

SEIU Local 221 Newsletter

Volume 3, 2009

Member Spotlight

San Diego County Public Health Nurse and SEIU Local 221 member Judy Wright works every day to keep our community safe and healthy.

Wright and her colleagues are working to screen members of the San Diego public to see if they are currently eligible to receive the first round of H1N1 vaccinations provided by the Center for Disease Control and to administer the vaccine when appropriate.

Normally, Public Health Nurses engage in a variety of activities to ensure the health of our community, such as monitoring the health of pregnant women, infants, and school age children and linking service providers with those in need of health services. With the onset of flu season, however, educating the public and administering vaccines has been the main focus of Public Health Nurses here in San Diego County.

In addition to administering the vaccine, Wright said Public Health Nurses are often called upon to educate and calm the public, which isn't always an easy task.

"Initially people were anxious about not receiving the vaccine because they weren't in priority groups, though now most are accepting the way the vaccine is tiered to protect the most vulnerable population," Wright said.

Kathy Griffiee, a San Diego County Public Health Nurse who is also a Local 221 Executive Board member, explained that nurses have been working hard to keep us safe and healthy.

"All of the Public Health Nurses have been stepping up to meet the needs of the San Diego community and provide the vaccine," Griffiee said.

"Public Health Nurses around the county worked relentlessly to vaccinate close to twenty thousand people those first few weeks to meet public demand," Wright said.



Public Health Nurse Judy Wright outside the County Health & Human Services Agency

Also in this issue:
ARMS Committee
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Member Benefits
& Much More!

From the President

As we enter the season of thanks, good tidings, giving, reflection, and resolutions I would like to focus this letter on those topics.

Thanks

Thanks to Tracy Carter, a clerical employee with the County of San Diego, who came out on lost time to help organize her bargaining unit. Tracy had one-on-one conversations with many members and organized two large clerical meetings where members could come and have questions and concerns specific to clerical employees addressed. If you are a San Diego County clerical employee who would like more information, contact Tracey Carter at tracey.carter@seiu221.org.

Thanks to all the members who came out on lost time to help increase the Committee On Political Education (COPE) donations from members. Because we don't use dues money for political actions, these donations fund our local political campaigns and will help with the fight for Term Limits for the San Diego County Board of Supervisors. COPE lost time members included Heather De Leon and Lizette Maggio-Stone both from Head Start, Executive Board member Al Parra, Retired Public Health Nurse Carmen Duron, and Retired Social Worker Luz Villafana.

Thanks to Marge Johnson for having the courage to stand up for herself and her San Diego County co-workers by bringing forth the Term Limits Initiative for the San Diego County Board of Supervisors.

Good Tidings

This year's SEIU Local 221 Holiday Party is going to be great, with plenty of good cheer, delicious food, fabulous raffle prizes, and dancing. We are having the Holiday Party at a new location this year, Holiday Inn on the Bay. Rooms at the hotel are a discounted rate SEIU Local 221 members. Check our website, www.seiu221.org, for the discount code or call Norma Whitaker at 858-560-0151 x225.

Giving

Alison Webb and Michelle Gay who lead the Veterans & ARMS (Active & Reservist Military Services) committee will be sending holiday cards to troops stationed overseas. Stop by the Holiday Card Project table at the Holiday Party and help them spread cheer to our military members.



The African-American Action Committee (AAAC) was also active in our community this year. They volunteered with I Love A Clean San Diego and the National City Senior Nutrition Center. For more information on the AAAC, contact Satomi Zeigler at satomi.zeigler@seiu221.org.

Reflection and Resolutions

I once heard Ann Richards, a politician from Texas, speak about giving to charities and causes. She asked one simple question that I think is fitting for this time of year. "If you dropped your checkbook and someone found the registry what would it say about you?" What if it were your calendar? I encourage you to help those who are less fortunate through volunteering or contributing to a charity. If you are searching for an opportunity to help, Local 221 has great community outreach partners such as the USO, United Way, The American Cancer Society, the San Diego Food Bank, and other organizations who are always looking for volunteers. Local 221 is also participating in the San Diego – Imperial Counties Labor Council toy drive for union members in need. If you are interested in participating in the toy drive or obtaining information regarding any of our community partners, please contact the union at 858-560-0151 and ask for Susan Brondell.

During this time of year remember: "How far you go in life depends on your being tender with the young, compassionate with the aged, sympathetic with the striving, and tolerant of the weak and strong - because someday in your life you will have been all of these."

- George Washington Carver

Happy Holidays!

*Sharon-Frances Moore, President
SEIU Local 221*



**SEIU Local 221
Annual Holiday Party**

Saturday, December 5, 2009

New Location

Holiday Inn on the Bay
1355 North Harbor Drive
San Diego, CA 92101

6:00 p.m. to 11:00 p.m.

Buffet Dinner & No Host Bar

Child Care Services & Free Parking

Tickets are **\$12.50** for adults and **\$8.00** for children.
*To purchase tickets, please contact Norma Whitaker at
858-560-0151 x 225.*

The annual raffle will be held with cash prizes, gift certificates, gift baskets, and much, much, more! Contact your Worksite Organizer to purchase raffle tickets.

Friends. Food. Fun!

Community Corner



Be a shining star for a child this holiday season

The San Diego - Imperial Counties Labor Council is collecting toys for the children of union members in need. Their goal is to collect 500 toys and Local 221 has committed to helping them reach their goal.

