

MassDefenders hang tough

Vow to keep fighting for rights as legislation dies

The MassDefenders aren't going to take "no" for an answer.

At a statewide organizing committee meeting in Worcester, leaders of the bid to win collective bargaining for employees of the Committee for Public Counsel Services vowed to press forward.



WORKING FOR JUSTICE: Rebecca Amdemariam, left, spoke at a State House rally of workers in the public defenders' office and their supporters.

Local 888 Secretary-Treasurer **Tom McKeever** called on the MassDefenders to step up their efforts. "Local 888 has been with you on this journey for rights and respect for six years. We aren't going to give up now."

The roughly 750 lawyers, investigators and social

service advocates and administrative staff in the state agency are caught in a bureaucratic mess. They want to form a union, but a loophole in the law denies them their basic human right. The MassDefenders have called on the state
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MEMBERS PROTEST: From left, **Theresa Vogel** CNA, **Yelitza Hernandez** CNA, **Colleen Bartlett** LPN, **Carmen Rivera** CNA, **Marilyn Cruz** facilities, **Vanessa Rosado** CNA, **Karen Finnerty** LPN, **Becky Zavala** CNA.

Holyoke workers show unity

Local 888 members at the Holyoke Soldiers Home staged a successful day of action to protest understaffing. The protest was led by CNA/LPN members concerned about chronic understaffing at the Holyoke Home.

A strong majority of the certified nursing assistants and licensed practical nurses took part in the day of action by wearing SEIU buttons.

Many of Local 888's other members in housekeeping along with NAGE members also took part by wearing the pins. The action coincided with a labor management meeting the same day. The Holyoke Soldiers Home offers a residential facility and hospice, dental and health services.

Former public defender in race for D.A.

Former public defender **Shannon McAuliffe** is Local 888's hometown fave in the race for Suffolk County district attorney.

"Shannon has done the work of improving the lives of the unfortunate — and she has a plan to move the justice system forward," said Local 888 Secretary-Treasurer **Tom McKeever**. "She is the right person for the job. And what makes this special is seeing a woman who isn't afraid to seek justice in a male-dominated profession."

McAuliffe served for years as a Massachusetts public defender. In 2015, McAuliffe went to work at Roca, a Chelsea-based nonprofit that works with gang- and court-involved high-risk young men. The goal is get them on a path that allows them to stay employed and keep out of jail.



McAULIFFE

McAuliffe (See: <https://www.mcauliffeforda.com/>)

said that nearly 80 percent of the long-term participants had no new arrests while she directed the program.

Besides Local 888, the ex-public defender has been endorsed by Chelsea City Councilor **Enio Lopez**, a Local 888 Executive Board member. McAuliffe has also been endorsed by a number of other unions, including UNITE HERE Local 26 and NAGE/SEIU Local 5000.

Suffolk County Sheriff Steve Tompkins, who has endorsed McAuliffe, said she would see the office of District Attorney "not just as a vehicle for punishment, but one for creating second chances as well."

McAuliffe said her track record shows she is "the progressive change candidate" in the race. She said, "Our justice system is broken. It unfairly targets the poor and people of color. It promotes winning over justice. And it wastes money on ineffective incarcerations."



GOING ALL OUT: Local 888 Secretary-Treasurer **Tom McKeever** heartily endorsed **Shannon McAuliffe** at a big campaign rally at Faneuil Hall.

McAuliffe is running as a Democrat in a field of five candidates, a number that rose after incumbent Suffolk D.A. Daniel Conley announced he wasn't running for re-election.

Local 888 backs candidates

Local 888's Committee on Political Action and union leaders have been hard at work this summer holding candidates nights and taking stock of State House races.

Local 888 has endorsed for state Senate: **John Drinkwater** (See:

<https://www.drinkwaterfor-senate.com/>) for the open state Senate seat being vacated by Eileen Donoghue, who left to become Lowell's city manager. Drinkwater, legislative director for the state AFL-CIO, said he was motivated to run for Senate after years of advocating for labor unions and as a parent with children about to enter



DRINKWATER

Lowell Public Schools.

See page 3 for more on Candidates

Emerson staff celebrate contract victory

Emerson College staff members toasted their hard-fought contract victory and their subsequent election of officers with a party at Democracy Brewing in downtown Boston.

"It feels great to celebrate," said Emerson research librarian **Cate Schneiderman**, who served on the negotiation committee. "It was stressful and it took a lot of work to come to terms with the college."



LEVINE

The Emerson chapter's first collective bargaining agreement with the college guarantees across-the-board raises of 14.5 percent over the four-year contract, strong "just cause" job protections and a broad parental leave policy.

A key turning point in the chapter's mobilization campaign was a May Day rally at the Emerson administration building. During the demonstration, the college president agreed to join other Emerson representatives at the

bargaining table. Emerson then dropped its insistence on merit pay.

