



# The Spark

December 2017



## Officer & Exec. Board Elections set for Feb. 2018



The date for the Local 888 election of Officers, Executive Board and Trustees has been set! Ballots will be mailed no later than Feb. 2 to all members in good standing. The election will conclude on March 3, 2018 with the vote count at 10:00.

The election is for positions of President, Secretary-Treasurer, Recording Secretary, eighteen Executive Board members and three Trustees. The Local has retained MK Election Services to print, assemble and mail ballots to all members in good standing.

The election will be overseen by a three-person Election Committee: **Gordon Luciano**, Chair (Lottery), **Meta Jones** (Boston), **Lenny DiBartolomeao** (Chelsea). **Kathleen Porrazzo**, (Quincy Housing Authority) Alternate.

Questions, concerns, or protests should be sent to: **SEIU Local 888 Election Committee**, 25 Braintree Hill Office Park Suite #306, Braintree, MA 02184 or e-mailed to [gluciano508@verizon.net](mailto:gluciano508@verizon.net).

The Election Committee will be guided by three principles: Be fair and impartial, treat all candidates equally and avoid favoritism or even the appearance of favoritism; follow the election provisions of Local 888's Constitution and Bylaws and any other election rules consistent with federal law; and protect the right of every member to nominate candidates, run for office, and vote by secret ballot for officers of the local.

More information including the official election notice, official nomination petition, and the election committee's general election policies and procedures can be found at [www.seiu888.org/888members/elections](http://www.seiu888.org/888members/elections)

**Look for your Local 888 ballot in the mail in February and vote!**

**Check out the Election Timeline on page 3**

## Raise Up Mass signature collection victory!



Raise Up Mass collected *more* than 271,000 signatures to put raising the minimum wage to \$15 per hour and paid family and medical leave on the ballot in 2018. The coalition collected 137,000 signatures for boosting the minimum wage and 133,500 for paid leave.

Local 888 members collecting 875 signatures for raising the minimum wage and 845 for paid family medical leave. Congratulations to all who helped in this monumental effort!

Did you collect signatures? Share your story about what it was like talking to your fellow members. How did other members respond? Please contact Penelope at [pjennewein@seiu888.org](mailto:pjennewein@seiu888.org) to share your experience.



Above are the boxes containing over 271,000 signatures that Raise Up activists turned in on December 4.

## Emerson staff fight back!

On Nov. 28, the *Boston Globe* ran a front-page story on Emerson College's plan for development along the Boston Common. Emerson is planning to make a big push to grow their reputation and increase their presence in Boston.

The article did not mention that while Emerson administration is seeking to increase its influence, it is also in contract negotiations with staff. Half of Emerson workers are paid below market rate for peer institutions, while management offers new hires higher wages than veteran workers in the same title.

Emerson's Staff Union Bargaining Committee responded to this story with the following statement:

*Reading about Emerson's 'big plans' to boost its image hit a sore nerve for Emerson staff who are working for unlivable wages. Emerson's attempt to build a civically engaged liberal arts college is tone-deaf on a good day.*

*After forming a union in the Spring of 2016, we are still negotiating our first contract. Management insists that it cannot raise our pay, and that it is low because we work for a non-profit. Then, in the same week, they purchase a building for \$24 million!*

*Emerson's own comparative compensation studies show staff is paid well below market rate. Management uses its building renovations as an excuse for why our salaries are so far behind. Real estate may be a good investment, but an investment in the employees working in these spaces who actually make the college successful is long overdue.*

The staff union has had over 20 bargaining sessions over the past year. Before their last bargaining session, the Bargaining Committee hosted a "coffee hour" for staff. Over 50 Emerson staff came to greet management's bargaining team as they walked in to the negotiations.

All Local 888 members are urged to support Emerson staff union's fight for a good contract by signing an online petition!



Emerson bargaining committee members and staff at the coffee break they hosted as management entered their most recent negotiating session.

## Use contract to fight sexual harassment in the workplace

Sexual harassment is everywhere in the media right now. Women are coming forward with their stories of sexual harassment at the hands of powerful men across many industries. In our society, few workplaces are free of sexual harassment. Union members are finding that their contracts can be used to fight against it and ensure proper recourse if there is a problem.

Our union contracts help equalize the imbalance of power between workers and their bosses. Without a union, the boss has complete control. With a union, workers have contract language that gives them a voice in the decisions and policies of their workplace.

If a boss is sexually harassing a worker in a unionized workplace—there is recourse. Members can use the grievance procedure and the "just cause" provisions to protect them from being fired or disciplined for speaking out. With a union, workers can stand together against employers who violate basic principles of respect and dignity.

### What can Local 888 members do to protect yourself when you are sexually harassed?

- Talk to your fellow co-workers about the incident. Don't suffer in silence.
- Document it in writing immediately and call your steward or chapter chair to let them know.
- Make a plan with coworkers about what to do the next time someone is harassed.





## Member Spotlight:

### Jayne Fogarty

- Yarmouth Chapter President
- 32 year union member
- Worked as a Police Dispatcher for 29 years
- Currently works as a Principal Office Assistant

#### How did you become involved in the union?

"As soon as I was hired, I started attending union meetings. I became a shop steward the first year I started my employment. Back then, we had only 3 negotiators, who basically negotiated for only their departments. I felt it was inequitable and fought against it. Today we have a representative from all six departments at the negotiation table with management. As an 8-year union president, my mentality is 'all for one and one for all.' We negotiate for the majority of our members and not just for a specific department."