You can help by donating a new, unwrapped toy. Donations will be accepted through December 4th at SEIU Local 221, 4004 Kearny Mesa Road, San Diego, 92111. You can also bring a toy to the Holiday Party on December 5th and get entered into a raffle drawing.



Holiday Food Drive

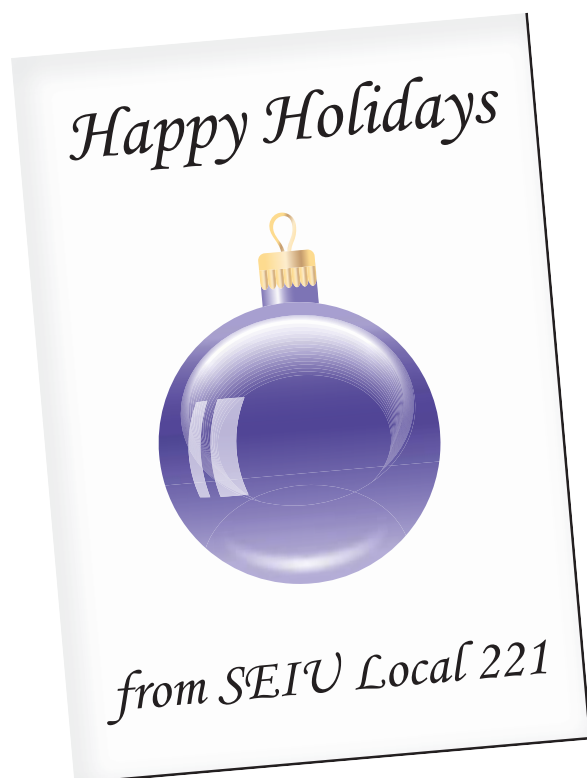
Please bring canned and packaged food items to the SEIU Local 221 Holiday Party for the 2nd Annual Holiday Food Drive.

All guests who bring food items will be entered into a special raffle drawing for a prize.

If you have questions about the Holiday Food Drive, or would like to donate prior to the Holiday Party, please contact Worksite Organizer Sarah Loud at 858-560-0151 x 248 or sarah.loud@seiu221.org.



SEIU Local 221 2nd Annual Holiday Card Project



The 2nd Annual SEIU Local 221 Holiday Card Project will be taking place at the Holiday Party on Saturday, December 5, 2009. Last year we were able to send 300 holiday cards to military personnel in Iraq because of the generous donations of Target Stores and the SEIU Local 221 Senior Staff.

This year we are asking for any SEIU Local 221 member who has a loved one in the military to provide their name and military address via email to Liz DeRoulet at liz.deroulet@seiu221.org no later than December 3, 2009. Your request can also be faxed to 858-560-1299. Identify your fax or email as "Holiday Card Project." We will compile a list to be used at the Holiday Party to send holiday cheer.

This year we will also send holiday cards to political prisoners detained for promoting democracy in their country. Thank you to member Rene Keester-Wellman, a San Diego County IHSS employee, for providing the information to include this worthwhile cause.

Look for the Holiday Card Project table at the Holiday Party and spend some time from the food, music, and dancing to remember our military personnel and political prisoners.

*Marge Johnson
Social and Economic Justice
SEIU Local 221 Executive Board Member*

Bargaining Update

Victory in Calexico!

SEIU Local 221 members who work for the City of Calexico had been fighting to get a decent contract. Bargaining a contract in these tough economic times was extremely difficult. The City of Calexico was facing a budget deficit and threats of cuts from the state.

Although members of the bargaining team worked



*Calexico Bargaining Team
Seated- Pete Gastelum, Lorena Minor-Montes. Standing - Francisco P. Lopez, Jose Corcoles, and Luz E. Villanueva.
Not pictured: Veronica Luna-Alvarado.*

hard to get a fair deal for employees, the city wouldn't budge. Their last, best, and final offer was for employees to take 18 furlough days, pay more for healthcare, and pay more toward their pensions.

The bargaining team and membership agreed the deal the city was offering was just not good enough. For many members, the loss of pay due to the furlough days and the increased healthcare and pension costs would have had a severe financial impact on them and their families. The membership rejected the contract offer. The contract then went to impasse, with the fates of our employees to be decided by Calexico City Council.

Members spoke at the city council and expressed how

the proposed contract would affect their families, their jobs, and the services they provide. They also offered cost-saving ideas that wouldn't just balance the budget on the backs of employees. Council delayed the contract vote and urged the City Manager to meet with employees and come up with money saving ideas.

In addition to working on cost saving ideas, Local 221 members took their message to the public and put pressure on the City Council and the City Manager to make the right decision.

A budget analysis showed over \$800,000 in unnecessary spending (new furniture, phones, vehicle purchases, etc.). Members pointed out that these expenditures could wait until the city was in a better financial position.

City council members listened to the suggestions and on September 1, 2009 offered city employees a contract that eliminated the increased healthcare and pension costs and reduced the furlough days from 18 to 10.

Local 221 members were very happy with this contract offer, as it will have a much smaller impact on their jobs and pocketbooks.

Our members gained a better contract deal because they were unified and organized. Their victory is an inspiration to all union members. If we work together - we can win!



