VICTORY IN VEGAS!

page 9
Commitment. Determination. Pride. This was the spirit of more than 4,000 delegates, alternates and guests who attended AFSCME’s 42nd International Convention this summer in Las Vegas. Charged with charting AFSCME’s future, members were eager to consider resolutions on a host of issues, participate in workshops to develop important skills, and march to Trump International Hotel in support of our sisters and brothers of the Culinary Workers Union (page 9).

Members left the Convention ready to return to their communities to apply what they learned and become involved in the November elections. Like Glenn Sago of Local 448 (Illinois Council 31), who alongside his union is fighting with anti-worker Gov. Bruce Rauner to secure a fair contract (page 13). Like Angie Hernandez of Local 2960 (Arizona), who is pumped to get out the vote for Hillary Clinton this fall. “It’s exciting to me to be a part of this election...She will do all she can for America,” said Hernandez (page 14).

CLOCKWISE: Delegates pack the 42nd International Convention; Glenn Sago (Illinois Local 448); Angie Hernandez (Arizona Local 2960).
▲ Video: Quitters Don’t

Quitters don’t move mountains or pull their weight. Quitters don’t shape minds or stay late. America isn’t powered by quitters. And neither is AFSCME. Watch this video that celebrates your commitment to your community at AFSCME.org/quitters-dont.

AFSCME’s Going to the Dogs!...and Cats and Birds! ►

We’re taking a minute to celebrate the furry, feathered and scaly friends who lift us up after a long day of improving our communities. Share your photo with us and your pet could be featured on the AFSCME website or in the next issue of WORKS Magazine. Visit arfsccemstrong.tumblr.com
Lighting Up Las Vegas

Never Quit. That’s the spirit of AFSCME members. It’s who we are — proud, resilient hard workers who get up early and stay up late to keep our communities running.

At our 42nd International Convention this summer, that Never Quit spirit was downright electric, with enough wattage to light up the entire Las Vegas Strip. Several thousand delegates and alternates convened to strengthen public services and our union, preparing to fight for a better future for all working families.

We voiced our solidarity with AFSCME members in Illinois, passing a resolution denouncing virulently anti-worker Gov. Bruce Rauner, who has made the annihilation of labor unions his number-one priority. We pledged the national union’s support in the event of a strike.

We also passed a resolution in support of our sisters and brothers in Puerto Rico and their pension and labor rights. We passed a resolution demanding a Senate vote on U.S. Supreme Court nominee Merrick Garland. And recognizing the importance of two of the nation’s most powerful union’s collaborating together more closely, delegates passed a resolution embracing greater coordination between AFSCME and SEIU on organizing, political and communications efforts.

We also announced the AFSCME Free College Benefit. AFSCME members, their families and retirees can now obtain an associate degree online — at no cost. (See page 17.)

Why We’re with Her

It’s not every day you get to be in a room with the next President of the United States and hear her share a vision of an economy that works for everyone. It was an honor to welcome Sec. Hillary Clinton to our Convention, to hear her speak with passion about her plans to stand up for working families.

“I can’t imagine how we could run our country if we didn’t have people like you,” she told us, promising. “I will be by your side in this fight every step of the way.”

AFSCME members nationwide will work their hearts out this fall, pounding the pavement to ensure she wins. No question about it: We’re with her.

We have to be. Consider the alternative. This election is a choice between an unstoppable champion and an unstable charlatan. Hillary Clinton is a champion for the middle class, for union rights and equal pay, for affordable health care and retirement security. Donald Trump is a scam artist and hatemonger, whose agenda will destabilize our economy and our country.

We didn’t leave Las Vegas without getting in Trump’s face. He refuses to negotiate a union contract with employees at the Trump International Hotel. So AFSCME went out in the blistering desert heat to rally with our sisters and brothers in Culinary Union Local 226 and Bartenders Local 165, saying loudly and clearly that you don’t make America great by busting unions and attacking working people.

Trump has since settled a dispute with two culinary workers, and the National Labor Relations Board has reaffirmed the union rights of Trump’s Las Vegas employees.

“What Happens Here…”

You know the famous Las Vegas slogan: “What happens here, stays here.” Well, not in our case. Because what happened at our Convention — a renewed commitment to our union, to never quit fighting for our rights, for public services, and for each other — doesn’t stay there. It comes home with us. We will bring it to life every day in our communities.
Your Vote: Protect Your Power

Fighting for justice and fairness is a part of AFSCME’s DNA. Throughout our history, our sisters and brothers fought for workers’ rights, women’s rights and immigrants’ rights, among others, to advance justice for working families in our union and around the country.

So it’s no surprise AFSCME supported the Voting Rights Act (VRA), signed by Pres. Lyndon B. Johnson in August of 1965, to erase barriers that prevented Americans from exercising their right to vote.

Yet 51 years after this landmark law, some politicians still seek to drag us back to the old days.

This will be the first Presidential election in 50 years without the full protections of the VRA, thanks to a Supreme Court ruling that said a provision of the VRA was no longer necessary. And a rash of voter ID laws enacted to combat so-called voter fraud quickly followed that ruling. The result could be more requirements for people to vote, fewer days of early voting, long lines at the polls on Election Day and more voters turned away.

Labor Rights and Voting Rights: the Same Fight

Voter ID laws make a mockery of our democracy. As Rev. Dr. William Barber said so powerfully during his address to AFSCME delegates at the 42nd International Convention in July, “...labor rights and the fight for voting rights are the same fights.”

At AFSCME we don’t let injustice go unaddressed.

Quentin Hutchins of Local 1644 is a school bus operator in Atlanta. But that’s not all: He also sees the effects of Georgia’s voter ID laws, one of the strictest such laws in the country, and is speaking out.

“Thousands of voters were given the wrong information about where to vote,” Hutchins told the assembled delegates at Convention, adding some who arrived at the correct voting site were not allowed to vote, even if they were in line before the polls closed.

Hutchins won’t allow attempts to silence his family, friends and neighbors.

And we shouldn’t either. We need to make our voices heard against voter ID laws. That’s why delegates at Convention passed a resolution calling for the expansion of voting rights throughout the country.

