

'Unions for Kids' poker tournament raises cash for Doernbecher, LCSA

Unions For Kids raised critical funds for community nonprofits at their Oct. 7 Texas Hold'em Poker Tournament, including \$10,000 for Labor's Community Service Agency (LCSA). Additional proceeds will be given to Doernbecher Children's Hospital.

LCSA Executive Director Eryn Byram said the money will go directly toward continuing to serve over 1,200 children throughout the community with safety net, holiday, and educational programs.

The 6th annual Poker Tournament was held at the IBEW Local 48 Hall in Northeast Portland.

The card game originally was held in conjunction with the Unions for Kids motorcycle poker run, which took place in June. The poker run was discontinued in 2014, but Unions for Kids maintained its non-profit status and the card game continued. This year's event attracted 21 sponsors and 60 players. Top finishers were: 1st Justin Stevens, 2nd Gerardo Arizmondi, 3rd Dustin Hysmith, 4th Micah Herrera, and 5th Lynn Sayer.



Sixty players (above) participated in the 6th annual Unions for Kids Texas Hold'em Poker Tournament held Oct. 7 at IBEW Local 48's hall in Northeast Portland. The tournament raises money for Doernbecher Children's Hospital and Labor's Community Service Agency. In the photo below left, LCSA Executive Director Eryn Byram tries to deposit the donation check at IBEW and United Workers Federal Credit Union. With her is Joe Harris, president of Unions for Kids, Jeanine Lopez, vice president of the credit union, and Barbara Mathey, CEO of the credit union. Harris is a business rep for Sheet Metal Workers Local 16. The credit union was a major sponsor of the event. In the photo below right are players who made it to the final table.



SCOTUS: Do workers have a right to class-action suits?

By Eric Tegehoff
Public News Service

Workers across the country watched the U.S. Supreme Court closely Oct. 2 as justices heard oral arguments in a case to determine whether employers can ban class-action lawsuits.

The case, *Epic Systems Corporation vs Lewis*, involves arbitration agreements often found in the fine print of employee contracts. About one-quarter of private-sector employees, or nearly 25 million Americans, have signed agreements that waive their right to sue employers collectively, according to the Economic Policy Institute.

Elizabeth Hanley, an employment law attorney for Reed,

Longyear, Malnati and Ahrens law firm, says class actions are important in cases of wage theft.

"There's often very small amounts of money affecting many, many employees, and it can be cost-prohibitive for them to litigate them individually," she explains.

Epic Systems and other companies argue that employers need to know if class-action waivers in their workers' contracts apply. If they don't, the companies say, that will change the employer-employee relationship. A decision on this case is expected in June 2018.

During arguments, Justice Stephen Breyer said a ruling in favor of employers would rip out

"the entire heart of the New Deal" and change our understanding of labor relations dating back to the Great Depression. Hanley says class actions have been important tools for workers in labor disputes.

"I don't think, without the weight of class actions, that you will be likely to see the enforcement of wage and hour laws or employers incentivized to change any unlawful practices," Hanley warns.

The Epic Systems case deals with the conflict between two federal laws. The Federal Arbitration Act of 1925 favors arbitration. But the National Labor Relations Act of 1935 encourages workers to sue collectively in labor disputes.



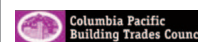
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GROWTH: Developing new family wage jobs
EDUCATION: Policy for business-linked educational programs



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