Calexico Chapter President Pete Gastelum spoke to the media about the bargaining situation before the Calexico City Council meeting.

County Medical Benefit Update

On October 19, 2009, County Human Resources, Labor Relations managers, and representatives of Mercer Consulting met with the employee representatives of all county bargaining units to introduce and discuss annual changes to employee healthcare options. SEIU Local 221 members Scott Hayward, Alison Barkley, and Rick Lovett, along with staff members Kay Ryan and Sarah Loud, represented our union.

Mercer explained that the tough economic situation is anticipated to contribute to rising healthcare costs.

Selection Committee

Prior to the meeting, the county conducted its annual "Request for Proposal" (RFP) process, which allowed a selection committee to review the costs and coverage proposals of various providers, in an effort to select the most competitive bids. SEIU Local 221 member Scott Hayward was a part of the selection committee.

New Options

The selection committee recommended the following changes, based on all bids provided for the 2010 year:

- Medical: Changing from PacifiCare to Anthem Blue Cross
- Prescription Drug: Changing from RX Solutions to CVS and keeping the current RX co-pays
- Dental: United Concordia will be the sole dental provider, offering HMO and PPO plans
- Life/Disability: No change
- EAP: No change

The county has agreed to provide all employees with a packet outlining the times and dates of vendor fairs, rates, the open enrollment process, and other information by email, mailing address, and on its website. The county said that there will not be a

disruption of service from specific doctors and dentists. Additionally, there will be no significant difference between current and future healthcare access and services.

Plan Changes

The most significant practical difference for employees will be for those who currently use PacifiCare. PacifiCare does not currently require employees to choose between an HMO and PPO. Under Anthem Blue Cross, employees will need to elect during the open enrollment process whether they want to utilize the HMO or PPO plan, and once they have chosen they cannot go back and forth during the coverage period. The total blended increase between 2009 and 2010 is 2.8% if an employee elects the HMO plan, and is 12.4% if the employee elects the PPO plan. SEIU Local 221 negotiated a 5% flex increase in 2010 when deciding which plan to use. The advantage of a PPO plan is that the employee can elect any provider, whereas an HMO plan restricts choices to those providers who are in-network. Employees may also elect to continue coverage with Kaiser, which is an alternative HMO option, although the cost of Kaiser will increase by 6.1%

Enrollment

It is the employee's responsibility to enroll during the open enrollment period. Employees will have to enroll online. If an employee fails to enroll during the applicable period or fails to waive coverage if covered by a spouse or other source, the county will select a program by default, based on which plan is the most similar plan to the employee's current plan.

Questions

For additional information, employees should look for a county email and mailing containing the full benefits package summary, as well as attend the open enrollment vendor fairs happening throughout the county. Specific questions may be addressed by the County Employee Benefits Division, at (888) 550-2203 or DHRBenefits.FGG@sdcounty.ca.gov.

HHSA Corner

By Rick Lovett, Local 221 Executive Board Chair
Health & Human Services Agency



Rick Lovett

Since my last HHSA newsletter came out, things have been abuzz around the agency. Several members have contacted me with questions about the agency and Local 221 and I thought this would be a good time to address some of the issues.

Outsourcing

As many of you have heard, the Board of Supervisors has accepted a report from Agency Director Nick Macchione recommending the outsourcing of the Welfare to Work Program and the Child Care Services, Stage 1. The loss of these services to the public and the displacement of over 100 employees is yet another example of the unconscionable and callous attitude of the Board of Supervisors. This has not gone unchallenged by your union. SEIU Local 221 President Sharon-Frances Moore addressed the Board at their October 2009 meeting and presented them our written NOTICE that our union is already gathering the facts and statistics that prove outsourcing HHSA services have proven to be a total failure here in California and around the nation. To read the letter President Moore presented to the BOS, log on to the SEIU Local 221 website at www.seiu221.org. On the home page, scroll down to HHSA Outsourcing Update. The full use of the union's resources are focused on this issue and our campaign to combat this attack on public services and our members will continue throughout the Request For Proposal process. We expect that some of those bids will come from the same companies that have failed elsewhere around the country.

Emails

Several other members have asked me, "Why do I get emails to my personal email account from people I didn't give my contact information?" Well, this can be a long or short answer. When you are at the union

office and clip boards are going around as a "Sign-In Sheet" Not all of them may be from the union. My advice is to read what you're signing. Official union sign in sheets are plainly marked and request your name, work location, phone number (work and home) and email address. The union has strict rules about member confidentiality. Stewards can get names and work locations of Stewards located in their Bargaining Unit only. At no time has the union given anyone's personal email address to an unauthorized user. If you are receiving emails you don't want, my advice is: 1. Block the sender on your email. 2. Mark the email as spam or return it to sender unread (some email programs provide this feature) or 3. Just delete it.

Class Action Lawsuit

In other HHSA news, Federal Judge Claudia Wilken issued an injunction against Governor Schwarzenegger blocking the IHHS cuts to persons with disabilities, mental health needs, the blind, low income seniors, and their families. In-Home Supportive Services (IHSS) workers, advocacy groups, SEIU 221, and other unions joined in the class action lawsuit. The Judge said the state violated federal law when issuing the order.

Sincerely,
Rick

Contact Rick Lovett @ richard.lovett@seiu221.org.