Voter Fraud Is a Myth

Let’s be clear: Voter fraud is a myth. The facts back it up: The Department of Justice found “no apparent cases of in-person voter impersonation” when it reviewed its databases and other sources. Academic studies, investigative reports by journalists and court rulings draw the same conclusions.

Appropriately, the courts have blocked some of these voting restrictions. A federal appeals court recently struck down North Carolina’s voter ID law, saying the state’s General Assembly enacted it after “unprecedented African American voter participation in a state with a troubled racial history and racially polarized voting.”

Similarly, a federal court found Texas’ voter ID law violated the VRA. North Dakota’s voter ID law was blocked by a federal judge who said it unfairly burdened Native Americans. And a Kansas judge blocked the state’s two-tier voting system, which required proof of citizenship to vote in local and state elections, but not in federal elections.

Our Democracy’s Sacred Cornerstone

The right to vote is the sacred cornerstone of our democracy. It is your voice. And your vote should be exercised unimpeded.

“We cannot sit silent while the forces against us try to chip away at the progress that was made,” Hutchins said.

He’s right. AFSCME members fight for what is right. That’s our tradition.

Laura Reyes
Secretary-Treasurer
As AFSCME members, we're committed to providing the best possible public services for our communities. That commitment is reflected in the creative ideas and innovations we bring to our jobs, making our communities even better.

Innovation sometimes means sticking your neck out to offer a new solution to a problem that nobody else has thought of, and it can be risky. But the rewards — in the pride that comes from finding ways to bring public services in-house, makes the risks worth taking. Through their innovations, AFSCME members have earned the respect of their employers and their neighbors.

Innovation not only makes our communities better, it makes our union stronger. That's why we're honoring four of our sisters and brothers with AFSCME's first-ever Never Quit Innovation Award. It honors members who have made a difference to their union, their community and even to their state — and beyond.

**Saving Lives**
As a lifeguard and surfer in Hawaii, Melvin N. Puu’s job is to save lives, and he’s saved many. Because saving lives is his calling, he helped create an innovation that will save thousands of lives worldwide.

Oahu’s North Shore has the reputation of having some of the biggest waves in the world, and the surfers who tackle them face serious injury and even death without quick rescue. Watching surfers being knocked off their boards, Puu — alongside a group of other “big wave” surfers and lifeguards — helped pioneer the development and use of personal rescue watercraft.

Their innovative and life-saving idea: attach a “boogie board” to a WaveRunner, produced by the Yamaha Motor Company. They also developed a rescue program and advocated in court for permission to use jet skis in rescues conducted by public lifeguards. They succeeded. By 1991 the city and county of Honolulu made the use of rescue craft part of its daily operations. Hawaii County Mayor Billy Kenoi also became interested in using the techniques and equipment as a public service. In 2014, the Ocean Safety Division launched the service with a $320,000 budget. Today, Puu is a water safety officer for the City and County of Honolulu’s Emergency Services Department, working in the Ocean Safety Division on Oahu.

His union, the Hawaii Government Employees Association (HGEA)/AFSCME Local 152, represents the state’s lifeguards. He is HGEA’s Unit 14 director. Puu’s dedication to water safety doesn’t end at Hawaii shores. Puu helps train lifeguards in the use of the watercraft in rescues, at home and around the world.

**Building Unity**
Who would have thought that gardening would strengthen a union? Terry Magnant did.

A certified nursing assistant (CNA) working at the Wisconsin Veterans Home at King, Magnant saw her union devastated after Gov. Scott Walker succeeded in 2011 in stripping away the rights of public service workers to come together in union to negotiate collectively.

Membership declined in the wake of Walker’s destructive Act 10. Magnant knew she needed to keep her sisters and brothers in Local 555 (Council 32) united. They joined together, and as a group they were able to beat back unilateral scheduling changes.

Magnant, who became the local’s president in 2014, then came up with her innovative idea to maintain her coworkers camaraderie: gardening.

**Melvin N. Puu**

PHOTO: MEMBER SUBMITTED

by Clyde Weiss
So last May, Local 555 members dug in — literally — to revitalize a long-neglected garden on the grounds of the Veterans home. They pitched in to buy and plant hundreds of new perennials. They created a garden that has since come into its second season.

Magnant and her fellow members of Local 555 continue to work with pride to maintain and revitalize the garden. It’s the same way they work with pride to keep their union flourishing — an innovation that has sprouted its own blossoms in a garden of public services.

**Safety First**

Necessity is often the mother of invention — and so it was for St. Louis sanitation worker Eric Wisner.

Wisner, a heavy equipment operator II in the city’s Refuse Division, sits on the city’s Accident Review Committee/Safety Steering Committee. With 17 years of experience under his belt, he is uniquely qualified to see shortcomings that could lead to injury or death on the job.

As a steward of Local 410 (Missouri Council 72), Wisner is always on the lookout for safety measures to protect his co-workers. Realizing that newly hired employees in his division lacked an adequate training program, he innovated.

In 2014, Wisner led an effort to improve the city’s training program to more safely, efficiently and effectively collect commercial and residential refuse. Today, new hires get two weeks of training on equipment they must operate, and more for more complicated operations.

This year, he also led negotiations to win a 10 percent bonus for workers in training.

Wisner and his fellow AFSCME members work relentlessly to improve safety and increase fairness within his division. That effort involved building strength on the job through organizing, then using that strength in innovative ways to improve the vital public services they provide.

**Doing It Better, Smarter**

West Chester University custodian Barbara “Bunnie” Cooper didn’t give in to outsourcing — she fought back.

Cooper knew that the employees of her eastern Pennsylvania campus could do their work better and for less money than companies hired from outside. She set about to prove it.

As president of Local 2345 (Council 88) and treasurer of Council 13, Cooper understood the threat that outsourcing (sending jobs to an outside company) posed to her co-workers and fellow AFSCME members. Many were already unhappy that the university often hired outside of the system, rather than promote from within. Now their work was on the line.

It was time to take matters into their own hands. So Cooper identified work slated to be outsourced — including carpentry, heating and air conditioning and cement repair — and had her co-workers select which projects they would like to do. Then she gathered the evidence needed to persuade the university to let her co-workers carry out the work.

