

AFSCME C65 NEWSLETTER

October 16, 2020

2020-2021 AI Church Scholarship Drive



Every year, we hold the AI Church Scholarship Raffle to help support the employees and families of AFSCME Council 65 in funding their education. Because of past support of this important annual fund-raising effort, the Scholarship Committee has been able to provide many valuable scholarships to Union Members. Last year, six (6) \$500 scholarships were awarded and our goal this year is to be able to give back more.

This year, we are trying a different approach. We would like to ask our members, along with each Local and Chapter to send a donation for the AI Church Scholarship fund. I have listed the suggested donation amounts below, however please feel free to contribute what you can. Please help us continue this long tradition of providing Scholarships to our Union Members' children.

Please have all donations returned to the St. Cloud office by February 19th, 2021. All donors will be entered into a drawing. Each \$25 donation will equal one entry. Those that contribute \$100 or more will receive 5 entries per \$100 donated. On March 16th, we will hold the drawing in which three (3) winners will win \$250.00 each! If you would like to donate please print off the donation form and send it, along with the donation to the St. Cloud office. Members, immediate family of members, grandchildren of members, and retirees and their families are all welcome to apply. Applications are due by April 14th, 2021 and should be emailed to bmaciej@afscme65.org and cc: office@afscme65.org or can be mailed to:

General Information

Treasurer Reports: Attached are the reports for August 2020. The funds will be deposited into your account on October 16th, 2020. If you have any questions, please contact Sue Kunkel at skunkel@afscme65.org



Surety Bond Payments- Last week, the IU mailed out the bills for the Surety Bonds. Once you receive these, please send in your payment to the IU.

Officer Elections: Elections should be held in the month listed in each local's constitution. If you are uncertain when these should be held, please contact your Labor Representative. After the election is held, please forward the completed Officer Election form to Becca Maciej at BMaciej@afscme65.org

Membership: Members can now sign up on our website. <https://www.afscme65.org/join-afscme-65>

All dues and membership cards are being processed at our office in St. Cloud. If you have any membership cards that need to be sent in, please email Cheryl Anderson at canderson@afscme65.org or mail them to the St. Cloud Office.

Covid-19 Resources: For all up to date resources regarding COVID-19, please visit our website. <https://www.afscme65.org/covid-19-resources>.

Stay in the Loop!

Remember to check out our website and please sign up to join our email list to be notified of events and trainings. <https://www.afscme65.org/>

Upcoming Events

Virtual Treasurer Training- Nov 18th 5-7pm

Day on the Hill- March 9th, 2021 (tentative)

2021 Council 65 Convention- Sept 24th-25th in Duluth, MN

From the International President



Workers Need the Freedom to Negotiate

For AFSCME sister Tina Suckow, helping people struggling with mental illness is a calling. She always wanted to be a nurse, and while she knew her job at Iowa's Independence Mental Health Institute could be dangerous, nothing could have prepared her for what happened last October. A

patient brutally attacked and beat her, leaving her unconscious with injuries to the head, knee and shoulder.

It has been a long road to recovery. But in March, Tina's nightmare took another horrific turn. After her sick days ran out, her employer, the state of Iowa, refused to grant her request for unpaid leave. And then, the state fired her just a few weeks after she had major surgery.

For decades, Iowa had a robust collective bargaining system that allowed state employees like Tina to negotiate virtually all terms of employment. But a new state law, rammed through the legislature in 2017 with barely any debate, stripped the system down to its bare bones.

People like Tina who devote their careers to public service deserve better. They deserve a seat at the table with their employer to hash out a fair contract. A new bill introduced in Congress would give them just that.

The Public Service Freedom to Negotiate Act would extend to public employees the same rights and protections enjoyed by those working in the private sector. It would allow them to join together in a union if a majority of employees vote to have one; to bargain collectively

over wages, hours and working conditions; and to access dispute resolution mechanisms like arbitration and mediation, as well as the ability to sue.

If this bill were law, Tina could have filed a grievance through her collective bargaining contract after she was terminated. And she would have had the chance to negotiate for more rigorous workplace safety standards in the first place, perhaps preventing the incident altogether.

Workers nationwide are organizing and mobilizing to secure just these kinds of freedoms, with strong unions as the vehicle for progress.

Thanks to a surge of bold activism from AFSCME members, the governor of Nevada recently signed an historic law empowering 20,000 state employees with collective bargaining rights. They now have the ability to negotiate for a fair return on their work and for resources their communities need. In Delaware, AFSCME members recently won improved access to wage bargaining. New state contracts in both Illinois and Pennsylvania include strong wage increases, demonstrating respect for the work we do. In Texas, AFSCME Texas Corrections won \$84 million for retention of experienced employees.

From strikes by teachers, hotel workers and grocery workers to vigorous new organizing in media, behavioral health and other industries, we're seeing the most dynamic wave of worker activism in decades. Public approval ratings for labor unions are at a 15-year high, and nearly half of all Americans say they would join a union if given the choice.

Now is the moment to harness that energy and momentum, turning it into lasting change. We can start by passing the Public Service Freedom to Negotiate Act, giving Tina Suckow and so many like her the voice on the job they need and the basic respect they deserve.

Council 65 Convention Recap



The AFSCME Council 65 57th Annual Virtual Convention was held on October 2nd and we had a great turnout from our membership. There were many wonderful workshops, taught by our guests from the International, and some very informative video presentations from AFSCME President Lee Saunders, Governor Tim Walz, Majority Leader MN House, Ryan Winkler, and our Regional Director, Ryan Wells. This year, we had five awards winners acknowledged at the convention. The Lifetime Achievement Award winners were Rowe, Local 1119 and Kevin Boedigheimer, Local 545. The Taylor-Morsching Award winner was Brad Miles, Local 2488. The Joel Plenis Award winner was Glenda Maxted, Local 169. The Outstanding Leadership award was given to Tracy Ratike, Local 3331.