Visit Our Website



Did you know you can find Local 221 news, worksite meetings, events, political updates, and much, much more at the Local 221 website? Log on today and find out more about our union.

www.seiu221.org

Local 221 Chapter News

Fallbrook Union High School District

By Troy Lee Drake, Chapter President

As Chapter President, it is not often that you get a good news email. One of my members sent me a thank you for donating a sick day to her and expressed her heartfelt gratitude. Along with the donations of other members in our chapter, she was able to get a full paycheck until she was able to return to work.

It was then that I remembered that Rose Peralta and Maria Fernandez teamed up to make sure that this member got enough days to get that full paycheck. They went around asking other members to donate a day each.

Members like Rose and Maria are some of the reasons that I decided to throw my hat back in the ring and stand up for our members here in the Fallbrook Union High School District. They care for others and will go that extra mile to help where they can. I was Chapter President once before back in the 90's when we were going through another downturn and did my best to represent the chapter. While I bowed out and stood on the sidelines, these two kept stepping up whenever someone needed help. I was too busy with my own life to see that others needed help that I could provide.

I didn't want to take on the responsibility and turmoil again that Chapter Presidents have to go through just about every day. Then I opened my eyes and started to look around me and see the pain and frustration that was on the face of my fellow members. I just couldn't stand by and do nothing. I got involved.

While it hasn't been easy, the other officers and stewards of our chapter have really taken a stand against the injustice we have been experiencing here at FUHSD. Members like Rose and Maria encourage us to keep fighting. Whenever we feel that we are failing, we remember them and know that we can not stop. We have to keep the momentum going. Not only for ourselves, but for our members. Someone must be willing to stick their necks out. With the backing of Worksite Organizer Alexis English and our brothers and sisters of SEIU, we can stand up against anyone.

I encourage everyone to attend your chapter meetings, union meetings, and steward's trainings. We need others to be ready to replace us when we can no longer do the job needed. Be willing to stick your neck out for your fellow brothers and sister who wear the purple of SEIU.

Poway Unified School District

By Lana Peet, Chapter Secretary

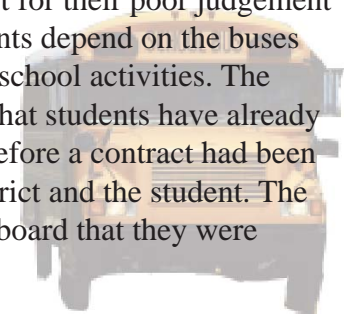
Poway Unified School District notified SEIU that the after school activity buses would be terminated, effective the winter break this December. This would affect at least 24 bus drivers, cutting their time by at least one hour, four days a week.

This information was not given to the affected schools or to the parents. One of our stewards told his students who ride his bus that the activity buses would be going away affective winter break.

At the PUSD school board meeting on October 14,

2009, a parent who heard the news was given time to speak and blasted the district for their poor judgement and noted that a lot of students depend on the buses to get home following after school activities. The parent also told the district that students have already paid for bus passes and therefore a contract had been established between the district and the student. The parent reminded the school board that they were breaking that contract.

Within 36 hours of the school board meeting, the decision had been reversed. The activity buses where back!



Local 221 Chapter News

A County Chapter Is Born

This year Local 221 ratified a new set of bylaws and elected an Executive Board. This was the final episode in the merge of Locals 535 and 2028 into the new Local 221. The merge meant that the San Diego Chapter of Local 535 would join former Local 2028 members in a larger, more powerful union, Local 221.

The Local and then San Diego Chapter President Rick Lovett had a quandary: How to build power by becoming one voice when speaking up for county members while keeping the unique culture of Local 535 alive and well?

Through that question the idea to form a County Chapter was born. A County Chapter would not only include Social Welfare Unit members, but members of all bargaining units in San Diego County.

President Moore tapped Kelly Monge, Bill James, Amy Cross and Diane Cates for the task. Kelly Monge quickly took the reins and with the help of additional members took on the daunting task of forming the County Chapter Committee.

Thanks to all who took the vision and ran with it, thus creating what were are sure will be a great vehicle for member involvement.

County Chapter Committee

By Kelly M. Monge, County Chapter Committee Chair

It has been an incredible endeavor to create bylaws to govern the new County Chapter. After Executive Board approval, leadership will be elected to help navigate the county employee membership in a new, stronger, and more effective direction.

The committee worked diligently on writing the proposed bylaws, which will be unveiled after the New Year. After the ratification of the chapter bylaws, county employees will be asked to choose officers to lead the governing body of the chapter. You may ask: Why all this fuss and focus on structure during these times of uncertainties? The

answer is simple: the foundation we build today will give direction to our chapter tomorrow. Plus it will provide additional strength for us through communication networks and activities focused on county employees. This will help us make it in this difficult time and in the future. We are riding a wave of change that is effecting our country, our state, our county, and our local. If we set our compass, it will be true. The work has begun. Our diversity is our strength, and the committee is trying to tap into the strength of the membership to help build a new chapter. We are calling out to all those county employees who have questioned what the

union is doing for them, and reminding them this is our union...so what are we going to do to help each other? We need you, like never before.