The university agreed. Cooper and her co-workers saved the university considerably, even with overtime. In 2015, they saved more than $250,000 on projects that would otherwise have been outsourced.

**3 THINGS TO KNOW:**

1. AFSCME members not only do their best providing public services. We work to make public services better.
2. AFSCME members innovate to improve public services and their communities.
3. Four AFSCME members received Never Quit Innovation Awards.
“When you nourish a child, you give that child hope through a meal.”

– Atlanta school cafeteria supervisor

Rachel Cooper, winner of the AFSCME Never Quit Service Award

Just like Rachel Cooper, AFSCME members serve the public because we know our communities need us. And AFSCME is making sure our stories are heard.

Visit AFSCME.ORG/NeverQuit today to hear Rachel tell her story and to nominate someone you know for a Never Quit Service Award.
More than 4,000 delegates, alternates and guests gathered at the 42nd International Convention in July in Las Vegas, filled with a steadfast spirit to strengthen AFSCME, improve our communities through the public services we provide and elect Hillary Clinton as the next President of the United States. Delegates also attended to the business of the union, including re-electing both Pres. Lee Saunders and Sec.-Treas. Laura Reyes and electing International vice presidents.

Guiding AFSCME as a positive force in shaping our nation’s future, delegates also passed resolutions, including one affirming our commitment to fighting and winning racial and economic justice, and honoring the work of public safety officers who serve and protect the public without regard to race, color and creed. Another called for AFSCME to voluntarily partner more closely with the Service Employees International Union (SEIU). Together, we will create a formidable force of 3.6 million women and men that will build power for the middle class. This will include closer coordination of organizing, political and communications efforts.*

Delegates vowed to bring the lessons learned during the Convention back home to their local members and co-workers, to keep building a stronger, more powerful voice in the workplace and to continue help keeping their communities safe and thriving.

AFSCME Retirees: Commitment that Starts Early and Literally Never Quits
AFSCME Retirees launched the week by hosting their 36th Annual Retiree Council Meeting. President Saunders and Secretary-Treasurer Reyes spoke to more than 200 representatives and guests. The retiree leaders addressed ways to protect pensions, and expand and strengthen Social Security and Medicare, re-elected their leaders, and geared up for the election.

Emerging Stronger Through the Storm
President Saunders delivered a stirring keynote speech on the Convention’s first day, detailing the many ways AFSCME members are unyielding and more unified after four years of relentless attacks. While he warned of the challenges public service workers still face, he also celebrated the grit and drive of AFSCME members around the country.

President Saunders noted the major crisis we averted earlier this year when the U.S. Supreme Court in Friedrichs v. California Teachers Association effectively reaffirmed our right to negotiate collectively, but cautioned against complacency. “The forces behind Friedrichs aren’t going anywhere,” he said. “Their attacks are as ferocious and unrelenting as ever.”

* To read the full list of resolutions, and more about the convention visit: 2016.AFSCME.org
For AFSCME, ground zero for such attacks is Illinois, where President Saunders said Gov. Bruce Rauner “is thinking about ways to stick it to us, ways to drive a stake through the heart of Council 31 and its members.” But the sisters and brothers of Council 31 are fighting back, he said, “taking risks to defend their rights on the job. And this Convention — and all 1.6 million AFSCME members — stand with them.”

President Saunders recounted some of the many successes of the AFSCME Strong program. We trained thousands of new member activists and strengthened the bond between members and their union. That work has paid off. Since 2013, nearly 340,000 fee-payers and nonmembers have signed up with AFSCME, including nearly 63,000 new members in right-to-work states like Iowa, Florida and Texas. PEOPLE, AFSCME’s voluntary political action committee, also is breaking records, for the contributions donated and the number of members contributing.

Delegates emerged energized from the hall after the keynote. Said delegate Sherman Baisa of Hawaii Local 646 (United Public Workers): “I’d follow him to hell and back!”

Sec.-Treas. Laura Reyes inspired delegates in her keynote the following day, reminding them that they are writing the next chapter in AFSCME’s long, proud history. “We started out as an idea, a spark...that grew and spread,” she said. “And as it spread, our union grew in size and shaped the events that made us a better nation.”

Reyes said the next generation will continue that legacy. “Growing this union, winning for working people and making America happen takes a team that has each other’s backs,” Reyes said. “We are that team!”

Hillary Clinton’s Promise to AFSCME

Our nation’s future was the focus of a riveting address delivered on the Convention’s second day by Sec. Hillary Clinton, AFSCME’s endorsed candidate for President. “AFSCME, you have my back, and as President I’ll have yours,” she said. “When I’m President, working people will always have a seat at the table and a champion in the White House.”

Secretary Clinton promised to support us in our fights against anti-worker governors including Rauner in Illinois and Wisconsin’s Scott Walker, and she pledged to end private prisons that profit off our criminal justice system. “I’m proud to be in the trenches fighting alongside you to raise wages and keep the ‘public’ in ‘public service,’” Clinton said. She also urged delegates to support her by talking to our friends and neighbors, knocking on doors and registering people to vote.

AFSCME: Learns, Connects and Honors

Delegates did far more than listen to speeches. They also learned hands-on ways to build solidarity with fellow members and create a stronger union, including the popular AFSCME in Action breakouts. Thousands of participants learned how to apply direct action organizing techniques to workplace issue campaigns. For instance, they simulated a march on the boss for workplace justice. The energy was incredible.
“The more you practice something like this, you become more familiar with it, said Carissa Stearns, Local 469 president (Pennsylvania Council 13). “That way you can implement it effectively for positive change.”

Delegates also celebrated each other’s achievements. The new AFSCME Never Quit Service Award honored members making their communities better through the work they perform both on the job and in their union. Among the honorees was Rachel Cooper, a school cafeteria manager in Atlanta and Local 1644 member who teaches children about nutrition.

Cooper received a standing ovation as she was presented with her Never Quit Service award. “My job is to make sure that every child that enters that building has a hot meal, even if they don’t want anything but a hug,” she said. “I know I have to be there... and that’s why I never quit!”

