

LOCAL 284



The Communicator

A publication for SEIU Local 284 Education Workers Across Minnesota

STRONGER TOGETHER

FALL 2014

We provide a clean, safe, nurturing place for students to learn and grow.

We support teachers, faculty, and families.

We work hard to provide for our families and we give back to our communities.

A UNION OF MEMBERS POWERFUL ENOUGH TO MAKE IT HAPPEN!

INSIDE THIS ISSUE:

- Welcome Back!
- Summer Fun with SEIU
- Facing Real Challenges, Creating Real Solutions
- Welcome Aboard Matt LaBo
- 2014 Days of Action for Labor
- 2014 Fall Leadership Assembly and Officer Nominations
- Local 284 Meetings

Check us out on the web for more information:

* Upcoming events

* Member Stories

And Much More...

www.seiu284.org

Welcome Back!

We hope the school year has gotten off to a good start for you. A new school year brings many new faces. Please remember to welcome all new hires and ask them to join you as a union member.

You can notify your steward(s) to make contact with the new hires or you/they can get a membership authorization card from your unit steward(s) or, they can sign up for membership on-line by going to our website www.seiu284.org, click on the member tab and click on membership card. This will help greatly in keeping your bargaining unit strong!

Summer Fun with SEIU

This past summer, SEIU provided a number of great opportunities for our members to connect with fellow SEIU members and their families.

- On Wednesday, June 18 we had an SEIU day with the St Paul Saints. We tailgated with burgers and hotdogs before attending the outdoor baseball game to watch the St. Paul Saints and the Lincoln Nebraska Saltdogs.
- On Sunday, August 10 we had the SEIU Zoo Day at the Minnesota Zoo. Over 3,000 SEIU members and their families enjoyed free admission to the Minnesota Zoo in Apple Valley.
- During the months of July, August and September, SEIU held regional member picnics across the state—Buffalo, Cambridge, Crosby, Minneapolis, Rochester and Sauk Rapids. Members enjoyed burgers, hotdogs and good conversation.

I hope that you were able to attend one or more of these fun events. If you were not able to attend, our hope is that you will be able to attend one or more of these events next year. Best wishes for a successful 2014-2015 school year! —Keith Niemi, President SEIU Local 284





Facing Real Challenges, Creating Real Solutions

While most people were enjoying the summer weather this past June, the US Supreme Court made a decision to weaken the ability of Homecare Workers, Childcare Workers to improve standards for themselves and those they care for. The US Supreme Court set the stage for overturning a law that has been in place since the 1970's (Abood). The June 30th

US Supreme Court decision *Harris v Quinn* means Homecare workers and their unions will be working in a Right To Work (RTW) environment. **Make no mistake**, it means Right To Work—for less. You don't have to go far to see the truth. RTW states, overall, have lower annual pay for similar work than in pro-union states. You can look at what has happened to our neighbors to the east—Wisconsin and Michigan. Both have passed legislation to restrict collective bargaining making it almost irrelevant. Public sector union members in these states have seen significant reductions to their take home pay. There are lessons to be learned from what happened in these states. They didn't have even a year to plan or strategize with their members and allies to carry out the work that would give them the ability to stay strong in a RTW environment. As a result, workers and their families have experienced real losses impacting their local communities and the overall economy.

Homecare workers and their unions were able to face this challenge head on. They engaged and activated more members than ever before. These workers started to not only understand that *they* are the union and if they wanted to win improved standards they would have to be actively engaged to make it happen. This willingness to actively participate, roll up your sleeves, lock arms and fight for fair wages, benefits and respect on the job- is what it will take to improve living standards.

What is Abood?

Abood is a 1977 US Supreme Court decision that allows public sector unions to collect fair share fees. No one got a free ride. It is a decision that resulted in everyone paying their fair share because everyone benefited from the pay and benefits negotiated by their union. This law enabled public sector unions and their members to significantly increase their collective bargaining power resulting in significant pay and benefit gains. As public sector unions got stronger through organizing more workers into a union, conditions continued to improve for public sector workers. Especially in the 80's and 90's following the Abood decision. Unfortunately, as con-

ditions improved in the public sector, union density in the private sector started to decline significantly. The result of this loss in collective bargaining power has had a significant impact on pay and benefits in the private sector. Wages and benefits in the private sector have flat lined and when adjusted for inflation, in many cases, have gone backwards with retirement security and employer offered pensions almost a thing of the past. This has spilled over into the public sector workforce as state budgets have been squeezed due to more and more private sector jobs that do not pay a living wage but instead require the state to subsidize many employees of employers like Walmart and McDonalds to help provide basic living needs. **This is what jobs look like when union density in the private sector is just over 6%**. The overturning of Abood will mean public sector workers will be working in a Right To Work—for less environment nationally-overnight.

Now They Are Coming For You

Our public school members will be facing these same challenges if the National Right to Work Foundation has their way. The US Supreme Court has several cases already lined up that are expected to be on the docket in 2016 with 1 primary funding source, the National Right to Work Legal Defense Fund. We have an opportunity to organize internally and externally to remain a force for improvement and that will take all of you!

We Must Seize The Opportunities We Have In The Face of This Crisis:

- To strengthen our union by increasing our membership, developing more member leaders, and signing up more members to COPE.
- To expand our movement by uniting private sector workers to raise wages on a scale we haven't seen in our lifetime.
- To unite our strength with allies to show how we're all in this together to hold Wall Street accountable, invest in good schools and quality public services, and make our communities better places to live and work.