County Chapter Committee: Back row- Tracey Carter, Bill James, Robert Grant, Kelly Monge, Mary Avastu. Front row- Karen Gaddis, Sharon O'Brien, Renee Keester-Wellman. Not pictured: Laura Carter

Local 221 Chapter News

MAAC Project Chapter

By Liliana Camarena, Chapter President

Hello, we are the MAAC Project Chapter. We represent Head Start employees, DUI counselors, property management, and weatherization workers. We are dispersed throughout North and South county. We are proud to say that we have just finished ratifying our contract and believe we stood our

ground and came out with a victory. We made sure our yearly step increases are not a thing of the past and we got a cost-of-living increase. Now it is time to educate our members to make use of their contracts to advocate for themselves and other coworkers. We want to let our members know you can email us at our SEIU Local 221 email, maac@seiu221.org.

Chula Vista Chapter

By Michelle Castagnola, Chapter President

Have you ever thought “I will never get the same job advancement as a man and therefore I can not make the impact I’d like to in my job?”



*Chula Vista Chapter Officers:
Left to right: Michelle Castagnola, Melissa Trulock, Donna Davis, Nicole Hobson.*

The Chula Vista Employees Association Chapter recognizes women are powerful. The SEIU/CVEA union members voted in an all

women board. Michelle Castagnola, Melissa Trulock, Donna Davis, and Nicole Hobson make up the board with Sarah Loud as our SEIU Worksite Organizer.

These brave women stepped up to the plate in an extremely tough economic time for municipal employees and with union negotiations around the corner. These women recognize the hard work that everyone has put in before them and equally recognize that they have a lot of work ahead of them.

Although this board is all women, they know there is strength in unity and numbers. They encourage open and transparent communication and collaboration

with our employees. Knowledge is power and together we ALL make an impact in our city.

Executive Board



The SEIU Local 221 Executive Board was elected in July and sworn into office in September.

The new Executive Board consists of a variety of different seats. Board seats include several county seats, a seat for cities, nurses, Head Start, schools, courts, and a seat that works on social & economic justice issues.

If you are interested in attending a Executive Board meeting, the dates and times of the meetings are published on the Local 221 website. Log on to www.seiu221.org for more information.

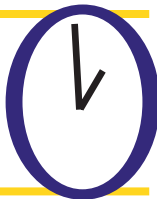


Government & Community Relations

Term Limits: We are going to the ballot!

Since July, SEIU Local 221 members have been working hard to qualify a ballot initiative that would limit the terms of the San Diego County Board of Supervisors. During this last budget cycle, the Board of Supervisors

**IT'S TIME FOR
TERM LIMITS
2010**



made drastic cuts to our jobs and services yet they have refused to cut their own perks. Management pay, Supervisor car allowances -

\$12,000 a year - have not been decreased. In addition, the Supervisors still refuse to give up their slush funds which enables each Supervisor to spend two million dollars a piece on their own pet projects and organizations.

Members of SEIU Local 221 are fed up and as a result we are taking our Term Limits Initiative to the ballot. On Friday October 30, 2009 we reached our goal of collecting 120,000 signatures guaranteeing that our Term Limits Initiative will be on the June 2010 ballot.

Local 221 members and our partners at the United Domestic Workers of America worked hard to get signatures so the initiative could qualify to be placed on the ballot. We should all be proud of our efforts as we gear up for the campaign to make sure the initiative passes with a very wide margin.

Healthcare Reform

Healthcare has been the hot political topic throughout the summer and into the fall. SEIU Local 221 members have been actively engaging fellow union members in healthcare discussions and mobilizing members to action to ensure that any healthcare reform is meaningful and

will have a positive impact on working people. With Local 221's Member Political Organizers (MPO's) and Head Start members leading the charge, we visited members of Congress, attended town hall

forums, made more than 200 phone calls, participated in hundreds of button actions, wrote letters to Congress, and penned letters to the editors of our local papers to make sure the voices of working families are heard.



MPO Chair Michael Dobbins met with U.S. Representative Susan Davis to discuss healthcare reform.

COPE Lost Timers: Making it Happen

Over a two-week period, members of SEIU Local 221 took time off from their jobs to talk one-on-one with other members about our union's political program and the need for members to give to the Committee On Political Education (COPE). Thanks to the efforts of Luz Villafana, Carmen Duron, Al Parra, Lizette Stone-Maggio, and Heather De Leon we raised over \$400 a month to fund our efforts to protect the jobs and services our members provide.

If you have questions about Government & Community Relations at SEIU Local 221, please contact Government & Community Relations Director Eric Banks-Consedine at 858-560-0151 or eric.banks-consedine@seiu221.org.

Financial Update

Financial Position

Our financial position remains stable, with sufficient cash flow to meet all expected 2009 obligations. We remain concerned about member losses due to county and city layoffs since the beginning of the year and the continuing impact of the current economic crisis. At this point in time, we are assessing our current run rates, looking for opportunities to cut expenses, fighting to keep jobs, and increase revenues as we plan for 2010.

Dues Cap

We have been able to manage a nine month delay in the implementation of the dues cap increase for members and agency fee payers approved by our members in March 2009. We will need to implement that dues cap increase in January 2010, in order to assure the cash flow needed to meet our financial obligations in 2010. Agency fee payers will be subject to the same dues cap as paid by our full members. **We are not planning on a general dues increase for members in 2010.**

Facilities and Systems Update

Major projects completed in 2009 include the replacement of the database used for member support, re-landscaping the building to meet the new water conservation requirements set by the City of San Diego, and the repair of the union office's HVAC systems. We will delay the replacement of our legacy phone system until such time as the system actually fails or until we have adequate funds for this project.