Delegates didn’t have to search far to share their personal stories of community pride and commitment during the week. They only needed to step into the “Share Your Story” video booth.

Better Education to Better Serve Our Communities

President Saunders also announced an exclusive new education benefit, AFSCME Free College, to help members and their families earn an associate degree online from Eastern Gateway Community College. Members lined up at the AFSCME Advantage booth to learn more about the program.

“What it really means to us as members is we can get more education and better serve our communities,” said Cynthia Stenson of Local 768 (New York DC 37). Visit freecollege.AFSCME.org and follow the prompts at the top of the page.

“AFSCME, you have my back, and as President I’ll have yours.” When I’m President, working people will always have a seat at the table and a champion in the White House.”

– Sec. Hillary Rodham Clinton
Rallying for a Fair Contract
Building AFSCME’s power also means solidarity with fellow union members. More than 2,000 AFSCME delegates marched and rallied under a blistering desert sun with Culinary Workers Local 226 and Bartenders Local 165 to demand a fair contract for workers at the Trump International Hotel in Las Vegas.

Workers at the hotel won their union elections last December, and the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) certified their victory this past spring. But Trump refuses to begin contract negotiations — opting to conduct an aggressive anti-union campaign instead.

“I’m so happy to see you guys,” said Geoconda Arguello Kline, secretary-treasurer of Local 226. Trump, she said, “doesn’t respect working people...who make him money every single day. These workers here, they had an election. They won. We’re going to fight and we’re never going to give up,” she said.

Kathryn Lybarger, AFSCME Local 3299 president and an International vice president, also addressed the rally. “The 1.6 million members of AFSCME stand with the Culinary Union to urge Trump to treat his employees with respect and negotiate a fair contract,” she said.

The day after the march, President Saunders announced to the Convention that Trump International had taken a step closer to settling the dispute. The hotel agreed to pay two workers $11,200 in lost wages to avoid going to trial following a complaint issued by the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB). Later, the NLRB handed the Culinary workers another victory by rejecting the hotel’s challenge to the workers’ election.

Rev. Dr. William Barber II: “Calling Code” for a Moral Revolution
Connecting AFSCME’s fight for working families to the broader struggle for Civil Rights, the Rev. Dr. William Barber II delivered a passionate challenge to AFSCME members, and urged us to be part of our nation’s moral revival.

“I’m here with you today because we need a moral revolution of values to address the moral crisis at the heart of our democracy right now,” Dr. Barber said.

That crisis is nothing new and it continues today through Donald Trump’s fear mongering and efforts to suppress the vote, he added, “because they know the power of us coming together.”

If paramedics “call code” when it’s time to use a defibrillator on a person having a heart attack, he said, then we need to “call code” and revive the moral heart of our nation: “I came by AFSCME to call code! It’s time for the labor movement and the Civil Rights movement … to realize we are the moral defibrillator of our time.”

Ready for the Work Ahead
After five days of building skills, rallying, passing resolutions, electing leadership and celebrating each other’s accomplishments, AFSCME members are ready for the work ahead. We are determined more than ever to protecting our rights in the workplace and building stronger communities throughout our country.”
Standing Strong in Illinois

An anti-worker governor is trying to silence Illinois state employees, but they aren’t backing down.

By Olivia Sandbothe

Glenn Sago has been fighting for his union rights for 10 years, and he’s been through plenty. “It’s a lot of work,” he said. “It’s all worth it to know that your rights will be respected. I became a steward to stand up and make sure the contract was followed.”

But he’s never seen anything like the current situation in Illinois, where he works for the state in law enforcement support services.

Since Gov. Bruce Rauner was elected in 2014, AFSCME members there have been under fire like never before. “I’ve done negotiations with the previous governor, but this is a different battle,” says Sago, an executive board member at Local 448 (Council 31) in Rockford who also serves on the state bargaining committee.

The list of attacks is unprecedented. The governor has held the budget hostage for more than a year, blocked the state from fulfilling its promise to issue back pay to thousands of state workers, and wants to double health care costs and freeze wages for four years to implement his extreme agenda.

AFSCME Council 31’s bargaining team members have told the Rauner administration repeatedly that they want to continue bargaining, but he walked away from the table in early January, seeking instead to impose his extreme demands. It seems reasonableness, compromise and collaboration are not in the governor’s playbook. He’s a billionaire bully, blaming the state’s budget situation on working families and contending state workers make too much when, in fact, politicians in Springfield mismanaged the state’s funds.

We Won’t Back Down

In July, the state Labor Relations Board rejected Rauner’s attempt to fast-forward a hearing process that will decide whether the parties are ordered to resume bargaining. Roberta Lynch, Council 31’s executive director and an AFSCME International vice president, applauded the decision.

“We have been and remain ready to return to the bargaining table, to do the hard work of compromise,” Lynch said. “We want to reach an agreement that is fair to all. The fact that the Rauner administration pushed for this unprecedented short-circuiting of board procedures demonstrates just how fiercely determined the governor is to try to impose his own harsh terms on state employees.”

In the face of Rauner’s anti-worker agenda, Sago and his colleagues are working harder than ever to connect with their co-workers, face-to-face. These conversations are a powerful tool against Rauner’s misinformation campaign.

“Every time Rauner makes statements about us, we are out talking to members and telling them the truth,” said Sago.

National Support

AFSCME members nationwide are standing in solidarity with their sisters and brothers in Illinois. “Council 31, your fight is our fight,” Pres. Lee Saunders declared during his keynote address at AFSCME’s 42nd International Convention in July. (See Page 9). “Your struggle is our struggle.”

Thousands of Convention delegates agreed. They voted to “stand in solidarity with AFSCME Council 31 members in state government who are directly confronting one of the most fiercely anti-union governors in the country today.”

Members of Council 31 are ready to meet whatever challenges come next. “We’ve stayed the course this long,” said Sago. “We’ve fought over a year and a half at the bargaining table and in the Legislature. It may get to the point that we have no choice but to go on strike, but the members have to vote and make that choice.”
Why I Support Hillary

AFSCME members explain why they are with her this November.

