

UNION ORGANIZING



Laborers Local 737 leaders Ben Guzman (left) and Zach Culver (right) celebrate with union supporters after a successful union campaign at non-profit child care centers in Marion and Clackamas counties.

Four migrant day care centers join Laborers 737

About 130 workers at four non-profit child care centers in Marion and Clackamas counties expect to begin contract bargaining later this month, after voting 61 to 56 to unionize with Laborers Local 737 on March 20.

The taxpayer-funded centers are run by the non-profit Oregon Child Development Coalition (OCDC). OCDC provides early childhood education to about 4,000 children of migrant farm workers at 24 locations in 13 Oregon counties.

Workers at several OCDC facilities have been union-represented since 2008, when they were members of what was then Laborers Local 320. At OCDC's Gresham location, workers

voted out the union in 2012, and so did workers at the Silverton and Woodburn facilities in 2013.

The Laborers union has continued to represent workers at OCDC centers in Cornelius in Washington County.

The recent union vote brings the Silverton and Woodburn facilities back into the union, along with OCDC day care centers in Brooks and Mulino.

Workers at OCDC child care centers in Klamath Falls, Chiloquin, and Malin, Oregon voted to join AFSCME in 2015.

"This is a group of brave women and men," Local 737 organizer Ben Guzman said. "They do this work and do it well, and they want to be represented."

Psych nurses want union

At Unity Center for Behavioral Health in Northeast Portland, more than 170 out of the 215 registered nurses have signed cards seeking to join Oregon Nurses Association. Unity Center is a 24-hour psychiatric emergency room and behavioral health center. It's operated by Legacy Health System as a joint venture with several other local health networks.

Nurses Jeff Ferrier and Sherrie Neff told the Labor Press they and their co-workers want a union so they can have more say in decision making and a safer environment for patients and staff. Since it opened in 2017, Unity Center has faced multiple investigations over violations of safety rules.

Veterans nursing home workers re-run union election

A nursing home for veterans is heading for a second union election after management labor violations tainted the first one.

The facility, located in Lebanon, Oregon, is run by non-profit Veterans Care Centers of Oregon. United Steelworkers of America (USW) represents about 170 workers at a veterans nursing home in The Dalles, Oregon, that is run by the same group.

USW District 12 staff representative Jim Kilborn says more than 60 percent of the Lebanon nursing home's 215 workers had signed union authorization cards as of Feb. 7, when USW asked the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) to hold a union election.

But when the election was held on March 4, the tally was 58 to 59: USW lost by one vote.

Kilborn says some union supporters didn't cast ballots be-

cause managers were loitering near the balloting area. And that tactic was the culmination of a series of coercive statements and actions by nursing home managers.

Three pro-union workers were given formal warnings for passing out union literature in the parking lot and in the break room, and sending pro-union text messages. Managers also told employees not to talk about the union while working. One worker — told to leave for talking about the union — was followed out of the building.

Managers also said there would be no union, and that a union wouldn't be able to help.

All of those things violated federal labor law, USW charged. The NLRB agreed. The NLRB also objected to employee handbook policies that prohibited workers from distributing union literature, and

barred workers from being on the premises when off the clock.

To settle the charges with the NLRB, Veterans Care Centers of Oregon agreed to revise its handbook, rescind the discipline of the three workers, and cooperate on a new election.

It's scheduled for May 20. The proposed collective bargaining unit includes registered nurses, certified nurse assistants, licensed practical nurses, medical records clerks, activities coordinators, barbers, and maintenance and transportation workers.

Meanwhile, workers at the nursing home in The Dalles expect to vote soon on a tentative three-year agreement that will raise wages 15 percent. For the first time, the agreement also includes union security — a requirement that all represented workers pay union dues.

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The following are Oregon and Southwest Washington workplaces where workers have decided whether to be represented by a union. The thumbs-up symbol means workers will be union-represented. Thumbs-down means they'll be on their own. The information comes from the National Labor Relations Board and the Oregon Employment Relations Board.

Union election results

Employer (Location) Union	Yes-No	
Legacy Good Samaritan Medical Center (Portland) SEIU Local 49	2-3	👎
■ 6 communications operators		
Ore. Child Development Coalition (Wilsonville) LiUNA Local 737	61-56	👍
■ 132 preschool teachers and support staff in Mulino, Silverton, Brooks, and Woodburn		
Burgerville (Portland) Burgerville Workers Union	15-9	👍
■ 28 crew members employed at 8218 NE Glisan St.		
Burgerville (Portland) Burgerville Workers Union	14-7	👍
■ 37 crew members employed at 1135 NE Martin Luther King Blvd.		

Unionization by majority signup

Employer (Location) Union	
Oregon State Board of Examiners for Engineering and Land Surveying (Salem) SEIU Local 503	
■ 13 non-supervisory employees	

JOBS

Pharmaceutical-labor coalition releases jobs report

The biopharmaceutical industry helped drive over \$190 million in private infrastructure investment in Oregon from 2012-2017, resulting in more than 97,000 hours of work for union building trades workers — according to a new report commissioned by a coalition of unions and pharmaceutical companies.

The report was released May 2 at the United Association of Plumbers and Fitters Local 290 facility in Tualatin. It looked at major projects of \$5 million or more in 11 states at any point between 2012 and 2017. All told, 249 projects were identified, which required at least 15.6 million labor hours by union workers, and yielded at least \$454 million in wages and tens of millions of dollars for union health insurance and pension benefits.

Oregon projects included a \$125 million Genentech plant expansion in Hillsboro; \$60 million at two expansion projects for Bend Research Inc. in Bend; and \$5.7 million in renovation work at Patheon/ Thermo Fisher Scientific in Bend. The report estimated at least 97,000 hours logged by union workers in 14 trades, resulting in at least \$2.9 million in union wages.

The report also identified eight construction projects in Washington that required 323,250 hours of work, generating \$10 million in earnings for union workers.

"The life sciences sector has

been a source of significant opportunities for union construction workers in Oregon for many years," said Robert Camarillo, executive secretary of the Oregon State Building Trades Council. "The sophisticated and technical nature of the work to build biopharmaceutical facilities requires the type of highly-skilled labor that union craft workers in Oregon are accustomed to."

Other speakers at the press announcement were Columbia Pacific Building Trades Council Executive Secretary Willy Myers. Local 290 Business Manager Lou Christian, and Genentech lobbyist Tim Layton.

The study was produced by the Institute for Construction Economic Research (ICERES) at the request of the Pharmaceutical Industry Labor-Management Association (PILMA). PILMA is a coalition of labor organizations and pharmaceutical companies that touts the value of union labor and issues joint statements on national legislation affecting the pharmaceutical industry. ICERES is a network of academic researchers who study the impact of prevailing wage laws and construction unions in the economy. Data for the study were provided by Industrial Information Resources, a consulting firm specializing in market data on power, energy, and industrial infrastructure projects in the United States.