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## UNION DEMOCRACY

# Multnomah County union has new top officer

By Don McIntosh

AFSCME Local 88 has a new president, Josyln Baker.

Baker ran unopposed after incumbent Percy Winters Jr. opted not to run for a third two-year term, and she was sworn into office at the local's Nov. 17 general meeting.

With about 3,400 members, Local 88 represents most employees who work for Multnomah County. It also includes workers at Central City Concern and Transition Projects Inc., two large nonprofits that have contracts with the county.

Baker, 55, grew up in Fremont, California, where her father was a high school teacher active in his union. She moved to Portland in 1992 and got a job at Multnomah County. Twenty-nine years later, she's still at the county, having held 13 jobs in four departments over that time. In recent years she's worked on county efforts to combat domestic violence and sex trafficking, and to comply with OSHA and COVID safety rules.



Local 88 president Josyln Baker is a 29-year employee of Multnomah County.

"I think the common thread linking my work is seeking justice for both employees and the communities that we serve as county workers," Baker told the *Labor Press*.

Baker is currently a project manager for county chief operating officer Serena Cruz, and will remain on the county payroll while working full time for the local under an agreement between the union and the county.

She got active in Local 88

about 10 years ago, and became a union steward.

"Eventually I became the lead steward for DCJ [Department of Community Justice] and primarily focused on cases where people with protected-class identities were experiencing some kind of workplace discrimination, harassment, harm," Baker said.

She later joined the Local 88 Executive Board, and since May, has also served as Region

3 vice president at the union's statewide council, Oregon AFSCME.

As president of Local 88, she'll lead a team of rank-and-file union officers, supported by three union staff representatives: Eben Pullman, Mecca Scott, and Brian Dunnville.

Holding managers accountable will be a priority, Baker said. She also wants to take a new look at the "trial service" period for newly hired employees, and questions whether the one-year probationary period is too long.

Contract bargaining will be big on her to-do list.

"Our members are fired up about bargaining," Baker said.

The local's collective bargaining agreements with the County expire June 30, 2022. Members are currently filling out surveys to determine what priorities will be when negotiations begin. One likely concern will be cost-of-living increases, given the recent increase in inflation.

Other top Local 88 officers were also unopposed and declared elected by acclamation:

- **Vice president** Raymond De Silva
- **Treasurer** Matt Davis
- **Secretary** Jackie Vitron
- **Trustees** Shirley Bailey, Gordon Long, Jeanne Ramsten

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