By Clyde Weiss

3 THINGS TO KNOW:

1. AFSCME members will get out the vote for Hillary Clinton because she supports strong public services and respects the people who provide them.
2. Trump’s anti-worker record includes support for right-to-work laws that drive down wages and benefits, outsourcing jobs and opposition to raising the minimum wage.
3. The next President could appoint as many as three Supreme Court justices, making this election even more critical.

Angie Hernandez
Never in recent American history has the choice for President been so stark — Hillary Clinton or Donald Trump. We are about to make one of the most important political decisions of our lives. It’s a decision that will set the course for our nation in the decades to come, with the direction of the U.S. Supreme Court in the balance, and it will define what it means to be an American.

That’s why AFSCME members across the country are standing up for Secretary Clinton, who has vowed to:

**Defend workers’ rights** to negotiate collectively to improve their jobs and their communities.

**Fight to ensure working people and our families** have the secure retirement we’ve earned after a lifetime of hard work.

**Support paid family leave, earned sick days, fair schedules, equal pay for women, quality affordable child care, and affordable college** for every family.

**Invest in public services and infrastructure.** to make sure we have the resources we need to serve our communities.

**Press for changes in the law to make big corporations and the wealthiest Americans pay their fair share** to help build an economy that works for everyone, not just a few.

“\textbf{I believe we should strengthen unions, which have formed the bedrock of a strong middle class,}” Clinton said in North Carolina this June. “\textbf{It should be easier to bargain collectively. That’s not only fair, it makes workers more productive, it strengthens our economy.}”

In their own words, four members — one from each region of our vast country — talk about why they believe Secretary Clinton should be elected our next President.

**Hillary Will Create Jobs**

Creating jobs is important to Angie Hernandez, of Local 2960. As a code enforcer and inspector in Phoenix, Arizona, her job is to ensure that properties are kept up, that yards are mowed and that her community is healthy. When jobs disappear, people fall into poverty and neighborhoods fall into ruin.

She works hard to make her community a better place and believes the country deserves a President like Clinton, who has also devoted herself to public service and helping others. She knows that Clinton will restore America’s economic vitality by making job-creation a priority — and not by building walls to keep others out.

“It’s exciting to me to be a part of this election,” she added.

Her enthusiasm comes across when she talks to others. Hernandez said people are persuaded when “they can actually see me, when I’m talking,” because they see her emotions when she speaks about Hillary Clinton.

Hernandez says Trump is divisive when it comes to immigrants. “For him to say they’re not welcome and he wants to deport them. That’s very wrong of him. There has to be a way” for immigrants to become legal citizens, she said.

On the other hand, when Clinton “speaks about the opportunities that women have, it doesn’t matter where you come from — your vision or your dream can come through, and that means a lot.”

Clinton makes her believe that anyone can become President, “as long as we put our hearts to it,” she said. “I believe she really has a very loving heart. She will do all she can for America.”

**Hillary’s Fighting for Us**

Dave Jacobson’s enthusiasm for electing Hillary Clinton the next President is obvious to anyone who has had an opportunity to discuss her candidacy with the Northwest Florida AFSCME Retiree Subchapter of Chapter 79 member.

Clinton’s support for protecting and expanding Social Security and Medicare benefits is important to Jacobson. So are workers’ rights.

Clinton will “appoint judges who are labor-friendly, I’m sure of that,” he said. “That will preserve collective bargaining.”

Clinton’s support for taxing Wall Street multimillionaires and billionaires “at a greater level than Trump ever would” is another reason he is supporting her candidacy. “That will help the American economy. She wants to help raise the tide for the middle class.”

As for Trump, he said, “I think the unions will be severely punished for supporting Hillary” if he wins. He’s also worried that Trump will nominate Supreme Court justices who will oppose workers’ rights.

Jacobson, who was a Clinton delegate at the Democratic National Convention in Philadelphia, said he plans to “work for her by making phone calls” to get out the vote this November, and by encouraging voters to “vote by mail to avoid the lines.”
Hillary’s Got the Most Experience
For Howard Thompson, voting for Hillary Clinton is a vote to preserve — and expand — workers’ rights. Clinton “has stood with organized labor,” said Thompson of Local 2902 (Pennsylvania District Council 85) who also sits on Council 13’s executive board. “She’s in favor of allowing people to organize easier,” as opposed to those who support right-to-work laws that hurt workers by weakening workers’ rights to negotiate collectively to set standards, change the rules and create better workplaces.

Trump, on the other hand, is “100 percent on board with right-to-work,” he said. Also, he noted that Trump has said American workers’ wages “are too high” — a statement “that should alarm anybody who works for a living,” Thompson added.

Thompson operates heavy equipment for the street department of Neshannock Township (about 60 miles from Pittsburgh).

He’s active in his union’s efforts to help elect candidates who support working people. That included Hillary Clinton when she last ran for the White House. Now he’s fired up to help her again.

Clinton is “far and away the most experienced candidate we’ve ever had out there,” he said, noting that she’s been Secretary of State and a U.S. senator from New York. Clinton also “has the experience and the knowledge to vet people for the Supreme Court” to fill the seat left by the late Antonin Scalia, he added. “We’re going to have to live with those people for a long time after this election and Presidential term of office is over,” making this Presidential election even more critical for working families.

Hillary Gets Things Done
Working at the University of Toledo Medical Center, Elizabeth Lacumsky advocates for those who cannot do it for themselves in the unfamiliar surroundings of a hospital. “I try to make sure their health care needs are met,” she explains.

But as a citizen of her community, Lacumsky also believes in speaking up for working people like herself in this year’s election. That’s why she’s planning to get out the vote for Hillary Clinton to become President.

“I’m speaking for Hillary in my home area, in my own personal way,” said Lacumsky, a member of Local 2415 (Ohio Council 8). She knows that the future of the country hangs in the balance of this election, and Clinton is the candidate who has her back.

“Hillary Clinton is far and away the most experienced candidate we’ve ever had out there.”

– Howard Thompson, Local 2902

That’s why he believes Clinton “has the wherewithal and the understanding to actually get in there and get some things accomplished.”

Thompson said voters need to focus on Clinton’s commitment to an economy that works for everyone, not just the rich. That message “resonates with working people, women and minorities,” he said. “Her message is dynamic and people will pick up on that.”