In the fourth quarter, we will complete a project to build planter boxes around the existing olive tree stumps in our parking lot. The project is an Eagle Scout Service Project sponsored by Will Ayers of Boy Scouts of America Troop 362 from La Mesa. Will is currently working on the planning stages with his Eagle Scout Counselor, and will raise all of the funds and manpower needed to complete the project. The planter boxes will actually serve as a physical barrier to keep cars from being damaged by the stumps, and the project will include the removal of exposed root systems running along the fence line.

SEIU Scholarship Program 2010 - 2011

Being a union members enables working families to fulfill their dreams in many different ways, including the pursuit of higher education. To help make those dreams become realities, SEIU offers scholarship opportunities for our members and their children.



Scholarships

SEIU Lottery Scholarships

A total of 48 lottery scholarships are awarded annually. Fifteen \$1,000 scholarships renewable for up to four years as well as 33 \$1,500 scholarships for one year of study.

SEIU Moe Foner Scholarship

One \$5,000 nonrenewable scholarship is available to a student who is pursuing a degree or training in the visual or

performing arts, who believes the arts are a vehicle to advance social change.

SEIU Jesse Jackson Scholarship

One \$5,000 scholarship renewable for up to four years is given to a student whose work and aspirations for economic and social justice reflect the values and accomplishments of the Rev. Jesse Jackson.

SEIU John Geagan Scholarship

One \$5,000 nonrenewable scholarship for SEIU members, their children and local staff who want to pursue a college degree in labor studies. The John Geagan scholarship was created primarily to serve those applicants who are not served by traditional education institutions - typically adults who have been in the workforce and have decided to go, or return to college.

SEIU Nora Piore Scholarship

This \$4,000 scholarship is renewable for up to two years and is for SEIU healthcare members and their children who wish to pursue an occupation in healthcare or healthcare policy. The scholarship is made possible by an endowment from the family of the late Nora Kahn Piore.

Scholarship applications must be post marked by **March 1, 2010**. To find out more information on how to apply, log on to www.seiu221.org or call 615-320-3149.

Veteran & ARMS Committee - Supporting Our Military

SEIU Local 221 has a committee comprised of former military personnel and their families, called the Veteran & ARMS (Active & Reservist Military Services) Committee. The committee aims to support active duty and retired military union members and their families.

The committee is lead by Alison Webb, a San Diego County Sheriff's Department employee and Michelle Gay. Alison is a retired military member and Michelle's husband is a retired military member.

Last year, the committee sent holiday cards to troops serving overseas and plans to do the same this year. The committee is also volunteering at the USO and could always use more volunteers.

"We'd like to do a who lot more, but we need people to volunteer." Webb said.

SEIU Local 221 Government & Community Relations Director Eric Banks-Consedine has been working with the committee to help the San Diego USO get resources from local elected officials.

The Veteran & Arms committee is a part of the Affinity Groups project at Local 221. The Affintiy Groups project is committed to training and encouraging members to assume new leadership roles in community organizations.

If you'd like to become involved in the Veteran & ARMS Committee or if you'd like more information, email: arms@seiu221.org

Member Resource Center



Local 221 members can contact our Member Resource Center with questions or concerns or to find out about upcoming union events. The Member Resource Center number is 1-877-SEIU221.

Contacting Local 221

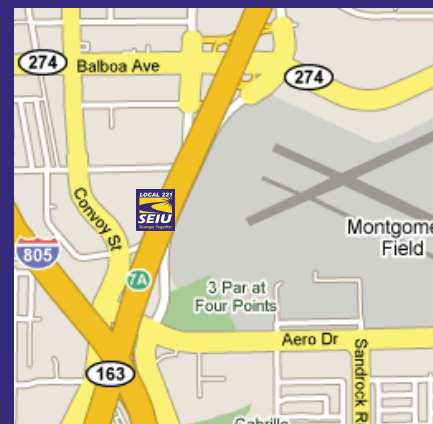
The SEIU Local 221 Union Office is located at:

4004 Kearny Mesa Road
San Diego, CA 92111

Phone: 858-560-0151

Fax: 858-560-1299

Website: www.seiu221.org



SEIU Member Benefits



Did you know?

SEIU has vision and dental insurance plans available to Local 221 members and their families.

Our dental plans start as low as \$17.03 a month for an individual plan or \$44.10 for a family plan. The dental plans offer several options perfect for working families. If you do not already have dental insurance through your employer, check out the plans offered by Local 221.

The vision plan at Local 221 starts as low as \$11.71 for an individual plan or \$19.31 for a family plan.

To enroll in either the dental or vision insurance plans, stop by Local 221 or call Norma Whitaker at 858-560-0151 for more information.

The following are for sale at SEIU Local 221 at a discounted* price. Please stop by the union office to purchase the following discounts.

