

The Spark

January 2017



Members urged to turnout for Boston Women's March

On the day after the Inauguration (January 21), thousands of union members will march in solidarity with communities most affected by the hate, intolerance and acts of violence being perpetrated especially in communities of women, immigrants, people of color, people who identify as LGBT and people with disabilities.

"Local 888 and the other SEIU locals in Massachusetts are 'Community Partners' to help energize and strengthen the march with our vision and people power," said Mari Cooney, a field rep who is spearheading Local 888's participation. "We are one of hundreds of organizations in Massachusetts that are educating our members and seeking meaningful change."

The march is a unique opportunity for Local 888 members to connect with thousands of other energized activists interested in working for equality, decency and justice for all.

The **Boston Women's March for America** is one of over 100 happening nationwide and internationally inspired by the Women's March on Washington.

"We stand for religious freedom, human rights, climate justice, racial justice, economic justice and reproductive justice," said Local 888 President Mark DelloRusso. "Together, we will send a message to our leaders and the world, that the United States stands for values of human decency, equal rights and freedom from discrimination."

Register for the march at Eventbrite:
<http://tinyurl.com/zw7tk4p>

Womens' March RideShare Group:
<https://www.facebook.com/groups/155205758297373>

Raise Up Mass plans ambitious agenda

Local 888 is a member of the **Raise Up Massachusetts**, a coalition committed to building an economy that works for all of us.

Raise Up won a significant increase in the minimum wage in June 2014 -- raising it from \$8 to \$11 over three years. Raise Up then led the campaign to ensure access to earned sick time for all workers by passing Question 4 in November 2014.

In 2015 and 2016, Raise Up passed a paid family and medical leave bill in the state Senate, fought to win a \$15 wage for working people as part of the national Fight for \$15 movement, and won the first of two votes by the full state Legislature needed to advance a new Fair Share Amendment to the 2018 ballot.

Next Steps

This year, Raise Up is focusing on winning three issues of critical importance to working families in Massachusetts:

- **Paid Family and Medical Leave** to ensure that workers in Mass. are not forced to choose between work and their own health needs or the well-being of their family members.
- A **\$15 Minimum Wage** to make sure workers can earn a living wage so they can make ends meet and support their families.
- The **Fair Share Amendment** that creates an additional tax of four percentage points on annual income *above one million dollars* for investments in quality public schools, affordable higher education, improved transportation, and high-quality early childhood education.

New fact sheets to help educate your coworkers, friends, and family about these three campaigns are available from Local 888. Email rwilson@seiu888.org



Scholarship Winners!

Congratulations to three Local 888 members whose children have been awarded \$500 union scholarships. The winners are: Nicholas Ferris whose mother **Kerry Ferris** works for the Hopkinton School paras; Tingwa Tam whose mother **Qiaoyan Tam** works for BPHC; and, Kaitlyn Vail whose



Tingwa Tam and Qiaoyan Tam

mother **Karen Vail** works for the Hopkinton School cafeteria.

Local 888 offers college scholarships for members and their families to attend any post-secondary school of their choosing. For information about the next opportunity to apply, visit:

<http://tinyurl.com/j2dtver>



Kaitlyn Vail and Karen Vail

Brockton Cafeteria workers win big raises

Brockton Cafeteria workers won a new three-year agreement which included a \$1 an hour increase in the first year and 2 percent raises in the second and third years. The \$1 across the board increase means members will get between 5 and 10 percent increases in the first year!

Other highlights: Members with over five years of service will receive a \$300 longevity increase. Four assistant managers were upgraded to managers, and the lead satellite position at the Huntington School was upgraded to Assistant Manager.

If a state of emergency results in a school closing, employees will be paid for up to two days per school year. There were many other improvements, including higher pay and more security for caterers and an increase in the sick leave payout.

The agreement was ratified with 85 percent approval.

Brockton High School Production manager **Linda Machnig** is the chapter chair and has worked

Brockton Cafeteria continued



Brockton Cafeteria workers held a large membership meeting last year before contract negotiations to affirm their support for winning a new contract and to hear from State Rep. Michelle DuBois (standing in photo above) who strongly supported the workers.

at the Brockton schools for 26 years. She said, "We got ourselves together and really worked hard for almost a year on this agreement. We got great help from the Local 888 and support from the community. I'd really like to thank our Reps from Local 888, Maureen Medeiros and Larry Higgins."

A well deserved retirement party!



Congratulations to **Sharon Quint** (in blue vest and hat above), children's director at the Brockton Public Library for 37 years! She celebrated her retirement with many of her fellow Local 888 members on January 5. (Photo Marc Vasconcellos, Brockton Enterprise)



Member Spotlight

Quiet Heroes Among Us

Local 888 member Peter Cavicchi wrote this month's Member Spotlight column about two of his coworkers at the Boston Public Health Commission.

Counselors **Phazon Martin** and **Mike Parkinson** returned from working the Outreach Team at the Southampton St. Shelter. Mike and Phazon both stand six feet tall with strong muscles and keen minds.

Their actions kept five homeless people from overdosing on Boston's tough streets. Mike described working from August to November, his hands squeezing the Narcan syringe in the nose of a near-death person.

Mike and Phazon volunteered for the outreach positions. They broke the ground for this new program.

Phazon has been with the Commission for 9 months full time and Mike has been working the last year full time. They receive satisfaction in helping other people, the drug dependent and homeless. They have empathy for them and their difficult circumstances.