“I’m speaking for Hillary in my home area, in my own personal way.”

– Elizabeth Lacumsky, Local 2415

Clinton, she said, “is trying to get things done in a better way,” especially on health care reform — an issue she knows about first-hand. “I would like to be able to help her, so she can try to fix the problems.”

Clinton “would be an advocate for additional federal funds to create more physicians,” she said. She’s also confident that Clinton will get things done because of her extensive experience as a U.S. senator and secretary of state.

“She knows what’s going on in Congress and knows how to get things done,” she said.

That’s why she will be “working with my union, going door-to-door,” to elect Clinton, she said. “I’ve never done that before — not even phone calls. But there’s always a first time.”

PHOTOS: MEMBER SUBMITTED
Working families are getting squeezed in all kinds of ways these days, but few expenses are more frightening than higher education. Whether you’ve got kids graduating high school or you’re looking to move forward in your own career, you’ve probably wondered how you’ll manage to keep up with skyrocketing tuition costs.

There’s less to worry about thanks to a new benefit for AFSCME members and families. Starting this summer, every member or retiree member, as well as spouses, children, grandchildren and dependents of AFSCME members, can earn a two-year degree online for free. That’s right — free college just for being a member in good standing.

Flexible Options for Working Families
AFSCME is partnering with Eastern Gateway Community College to provide all members and families access to their classes online. Eastern Gateway is an accredited, non-profit public institution with campuses serving eastern Ohio, but AFSCME members can enroll in the distance learning program from anywhere in the country. Right now you can earn an associate degree in Business Management or Criminal Justice, or you can complete an Associate of Arts program that can be transferred to a four-year college.

The enrollment process is simple. Just visit freecollege.AFSCME.org and verify your AFSCME membership. From there, you can fill out a simple Eastern Gateway application form and an online financial aid form. You will be contacted by an enrollment advisor to help you with any questions you may have about enrollment. You may also contact your local or council. AFSCME members around the country are being trained to help one another through the process.

This program has been running in Ohio for a year now, and hundreds of AFSCME members and their families are already taking advantage of it.

Beverly Payne, a member of Local 416, OAPSE/AFSCME, has been working full time as the secretary and transportation coordinator for a preschool for 30 years. She spends her days helping children get a start on learning. But her own educational goals were on the back burner until now.

“I had wanted to go to college a long time ago, but with four children I never had time,” she says. “When I heard about this program I decided to finally get my degree at 71 years old.”

Learning Without the Price Tag
Payne wasn’t sure how she’d adjust to student life after 50 years in the workforce. But the program allows her to take one class at a time, and her professors have been very supportive. The online, self-paced classes offered in the program are broken into two eight-week sessions each semester. She’s acing her classes so far — and her positive experience has encouraged her family members to enroll, too.

“My daughter is enrolled right now, and another daughter is looking into it, as is my granddaughter,” she says. A third daughter has her bachelor’s degree.
but is thinking of taking additional courses to further her career.

The Department of Education estimates that the average associate’s program costs $3,440 per semester. It would ordinarily cost tens of thousands of dollars to put six family members through school — but thanks to AFSCME, Beverly Payne can do it simply by keeping up-to-date with her union dues.

“Public service workers are passionate about their jobs. They strive to do better for their families and their communities, and they want their union’s help to grow personally and advance professionally,” said AFSCME Pres. Lee Saunders. “We know the important role education plays in the lives of so many working-class families — helping them learn new skills and climb the ladder of opportunity. This partnership will help public service workers and their families prosper, and live their best lives.”

3 THINGS TO KNOW:

1. AFSCME members, retiree members and their families are eligible to earn a free two-year degree.
2. Eastern Gateway Community College offers an accredited online program with credits that are transferable to many other colleges and universities.
3. To enroll, just visit freecollege.AFSCME.org.

5 Easy Steps to FREE COLLEGE

1. Go to FreeCollege.AFSCME.org, where you can fill out an application form.
2. Submit your high school transcript, GED score, or college transcript to:

   Eastern Gateway Community College Admissions
   101 Federal Plaza East; Youngstown, OH 44503
   Attn: AFSCME
   Email: online@egcc.edu or Fax: 330-480-0817

3. Notify your Eastern Gateway enrollment advisor of your AFSCME member ID number (which you can find on your membership card or on the mailing panel of this magazine).

   Remember, any federal grants will be applied to your tuition, but even if you are not eligible for financial aid, there is no charge to you.

5. Check with your employer if tuition reimbursement or assistance is available and notify your enrollment advisor. Eastern Gateway will work with you to apply these benefits.

To learn more visit freecollege.AFSCME.org, or call 1-888-305-5534.
Many workers — from highway construction crews to park rangers — spend a large chunk of their days outdoors. And while they’re used to taking precautions against the sun’s rays, they may be less aware of a serious threat in the Zika-spreading mosquitoes that are active this summer.

The Aedes species of mosquito is responsible for the spread of the Zika virus, which has reached pandemic proportions in the American continent. In the continental United States, the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) issued an unprecedented travel warning for a South Florida neighborhood where over 20 cases of locally spread Zika were reported.

The mosquito that spreads the disease is said to exist in 30 U.S. states. But even people who live in mosquito-free areas are at risk, since the virus can also be spread through sexual contact. Although it’s accompanied by mild or no symptoms, Zika can lead to Guillain-Barré syndrome, a disorder of the nervous symptom that causes temporary paralysis. In pregnant women, it can lead to severe birth defects.

Don’t Take Chances
That’s why many workers who spend time outdoors aren’t taking any chances. Kyle Darren Simmons, a New York City laborer and president of AFSCME Local 924 (DC 37), says he and his co-workers do most of their work outside — digging trenches, repairing fences, operating heavy equipment. His big concern this year is that Zika will spread in New York, one of the states where the mosquitoes live.

“I’m letting my co-workers know that they have to be very careful,” Simmons says. “They have to cover up and wear long sleeves, even if it’s hot outside, and they have to use the right kind of bug repellent.”

