



ON THE

MOVE



We Won't Back Down.

Non-Profit Org
U.S. Postage
PAID
AFSCME

AFSCME Council 31
205 N. Michigan
Ave.
21st Floor
Chicago, IL 60601

**UNION WINS 7-YEAR
BACK PAY BATTLE**
PAGE 5

**PROGRESS IN 2018
LEGISLATIVE SESSION**
PAGE 6

**SUPREME COURT RULES
AGAINST WORKERS**
PAGE 8

EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR'S REPORT

We will carry it on

After coming this far, we won't stop now



BY

ROBERTA LYNCH

**UNION
ORGANIZING
TRANSFORMED
COUNTLESS
LIVES**

As union members all across America face a new reality—a Supreme Court ruling in the Janus case that greatly strengthens the hand of the already rich and powerful—I find myself thinking back on the history of the labor movement in our country—of challenges overcome and of those who came before.

In particular, I've been thinking about four stalwart defenders of workers' rights who we lost in the first half of this year—Paul Booth, Barbara Hillman, Ed Sadlowski and Gloria Arsenau.

Every one of us, no matter what we do in life, stands on the shoulders of someone who preceded us: Someone who first cleared the ground we farm today, who wrote the score for the music we play, who fought on foreign shores for the freedoms we cherish.

For working people in this country and across the globe, there are countless such someones—men and women who came together, despite fierce opposition, to assert their right to a decent standard of living and a voice in the decisions that affect their lives. By uniting to form unions, they sought to overcome the harsh, demeaning and unsafe conditions in which they labored.

Employers were against them. The law was against them. The press was against them. And too often the politicians were against them. Many lost their jobs, their income, their prospects; some lost their lives. But they would not be deterred.

It took nearly a century of struggle to enact the first federal laws that solidified fundamental workplace rights—and many decades more before those rights were extended to public employees through state laws.

I've been around long enough to recall when public employees in Illinois didn't have the legal right to form a union and were completely at the mercy of their employers. Over many years, state, city and county workers took direct action at their workplaces, made demands to bargain, and put pressure on decision-makers, all to secure

the basic right to be recognized as a union and bargain collectively.

It wasn't until 1984 that Illinois public employees gained that right. In the years that followed, hundreds of thousands of them voted overwhelmingly to form unions at their workplaces.

That explosion of organizing transformed countless lives. Pensions that had been a pittance became the promise of dignity in retirement. Salaries that barely supported a family came to reward dedication and years of service. Promotional opportunities were now based on fairness, not favoritism.

None of this progress happened by chance. It happened because of people like Paul, Barbara, Ed and Gloria.

Before he moved to Washington, DC to work for the national union Paul Booth was a key strategist in laying the groundwork for the powerful force that AFSCME became in Illinois. Paul had the air of an absent-minded professor—piles of papers under his arm, tie askew, glasses low on his nose—but his mind was razor-sharp. He was a tireless organizer, laser-focused on improving the lives of working people.

Barbara Hillman was a pioneering woman labor lawyer. It's fitting that she often represented the Steelworkers union, since she had a steely resolve that could cow even the most arrogant management-side attorney. Barbara aided early efforts to forge Illinois collective bargaining laws, regulations, and judicial rulings that expanded the ability of public employees to have a say in the decisions that affect our working lives.

Ed Sadlowski, former leader of the Steelworkers in the Calumet region, was a


powerful voice for economic justice who never backed down from any fight and stood up for workers everywhere. His fierce commitment to dignity for every worker influenced countless trade unionists all across the country.

Gloria Arsenau, longtime president of AFSCME Local 2794 in the Kankakee area, passed away just last month. A passionate union advocate for more than three decades, she served on the Council 31 Executive Board and on every state bargaining committee since 1988.

Gloria studiously worked to avoid the spotlight, but she was the person who came to every meeting, prepared the agenda, took the minutes, walked countless picket lines and never failed to respond to a member's call for help. During a five-year battle with ovarian cancer, Gloria's strength, commitment and character emerged even more clearly. She never complained and she never quit.

Each of these lives has meaning for every one of us. Like countless others before them, these four dedicated trade unionists fought for the rights we have today.

The question for every union member now is this: Will we heedlessly surrender those rights to the likes of Bruce Rauner and his fellow billionaires who have battled to ban fair share fees in the hopes of driving down membership and bankrupting unions?

I refuse to believe that we will. After coming this far, we won't stop now. We're going to stay united and stay strong so that our shoulders will someday be the ones that our children and grandchildren stand upon to forge their own better lives. 

Council 31
AFSCME
We Make Illinois Happen

ON THE MOVE

AFSCME Illinois On the Move is published six times annually by Illinois Public Employees Council 31 of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO. Send correspondence to: nmcnamara@afscme31.org or: AFSCME, On the Move, 205 N. Michigan Ave., 21st Floor, Chicago, IL 60601

Roberta Lynch, Executive Director
Mike Newman, Deputy Director
Nell McNamara, Editor
Tom Greensfelder, Designer

COUNCIL 31 EXECUTIVE BOARD OFFICERS

Executive Director
Roberta Lynch

State Sector Executive Vice-President
Ralph Portwood, Local 1866

Private Sector Executive Vice-President
Yolanda Woods, Local 2481

University Executive Vice-President
Ellen Larrimore, Local 1989

Local Government Executive Vice-President
John Rayburn, Local 1215

Secretary
Dave Delrose, Local 1028

Treasurer
David Morris, Local 805

BOARD MEMBERS

State Conference Board Co-Chairs
Gary Ciccio, Local 29
Kathy Lane, Local 448

REGION I VICE-PRESIDENTS

Phil Cisneros, Local 3969
Safiya Felters, Local 2854
Lloyd Marshall, Local 3477
Stephen Mittons, Local 2081
Kobie Robinson, Local 3835
Crosby Smith, Local 2645

REGION II VICE-PRESIDENTS

Terry Boone, Local 672
Garry Cacciapaglia, Local 1058
Carlene Erno, Local 2615
Tom Opolony, Local 89
Yurvette Simmons, Local 3237
Miguel Vazquez, Local 3297

REGION III VICE-PRESIDENTS

Shaun Dawson, Local 2073
Lori Gladson, Local 51
Steve Howerter, Local 3585
Melanie Hoyle, Local 2600
Matt Lukow, Local 1964
Trudy Williams, Local 3433

REGION IV VICE-PRESIDENTS

Tad Hawk, Local 1805
Chris Milton, Local 799
Cary Quick, Local 141
Tim Worker, Local 993

TRUSTEES

Tom Brown, Local 3654
Jerry Grammer, Local 1175
Jeffrey Reighter, II, Local 2856

RETIREE CHAPTER 31 REPRESENTATIVE

Larry Brown

AFSCME PEOPLE Committee endorses Pritzker for governor

On April 27 the PEOPLE Executive Committee, comprised of AFSCME local union leaders from across the state, met in Springfield and voted unanimously to endorse J.B. Pritzker for governor and Juliana Stratton for lieutenant governor.

The vote furthers the commitment made by delegates to the AFSCME biennial convention in October who pledged to do whatever it takes to defeat Bruce Rauner in the November election.

In January, hundreds of delegates to the AFSCME PEOPLE Conference voted to authorize the PEOPLE Executive Committee to make an early endorsement in the general election so that our union could immediately begin to lay the groundwork for the kind of grassroots voter outreach it will take to win in November.

Right to the point

WHEN PRITZKER APPEARED before the committee to present his views on a wide range of issues affecting public service workers in Illinois, the candidate provided thoughtful, in-depth answers to questions from committee members on topics such as protecting pension benefits, securing a contract for state employees, restoring funding to our state universities, raising the minimum wage and implementing a fair tax.

Matt Lukow, president of AFSCME Local 1964 representing DOC and State Police employees in the greater Springfield area, asked Pritzker a question that's on the minds of many state employees. Noting that Bruce Rauner walked out on contract negotiations with AFSCME members two years ago and employees are still without a union contract, Lukow asked: "Will you negotiate in good faith to reach agreement on a new contract?"

Pritzker's response was strong and clear: "Among my first priorities will be to sit down and resume negotiations with your union to quickly achieve a contract that is fair to both state


workers and taxpayers," he said. "It is long overdue. As your governor, I will be your partner and always negotiate in good faith."