AMC Movie Theatre Ticket

\$6.00 (Restricted Movies Excluded)

Regal Entertainment Movie Theatre Ticket

\$6.50 (Edwards/Regal Cinemas/United Artist)

See's Candies Gift Certificate

\$11.60 (1 Pound of Chocolate)

Sea World Ticket

\$51.00 (Adult) \$45.50 (Child = Age 3-9)

Sea World Fun Card (Annual Pass)

\$60.00 (Adult - On Sale Until May 2009)

Universal Studios Hollywood Ticket

\$54.00 (Adult & Child)

Legoland Ticket

\$44.00 (Adult & Child)

Six Flags Magic Mountain Ticket

\$25.00 (Adult) \$15.00 (Child = Under 48")

SEIU Local 221 also offers discount coupons on the following:

Medieval Times
Palm Springs Tram
Knotts Berry Farm
Hertz Rent A Car
Wild Rivers
San Diego Zoo/ Wild Animal Park
Hornblower Cruise

*Please note all prices are subject to change without notice.

Union Member Assistance Program

Union members can apply to receive assistance with their rent, mortgage, security deposit, prescription drugs, utility bills, water bills, transportation costs, and even food. The assistance program is a joint effort by the San Diego-Imperial Counties Labor Council, The United Way, and the US Department of Labor.

If you are interested in applying for assistance, please call 619-641-0074. Please note you must call in advance for an appointment.

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iTHRIVE

Dr. Joan Van Tassel

DOCTOR TALK

How to Hold Useful Conversations with Medical Professionals



Almost everybody is busy. Hardly anybody wants to take the time for medical appointments. Yet there comes a time when everybody needs to see a doctor, and there are a few simple steps you can take to make the visit more productive and helpful:

- If you're not feeling well, write down a list of your symptoms in advance so you don't forget them.

- Arrive early enough to fill out any forms and have with you your insurance information and, if needed, medical records.
- Bring a list of all the medicines you take, including the dosage. Be sure to include vitamins and other supplements.
- Bring a pen and paper in case you need to write down important information.

It's great if the doctor says, "Everything looks fine." But the situation changes when things aren't so fine. The doctor-patient conversation becomes much longer and more difficult.

Consider the frame of mind of a person who has just received a diagnosis of serious illness. For most people, it is a shocking, often life-changing moment. As one cancer patient said, "You never go to a doctor again without wondering if this is the day the other shoe will drop." That shock reaction prevents many newly-diagnosed people from remembering what is said, its meaning, and how it will affect their day-to-day life.

One reason interpreting what the medical professional says is difficult is that the framework they use to guide much of the

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The role of the caregiver is to communicate the risks, and patients are responsible for making the major decisions about which risks they are willing to take.



information they present may be unfamiliar to patients. As in many business environments, the concept of risk has emerged as a key element of the practice of medicine. Diseases have risks, as do treatments and procedures. The role of the caregiver is to communicate the risks, and patients are responsible for making major decisions about which risks they are willing to take.

Conveying information about risks is not a simple task for the medical professional. Not all risks may be known. Risks have temporal aspects - they may be temporary, such as infection after injury or permanent, such as worsened vision from laser eye surgery. They may occur at specific points in the disease or treatment. Risk also varies in the likelihood that a negative event will occur. And risks have different meanings to people. For example, for some cancer patients, chemotherapy will cause hair loss. To some people, losing their hair may be a small price to pay for the chance to recover; for others, it is a psychological and social nightmare that brings up almost unbearable feelings of shame and isolation.

There are strategies patients can use to make the conversation with their doctor or other caregivers more useful and helpful for

them as they go through the treatment process. In many cases, it is very helpful if a family member or friend can accompany the patient first, second, and even subsequent appointments. Patients may not be able to make discerning judgements and appropriate decisions about their medical options for some days, even weeks, after the diagnosis. They are unlikely to ask the right questions or be able to interpret the answers they receive. The companion can take notes, ask questions, and clarify information the patient may not understand.

People also need to understand about the biases they may bring into a conversation about risk. They may try to anchor their understanding based on information they already have, seeking solace in the familiar - but not understanding might not be appropriate. People also overestimate the risks of "popular" diseases because they've heard about them on the news. Or they may overestimate small risks and underestimate large risks.

On the other hand, medical professionals have their own biases and gaps in knowledge. Massachusetts General Hospital suggests that patients be aware they may need to educate their caregivers, giving them information they need





There are a few simple steps you can take to make the next visit to the doctor more productive and helpful.

to have about unusual or rare conditions. Primary care physicians may never have seen such illnesses, or only a few times in their entire careers.

The most important thing for newly diagnosed patients to remember is that they must advocate for their own care. They must ask questions and keep asking them until

they are given answers that they can understand. It is not rude to be insistent about getting a thorough answer. The quality of decisions a patient makes depends on understandable, actionable information.

Such talk is never cheap and the consequences for incomplete information can be costly indeed.

GETTING YOUR "D" IS GOOD.... WHEN IT'S A VITAMIN

Dr. Joan Van Tassel

A new report card indicates that taking vitamin D3 and calcium could prevent cancer.

Those are the results of recent research conducted at the Creighton University School of Medicine in Omaha, Nebraska. The four-year study of 1,179 women over 55 who had been free of cancer for 10 years or more found that taking vitamin D3 and calcium together resulted in a dramatic 60 percent reduction in cancer risk.

The participants were randomly assigned to take daily dosages of 1,400 - 1,500 mg supplemental calcium, plus 1,100 IU of vitamin D3, or placebo - the calcium/

vitamin D3 group achieved the remarkable cancer-risk reduction. Further study will be needed to find out if these findings apply to other populations.

There are two forms of vitamin D, D2 and D3. The D3 is more active and effective in humans.