New York state is implementing a six-step action plan to fight the Zika virus that includes a public awareness campaign, free prevention kits for pregnant women and eliminating mosquito breeding grounds.

In Puerto Rico, it is estimated that thousands of people are contracting the virus every day. The number of pregnant women testing positive for the virus has risen sevenfold since January, which means hundreds of babies could be born next year with microcephaly, a birth defect in which the brain fails to develop normally.

Because we don’t know how far Zika will spread, everyone should play it safe. There are things you can do to prevent being bitten by a Zika-infected mosquito:

1. Wear long-sleeved shirts and long pants.
2. Use Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-registered insect repellents.
3. Treat clothing and gear with permethrin or buy permethrin-treated items.
4. Install or repair window and door screens in your home. Do not leave doors propped open.
5. Tightly cover water storage containers (such as buckets, cisterns and rain barrels or other items that hold water) so that mosquitoes can’t get inside.
6. Kill mosquitoes inside your home using an insect fogger or indoor insect spray. Always follow label instructions.

3 Things To Know:
1. The Zika virus is spread through infected Aedes mosquitoes.
2. The virus may cause birth defects in unborn children.
3. If you work outside, cover up and use mosquito repellent.
When AFSCME Members Flex Muscles, Big Things Happen

By Pablo Ros, Clyde Weiss, Kevin Hanes, Mark McCullough & Kevin Brown

Jim Ullmer of Local 3142 (Minnesota Council 5) is AFSCME Strong.

Jim Ullmer Jr., a Minnesota state patrol vehicle inspector, is one of hundreds of AFSCME members across the nation who is convinced of the importance of AFSCME Strong, our program for building a stronger union through one-on-one conversations with co-workers.

Recently, Ullmer and an AFSCME colleague, Catherine Claude, traveled more than 1,000 miles to talk with workers about issues that matter to them in their workplaces. It’s hard on them and their families to be on the road so often, he said. But they do it because they care about the members of their union, Department of Public Safety Local 3142 (Council 5).

On these visits they talk to members about workplace issues, they also personally deliver a copy of the union’s approved contract to each member, discuss any grievances and talk about the importance of standing strong if already a member. They’ve also helped other workers who wanted to sign up.

“We’ve done that [trip] every year for probably the last 10 to 15 years,” he said. “We don’t have all the answers but we sure try. We’ll never quit, we’ll never surrender.”

But now — after taking the AFSCME Strong training program — Ullmer says he’s able to have more focused, effective conversations with his union sisters and brothers.

Started the Ball Rolling

“Almost everyone knew about the union but didn’t know how it could help where they worked, or they were nervous to join because of misinformation and misunderstandings that have built up over time,” said Tad Lewek, a plan examiner for the Building Inspection Division of Jacksonville, Florida, who serves as a steward (and sits on the executive board) of Local 1279.

But now — after taking the AFSCME Strong training — Lewek says he’s able to have more focused, effective conversations with his union sisters and brothers.

Making It Personal in Kentucky

Union activism runs in Sandy Mayes’ family. Her father was a machine adjustor for an aluminum company and president of his local.

Mayes is president of AFSCME Local 4011, the Jefferson County (Kentucky) Association of Educational Support Personnel. The strand of union activism in her family is so strong that one of her daughters is a secretary for AFSCME and her son is a union member in the private sector.

The local’s rallies have been growing in size ever since Mayes and her co-workers began applying the AFSCME Strong principles. Through one-on-one conversations, many of their colleagues have become motivated to stand in union together.

In nearby Louisville, AFSCME Strong is just as personal to Stephanie Davis, but in a different way.

Davis, a library clerk and member of AFSCME Local 3425 (Indiana-Kentucky 962), never thought she had the right personality for one-on-one conversations with strangers.
But the AFSCME Strong training changed that. It gave Davis the support and courage she needed to have effective one-on-one conversations with her co-workers. And it built up her confidence in her ability to talk about her union to fellow members, with whom it turned out she shared many of the same life and work concerns.

“I’m good at doing things if I know what the guidelines are,” she says.

Conversations have become easier for Davis as she continues to reach out to her co-workers.

Growing the Union While Fighting Privatization

For Antonio Ruiz, a parking attendant at the University of California-Berkeley, becoming a UC employee in April instead of a contract worker means he no longer needs to work two jobs and miss time with his family.

“I’m not asking for special treatment — just for the dignity and respect that my 20-plus years of service to the University of California demands,” Ruiz said.

The AFSCME Strong campaign helped achieve this victory for nearly 100 subcontracted custodians and parking attendants. Now they are directly employed by the university, the result of a year of sustained effort by members of Local 3299 that included thousands of one-on-one conversations with fellow members and other workers. They are now covered by the union contract and enjoy top-notch health benefits, a pension and better pay.

Student groups and community organizations also played a key role, not to mention a nearly two-month speakers’ boycott supported by students, workers, community leaders and elected officials. ■

AFSCME’s Got Skills

AFSCME’s Got Skills (AGS) FREE webinars are designed with your needs in mind. Each live webinar is recorded and made available on AFSCME VIDEO for viewing by AFSCME leaders, activists and staff. For more information, go to AFSCME.org/learn.

NEW Topics

- Building Power: Organizing Workplace Issues
- Navigating the Five Steps of Grievance Handling
- Power of POP: Planning Purposeful Meetings
- You’ve Just Been Elected President: Now What?

... plus many more.
Federal
The Department of Labor issued a new rule requiring retirement investment advisors to act in the best interests of the people they advise. The rule may sound like common sense, but up until now it’s been legal for financial advisors to recommend investments that provide the highest fees and rewards for the advisor instead of recommending investments that will best prepare the saver for retirement. Some Wall Street cronies in the House and Senate tried to strike down the final rule, but failed. In the end, common sense won.

Trustees for Social Security and Medicare issued their yearly report on the fiscal health of these two critical programs. The 2016 report shows that Social Security is currently running at a surplus and Medicare’s financial situation has improved thanks to the Affordable Care Act. With fewer and fewer people covered by pensions, it is time for Congress to increase Social Security benefits to ensure that all Americans can have a secure retirement.