Mike and Phazon walk into a neighborhood to meet with homeless people hanging out and living outside. They develop positive, nonjudgmental relationships with the goal of keeping people safe and helping to ensure they can get access to drug and alcohol treatment. They deal with overdoses and medical emergencies.

The BPHC Outreach Program was developed as a pilot program. Mike and Phazon's successful work enabled the Outreach Team to become a permanent program for the City of Boston. Mike and Phazon recently returned to work as Counselors at the 450-bed Southampton Street Shelter.



Phazon Martin and Mike Patterson broke new ground piloting the BPHC Outreach Team

Mike and Phazon really demonstrate the highest attributes for Counselors – and union members -- at the Boston Public Health Commission.

A special shout out to our Local 888 staff rep, Mari Cooney!

Do you know a member who is making a difference in your union or community? Contact rwilson@seiu888.org to be featured in a future Local 888 Member Spotlight.

Another Hero Among Us

Congratulations to longtime BCYF Streetworker **Anthony Meeks** who was honored by the Boston Celtics at a game against the Utah Jazz with the "Hero Among Us" award on Jan. 3.

At each home game, the Celtics and their fans salute the exemplary efforts of

citizens with a special in-game presentation on the legendary parquet floor.



Pictured above is just one of the many holiday displays that custodian **Doug Bowen** creates every year for the Weymouth Schools. Bowen says, "I enjoy building the displays and I try to come up with new ways to outdo myself. Of course I want to give the kids a 'wow' factor, but for me it's really all about the 'smile' factor! Their smiles make it all worthwhile." *Bowen is the Weymouth Local 888 chapter chair.*

Coming Attractions

SEIU 888 Executive Board meeting

Wed, Jan. 18, 10:00am at SEIU Local 888, 25 Braintree Hill Office Park, Braintree



COPA monthly meeting

Thurs, Jan 19, 6:30pm – 8:00pm
SEIU Local 888, 25 Braintree Hill Office Park, Braintree, MA. For more info contact: Joe Lazzerini jlazzerini@seiu888.org

Boston Education Justice Alliance town hall meeting

Thurs, Jan 19, 4pm – 8pm
Madison Park H.S., 75 Malcolm X Blvd, Boston
The Alliance to Reclaim Our School's National Day of Action is on January 19th. As part of this day of action, the Boston Education Justice Alliance is hosting a town hall meeting. For more info: bostonedjustice@gmail.com

Boston Women's March for America

Sat, Jan 21, 11am
Gather on the Boston Common at the corner of Beacon and Charles Streets. Register for the March at Eventbrite <http://tinyurl.com/zw7tk4p>

Speak Up for Affordable Care

Wed. Jan. 25, National Call in Day
Rather than keeping what works and fixing what doesn't in the Affordable Care Act, some members of Congress are rushing to repeal the healthcare law without a plan to replace it. **On Jan. 25. call 866-426-2631 to tell Congress: "Show us your plan to lower healthcare costs and make improvements before taking vital healthcare and Medicaid away from millions of Americans, our children and aging parents."** Download a flyer to promote the call-in with your coworkers, friends, and family here: <http://tinyurl.com/jjlho3w>

Popular Education Training of Trainers for Women

Mon, Feb 6, 9:30am – 4:00pm
MTA, 48 Sword St, Auburn, MA 01501
Popular Education (Basic and Advanced) Training of Trainers for Women. Sponsored by WILD
Cost – \$25 for breakfast, lunch and all materials (Free to WILD women volunteers and facilitators)

For more information contact Susan Winning at 978-934-3127. Learn more at: <http://wildlabor.org>

Chapter Reports



Brewster School Custodians

Brewster School Custodians negotiated a new three-year contract with a salary increase of 6 percent over three years! Deleting the first step and adding a new Step 14 at 2 percent helps senior members who are maxed out of steps. Also, a \$25 across-the-board increase in longevity! The School Committee has agreed to help decrease out-of-pocket expenses by working with members to provide winter clothing and rain gear outside of their clothing allowance.

Monomoy Regional School Custodians

What a difference a contract makes! The first contract with the Monomoy Regional School District was a battle that went into mediation. In December, a three-year contract was easily ratified with a revision to the salary schedule, dropping three steps and adding two steps from the eighteen-step salary schedule for the custodians. The contract includes a 10 percent increase for the custodians and a 12 percent increase for the lead custodians! Double time on Sundays, an increase in outside function pay to forty dollars per hour, and an additional step in longevity after completing 24 years in the amount of \$1,500 boosted pay to dedicated employees who have maxed out! Longevity was increased across the board by \$100 in the third year of the contract! The biggest win was deleting language that redlined a member, giving him the opportunity for a 10 percent increase over the life of this contract, as well as all future salary increases!

Nauset School Custodians

Nauset School Custodians unanimously ratified a new three-year contract that includes a 2 percent increase each year, deletion of the first step and addition of a 14th step at 3 percent, a slight increase on the night differential and grounds person's differential, a \$25 increase on each step of longevity, and an increase in the limit of sick days from 160 to 180! The School Committee agreed to provide winter clothing and rain gear, putting out of pocket expenses back in the members' pockets, as well as disease control equipment and clothing!

SEIU Field Rep. Joan Caruso assisted with all of the above contract settlements.