A new course

"I'M HONORED TO HAVE THE support of AFSCME and the tens of thousands of workers it represents in Illinois," Pritzker said. "While Bruce Rauner undercuts our workers and attacks their families at every chance, I will restore the respect our public service workers deserve. I will defend collective bargaining rights for our unions and protect hard-earned pensions. With the support of AFSCME members throughout Illinois, we will put Springfield back on the side of working families."

"Repairing the damage done by Bruce Rauner is a big job," AFSCME Council 31 Executive Director Roberta Lynch said. "Illinois needs leaders like J.B. Pritzker and Juliana Stratton who will bring people together and who care about working families. They've taken the time to travel the state and to listen to working people. They know the importance of public services and they value the women and men who provide those services in our communities every day. We look forward to working with them to rebuild our state."

AFSCME members interested in volunteering to win this critical election can visit AFSCME31.org/Volunteer to sign up.

"While Rauner currently lags far behind in the polls, we cannot take his defeat for granted," Lynch warned. "Rauner prides himself on his persistence, and there's no doubt that he will do everything in his power to win in November. It will be up to all of us to help ensure that he doesn't succeed." 



AFSCME local union leaders unanimously endorsed J.B. Pritzker for governor and Juliana Stratton for lieutenant governor.

AFSCME COUNCIL 31 LEADERS ON SUPPORTING J.B. PRITZKER FOR GOVERNOR

"For working people tired of Bruce Rauner attacking us and never being on our side, J.B. Pritzker will bring dramatic and welcome change. For state employees, I believe J.B. will be someone who's open and willing to work together and treat us fairly. J.B. and Juliana have a progressive platform to raise the revenue Illinois needs from those who can afford it."

—Stephen Mittons, Local 2081, Chicago

"Everybody who works for a living has been harmed by Bruce Rauner. We need someone who will sit down with everyone and come up with solutions that are fair. J.B. has already gone out and built bonds with many different groups all over the state. We're excited to stand together to beat Bruce Rauner."

—Garry Cacciapaglia, Local 1058, Rockford

"Under Rauner we've had to fight just to get a living wage. He doesn't understand the work we do and never walked in our shoes. We need leaders like J.B. Pritzker and Juliana Stratton who are compassionate enough to take the time to understand a single mother who works two jobs and still can't make ends meet. We need leaders who are willing to stand up for what's right and get the job done."

—Yolanda Woods, Local 2481, Springfield

"Bruce Rauner starved universities, doing incalculable damage to university employees and the students we serve. We need a governor who will prioritize higher education. I know that J.B. Pritzker believes in funding public higher education and understands the important role it plays in our state."

—Ellen Larrimore, Local 1989, Chicago

Labor Board rejects Rauner on steps

A FSCME members won another important victory at the Labor Board this June in the long battle with Gov. Rauner over step increases.

In a June 12 hearing in Springfield, the state panel of the Illinois Labor Relations Board (ILRB) rejected the Rauner administration's delay tactics, found that employees must be made whole, and sent the matter to a board compliance officer to determine a remedy.

"The labor board rightly rejected the Rauner administration's delay tactics and

made clear that the governor's step freeze is wrong," AFSCME Council 31 Executive Director Roberta Lynch said. "Our union will keep doing everything possible to make sure that employees are placed on the correct step and made whole for the increases they've been denied."

Since Rauner acted unilaterally to halt movement for state employees in the step

plan in 2015, AFSCME has continued to battle in the courts to restore the frozen step increases.

AFSCME contends that employees should be made whole by being placed at the proper step and paid back wages for the steps missed. But the Rauner Administration has been trying to convince the Labor Board that there are no funds appropriated to cover the cost for this remedy.

In early May the Fifth District Appellate Court remanded AFSCME's case challenging the Rauner Administration's refusal to pay steps back to the ILRB for a remedy. The Appellate Court had found that

Rauner was wrong to freeze movement in the state's step plan and that the ILRB ruled wrongly in denying AFSCME's Unfair Labor Practice charge against the Rauner administration regarding the freeze.


Untiring in his efforts to drive down the income of state workers, Rauner then argued at the Labor Board against full restitution for employees. He sought to drag out the proceedings for as long as possible.

The labor board sided with the union, rejecting Rauner's attempt to slow the proceedings down to a crawl.

But even though the board rejected Rauner's request for an extensive hearing process, it

failed to take prompt attention to ensure that justice is done for employees.

Instead, the board will wait for its next scheduled meeting in July, when the board will formally refer the matter to a compliance officer. AFSCME will immediately petition for a make-whole remedy, and the compliance officer will then have 75 days to respond to the union's petition.

"Employees have already waited far too long for the basic fairness they deserve," Lynch said. "There's no need for a compliance officer to take the full 75 days to respond. They should act promptly to issue a final order in this case." 

Community outreach workers join AFSCME

More than 100 workers at Erie House, a human services agency on Chicago's west side, voted overwhelmingly to join AFSCME on May 2.

The National Labor Relations Board certified the election results on May 10. Now these new AFSCME members are preparing to bargain their first union contract.

An education and resource center serving the immigrant community, Erie House provides early childhood education and family support, along with adult and after-school programs.

About a year ago, Erie House workers reached out to AFSCME because they believed working conditions and services could improve if employees had more support and respect from management.

"We do everything we can for our participants. We go back and forth and up and down for them, but when it comes to the employees, it's hard to find that support," said Jose Frausto, a maintenance worker who has held multiple positions at the organization over the last 14 years.

"I was a participant at Erie House when I first came to this country about 19 years ago,"

as they were for me back then."

Workers need a voice

FRAUSTO IS MARRIED TO Irene Marquez, a preschool teacher at Erie House. They are expecting their first baby. He says he, his wife and their co-workers know the organization from different perspectives but have similar concerns: the lack of resources and

support to do their jobs.


For example, teachers don't have enough time to cover classrooms and complete the paperwork required for grant funding. Without support and adequate staff, they feel overwhelmed, overworked and underpaid.

"Working for a community organization, we aren't looking to become rich," Frausto said. "We do this work from our heart, to help our community. But sometimes it feels that

management takes advantage of that. We're not asking for a lot of money, just a decent, living wage. We don't even have that."

But fair compensation is just one part of what Erie House employees want to achieve with their union. They want a voice in the decisions that impact them and the people they serve on a daily basis.

Management regularly creates new policies that directly affect employees' work, but staff often find out about them after they have already been implemented. There isn't enough transparency or collaboration with staff.

"As frontline employees, we are the ones who understand the community," Frausto said. "Having our voice be part of the decisions will make Erie House a better place to work and a better place for those we serve." 



Staff at Erie House are ready for a union: "Having our voice be part of the decisions will make Erie House a better place to work and a better place for those we serve."

The battle for back pay

After seven years, the state will finally pay its oldest debt—\$63 million in back wages owed to more than 24,000 state employees.

Through legal battles and lobbying efforts spanning two administrations, AFSCME ensured the state complied with the law and that hard-working employees will be paid what is rightfully theirs.

To make sure that every state employee received back pay owed since 2011 (an average of \$2,400 each), AFSCME worked during the legislative session to pass a bill to pay the wages and for inclusion

appropriations available.

After that ruling, raises were paid in full in many agencies.

That same year, the Quinn Administration entered into a new contract with the union that addressed pay issues going forward but employees in Corrections, Human Services, Juvenile Justice, Natural Resources and Public Health were still owed back wages.

the money we are owed is so easily overlooked by the very government we serve? That the state has kicked this can down the road so many times shows blatant disrespect for the state employee workforce. We have done our jobs, gone to work every day and continued to serve. The state should uphold the same duty and pay what it owes.”


“At my facility alone, 75 percent of our members are owed a couple thousand dollars apiece,” said Dennis

Williams, a mental health technician at Chicago-Read Mental Health Center and the president of AFSCME Local 1610. “Many of us are struggling with bills and living paycheck to paycheck. This money is ours. We deserve it because we worked for it.”

Legislators heard these stories and others at the Lobby Day. Just two weeks later, the bill passed the House of Representatives by an overwhelming vote of

98-10-1 on May 24. It passed the Senate with unanimous support on May 30.

The bill headed to Rauner’s desk. But before he had the chance to veto the veto-proof legislation, the governor signed the 2019 budget bill, which included adequate funding to pay the remaining back wages owed.

AFSCME will press for swift dispersal of funds to employees. The union won’t quit until every employee receives their money. 

AFSCME will press for swift dispersal of funds to employees. The union won’t quit until every employee receives their money.

of funding in the negotiated 2019 budget plan adopted by the General Assembly.