Newly elected Chapter Chair **Dennis Levine** said the contract success was due to members "sticking to their guns — and sticking with the union." Levine added, "We need to keep everybody in the administration honest. But we can't do that without you. Please everybody, stay involved — so we can all make Emerson a better place to work."

On behalf of the new Emerson union members, chapter Treasurer **Elbert Lee** told Local 888 field rep Ronald Patenaude: "Thanks for all you have done."

For his part, Patenaude talked up the importance of stewardship training, "If you don't know what your rights are, you won't know how to enforce them."

The other new chapter officers are: **Shaylin Hogan**, vice chair; **Robin Chace**, recording secretary; and **Korina Figueroa**, chief steward.

Primary contests heat up

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Drinkwater, who has also been endorsed by the state AFL-CIO, faces a primary fight in the First Middlesex District.

Diana DiZoglio, a Methuen state representative who is running for the First Essex Senate District. DiZoglio, also endorsed by Local 888, (See: <http://votedizoglio.com/>) is known for speaking up forcefully on the issue of addressing the problem of sexual harassment in the state Legislature.



DIZOGLIO

For state representative, Local 888 also

endorses the following candidates:

Darrin Howell (See: <http://darrinhowell.com/>) in his bid for state representative in the Fifth Suffolk district, which covers parts of Dorchester and Roxbury. Howell previously worked for SEIU Local 1199 as a political organizer.

And **Pam Gemme** (See: <https://electpamgemme.org/>), a social worker for the Massachusetts Department of Children and Families and an SEIU Local 509 member, is running for the open 17th Worcester District.

In addition, **Peter Capano**, who is running for the 11th Essex District. Capano, now a Lynn city councilor, has also served as a vice president of the state AFL-CIO.

For a complete list of candidates endorsed by Local 888, see <http://www.seiu888.org/>

MassDefenders on offense

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Legislature to amend the law. Despite garnering 90 percent support from legislators, the bill never made it out of the House Ways and Means Committee.

State Rep. Jeffrey Sanchez, the committee chair, did not return calls for comment placed by The Boston Globe nor did House Speaker Robert DeLeo explain why the bill failed to advance.

Ben Evans, a Fall River public defender, told the Globe: "DeLeo wants to keep us powerless and begging for money every year." The Legislature has failed to approve the bill despite a six-year campaign.



SPEAKING UP:
Ben Evans seen at
the State House.

"There is a great need for indigent people to have adequate representation in the justice system," said **Jennifer Coliflores**, a public defender in Worcester. "We spend our days defending them and

fighting for their rights. It's time for all of us working for CPCS to stand up for ourselves, and our rights."

"The issues facing our clients are often linked — criminal matters, immigration issues, lots of poverty, mental health issues," said **Rebecca Amdemariam**, a lawyer with the Children and Family Law Division, which deals with parents and children facing possible state intervention. "If state representatives continue to deny us our rights to unionize, it says that they don't care about the communities that most need our help," she said.

MEET CANDIDATES FOR GOVERNOR

Sat, Sept. 15, 10:00 a.m. – 12:30 p.m., at District 1199's state headquarters, 108 Myrtle St., Quincy. Sponsored by SEIU State Council, SEIU Locals 509, 32BJ, 1199 UHE, 888 and 3FO and SEIU Community Action.

'Member Portal' raffle winner

When Local 888 President **Brenda Rodrigues** pulled a TV raffle winner out of a box, it capped a campaign to get members to start using the new online "Member Portal." Over 1,000 members entered the raffle for the 50-inch Vizio Smart TV.

"I'm so excited that our members are able to connect with Local 888 and its leaders in so many different ways," said Rodrigues. Members log in to the portal, seen at the top right of the website, using a password.

There, said Rodrigues, "they will be able to view their own site — contract, union benefits and other information that a chapter chair may have left for them." Rodrigues announced the winner live on Facebook: Congrats to Kimberly Kaufman of the Belmont Administration and Clerical Union.

<https://www.facebook.com/SEIULocal888/>

To sign in for the first time, go to the Local 888 website (<http://www.seiu888.org/>), click on "Member Portal," click on "Request Access," and then fill out the "Member Portal Web Form." Local 888 staff will send a password to members.

Coming Attractions

Labor Guild classes begin Sept. 10

Local 888 will pay for up to eight members to attend. Monday classes at 6:30 p.m. include Internal Organizing, Health and Safety in the Workplace, The Steward's Job, Why Unions Matter. Classes at 7:50 p.m. include Crucial Legal Issues

For Unions Today, Persuasive Public Speaking and Political Engagement: What's in it for Unions. From 6:30 p.m. to 9:00 p.m. on Mondays: Negotiating in the Era of Janus. Classes held at the Labor Guild of Boston, 66 Brooks Drive, Braintree. For more info

<http://laborguild.com/school-of-labor-management-relations/courses/>

