

## Adult Foster Care providers gain a voice and help launch SEIU Healthcare

Adult Foster Care (AFC) providers give 24-hour care to developmentally disabled, mentally ill, physically handicapped or elderly Oregonians who cannot live alone but do not need to be in nursing homes. However, providers are paid poorly and most do not have access to affordable health insurance. Equally important, providers have little say in regulations affecting their clients or the care they provide.

To obtain a voice, Oregon Adult Foster Care providers decided to join SEIU 503. Many providers, along with 503 members and staff organizers, gathered cards, made home visits and calls, and lobbied the legislature to gain recognition. On June 1, Governor Kulongoski issued an Executive Order giving providers full collective bargaining rights. And on the very last day of the legislative session, we passed legislation confirming that order.

As the newest members of SEIU 503, several Adult Foster Care providers joined other healthcare workers at SEIU's National Healthcare Conference held in June. Now, Adult Foster Care providers are wrapping themselves in the purple flag.

More than 2000 healthcare workers met in Baltimore to launch SEIU Healthcare, our new national union with more than one million healthcare members from 38 SEIU locals, speaking with one strong voice for good jobs and quality care.

SEIU Healthcare will work to unite healthcare workers, raise standards, and fix America's broken healthcare system. Our first big effort is to collect a million signatures on petitions urging Congress to provide health insurance to uninsured children. More information on this effort is available at [www.seiu503.org](http://www.seiu503.org).

**“As health providers join together, we can make a difference in improving our healthcare system. I had the opportunity to share stories and get valuable information from other care providers at the SEIU National Healthcare Conference I recently attended in Baltimore.”**

Mozetta Zion, RN and Adult Foster Home provider from Portland

## University workers struggle to win parity with State workers

*Even though DAS and OUS won cost-of-living adjustments that exceed inflation and made certain health insurance premiums will not come out of our pockets – as we go to press – the fight for a fair contract isn't over for OUS workers. Significant issues remain on the table, including selective salary increases.*

We asked **Deanna Berglund**, who is on the bargaining team representing SEIU members at the Uofo, to share some of her experiences.

**This is your first time as a member of the OUS bargaining team. What do you think about your new role so far?**

I expected to learn a lot about our union and our contract, and I have. It has turned out to be more fun than I anticipated. Certainly there have been frustrating moments with management, but I am impressed with how well SEIU staff members of our team, Rich Peppers and Paul McKenna, have prepared us for this and the example they set in our face-to-face meetings. And I really value the relationship that I've developed with all the other truly awesome members of our union.

**What will it take for SEIU to win parity for OUS workers?**

We have already won COLAs that exceed inflation, and made up some of the ground we've lost to inflation over the last 10 years. We also stood firm and beat back insurance premium cost shifting to our full-time and part-time members. Now we must continue to push back against attempts by management to weaken contract rights that we currently enjoy. I see no reason we can't win such a contract if our members are willing to let management know that we deserve and expect a fair settlement.

**How can SEIU members make this happen?**

We need more of what I call "visible support", which goes beyond laying low in the workplace and thinking, "yeah, I support what the union's doing." Visible support means wearing purple, displaying SEIU stuff in your workplace, even visiting a bargaining session when one is held on your campus. It means answering the call of your local leadership to attend rallies or other events. Visible means putting your name to paper on a letter or email to your university president, Chancellor Pernsteiner, or Governor Kulongoski to let them know you want a fair settlement now.

**What are some examples of creative actions members have done to win a fair contract?**

We have a tradition at the Uofo of having brown bag meetings at 2:00 a.m. for our night custodial staff so they can stay informed about bargaining. Recently at PSU, members shouted a chant created around the rather unique name of their Vice President for Finance as we marched past her office. Some part-time library workers lobbied their Dean about the insurance inequity for part-timers, with the result being a promise of letters of support from the Dean to other OUS library directors and to university administrators. We also appreciate the efforts members make to welcome our team and to feed us really well when we visit their campuses!