“Public service workers earned these wages years ago. Finally paying what’s owed is not just morally right, it’s legally required,” AFSCME Council 31 Executive Director Roberta Lynch said. “At long last there was strong bipartisan support for putting this matter to rest. Because of our tireless efforts, lawmakers and the governor had no excuse for any further delay.”

The back story

THE BACK PAY ISSUE AROSE IN July 2011 when the state failed to pay negotiated wage increases that the union had previously agreed to temporarily defer in light of fiscal challenges at the time. When the raises came due, Gov. Pat Quinn refused to pay them in 14 state agencies where CMS said there were inadequate appropriations.

AFSCME filed a grievance in response, which went before an independent arbitrator who found that the pay increase was owed and should be paid immediately. And on July 9, 2012 the circuit court upheld the arbitrator’s ruling in part, ordering the state to pay raises from any

So AFSCME didn’t stop there. The union took the issue all the way to the Illinois Supreme Court, which ruled that the state must pay the back wages, but that doing so required a legislative appropriation.

In 2014, the General Assembly passed an AFSCME-backed appropriation that funded approximately 45 percent of the back wages owed. And in 2016, the General Assembly passed a bill to pay the remaining wages owed—but Gov. Rauner vetoed it.

Making it happen in 2018

AFSCME MEMBERS WERE ready to do whatever it took to ensure payment of the back wages in 2018.

On May 10, more than 1,000 union members and retirees flooded the state Capitol to press legislators to finally pay the debt by passing House Bill 4290, sponsored by Rep. Jerry Costello. (Sen. Andy Manar sponsored companion legislation in the Senate.)

At a rally to kick off the lobbying effort, Logan Correctional Center sergeant and AFSCME Local 2073 president Shaun Dawson asked the crowd, “How is it that



AFSCME members met with legislators to share their stories of struggle and urge the lawmakers to pass the back-pay bill.



Progress in 2018 legislative session

A FSCME Council 31's legislative team racked up some significant wins for union members in the 2018 legislative session that came to a close May 31.

With the help of grassroots activism and legislative allies, AFSCME successfully built support for bills that improve job conditions and fairness for working families and blocked bills aimed at undercutting workers' rights.

PASSED State employee back pay

AFSCME LED THE CHARGE to pass legislation needed to fund the remaining back pay still owed to more than 24,000 employees in six state agencies as a result of a negotiated wage increase that was withheld in 2011.

On May 10, more than 1,000 state employees turned

out in Springfield to lobby for the appropriation. Their voices were heard. Two weeks later, on May 24, the House of Representatives passed HB 4290 by a veto-proof majority of 98-10-1. The Senate unanimously passed the bill on May 30.

As a fail-safe mechanism should the governor veto HB 4290 and slow down the payment of monies owed, AFSCME also pressed for inclusion of the back pay in the FY 2019 budget bill. Rauner signed that measure on June 4 and AFSCME is pressing CMS to pay what's owed without delay.

AFSCME has been waging the battle for these funds in the courts and in the General Assembly for the past seven years. Employees in most agencies have already been paid in full. In addition, the union won

passage of an appropriation in 2014 that secure half the funds for employees in DHS, DOC, DJJ, DNR and DPH. Now those employees will receive the remainder of what they're owed.

Rep. Jerry Costello was the House sponsor and Sen. Andy Manar the Senate sponsor of HB 4290. Both were tireless champions on this issue.

PASSED Fair wages for DSPs

AFTER WINNING A 75-CENT per hour wage increase for direct support personnel (DSPs) in state-funded disability agencies last year, AFSCME members stepped up their campaign to increase base wages for DSPs to \$15 per hour this year with SB 3508 and HB 5622, sponsored by Heather Steans in the Senate and Robyn Gabel in the House.

AFSCME and our partners in the They Deserve More coalition also supported SB

3076 sponsored by Sen. Sam McCann and HB 5018 sponsored by Rep. Justin Slaughter, which would require DHS to identify ways to raise wages in school-based programs for children with developmental and physical disabilities like the Hope Institute in Springfield.

On April 18, AFSCME members held a Lobby Day at the Capitol, talking to lawmakers about sponsoring and supporting the legislation for a livable wage.

While we weren't able to get a vote on our legislation, we were once again successful in securing funds allocated to raises for DSPs in the state budget. The FY 2019 budget includes funding to provide for an average 50-cent-an hour increase in compensation for community disability agency staff in the coming year. The budget language allows agencies funded by school districts to bill for the additional 50 cents as well.

This is not the pay increase that DSPs need and deserve, but

it is another important step in the right direction and a particularly remarkable achievement in a time of fiscal belt-tightening. AFSCME members led the way in putting a human face on the problem of low wages and high turnover among DSPs through phone calls, postcards and visits with legislators to share their story of caring and hardship.

PASSED Workplace safety reporting

AIMED AT FOCUSING GREATER public attention on the risks that thousands of employees in state government face on the job, SB 3075 passed both houses of the General Assembly with unanimous votes (despite opposition from the Department of Juvenile Justice) and is on its way to the governor's desk.

Continued on next page

Illinois has a budget, on time and without Rauner's demands

For the first time since taking office, Gov. Rauner signed a full budget. He did so June 4 after the General Assembly adopted it with strong bipartisan support on May 31.

His hand weakened by near defeat in the March primary, the governor was conspicuously absent from budget talks in the final weeks of session—a big change from the previous three years when his anti-worker demands prevented legislators from funding the state's needs.


Last year, some Republican legislators broke with the governor and supported a necessary income tax increase, ending Rauner's two-year grip on the budget process. That funding was key to ensuring a fully funded budget again this year.

While not perfect, the budget that starts this July includes key pieces of funding important to AFSCME members and working families, including:

- Remaining back pay owed (some \$63 million) to 24,000 state employees since 2011;
- Raises for direct support personnel at state-funded disability agencies (50 cents an hour);
- Two percent funding increase for cash-strapped state universities;

- Partial restoration of cuts to local governments (from 10 percent cut to a five-percent cut);
- Hikes state payments to school districts by \$350 million;
- Capital funding to rebuild Quincy Veterans Home as a state-operated facility; and
- Full funding for the state employee group health plan, preventing another accumulation of unpaid medical bills.

While there were some reductions to personal service (salary) lines for state employees, the cut is not deep enough to indicate layoffs. But it will be another lean staffing year.

The budget also establishes a voluntary option for Tier I participants in SERS, SURS and TRS to receive a cash payment at retirement in return for accepting a lower cost-of-living increase over their retirement years. AFSCME will soon be sending members a complete summary of the new law along with information as to how taking that option would impact retirement security. 



His hand weakened by near defeat in the March primary, Gov. Rauner was conspicuously absent from budget talks in the final weeks of session.

LEGISLATIVE SESSION

Continued from previous page

Workplace safety is a crucial issue, yet too many state agencies see no urgency to address the growing problem of assaults on employees. That's why AFSCME initiated this legislation, which will require DCFS, DHS, DOC and DJJ to make regular, comprehensive reports to the Illinois General Assembly.

In both DOC and DJJ, a review of available data shows that assaults by inmates and youth on employees increased more than 50 percent since 2015. In DHS facilities, especially state mental health centers, assaults on staff are reported to be occurring with much greater frequency and much more serious injuries. And as a result of the murder of DCFS investigator Pam Knight, there is now growing awareness of the dangers

that DCFS employees face on the job every day.

PROGRESS Fair income tax

REPUBLICAN LAWMAKERS blocked passage of a constitutional amendment allowing for a fair income tax with lower rates for lower-income taxpayers and higher rates for those with higher incomes, long one of AFSCME's priorities.

Despite widespread public support for a fairer tax structure in Illinois, voters can't have a say unless both the House and Senate approve resolutions to put a constitutional amendment on the ballot—SJRCA 1 and HJRCA 39.

While neither of those resolutions passed, the House of Representatives did adopt a nonbinding resolution that put

the House on record in support of a progressive income tax: "We stand united in support of a fair and progressive income tax that must reduce taxes on low and middle-income families while raising taxes on the wealthiest Illinoisans. ... [This resolution is] a testament to our unwavering commitment to improving the day-to-day lives of families across this great State."