Attend our October Leadership Assembly, "Facing Real Challenges, Creating Real Solutions" and join with other members from around the state to strategize and plan our work together that ensures we together continue to push forward to win fair wages, benefits and respect on the job. —*Carol Nieters, Executive Director*

Welcome Aboard!



Welcome Aboard Matt LaBo! Matt joins our local as Field Staff Director after 15 years of union work.

Matt started his work in the labor movement with AFSCME Council 31 in Illinois. Originally from Ohio, Matt moved to Illinois to attend school and stayed there to work for AFSCME. He moved to Minnesota eight years ago with his wife, Kim, who grew up here and wanted to return home. Upon moving to Minnesota Matt worked for the Minnesota Nurses Association before accepting the position with Local 284.

2014 Election– A Defining Moment For Minnesota

Are Minnesotans going to vote to stay the course? This year, SEIU is supporting the re-election of Governor Mark Dayton, against his Republican challenger Jeff Johnson. Over the course of his time as Governor, Mark Dayton has prioritized education in a way that keeps moving Minnesota forward, by investing in all-day kindergarten and increasing funding to schools after budget cuts. Furthermore, Governor Dayton continues to support the rights of workers to organize, because he knows that good paying jobs and a strong middle class builds up our economy and keeps Minnesota moving ahead. His opponent Jeff Johnson has stated he, “Wants to go Scott Walker on Minnesota.” That is no vision for Minnesota.

SEIU has also endorsed Al Franken for US Senate, who shares values with Labor and has fought consistently for working families, by voting to end tax breaks for companies that outsource jobs, and to invest in companies that are moving jobs back to the United States. He has also been a vocal proponent of raising the federal minimum wage, so that more people can earn enough to provide for their families. Mike McFadden, Franken’s challenger, does not share the values of working families, as evidenced by him engaging in deals to lay off workers while he pocketed an \$11 million bonus through his work as an investment banker.

There are also many State House seats up for re-election this year, and many of those legislators (such as Will Morgan, Zach Dorholt, and Barb Yarusso, to name only a few) have been champions for labor and have advocated tirelessly for workers and their families at the Capitol. It is immensely important that we re-elect these legislators in order to continue moving a working family agenda through the House and Senate, and avoid the gridlock and misplaced priorities that come from a divided House and Senate. It’s the only way we can build on the good work that’s been done at the legislature in years passed, and we are counting on you to make sure they get re-elected on November 4th!

—Maren Hokanson, Political Organizing Director

October 2014 Leadership Assembly — Facing Real Challenges, Creating Real Solutions

We will be discussing the launch of our **vision/strategic priorities, new steward roles and compensation**. We will also be taking nominations at this time for the Local 284 Executive Board positions that are up for election in 2014 (below).

Carpenter’s Hall

710 Olive St., St Paul, MN

Saturday, October 11- 11am Registration, lunch served
 12pm—4pm Member meeting and Assembly
 Evening Member Gathering

Sunday, October 12 - Continental Breakfast (location and time to be announced)
 Political Training and Door Knock for our endorsed candidates and friends of education.



To sign up to attend one or both days, visit our website

at 284.seiu.org/leadership or contact your CO/IO.

* Food Service Workers will earn CEU credits (3.5 hours)
 ** Hotel Rooms can be booked for members outside the metro area.
 contact your CO/IO for hotel information)

SEIU Local 284 Officer Nominations

Article V, Section 2—Any nominee who is unopposed shall be deemed elected without the necessity for further procedures.

Article V, Section 5—No member shall be eligible for nomination or election to the office of Trustee or Member-At-Large unless the member is actively employed under a collective bargaining agreement in Local 284’s jurisdiction at the time of the election. Any member may be nominated and elected to the office of Executive Director, President, Vice President....No member shall be eligible for nomination or election as an officer in this Local Union unless he or she has been a member two (2) years immediately preceding the nomination and continuously in good standing of this Local Union and is paying at least the minimum dues required for working members.

Offices up for Election

Executive Director—3-year term
 1st Vice President—3-year term
 Trustee—3 year term
 Member-at-Large—3-year term
 Member-at-Large—3-year term



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If you have an article or suggestion for the newsletter, please contact Andy Running:
andrear@local284.com

LOCAL 284 OFFICERS

Executive Director:	Carol Nieters
President:	Keith Niemi
Vice Presidents:	Mark Hanson Sandy Ringler
Trustees:	Anna Angeles-Farris Steve Miltich Sue McNertney
Members at Large:	Bob Cook Donna Morris Mark Krey Valerie Rolstad Amanda Reineck
Sergeant at Arms:	Terri Buttleman
Senior Member:	Ginia Klamecki

The Officers of Local 284 make up the Executive Board. Executive Board meetings are open to all members in good standing. Please contact Union headquarters if you would like to attend.

Local 284 Meetings

October 9 Executive Board Mtg: 3pm (Local 284 Office)
October 11 Leadership Assembly: 11 am Registration/Lunch
Carpenter's Hall, 710 Olive St., St. Paul, MN
**Includes nomination of Officers*
October 12 Leadership Assembly/Door Knock
(location and time to be determined)
November 20 Executive Board Mtg: 3pm (Local 284 Office)
December 11 Budget, Dues & Finance Cmte Mtg: 6pm
December 18 Executive Board Mtg: 3pm (Local 284 Office)

Change of Address or Phone Number?

Please let us know by contacting our office at (651) 256-9100
Or by emailing Terri at terrib@local284.com