#### People have been asking the question, "why should I pay dues?" What do you say when people ask you that?

"I represent 109 people. I have a strong conviction in protecting them and their jobs. The new Town Administrator appears to be very anti-union and has tried to eliminate union positions.

"Without a union, many employees would not have their jobs and those who have made mistakes could lose their jobs. There would be no COLA's, vacation packages, personal time, health insurance, etc. We would all be employees 'at will.' If the Supreme Court eliminates dues requirements and members drop out, you will no longer have a union. Even if 51% pay dues, we will not have the money to sustain the union. This would mean no representation at the negotiation table. No representation at grievance hearings. We cannot afford to not have a union! We need to stand together and remain strong!"



Local 888 members at the Cape Cod regional Together We Rise training on November 16. Jayne Fogarty is pictured at left in the first row.

## SEIU Local 888 seeks member organizers

SEIU Local 888 is seeking members interested in taking a leave of absence from their current employment to work as an organizer for Local 888's *Together We Rise* campaign.

We are looking for member organizers to work between Jan. 15 and Mar. 15, 2018. Members should still apply even if only available for a portion of the above dates.

The job entails organizing small meetings and discussions with members about the importance of maintaining union membership and making a commitment to their union.

For more information and to apply for the job, contact Dan Hoffer at [dhoffer@seiu888.org](mailto:dhoffer@seiu888.org) or call (617) 241-3300.

## Local 888 Election Timeline:

- **Nominating petitions and Candidate statements** are available to be picked up at the union hall or on Local 888's website. Petitions must be returned to the union hall by 5:00pm December 22, 2017
- **Ballots must be received by 9:00 am Saturday, March 3, 2018** Ballots must be returned using the postage paid envelope to be counted. The ballot count will supervised by MK Election Services at 10:00 am on March 3 at the union hall.
- **Swearing-in ceremony of new officers May 1, 2018**

## 2017 Highlights

For the full year in review, go to [www.seiu888.org](http://www.seiu888.org)

Jan. 3 **A Hero Among Us.** BCYF Streetworker

Anthony Meeks was honored at a Boston Celtics game with the "Hero Among Us" award.

Jan. **Brockton Cafeteria workers** win big raises and a new three-year contract ratified by 85 percent membership approval.

Jan. 23 **Just Cause Victory.**

An arbitrator ruled that Chelsea Soldiers Home management did not have "just cause" to fire Local 888 member Teresa Krupien and ruled that she should be returned to work and her income restored.

Jan 24 **Suffolk University staff petition** the NLRB to form a union with SEIU Local 888. The board sets the representation election for March 2.

Mar. 2 **Suffolk Univ. staff union vote inconclusive.**

71 Suffolk Univ. staff for voted "yes" for SEIU Local 888 and 80 voted for no union. However, 56 challenged ballots that were not counted could determine the outcome of the election and must be resolved before workers will know the final result.

Mar. **Tyngsborough Administrative Assistants ratified a new contract.**

May 1 **International worker's day.** Members of Local 888 marched in communities across MA in support of International Workers Day and in solidarity with immigrants who are under attack.

May 9 **Public defenders testify for right to collectively bargain.** For the fifth year in a row, staff at the Committee on Public Counsel Services (CPCS) testified at a State House hearing to support legislation for collective bargaining.

May 23 **COPA endorses** Local 888 member Stephen Winslow for Malden City Council.

May 24 **Together We Rise.** SEIU leaders attend national strategy session in Chicago in anticipation of a Supreme Court ruling allowing non-members to opt-out of paying fair share fees.

June 13 **Campaign for Paid Family and Medical Leave.** Boston Water & Sewer member Damali Simmonds testified at a statehouse hearing in support of legislation to create comprehensive paid family and medical leave program.

June 28 **Somerville Slate.** COPA members voted unanimously to support incumbent

Alderman Matt McLaughlin for Ward 1, challenger JT Scott for Alderman Ward 2, challenger Ben Ewen-Campen for Alderman Ward 3, NAGE member Jesse Clingan for an open seat in Ward 4.

Sept. 4 **Local 888 "all in" for Labor Day** and the fight for \$15. Members of SEIU Local 888 joined a national day of action on Labor Day, standing up with fast food workers and other working people fighting for a better life. In addition to the rally in

Boston, Local 888 had an information tent on Campagnon Common at the Bread & Roses Heritage Festival in Lawrence.

Sept. 6 **Mendon Upton ABAs and Paras** win new contract. Mendon Upton regional school district ABAs and Paras ratified a new three-year contract with 80% support.

Oct. 4 **Together We Rise.** In anticipation of the Supreme Court decision, Local 888 leaders begin regional leadership trainings to prepare members for the impact of the decision and explore innovative ways to keep our union strong.

Oct. 4 **A Tie at Suffolk Univ.** After resolving the challenged votes, the final tally was 96 votes in favor of a union to 96 votes against. Unfortunately, a tie goes to the boss.

Oct. 18 **Emerson staff protest low wages.** Emerson College staff leafleted outside the Emerson College Board of Directors meeting to protest their low pay and frustration with the slow pace of negotiations.

Oct. 31 **Pension reclassification bills.** Members representing Emergency 911, nuclear reactor operators and veteran caregivers came out to testify in support of pension upgrade bills before the Joint Committee on Public Service.

Nov. 7 **Election results.** Steven Winslow, SEIU Local 888 member at Gloucester Department Heads, won City Council At-large seat in Malden. In Somerville, all four Local 888 endorsed candidates won their seats for Board of Aldermen. SEIU Local 509 member Khrystian King successfully defended his City Council At-large seat in Worcester.

Nov 13 **Public Defenders held "walk-in" actions** at District Courts across the state.