BLOCKED Anti-collective bargaining efforts

AFSCME SUCCESSFULLY blocked a number of anti-worker bills with several different goals, including:

- Removing public service administrators from the state employee bargaining unit;
- Creating a state right-to-work-for-less act;

- Making the ethics act preempt any collective bargaining agreement or personnel code;
- Limiting required topics of bargaining to employee wages only; and
- Requiring local governments to publicly post contracts before they can be ratified.


AFSCME also blocked an effort (Senate Amendment 1 to SB 2680) by Sen. Bill Brady to strip workers' rights to negotiate health care benefits and allow Gov. Rauner to set employee health care premiums based on the devastating terms he has been trying to impose.

BLOCKED Municipal bankruptcy

AFSCME SUCCESSFULLY stopped a bill (HB 5644) sponsored by Rep. Jeanne Ives that would have allowed municipalities to circumvent collective

bargaining agreements and pension obligations by claiming bankruptcy due to financial deficits.

BLOCKED Repeal of school anti-privatization law

AFSCME HELPED BLOCK HB 4196, sponsored by Rep. Tom Bennett, which would have repealed a law that AFSCME helped pass to prevent privatization of non-instructional school services currently being performed by public employees without first meeting rigorous accountability standards. Bennett's bill would have taken down any roadblocks to privatization, reduced the notification of layoffs and allowed schools to make changes simply to cut wages and benefits for employees. 

Supreme Court Rules Against Workers in Janus Case

The US Supreme Court sided with the anti-worker forces behind Janus v. AFSCME Council 31 on June 27. In holding that fair-share fees in the public sector violate the First Amendment of the Constitution, the court's majority made a decision based solely on politics, not on the true meaning of our country's founding document.

"This case is a blatant political attack by Bruce Rauner and other wealthy interests on the freedom of working people to form strong unions," AFSCME Council 31 Executive Director Roberta Lynch said. "We are extremely disappointed the Supreme Court has taken the side of the powerful few, but we're more determined than ever to keep our union strong, standing up for public services and the working people who provide them."

Who's pulling the strings

Originally filed by billionaire Republican Gov. Rauner, the case was taken up by the National Right-to-Work Foundation and the litigation arm of the Illinois Policy Institute, a Rauner-backed group whose national parent—the State Policy Network—said its intent in bringing the case was to "defund" the labor movement nationwide.

This decision proves that America needs unions now more than ever to fix a democracy and economy rigged in favor of the wealthy and powerful.

"The powerful interests behind this case have tens of millions of dollars to pour into their political agenda of trying to silence us," Lynch said. "But we're not going to let that happen. We're making certain that every union member knows the real intent of this case is to defund unions, then drive down wages and benefits of public service workers. We aren't afraid and we aren't going anywhere."

No court case will stop us

Unions are the most effective vehicle for working people to negotiate a fair return on our work; our strength in numbers gives us power.

That's why the forces behind the lawsuit are waging an aggressive campaign to get employees who are currently members to drop out of the union.

But no court case, and no amount of wealth and power, can stop our movement. Working people are more resolved than ever to stick together and fight back against any attacks that attempt to divide us.

The Union Difference

It Pays to Be **100%**
Union!



Better Pay

UNION MEMBERS EARN 25% MORE THAN THOSE NOT IN A UNION

Secure Retirement **76%**
76% OF UNION MEMBERS HAVE PENSION PLANS



Job Security

UNION MEMBERS HAVE DUE PROCESS RIGHTS THAT PROTECT THEM FROM WRONGFUL TERMINATION

People take for granted things we didn't always have—our insurance, retirement, time off, grievances. **Without a union we would be at the mercy of our bosses.**

— Nancy Anderson
LaSalle County Nursing Home



ainst

Stay AFSCME strong

AFSCME is Bruce Rauner's and IPI's number one target in their union-destruction scheme. That's why local unions all across Illinois are getting ready for the attack we know is coming. We need to stick together, fight back and stay union!

- ✓ Only through our union will we have the strength to stand up to our employer to protect and improve our pay, our health care, our pensions and our rights on the job.
- ✓ Because everyone benefits from the union contract, everyone should contribute to the costs of negotiating and enforcing the contract.
- ✓ Being part of a union means standing together with your co-workers to make things better for everyone.
- ✓ **Make sure you're a union member. Sign your AFSCME Strong card today!**



They want to weaken our union. We are not going to let that happen. We're going to fight for what's right for our families and our communities.

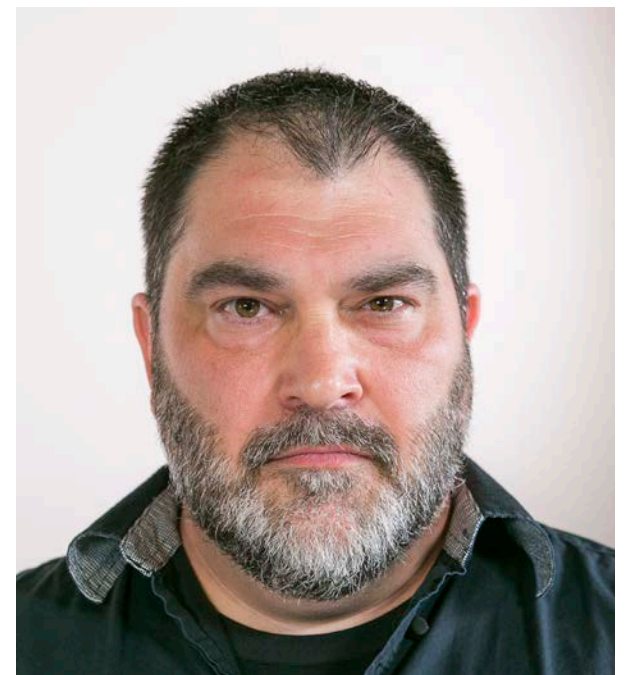
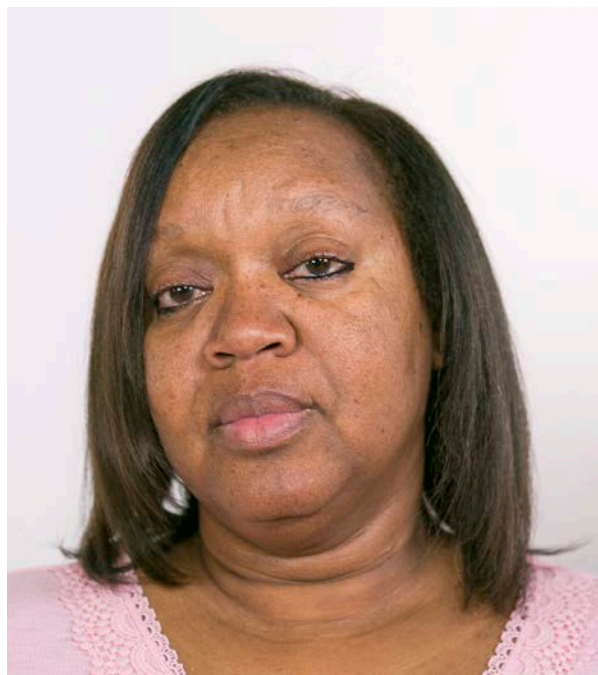
– Jose Prado
Stateville Correctional Center

I call the people behind this case nothing more than wolves in sheep's clothing. They just want to be able to strip away our rights.

– Christina Loudermilk
City of Rockford

With the union we get respect for the work that we do. The strength of a union is in its numbers. **When our backs are to the wall, we stand together. We won't quit.**

– Keith Kracht
Centralia Correctional Center



My Department of Juvenile Justice story

Allissa Keoughan is a Juvenile Justice Specialist with the Illinois Department of Juvenile Justice. She works at the Illinois Youth Center at Harrisburg and is a member of AFSCME Local 779. This story is in her own words.

I'm just like the next middle-class mother, trying to provide her children with a comfortable life. But if you live in Southern Illinois you are aware there is not a huge abundance of high-paying jobs with good family benefits.

I had worked as a substance abuse counselor, a GED instructor at our community college, and coached youth sports in our community for a number of years—none of which provided an income adequate for a family of five. So when I came across the position of Juvenile Justice Specialist, which described developing rapport with incarcerated youths, aiding in their rehabilitation, etc., at a starting salary of \$52,000, it sounded like a dream come true.

So, off I went to the academy, and completed six weeks of training. My first year at IYC Harrisburg was a year of figuring out how to be a female

working in an all-male facility, which is a struggle.

