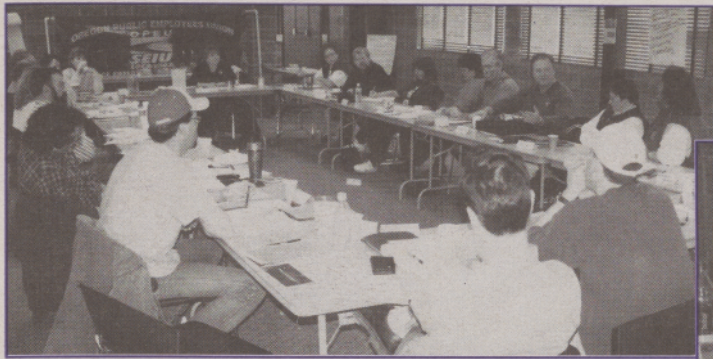


## Local Government Members Tackle Varied Issues



**ALBANY** — Led by Local Government Committee Chair **Bessie Johnson**, local government members and leaders tackled healthcare, contract campaigns, unfair labor practices and politics at a day-long conference here on Saturday, February 23. Former Linn County Local 390 President **John Hawkins** (gesturing, above) gave the group the benefit of his experience. New Executive Director Leslie Frane was in attendance. Members learned about ways to fight back the healthcare crisis, building relationships with elected officials, PERS challenges and issues specific to local government. Marion County Local 294 President **Ernie Pech** (inset) and SEIU Local 503, OPEU President **Kathie Best** (in front of the banner) led the group in a discussion of powerful contract campaigns.

## SEIU Local 503, OPEU Seeks Younger Workers!

**S** EIU Local 503, OPEU is recruiting younger workers (35 and under) to help identify what issues our younger workers are facing. Members are meeting to discuss things as basic as what it means to be part of a Union, to what are our younger workers' economic goals, trends and concerns. We are faced with an aging

workforce and it is vital to Local 503, and the labor movement, to identify ways to get younger workers involved in the fight. It's their future, and our future depends on it. For more information on joining the Younger Worker Task Force, please contact Staff Advisor, Abby Solomon at (503) 581-1505 or (800) 452-2146.

**Give Your Paycheck a Boost!** Claim *All* the Tax Credits you Earned

Get your Earned Income Credit. Many working families can now get the Child Tax Credit too!

There is help available for low and moderate income earners with both the Earned Income Tax Credit as well as the new Child Tax Credit. In addition, find some simple tips on the Union's website at [www.seiu503.org](http://www.seiu503.org)

### Earned Income Tax Credits you could get as much as:

Family Size	Income Under	Federal EITC	Oregon EITC
2 or more children	\$32,121	\$4,008	\$200
1 child	\$28,281	\$2,428	\$121
No children	\$10,710	\$364	\$10

The Child Tax Credit is worth up to \$600 per child if you:

- ◆ have taxable income above \$10,000
- ◆ claim a tax exemption for a dependent child under age 17
- ◆ have either a Social Security number or Individual Taxpayer Identification Number (for immigrant workers)

## Lavender Caucus

**S** EIU Local 503, OPEU Lavender Caucus is interested in revisiting the idea of offering nondiscrimination training to both staff and members.

During the past year, caucus meetings have been held at various locations around the state in an attempt to be more accessible to members. The next meeting is scheduled for Sunday, May 19, in Portland. It will be mid-afternoon at a location yet to be selected. Those on the mailing list will be notified as to exact location once that has been determined.

In addition, the caucus is involved in Portland Pride as well as other pride celebrations throughout the state.

The Lavender Caucus has been part of SEIU Local 503, OPEU for 15 years. It was originally formed as a group to develop the strategy of education and organizing around statewide bargaining to add "sexual orientation" to the nondiscrimination article of the state contract.

After our success, we moved on to do outreach to gay and lesbian Union members, creating a stewards' training program on how to combat gay and lesbian discrimination in the workplace and involve Union members in the struggle against the Oregon Citizens Alliance initiatives which would have deleted parts of our contract.

Throughout the years, we have been a resource for Union staff and members who are having problems. Without the caucus, there would be no place for them to look for support, bring their suggestions or plan actions in support of their issues.

Membership in the Lavender Caucus is open to any Union member, particularly those who identify as gay, lesbian, bisexual or transgendered.

Union members interested in joining the caucus and being added to the mailing list can contact **Elizabeth Duell**, caucus chair, at her e-mail address ([redheadedcyclone@yahoo.com](mailto:redheadedcyclone@yahoo.com)) or phone (503/ 362-8351 — Portland). The staff advisor is Penny Ruff, who can be reached at (503) 408-4090, ext. 117, or (800) 527-9374.