A growing body of evidence indicates that a higher intake of the 'sunshine vitamin' may be helpful in the prevention and treatment of many conditions, including high blood pressure, fibromyalgia, diabetes mellitus, multiple sclerosis, rheumatoid arthritis, and osteoporosis, as well as cancer.

To gain these benefits, many people need to supplement

A growing body of evidence indicates that a higher intake of the 'sunshine vitamin' may be helpful in prevention and treatment of many conditions.

their diet with vitamin D because they may not get a sufficient amount of it from the environment. Living in a latitude north of the 37th parallel, wearing sunscreen blockers, having darker skin, and needing to reduce the risk of skin cancer may all limit the amount of vitamin D the body produces.

There is general agreement that the recommended daily allowance (RDA) of 200 IU/d, for people aged 50 or younger, 400 IU/d for those aged 50-70 and 600 IU/d, 70 years and older should be raised.

There is still some debate over just how much vitamin D3 people should take. Too much vitamin D3 can be dangerous, leading to an overabundance of calcium in the body. Earlier studies indicate that high levels of hypercalcemia do not occur until the dosage of vitamin D3 reaches 10,000 IU, so taking 1,000 IU is well within the safety limit for most people.

Check your own intake of vitamin D3 and calcium - are you getting sufficient D's on your health report card?

QUESTION:

Is there a link between weight gain and cancer?

Q & A

DID YOU KNOW?

Answer:

People tend to put on weight in different parts of their bodies. Recent research that followed 360,000 men and women found that people with more weight around the middle had a higher risk of colon cancer.

Women with a waist circumference measuring 35 inches or more had a 48 percent higher risk of colon cancer than those with a waist of less than 28 inches. Men with a waist circumference of 40 inches or more had a 39 percent higher risk of colon cancer than those with a waist of less than 34 inches.

Excessive body weight and breast cancer also have been linked. The risk of breast cancer is 50 percent higher in women who have gained at least 44 pounds after the age of 18 compared to women who gained little or no weight after that age. One study of overweight women showed that the risk of breast cancer was 57 percent lower among those who lost at least 22 pounds, compared with those women who did not lose any weight.

So if you already had a million reasons to start exercising before learning about the link between weight gain and cancer, now you have a million and one.

QUESTION:

My older brother has metabolic syndrome, and my parents both have diabetes and heart disease. If it was to choose one specific food to add to my diet that would reduce my risk for developing these conditions, what would it be?

ANSWER:

Spinach. It is a good dietary source of magnesium, and a diet rich in magnesium has recently been linked to decreased risk for metabolic syndrome. Moreover, preventing metabolic syndrome is an excellent way to prevent diabetes and heart disease.

A 15-year study of more than 4,600 people concluded that people who took in the most dietary magnesium had a 31 percent lower risk of developing metabolic syndrome compared with those who took in the lowest amount.

Metabolic syndrome is diagnosed by the presence of at least three of the following heart disease and diabetes risk factors: high blood sugar, large waist circumference, high triglycerides, low HDL cholesterol, and high blood pressure.

In addition to spinach, other food sources of magnesium include almonds, cashews, kidney beans, avocados, and bananas.



By eating these foods and setting your sights on a healthier lifestyle, you can take steps to prevent metabolic syndrome, diabetes and heart disease.

QUESTION:

What are some of the benefits of magnesium?

ANSWER:

Magnesium is an essential part of bones, organs and cells and is needed for many biochemical reactions in the body. It helps regulate blood sugar levels, maintain muscles and nerves, and promote normal blood pressure.

Adequate intake of magnesium can reduce blood pressure, lower cholesterol, and help prevent many ailments, including diabetes, strokes and heart attacks.

Some good sources of magnesium:

- Halibut
- Almonds and cashews
- Spinach
- Oatmeal
- Whole grains
- Kidney and pinto beans
- Avocados

Adding these sources of magnesium to your diet will help set you on a path to better health. Check with your doctor to see if you are getting enough magnesium in your diet.





QUESTION: I have a family history of colon cancer. Should I avoid eating meat to decrease my level of risk?

ANSWER: The American Cancer Society recommends eating less red meat. If you do eat red meat, choose lean cuts, small portions, and avoid charbroiling the meat. A study in the Journal of the American Medical Association found that people who ate the most red meat (and processed meat like sausage, bacon, and hot dogs) had a 50 percent increased risk of colon cancer.

If you have a family history of colon cancer, you should communicate your concerns to your doctor. As far as meat is concerned, you don't have to give it up entirely; just see if you can cut down on red and processed meats and replace them with more fish and chicken.

QUESTION: I want to lose weight. What should I eat for breakfast? Should I eat breakfast at all?

ANSWER: A lot of people think that skipping breakfast leads to weight loss, but that is not the case. A study of over 16,000 U.S. adults found that people who ate breakfast every morning were leaner than people who skipped it. Additionally, people who ate cereal each morning were leaner than those who ate traditional eggs breakfast.

Breakfast cereal can be a good way to start your day, as long as the cereal has the right ingredients. Read the labels of your cereal and choose the ones that have more than 6 grams of fiber per serving, no fat, and less than 10 grams of sugar per serving. Adding your favorite fruit or berry to the cereal will add to the taste and increase the fiber content at the same time. High fiber diets decrease cholesterol and reduce the risk of heart disease.



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