Juvenile male inmates constantly expose themselves to female staff, often masturbating and making vile, uncalled-

felt at home, since I used to work as a substance abuse counselor; however, this is not your typical substance abuse program. None of the youths take it seriously; they just [see it as a way to be released early]. A common practice is to place youths in the program who had been acting up on other units. [The result is] a volatile mix of different ages and issues.

A month after I started, we received two new youths, a 15-year-old and a 17-year-old. I instantly noticed the 17-year-

“I had a bloody nose, my ear was on fire, and my entire head was aching all over. A fellow staffer transported me to the ER.”

for comments. Our only [defense is to write up] Youth Disciplinary Reports, which are usually not responded to by administration. A youth “may” receive two days of curfew, which means they must go into their rooms an hour or so earlier than normal for two nights.

In February 2018, I was placed on the substance abuse program unit. I should have

old preying on the weaker, younger youths on the unit. I began writing him up because while the tickets may not result in any discipline, at least he knew I was watching.

One day I had another youth on the unit come to me and inform me that the 15-year-old was telling other youths that he was going to “assault me and get me kicked off the unit.” Soon



Allissa Keoughan

after, he also began verbally threatening me from behind his door—and told staff that when he got out of his room the next day he was going to “get that [expletive] Keoughan” and that I was going to be gone when he was done with me—all of which I reported.

Our superintendent approved only two days of curfew for the threats.

On March 20 a male intern and I were escorting 21 youths from breakfast back to the unit (the youth to staff ratio is supposed to be 8:1), and we came to an area that was out of the view of any cameras.

The 15-year-old youth suddenly jumped out of line and struck me in the side of the head with a closed fist. This strike threw me off balance as I attempted to reach for my radio and shield myself from another strike. The youth struck me once again in the forehead, which caused me to lose my footing and fall to the ground.

After I was knocked to the ground, the youth jumped on top of me and continued punching me with closed fists in the face and head. All of a sudden, one of the other youths from the unit pulled the attacking youth off of me and began fighting him. This youth earned my gratitude for his


actions that day.

I had a bloody nose, my ear was on fire, and my entire head was aching all over. A fellow staff member transported me to the ER, where my husband later picked me up.

I was flooded with texts and calls from co-workers checking on me, which made me feel very supported. Our administration, however, was concerned with finding the previous tickets I had written that were denied, to keep themselves out of hot water.

I learned that next day that the 15-year-old admitted the 17-year-old had “paid” him to attack me because they knew he wouldn’t get any adult charges. They also planned the attack right where they knew cameras were not on.

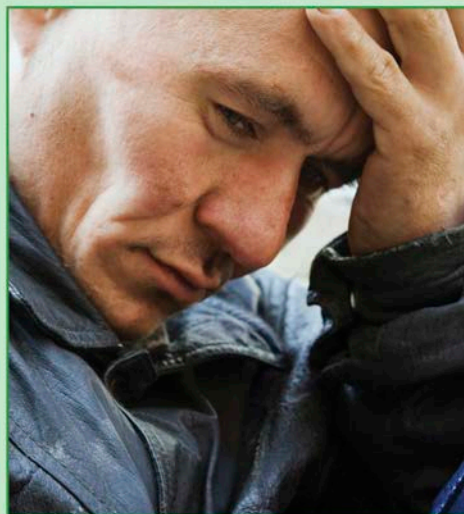
Our discipline team requested one year of “set time” [which delays access to the parole board] for the youth who attacked me. Our superintendent approved six months. The older youth who paid this youth to attack me received no consequences.

I’m not sure I can stay with the department, for my own personal safety and mental health, but I will continue to hope for change for every single Juvenile Justice Specialist who works there. 

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
1-800-647-8776



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.

Made whole with union power

Jason Klingeman is a father and member of AFSCME Local 424. He works a tough job as a security therapy aide at Chester Mental Health Center (CHMC) since 2011.

Residents at Chester are largely people found not guilty of crimes by reason of insanity or mentally unfit to stand criminal trial. As the only maximum-security psychiatric hospital in the state, its patients can be extremely challenging and volatile.

In April 2016, a patient entered a restricted area where Klingeman was on duty and refused to leave, becoming violent.

"He came at me with a closed fist and we both fell to the floor," Klingeman recalled. The patient was put into restraints by staff, and the day resumed for Klingeman and the other staff.

But the next day Klingeman was told he was to report to the control center, a glass enclosure where workers have no contact with residents, pending investigation of the previous day's incident.

Wrongly accused

VIOLENCE AT CHMC IS NOT uncommon and AFSCME members who work there are often wrongly accused of abusing residents. AFSCME grieves such wrongful discipline, and has prevailed in all 17 such cases in the last year.

For employees, the process can be extremely trying. Even if the employer's investigation is ongoing, workers are typically terminated after 30 to 60 days of suspension. They can expect to be unemployed for weeks or even months.

Klingeman's case dragged out for two years. After being told he would be assigned to the control center for 60 days before being terminated, Klingeman kept his job for more than a year before he officially lost his position. It was almost another year before he got it back.

Four months after the incident, Klingeman faced criminal charges and was interviewed by the state police.

"The police report said I shouldn't be charged and that the case was absurd," Klingeman said.

Four months after Klingeman was cleared of any

criminal charges, the Office of the Inspector General sent Klingeman a certified letter informing him he was terminated.

He knew that co-workers who had been terminated unjustly were denied unem-

"If it wasn't for our union, I wouldn't be here."

ployment benefits so he immediately sought other work.

"I have a little boy, so I didn't want to take any chances," he said. And it's a good thing he didn't. Klingeman was unemployed for almost a year as the state's investigation plodded along.

Union strong

DHS DOES NOT REPLACE suspended or terminated staff with pending investigations but instead covers their positions with mandatory and volunteer overtime.

One reason staff aren't replaced may be the fact that most get their jobs back. Klingeman was no exception. AFSCME took his grievance to arbitration and just two weeks after the arbitration hearing on March 20, the arbitrator issued a ruling in his favor.

"The arbitrator said my case was one of the most outrageous cases she's ever heard," Klingeman remembered. "She ordered the state to put me back to work immediately and make me 100 percent whole."

For Klingeman, the good news was a huge relief. To make him whole, Klingeman was given back pay for the many months after his termination, plus all holidays, vacation and sick leave he would have accrued during that time.

"It's awesome to be back at Chester," Klingeman effused. "If it wasn't for our union, I wouldn't be here." He had high praise for his local union president, Randy Clover, and Council



Jason Klingeman—and his union—didn't give up fighting for his job so he could provide for his son.

31 Staff Representative Ty Petersen, who worked tirelessly to get him back, along with the other local officers. Klingeman also cited Council 31 attorney Sue Osthus who handled his case. "Sue was magnificent. She did not back down."


Working at Chester is a

tough job because there's so little support from management, said Klingeman. But he stays on because he knows he's making a difference.

"I love when I can help a patient," he said. "When I hear they are out there getting a job, on the proper medication and

doing well for themselves, that feels really good."

And Klingeman finds strength in his union.

"I enjoy my union brothers and sisters. We have a good camaraderie. We have an awesome union. I am 1,000 percent pleased." 

ON THE LOCAL LEVEL



AFSCME Local 1890 members fought hard to win their first union contract.

Hundreds of NIU employees finally celebrate

AFTER WORKING FOR MORE than seven years without a raise—and without a voice—more than 600 clerical, technical, paraprofessional and administrative workers at Northern Illinois University decided to form a union with AFSCME two years ago.

Now the members of AFSCME Local 1890 have won their first union contract.

NIU management didn't make it easy. A federal mediator was ultimately engaged. The only person the university sent to negotiate with employees had no experience with labor relations or bargaining.

"I found that so disrespectful," local president and bargaining team member Laura Harris said.

Unfortunately, employees say, disrespect is a theme in the way the university has dealt with them over time. Harris said the "appalling" behavior of higher-ups—including verbal abuse and discrimination—was left unchecked by management.

"People deserve respect and dignity in the workplace," said Harris, an office manager in the College of Early

"Having a union gives us the freedom to work in a safe and nonthreatening work environment."

Education. "We all want to earn livable wages and come to work without feeling dread. We should feel good coming to work and making a difference, not discriminated against and downtrodden."

Harris said that the fact that she and her co-workers deserve better treatment is what has kept her going during the more than two-year contract fight.

"Having a union gives us the freedom to work in a safe and nonthreatening work environment," Harris said. "Before, everybody was scared of retaliation if they spoke up. Now that we're protected, it's not going to be swept under the rug. NIU is going to be held accountable."