**Deanna Berglund** (left) administers grants at Research Services at the Uofo.

## Child Care providers take a stand for kids and working families



**“We won an 18% pay raise. It allows me to make more than minimum wage, which improves the quality of my life and improves the quality of care I can provide.”**

**Darcie Ryan**, Child Care provider, Portland

Over the past three years, SEIU Child Care providers have been fighting for a voice in Oregon's childcare system. The hard work has paid off. In this historic legislative session, lawmakers voted to grant providers a real voice by giving them formal collective bargaining rights. They also voted to fund the first-ever contract for state-paid family Child Care providers.

This legislation was the result of care providers taking action by writing letters, making phone calls, signing postcards, and loading up the kids to head to Salem, all to persuade lawmakers that now is the time to invest in our kids.

The contract makes dramatic improvements to the program for parents, providers, and kids.

Providers who care for three children or fewer in their homes at rates that range from \$1.64 per child per hour on the low end to \$2.44 per child per hour on the high end will see their first rate increase since the program's inception in 1996.

Rates paid to providers will increase by an average of 18%. The co-payments charged to low-income parents will decline by an average of 20%. In addition, the contract expands the program to help more working families and creates options for child care providers to enhance their skills through a training fund.

## CODA Local 963 Notice of Nominations

**President, Vice President, Secretary, and one Bargaining Delegate**

**Nominations Open on Monday, August 13.**

**Nominations Close at 5PM on Tuesday, August 28.**

Nominations must be submitted on the official nomination form to: SEIU Local 503, OPEU. Attention: CODA Local 963 Elections Committee, 6401 SE Foster Rd., Portland, OR 97206. Or fax to: 503-408-4099.

Position descriptions for these offices and the official nomination forms may be obtained at any SEIU Local 503, OPEU office or from your Local offices.

**Ballots will be mailed to members' homes by September 10 and are due back to the Portland Field Office by 5PM Tuesday, September 25.**

## District 2 Notice of Nominations

**Assistant District Directors (3 positions)**

**District Secretary (1 position)**

**Nominations Close at 5PM Friday, September 28**

This election is being held to fill recent vacancies. These terms expires September 1, 2008. To be eligible for these positions you must be a SEIU Local 503, OPEU member from District 2. Nominations can be submitted to Jerry Rosenkoetter, Jerry.H.Rosenkoetter@state.or.us

**Election Process:** The election of District Officers will be held at the District 2 Meeting Monday, October 22, 2007. Absentee ballots can be obtained by calling Barbara at 503-581-1505 x150. All absentee ballots must be received at SEIU Local 503, OPEU HQ by 5PM, Monday October 22, 2007.

## CAPE Notice of Nominations

**CAPE Board of Directors**

**Nominations Open Monday, August 20**

**Nominations Close 5PM, Thursday, September 20**

Nominations are due to Amanda Basom, Portland Field Office: 6401 SE Foster Rd., Portland, OR 97206. Rules governing candidate statements shall follow those for SEIU Local 503, OPEU.

**Election:** There will be a CAPE Board of Directors election in October. Ballots and candidate statements shall be mailed to all regular CAPE members by October 1. Ballots are due back by October 24. A list of duties for CAPE Board of Director positions is available by contacting Amanda in the Portland office.

**The 503 Voice** is published by SEIU Local 503, OPEU. Contact: Kathie Best [bestk@opeuseiu.org](mailto:bestk@opeuseiu.org)

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**Eugene Field Office:** 541-342-1055 / 800-521-3446

**Medford Field Office:** 541-779-4324 / 800-452-7965

**Pendleton Field Office:** 541-276-4983 / 800-452-8146

[www.seiu503.org](http://www.seiu503.org)

## Bargaining 2007...

## How Members Win Contracts

*We attend rallies and marches at the Capitol and stand up at our worksite to show our strength and commitment.*

*It all starts with members completing bargaining surveys so the bargaining team knows which issues are most important.*



**Members in Medford send a strong message by purpling up.**



*We find creative ways to tell our story.*

*Our bargaining team does whatever it takes to get there, including a 27-hour marathon session to reach agreement.*

*We go to lobby days and hearings so legislators hear from front-line workers.*

ESTIMATED AVERAGE COSTS 2007	
LOAF OF BREAD	12.50
1LB HAMBURGER	13.00
BALLON OF BAZ	18.15
NEW CAR	125,000
AVG MONTHLY RENT	1,750
PERSONAL INCOME TAX	14,200
CORPORATE MINIMUM TAX	130

## Workers win in State Capitol

*SEIU members won significant victories in the 2007 Oregon legislature. Key to these victories was our member lobby day program. Over six hundred members met with their legislators in Salem. We told our stories and explained the importance of the services we provide.*

### Funding for contracts

As a result of our members' lobbying and activism, we won much-needed funding for contracts for DAS and OUS workers, Homecare providers, and Child Care providers. We also won funding for safer staffing levels in nursing homes, which will result in better care for elderly and disabled Oregonians.

