me and my whole family. It's helped me send four of my kids to college. It's helped me purchase a home.

I love my union. I would never want to get out of my union because I couldn't see myself surviving without it. 🦅