Dozens of Local 1890 members made up the bargaining committee, which was led by local president Laura Harris and AFSCME Council Staff Representative Sara Dorner.

Despite the challenges—including extreme fiscal constraints due to Gov. Rauner's budget crisis and cuts to university funding—these new

AFSCME members successfully secured a five-and-a-half year contract. Employees will receive a nine-percent raise over the first three years of the agreement; there are wage reopeners in the final two years. The unit agreed to accept whatever health insurance terms the AFSCME state bargaining team secures.

More than wages, the NIU workers are happy to win rights and protections on the job that they have never had before, like a grievance procedure and time off to represent members.

"Moving forward, we are going to concentrate on enforcing our contract and ensuring that our members are not afraid to speak up if their rights are being violated," Harris said. "We know NIU will push the envelope but now we have a legally binding agreement to protect us."

McHenry County probation department wins first union contract

EMPLOYEES OF MCHENRY County's probation department, members of AFSCME Local 1748, secured their first union contract after more than a year of negotiations. The agreement provides real gains in wages, improves benefits and strengthens workplace protections, all enforceable through a grievance process that ends in legally binding arbitration.

"We decided to unionize because we were underpaid compared to other counties," said Nick Hayes, a probation officer for 10 years at the county. "We felt our wages were unfair, especially because new hires were being paid the same as employees with 10 years of seniority."

"I can confidently say that nobody in this office chose this career to get rich. But we do want to be compensated fairly, to be able to feed our families

and go home to live a comfortable life. We want to be able to concentrate on the one job we have and not have to work multiple jobs just to make ends meet."

The contract significantly increases starting wages for legal support staff and probation officers, rewards and encourages longevity by increasing base salaries, and raises wages in each year of the contract by 2.75 percent or \$0.70 an hour, whichever is greater. Employees can earn additional increases for positive performance reviews. And union members will now have more choices when it comes to their health insurance plans.

"Now that we're unionized, management respects our voice," Hayes said. "We might not always agree, but we have a seat at the table."

The contract also institutes a "just-cause standard" for discipline—meaning management must prove their case to issue discipline, which must be progressive and corrective in nature—as well as a grievance procedure, labor-management meetings and layoff and recall rights.

"It's a high-stress job that you can't leave at the door when you get home," Hayes said. "Despite our critical role in community safety by ensuring that convicted felons aren't committing new crimes, we are underappreciated and underpaid."

"But at the end of the day, our work is motivating," Hayes said. "Whether they made a one-time mistake or a lifetime of mistakes, if given the right tools and opportunities the people we help have the power to make positive changes in their lives. It's inspiring." 🦋



Led by Colin Theis, the AFSCME Local 1748 bargaining team included Wendy Wesolek, Karen McCauley, Nick Hayes (pictured left to right) and Ryan Markowski.

SHORT REPORTS



Steven Rock elected SURS trustee

AFSCME-BACKED CANDIDATE Steven Rock was re-elected to represent active members in the recent State Universities Retirement System (SURS) trustee election.

Collin Van Meter was also elected by members and John Engstrom was elected to serve as an annuitant trustee. Their six-year terms begin July 15.

Rock, a professor of economics at Western Illinois University, is a member of the University Professionals of Illinois, an affiliate of the Illinois Federation of Teachers.

Rock is uniquely qualified to continue his service on the SURS Board of Trustees. He understands that SURS must reflect its membership in the decisions that are made and ensure that those decisions are in the best interests of active members.

Rock supports full state funding of SURS and believes that this commitment must not be pushed off onto individual universities that are struggling under the current higher education funding crisis.

Teacher strikes show strength of collective action

IN THE LAST SEVERAL months, teachers in five states have walked off the job—striking for fair pay and adequate education funding for their students, classrooms and schools. The string of strikes began in February with teachers in West Virginia. Two weeks later the governor agreed to a five percent pay raise.

After teachers went on strike in Kentucky, the legislature approved a significant increase to education funding. In Oklahoma, legislators responded to the teachers strike with a boost in educating

funding and teacher salaries. Teachers in Colorado went on strike for five days and won wage increases and lower health care premiums. And Arizona teachers, among the lowest-paid in the country, walked out for five days and won a nearly 20 percent raise over a three-year contract.

The message of each strike was broader than working conditions at a particular school; these teachers were urging better salaries not just for teachers but for all school employees as well as better funding for public education to ensure that every child receives a high-quality education.

Teacher salaries in the United States are effectively five percent lower than they were just a decade ago while retirement contributions and health insurance premiums have increased.

The states that are home

to these strikes have consistently cut public services and slashed spending on schools. In Oklahoma, schools have had four-day weeks because they don't have the funding needed to be open all five days. Striking teachers have told stories of decades-old crumbling textbooks or paying for school supplies out of their own pockets while they are unable to support their families on meager salaries.

All of the strikes took place in states where Republicans control state government and have been consistently hostile to public employees and their unions. But the strikers garnered widespread public support, as well as the backing of school superintendents who are desperate for funds.

The bold action by tens of thousands of teachers in states all across the country provides a stirring example of the gains

that can be made when working people defy the powers that be and stand up for fair treatment and important public services.


CEO pay soars to 361 times that of the average worker

COMPANIES MUST NOW DISCLOSE the ratio of their CEOs' pay to the median pay of their rank-and-file employees, an indicator of which companies have too much of their wealth in too few hands. Most of them do.

According to a new AFL-CIO Executive Paywatch report (aflcio.org/paywatch), the average CEO of a major U.S. company was paid \$13.94 million last year. That's 361 times more money than the average

rank-and-file worker, who was paid about \$38,613.

What's more, when adjusted for inflation, wages for the average worker have remained stagnant for more than 50 years, while last year alone CEOs got a six-percent raise. Companies that continue to distribute profits so unfairly are leading a race to the bottom.

"This year's report provides further proof of America's income inequality crisis. Too many working people are struggling to get by, to afford the basics, to save for college, to retire with dignity, while CEOs are paying themselves more and more," said AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Liz Shuler. "Our economy works best when consumers have money to spend. That means raising wages for workers and reining in out-of-control executive pay." 



Thousands of teachers across the country are standing up for fair wages and high-quality public education for our nation's students. And they're winning.

PHOTO: NEA

Children of AFSCME members win scholarships



Larry Marquardt Scholarship winners (L-R): Gabriel Dunbar, Cortney Powell and Patricia Santelices

Union membership helps workers build a better future for their families. AFSCME members and their families also benefit from annual scholarship opportunities to pursue their education goals.

Five children of AFSCME Council 31 members won college scholarships this spring. These opportunities and others are available to AFSCME members and their immediate families. Visit AFSCME31.org/Union-Scholarships for more information.

Larry Marquardt Scholarship Winners

AFSCME Council 31 provides three \$2,000 scholarships annually to honor Larry Marquardt, the first executive director of Council 31 and a tireless union organizer who dedicated his life to improving the lives of working people.

Gabriel Dunbar

Gabriel Dunbar, a graduate of Oak Park and River Forest High School, will attend Indiana University's Kelley Business School this fall. His father, James Dunbar, is a member of AFSCME Local 3436 and works as a senior parole agent for the state of Illinois in Chicago.

Gabriel demonstrated his awareness of the role of big corporations in our country's economy and their impact on working people in his application essay.

"In recent years companies have gotten bigger and now enjoy unprecedented

protections from the government," he wrote. But "the protections and benefits for companies unfortunately have not trickled down to employees."

Gabriel argued for protecting and expanding collective bargaining rights to create "win-win scenarios that yield profits while meeting the needs of the workers and their families." That's why he chose to study business, "to help people and organizations make value-driven and sustainable choices about their resources and hopefully create some of those win-win outcomes."

Cortney Powell

Cortney Powell is entering her second year at Quincy University where she has maintained an excellent GPA as she pursues her goal of becoming a nurse practitioner.

Cortney's parents are both AFSCME members. Her father, Keith Powell, is president of AFSCME Local 3567 at Western Correctional Center. Her mother, Marilyn, is a certified nursing assistant at the Quincy Veterans Home and member of AFSCME Local 1787.

"Ever since I was a young girl, I have understood the importance of having a stable, safe job," Cortney said in her application essay. "Both of my parents have careers that are protected under the AFSCME union and I couldn't be more thankful for that."