### Reforms to health care

We made significant strides on healthcare. By passing Senate Bill 329, we established a process for reforming the healthcare system in Oregon by controlling costs and expanding access to healthcare for the uninsured. In addition, SB 329 will improve the purchasing power of consumers by making it easier to buy into health insurance pools.

SEIU also led the fight to complete efforts to expand the Prescription Drug Purchasing Pool to all Oregonians. Any Oregonian (with or without insurance) can sign up for free at [www.opdp.org](http://www.opdp.org) and qualify for a possible 10-20% discount below the prices they currently pay.

### More rights for workers

We built the power of SEIU Local 503 by expanding bargaining rights for over 5,000 Child Care providers and 3,500 Adult Foster Care providers. It has been 34 years since the legislature protected this many workers under collective bargaining law.

Public sector workers won important victories on collective bargaining. Because of new laws,

if a majority of workers in a non-union group sign cards to form a union, their employer will be required to recognize the union. If this law had been in effect during recent organizing drives, Oregon Lottery workers and Oregon Courts workers would now be protected by a union. Current law favors employers through a tilted election process.

Public safety workers, including our members at Oregon Youth Authority and the Oregon State Hospital, will now, finally, be able to bargain over safety and staffing issues.

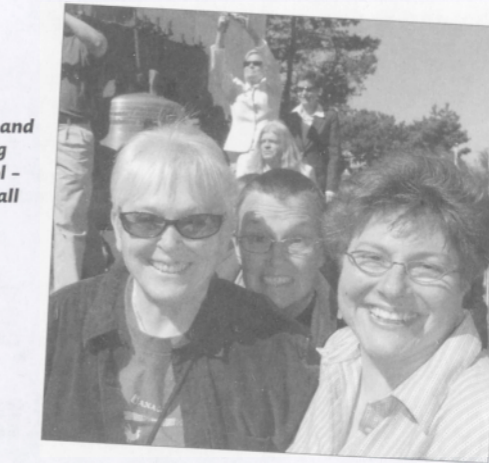
Working parents also earned significant victories. We made it easier to take family medical leave, particularly when people need to care for ailing grandparents or grandchildren. This session also saw Oregon move from being one of the worst states for working parents in which to find affordable day care, to being one of the best. Child Care providers were among the workers who lobbied hard on this.

Finally, workers gained a great deal of protection from predatory lenders. The legislature passed an across-the-board interest rate cap of 36%. The new law also toughens the rules for car-title loans, internet lending, and check-cashing stores.

## Homecare providers in the Capitol

Homecare providers pulled out all the stops at the Capitol this session to tell legislators that quality service for clients requires a workforce that is respected, valued, and fairly paid.

We met with legislators face-to-face during three Lobby Days. We testified and filled the room for hearings about the budget and for our bill to require Workers' Comp coverage for Homecare providers. We spoke before the Homecare Commission on the impact the



proposed sub-minimum wages and takeaways would have on providers. We delivered a thousand "Care Provider Platforms" in which members told personal stories of the value of our work. We jammed the Capitol phones with calls to legislators telling them that thousands of Oregonians rely on the home care program to continue to live with dignity in their own homes and asking them to fully fund the homecare program. We appealed to the Governor's office to support a fair contract for Homecare providers.

Our efforts paid off when the Legislature passed the Workers Comp bill that guarantees coverage for Homecare providers and added an additional \$4 million to fund the Homecare workers contract. We delivered a clear message that it's time for Oregon to value our services.

**“Winning big at the bargaining table is only possible when Homecare providers and our clients do our part by telling our stories and by sending postcards and making phone calls.”**

**Bobbie Sotin**, Homecare provider from North Bend