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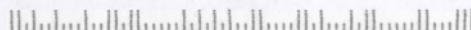
The 503 VOICE Vision to Action!

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DAS, OUS and Homecare members' Contract deadlines approaching

by Leslie Frane, Executive Director, SEIU Local 503, OPEU

Ninety percent of our members work under contracts that expire on July 1 of this year. That includes members of three of our largest bargaining units: DAS, OUS, and Homecare. For all three, bargaining is well underway, but it's already clear that the path to victory will have lots of twists and turns.

For State members in the DAS and OUS bargaining units, one piece of good news was the State's agreement to bargain jointly on wages and health care. Less promising was the State's initial economic proposal (described on page 4 by SEIU bargaining committee chair Cory McIntosh). They have offered us a whopping one percent raise in each year of the contract!

No state worker should need to rely on food stamps

Our proposal to management would enable us to keep pace with inflation. It would protect our health insurance and guarantee that no full-time state worker earns less than the gross income limit for food stamp eligibility for a family of four.

Homecare seeks raises and expanded training

Homecare members are asking for raises equal to forty-five cents an hour each year and to protect our health insurance and workers' compensation coverage. We also want to expand the training program begun under our last contract to cover clients as well as workers. So far, the Homecare bargaining team has not received even an initial bargaining proposal from the State.

We win contracts away from the table

The members comprising our negotiating teams for DAS, OUS, and Homecare are talented and dedicated. But ultimately, we win contract victories away from the table

- in the worksites, at the Capitol, and in our communities.

This year, we're on track to break our record for the number of members participating in our lobby day program. Elsewhere in this issue, you can read about members having face to face conversations with legislators to build support for our services and our contract campaign. One problem we face is that the money set aside in the Governor's recommended budget and the Legislature's Ways and Means Committee Co-Chairs' budget is not

enough to fund the progress our members deserve, so we are lobbying hard to amend those budgets.

Telling our communities about our living wage campaign

We're finding creative ways to purple up in the worksites, through unity breaks, sticker days, and other actions. In April, we'll be having press conferences and informational pickets to publicize our living wage campaign in our communities.

As July 1 approaches, there will be countless opportunities to stand up for ourselves, our families, and our clients in the struggle to win a fair contract. Check our website (www.seiu503.org) for updates, and talk to your steward or bargaining delegate.

“When I first got in the union I had a hard time believing anyone would listen to us, much less care about our issues. Now, into our third contract, Homecare workers know firsthand the worth of working together, and feel very hopeful we'll negotiate an even better contract.”



Bob Grant
Homecare provider, Roseburg

We “adopt” Colorado and Arizona



SEIU Board members voted to “adopt” Arizona and Colorado after hearing presentations from SEIU members and staff from those states. Mike Parachini from Colorado (back row, second from right) told how bad road conditions are because of lack of state funding. Being adopted means that we'll send member organizers to both states to talk to workers and help them organize into a union. Congratulations to Tanaya Brooks (Homecare), Joye Camacho (DHS), and David Meyers (ODOT-DMV) who went to Arizona to organize Pima County public employees who just voted to join SEIU (by a vote of 1163 to 70!).