Her parents are very proud of their daughter. "When she has her mind set," Marilyn Powell said, "nothing is going to hold her back."

"Cortney strives to be the best she can be," Keith Powell said. "If there was ever a perfect kid then she's the one."

Patricia Santelices

Patricia Santelices will start at the College of Lake County in August. Her father, Fermin Santos Salvador, is a habilitation program coordinator at Kiley Center and member of AFSCME Local 785.

A single father, Salvador cares for three children.

"I'm very grateful and thankful that Patricia was selected for this scholarship," Salvador said. "It makes me proud of being part of the union. I join in union activities

as much as I can to support our battles because it's so important."

Patricia understands the challenges facing union members and the broader labor movement, and has inherited her father's faith in the power of solidarity.

"How can workers have their own voice and protect themselves?" she asked in her application essay. Her answer was simple: "Through the labor movement."

William A. Lee Memorial Scholarship Winner

The William A. Lee Memorial Scholarship is sponsored by the Chicago Federation of Labor; it provides a one-time cash award of \$2,000.

Bianca Savant

Bianca Savant, a graduate of Whitney Young Magnet High School in Chicago, will attend the University of Illinois this fall to pursue a biology degree.

Bianca's mother, Shubhada Savant, is a member of AFSCME Local 505 who works for the City of Chicago's Department of Transportation. As chief programmer, Shubhada works with database management and analysis, computer programming and information technology.

Her daughter has


inherited her affinity for science and mathematics and is considering careers in research and medicine. Knowing that her mother has the security of a union job has made pursuing a college degree easier. "I'm more relaxed than other people I know, because I know that my mom can help me," Bianca said. "It takes a lot of the stress off."

Her mother agrees. "The union has been very helpful to create a good work balance in my life," Shubhada said. "My rights are protected and I am able to give time to my family to take care of their needs and support them in their goals."

After all the hard work of taking care of her daughter, now Shubhada looks forward to seeing the results: "I'm excited for Bianca's future and what it looks like."

AFSCME International Family Scholarship Winner

Anthony Ruhlessin

The son of AFSCME Local 3477 member Jeannie Bellina, Anthony Ruhlessin, was awarded the 2018 Family Scholarship by AFSCME International. His application essay was reprinted in the March-April issue of *On the Move* (page 2). 



William A. Lee Memorial Scholarship winner Bianca Savant (center) with (L-R): CFL President Bob Reiter; AFSCME Local 505 President Cherone Gladney-Morris; Savant's younger brother; her mother, Local 505 member Shubhada Savant; and CFL Secretary-Treasurer Don Villar.

RETIREE NOTES

Retirees ready to fight after Janus decision

ON JUNE 27, THE U.S. Supreme Court sided against working people and ruled that fair share fees are unconstitutional. Public sector unions can no longer collect reduced fees from bargaining unit employees who don't wish to pay them, but must continue to represent them as full members.

"The Janus case is an attempt to take away the power of the union and the voice of the people," said Don Todd, Sub-Chapter 86 President (Springfield). "But I was around before fair share. I know if we stand together what amazing things we can get done."

AFSCME members are standing strong, more determined than ever to protect workers' rights and improve the futures of their families and communities. They will need the help of retirees who have been through similar challenges.

"Retirees set the path for everything current working members have," said Jay Ferraro, Sub-chapter 69 President (Rockford). "None of our contracts were simply given to us. We had to fight for everything. We didn't have rights before collective bargaining but we are still here. Now more than ever we need to stand together."

You can get involved in the fight for our union by contacting your sub-chapter president to help with member education and outreach.

"There is a lot at stake," said Todd, "and our best



AFSCME Retirees Chapter 31 Executive Board Member Melissa Garman wins award.

defense is standing in solidarity."

Retiree honored at Mother Jones Dinner

AFSCME RETIREES CHAPTER 31 State Executive Board member Melissa "Missy" Garman won the Marge Jindrich Award for Union Leadership at DeKalb County's Second Annual Mother Jones Dinner.

"It was an honor to receive this award," Garman said. "To be honest, it was uncomfortable to be rewarded for something that is in my heart and soul."

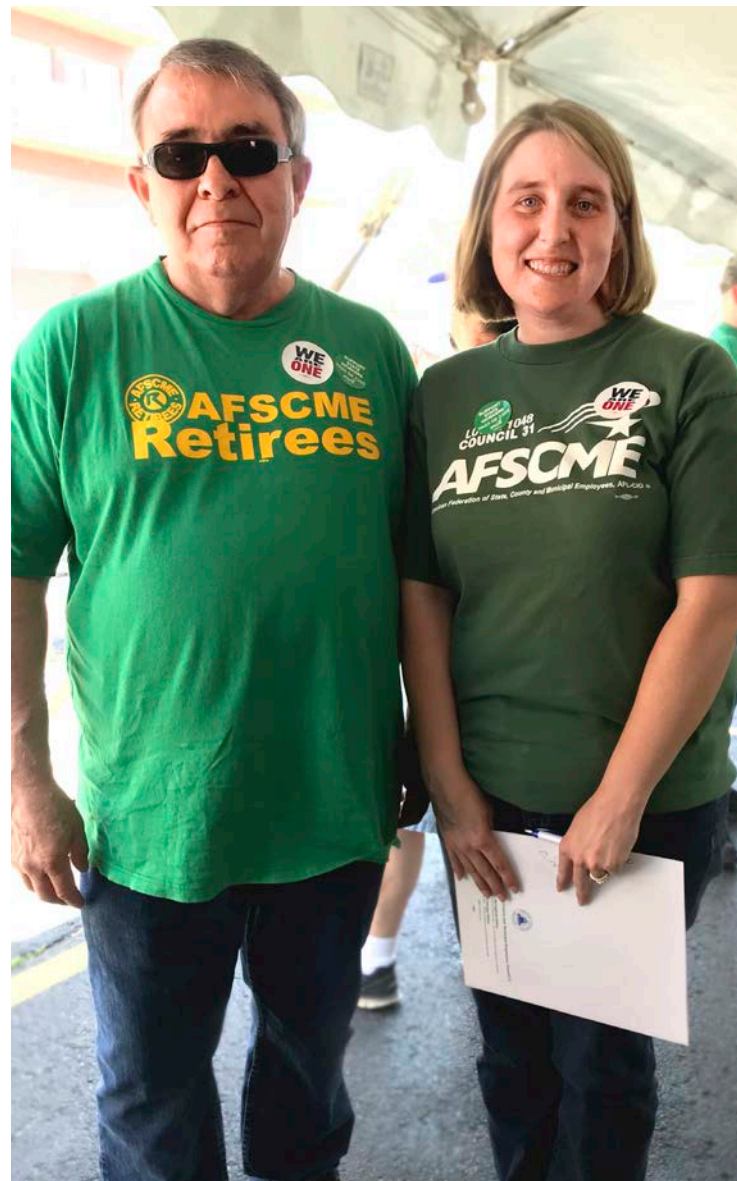
Marge Jindrich was a union organizer in Saint Charles and the first woman elected president of her union. The Marge Jindrich award recipient must be a fierce union advocate who fights for the progress of the labor movement.

Garman was born and raised in Chicago, a proud product of Chicago public schools, and attended Northern Illinois University to study political science. After graduation, she eventually settled in DeKalb and began her 32-year career as a child abuse investigator with the Illinois Department of Children and Family Services (DCFS).

Early in her state career, Garman became active in AFSCME Local 448, and after retiring, she stayed involved as a member of the Chapter 31 executive board.

Garman said the labor movement is in her veins: She carried her grandfather Sam's eulogy in her pocket when she received the award.

"Sam embodied all of the qualities of a strong union member," Garman said. "He was the president of the Chicago Fur Workers Union in the 1950s and devoted his life to the labor movement and the common man. He fought



Sub-chapter 90 member Tod Vincent and his daughter, Local 3280 member Natalie Stanley.

against discrimination of all minorities. I am a part of a strong lineage of activists. Winning this award is an honor."

Solidarity for my daughter

ON MAY 10, MORE THAN 1,000 AFSCME members marched to the Capitol to call on legislators to finally pay one of the state's oldest debts. Chapter 31 retirees were there to march with them.

In July 2011, the state failed to pay negotiated wage increases to more than 20,000 employees. The Illinois Supreme Court ruled that the funds must be paid, but required a special appropriation passed by the General Assembly. Gov. Rauner vetoed a bill with the required appropriation in 2016.

