

# Homecare Workers Prepare to Bargain First Contract



On three successive weekends in February, in nine locations around the state, nearly 300 homecare workers came together to celebrate their historic Union election victory and to prepare to bargain their first contract.

At meetings held in Coos Bay, Bend, Medford, Pendleton, Pacific City, Salem, Portland, Roseburg and Eugene, homecare workers elected their bargaining delegates and bargaining team members, learned about the bargaining process, and prepared for the actions necessary to win a fair contract.

The homecare workers showed they understood the need for political action, with 55 new CAPE members coming out of the meetings. In addition, 23 homecare workers and clients registered to vote.

Executive Director **Leslie Frane** attended the meetings in Coos Bay, Portland and Salem in order to welcome homecare workers into the Union, congratulate them on their tremendous success in forming a union, and wished them success in their fight for dignity.

Additionally, the homecare workers chose their bargaining team. The members of the team are **Diane Chandler**, Coos Bay; **Mary Breedlove**, Medford; **Basil Rogers**, Prineville; **Marla Denson**, LaGrande; **Jennifer Rucker**, Tillamook; **Patricia Mae**

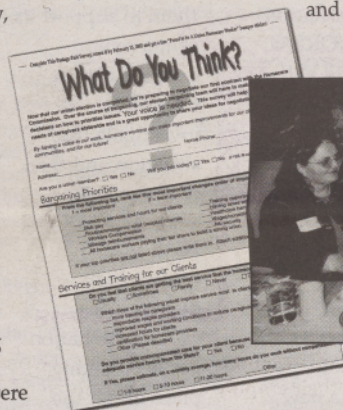
**Mueller**, Roseburg; **Lee Meyers**, Salem, and **Karen Thompson**, Scio. Alternate bargaining team members also were chosen. They are **Debi Valine**, Coquille; **Sally Cumberworth**, Cave Junction; **Lee Worcester**, Bend; **Vickie Gourley Neer**, Pendleton; **Joan Wesley**, Waldport; **Debbie Brown**, LaPine; **Patsy White**, Salem, and **Mike Carter**, Eugene. Portland area members will choose their bargaining team members soon.

In preparation for bargaining, the homecare workers circulated a bargaining survey among their members. Members were asked to rank such bargaining priorities as protecting services and hours for clients; sick pay; routine/emergency relief (respite) referrals, and having taxes withheld from checks, among others.

They were asked what would most improve services for clients: more training, dependable respite providers, increased hours for clients, and other provisions.

Training was a big issue with homecare workers during their ballot measure campaign for a commission. Questions about training was a subject of the bargaining questionnaire. Other questions dealt with pay and mileage and benefits.

Having a voice at work was



Two homecare workers share their ideas on a bargaining survey.

an important item on the questionnaire. Members were asked whether they feel they can express ideas and have them respected and whether they have meaningful input into meeting the needs of the client.

By having a voice in our work, homecare workers can make important improvements for our clients, for our communities and for our future. ●



Members meet across the state in preparation for bargaining the first union contract for Oregon's homecare workers.