Congress approved and the President signed a controversial bill partially addressing Puerto Rico’s economic crisis. The law allows for an orderly restructuring of Puerto Rico’s $72 billion debt, but fails to provide much-needed fiscal stimulus for the Commonwealth’s struggling economy, and creates an oversight board that undermines Puerto Rico’s democracy.

Congress departed Washington without approving legislation to address the lead crisis in Flint, emergency funding to prevent the spread of the Zika virus, nor spending bills needed to keep the government operating after Sept. 30. Conservative leaders in the Senate continued to refuse to hold a hearing or vote on Judge Merrick Garland, President Obama’s nominee to the U.S. Supreme Court.

California
A bill moving in the state Assembly would allow the state’s home care workers to participate in a retirement plan. Right now, the workers who care for seniors and people with disabilities under California’s In-Home Supportive Services Program can’t contribute to Social Security or Medicare and don’t receive any other retirement benefits through the state. Senate Bill 1234 would create a retirement system that all Californians can pay into with a simple payroll deduction.

“When I found out that I was no longer able to pay into Social Security and Medicare, I became really stressed. I hope I worked enough years in other jobs to qualify for some Social Security, but I’m not sure,” says Reyna Tellez, a UDW member and full-time caregiver for her disabled husband. “I can’t and shouldn’t have to leave my current job as my husband’s home care provider just to become eligible for programs other workers qualify for automatically.”

Missouri
Workers with AFSCME Council 72 turned out to the Capitol in May to help defeat yet another anti-worker bill in Jefferson City. The measure, nicknamed “pay-check deception,” is designed to make it inconvenient for workers to pay union dues.

Hundreds of union members took the time to contact their legislators and meet with them face-to-face. As a result, the bill narrowly failed to become law. Marcus Jones, a bus driver with North Kansas City Schools, and member of Local 3820 (Council 72) said, “I know my co-workers and I are also looking forward to working with legislators from both parties in the future on finding solutions to the real problems facing public employees across Missouri, like low pay and the increasing turnover rate in public jobs.”

Louisiana
Pensions were on the chopping block this session, but state workers survived unscathed after an attempt to switch new employees into a defined-contribution system was defeated in committee. Retirees got a boost too, as Gov. John Edwards signed a bill to provide pensioners with their first cost-of-living adjustment in two years.
Rev. Samuel ‘Billy’ Kyles passed away April 26 at age 81. He was a civil rights leader, friend of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., and founding pastor of Monumental Baptist Church in Memphis, Tennessee, where he served as pastor for 55 years.

It was Reverend Kyles and another local minister who beckoned Dr. King to travel to Memphis in the spring of 1968 in support of a strike by 1,300 African-American city sanitation workers. The workers wanted higher pay, safer working conditions and certification of their union, AFSCME Local 1733.

Dr. King agreed to join the workers in Memphis because he saw their strike as part of a broader movement for economic equality and social justice. It was at a rally in support of the striking sanitation workers that he delivered his famous “I’ve Been to the Mountaintop” speech.

Reverend Kyles was with Dr. King when he was assassinated on April 4. On that day he’d invited Dr. King to his home for a soul food dinner and made arrangements to meet him at the Lorraine Motel. Instead of leaving right away, they sat in Dr. King’s room for about an hour, listening to “preacher talk,” in Reverend Kyles’ words, and it was when they left the room that Dr. King was gunned down.

Born in Shelby, Mississippi, Reverend Kyles began preaching at age 17, following in his father’s footsteps. He became active in the Civil Rights movement and engaged in civil disobedience, including his arrest for refusing to sit in the back of a segregated city bus.

He became a central figure in Memphis’s struggle for civil rights and played an important role in the city’s integration of restaurants and other public places. He formed a chapter of the civil rights organization Operation PUSH (People United to Save Humanity) and was a board member of the National Civil Rights Museum, which was established on the site of Dr. King’s assassination.

In Memoriam:
Samuel ‘Billy’ Kyles Brought Dr. King to Memphis

Rev. Billy Kyles

Rev. Samuel ‘Billy’ Kyles
AFSCME Sanitation Worker Goes Viral

By Anders Lindall, Illinois Council 31

Bloomington, Illinois — When the special friendship between a 3-year-old girl and an AFSCME Local 699 sanitation worker in Bloomington, Illinois, went viral, the world got a lesson in kindness — and the humanity of the working women and men we rely on to provide public services every day.

Every Thursday morning for a year, Delvar Dopson would drive his garbage truck down little Brooklyn Andracke’s street. Dopson would honk his horn and flash his headlights, and the toddler would smile and wave.

“It was really cute,” Dopson says. “I would tell my wife about it every week.”

One day in April after Brooklyn’s birthday, Dopson arrived to find Brooklyn and her mom waiting on the curb. Turns out the little girl wanted to share one of her birthday cupcakes with her friend.

“I pulled over and got out of my vehicle,” Dopson says. “She was looking at me like I was Superman. Her mom said, ‘I just want to thank you for what you do every Thursday. You make my daughter’s day.’ I told her the feeling is mutual. I don’t have children of my own, so it means a lot to me to put a smile on her face.”

The resulting photo became an internet sensation. Dopson was interviewed by reporters as far away as Japan, and got notes and tweets from celebrities, athletes and politicians. Everyone wanted to share the heartwarming connection between the little girl and the garbage man.

“It’s cool because it’s not about me, it’s about being kind and generous and humble,” Dopson says. “We get so busy in this world that I just hope people are inspired to take your time, slow down and recognize others for who they are. If stories like this can be shared, these interactions between people will happen more often.”

Unfortunately, public service workers are frequently overlooked and their service is taken for granted. “Sanitation is one of those things people don’t think about,” Dopson says. “To them it’s like magic, you just take it out to the curb and when they get home, they expect it to be dumped. It’s not a respected job, but I believe that America was really built on folks like us who work with our hands and do the jobs that people don’t think about. I think my story shows that even the garbage man is valuable as a person.”

Dopson hopes his connection with little Brooklyn offers a lesson in how we all can better get along.

PHOTO: TRACI ANDRACKE

Three-year-old Brooklyn Andracke shares a birthday cupcake with sanitation worker Delvar Dopson.
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