But finally in this 2018 legislative session, not only was a back pay bill passed by both houses, but an appropriation for all the wages owed was included in the 2019 budget.

Retirees attending the May Lobby Day either had back pay owed to them or were standing in solidarity with others owed

money. Sub-chapter 90 member Todd Vincent drove more than three hours from Anna, Illinois, to support his daughter Natalie Stanley, a Local 3280 member affected by unpaid wages.

"I believe that I should stand in solidarity with my daughter," Vincent said. "She wants to strengthen her union and make sure that everyone gets paid fair wages. That is something that I fought for before we had a contract. We know the importance of standing together. We are a union family through and through."

"It means a lot to me that my dad was by my side," Natalie Stanley said. "He really knows what it means to be in the union and how hard we fight for our workplace rights. In the future, when I retire, I will sign up to be an AFSCME retiree so I can continue to fight for everything that the union does and continues to do for working members and retirees."

"The union is its members and we have to take care of each other, regardless if we are retired or working," Vincent said. "We all have to be union strong, no matter the issue."



At the Back Pay Lobby Day (L-R): Dave Spinner, Steve McLaughlin and Eric Kennedy of Sub-chapter 87 with John Tilden (Sub-chapter 66).

Tell us about your job at Anderson Lake State Fish and Wildlife Area.

I'll tell you what, I have a ball. It's great. It's hard work but it's rewarding. There are very few boring moments.

Day to day, we manage more than 90 campground sites, registering campers, mowing, cleaning latrines. We're in a floodplain so we are often cleaning debris washed up after floods.

A big part of our job is preparing for and managing hunting seasons. Turkey, deer and dove hunting season are busy. But our biggest hunting season is duck season.

We plant corn and in late summer we pump water from Anderson Lake to flood Carlson Lake and another 90-acre field so that the water covers the corn up to the ears so the ducks can feed on it. Those are the best hunting areas.

When the season starts, we check hunters in and out and draw for "blinds" and "timber holes" (platforms that hunters build in GPS-specific spaces). We track all the species of ducks and the total number of hunters.

What's your favorite part of the job?

Being outside. I come to work and we have baby geese running around, turkeys, baby fawns. We get eagles up and down the Illinois River, oodles and oodles of bald eagles.

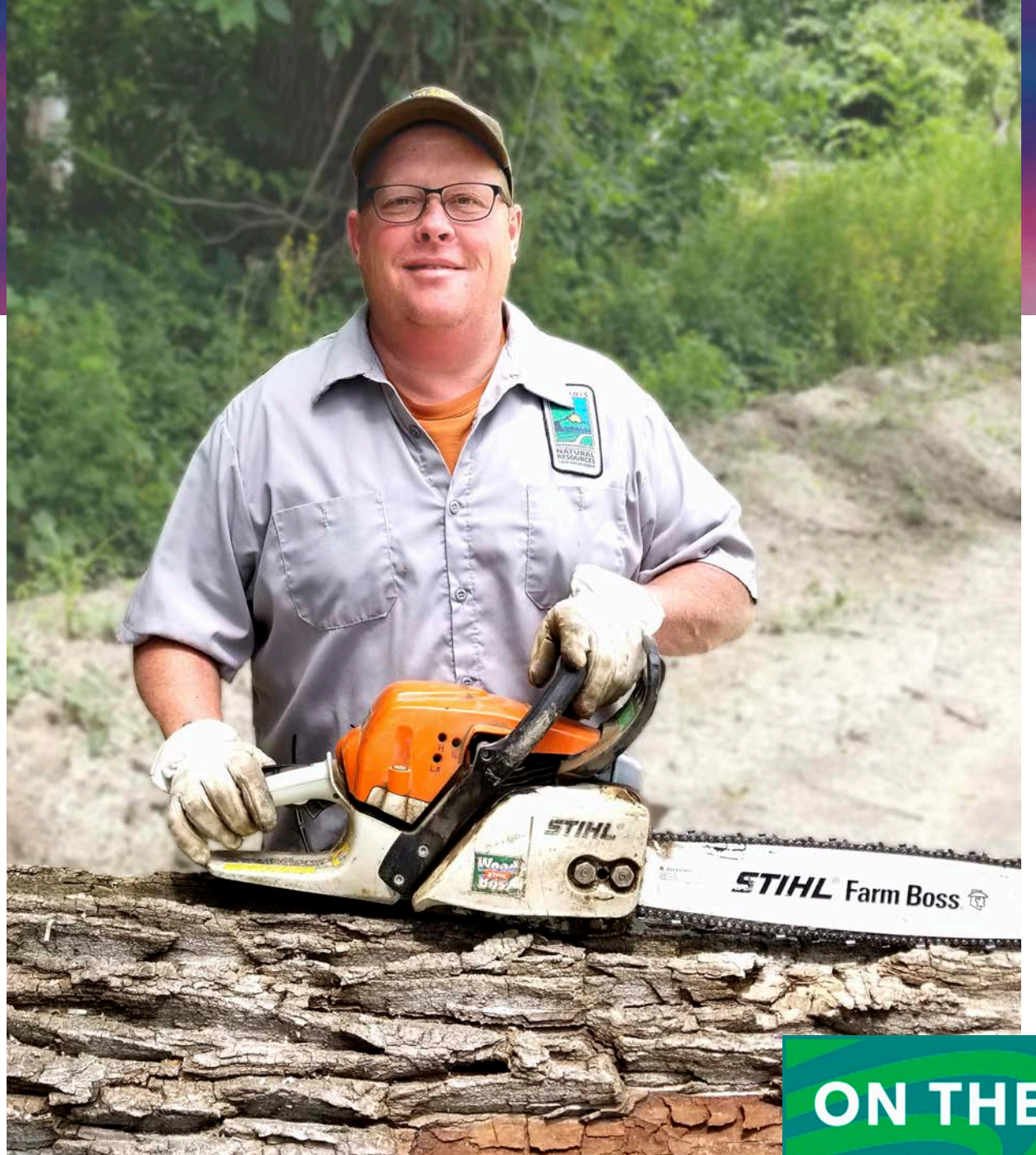
My happiest time of the year is our youth waterfowl hunting weekend. I love getting to see the smiles on those children's faces. It's really important to teach youth the correct way to handle a firearm responsibly. It's rewarding for the adult as well as the child.



PHOTO: GLEN BAUM

How did you come to this career in public service?

It took a long time for me to get here. I've come full circle over more than 30 years as a state employee doing maintenance-type work. I started at New Salem State Historic Site in 1986. I worked in Springfield at the Willard Ice Building, at the Lincoln Developmental Center, at the school for the deaf in Jacksonville, and back to New Salem in 2007.



Glen Baum

AFSCME Local 51

SITE TECHNICIAN II, ILLINOIS DEPARTMENT OF NATURAL RESOURCES

I came here to Anderson Lake in 2013 and I live with my family just seven minutes down the road on about 100 acres. I'm blessed beyond belief to be where I'm at.

How does your job provide a valuable public service?

So many people benefit from our state parks. At Anderson, our campgrounds cater to both locals and people travelling through. People riding bicycles come and throw a hammock up for the night. We have great fishing. There are picnic pavilions where people have fish fries, family get-togethers and reunions. There's trail walking, mushroom hunting, hiking, eagle and bird watching, and more.

The money spent, particularly with hunting season, spurs our local economy. And the work we do to regulate animal and fowl populations is really important.

How does being a union member improve your life and your work?

Day to day, the union touches us in different ways. We come to work knowing what the rules are—they don't change. We have a contract. There's structure in place. Both

management and employees follow the rules and that evens the playing ground.

I believe in the union strongly. My family has a better life because I have better pay, medical insurance and job security. You can't raise a family on minimum wage. And I think union jobs make better employees—you can pay someone eight dollars an hour but they aren't going to care and be passionate, and they aren't going to stay.

With a union we have a voice. One person hollering doesn't do a lot of good, but when you have 50,000 people, you make a difference. It's imperative that a union be in place. It's a win-win for everybody.

What's your inspiration to go to work every day?

I love being in nature, looking at God's creatures. It's a wondrous world we live in and you have to stop and look around. Some people are sitting in an office all day and I get to be out here on the water, seeing fish and wildlife, talking to campers and hunters.

I don't know that I could find a more perfect job than what I've got. How can you have a bad day when you wake up and get to do what you love? There's nothing bad, it's all good. It's all positive. It's amazing. 