

Local 888 members explore campaign to support affordable housing in Boston

SEIU Local 888 members who work for the City of Boston met with housing advocates and neighborhood organizers on June 30 to discuss shared concerns. Because of the tough residency requirement and the high cost of housing in Boston, Local 888 members are especially challenged to make ends meet on their city paychecks.

Christine Sullivan, a Program Manager at the Dept. of Neighborhood Developments' Boston Home Center was one of the members who attended the meeting. Her job is to help Boston residents purchase, improve, and keep their homes -- so she knows just how hard it is to survive the housing market in Boston.

"The meeting was great," said Sullivan. "There are many possible ways we can collaborate. These neighborhood housing groups are in the trenches all the time, so we learned something from them. I think getting our union to work more closely with some of these community groups could help Local 888 members. Eviction touches everyone, whether it's a family member or a union member. The cost of rent vs some of our member's low salaries just doesn't add up."

Steve Meacham, an organizer with City Life/Vida Urbana who attended the meeting had a similar reaction. "It was great to have this discussion with union members who are familiar with the serious problems in the city and also experts in housing policy."

The housing advocates are campaigning for passage of a "Just Cause" eviction law. "It could be something we could get behind," added Sullivan. But I think it will require more research. But we can let folks know

[about this research] and we offer hope. And with hope, all things are possible."

"I'm confident this was the first of several brown bag lunch meetings. Perhaps next time we can focus specifically on the proposed "Just Cause" eviction law

so we have a better understanding of the whole bill."

"There was an interesting political alignment between the advocacy groups and Local 888 members," said Meacham. "Looking ahead, I think there are excellent opportunities for collaboration and mutual support."

In addition to City Life/Vida Urbana, representatives from the Boston Tenant

Organization and Right to the City also attended the meeting.

Save Our Public Schools

SEIU leaders attended a briefing and campaign kickoff to oppose lifting the state cap on charter schools.

Nearly one quarter of Local 888 members work for public schools. This year charter schools drained public school budgets by more than \$400 million. If the cap on charter schools is lifted, it would take even more funding from public schools.

A measure on the November 2016 ballot seeks to lift the cap on charter schools in Massachusetts. If this ballot measure passes, up to 12 new charter schools

Continued on page 2



Union members and housing advocates gathered to discuss common concerns – and a potential collaboration.



Public Schools

Continued from page 1

could be added every year forever, taking away billions of dollars from public schools and hurting students. School employees would lose jobs and vital programs would be eliminated.



Secretary-Treasurer Brenda Rodrigues and Local 888 executive board members Jorge Vargas, Charlotte Killam and Mike Kelly attended the "Keep the Cap" briefing.

Increasing the number of charter schools will:

- Take precious resources out of local schools, increase class sizes and divert funding for art, science and music programs.
- Create a separate and unequal school system that underserves English language learners and special needs students.
- Result in even more high-stakes testing, taking educators and students away from real teaching and learning.

All Local 888 members are urged to get involved in the campaign by visiting:

saveourpublicschoolsma.com

Looking to build a stronger union?

A new book, **Secrets of a Successful Organizer** by three [Labor Notes](#) staffers is chalk full of tips in a user-friendly format. The book has 47 "secrets" culled from experienced organizers. It has real life stories and practical tips to help you spot hot issues, map your workplace and inspire your co-workers to take action.

Win a free copy of this new book! Enter a raffle by emailing rwilson@seiu888.org. Put the words "Secrets" in the subject line and include your name, work location/chapter and phone number. Winner will be drawn on August 1.

Women members get WILD!

Local 888 members attended the Women's Institute for Leadership Development (WILD) that was held at Bridgewater state university from June 24-26.

Charlotte Killam (pictured above third from left) said,



"WILD trainings are always excellent because they are so well planned. Everyone takes a leadership class. You not only learn from the instructors but from everyone else in the classes. It's a very relevant learning experience for any steward or chapter chair. You also build great comradery by talking with others about how they approach problems in the workplace." **UMass Lowell executive board member Susan Winning** also attended. More info at wildlabor.org.

Member Spotlight



Everything starts with 'one'

For local 888 member **Joan McKenna**, the battle against addiction is personal. The lifelong Somerville resident and mother of four boys has seen the ravages of drug addiction in her family, on her street, and in her community.

Her close friends, Dave and Kathy Harrington lived across the street and their kids went to school together. When the Harrington's lost their son to a drug overdose, they started the [Ryan Harrington Foundation](http://www.ryanharringtonfoundation.org) to raise money and awareness about the issue. Joan wanted to help too and she pitched in to organize a yearly "corn toss" fundraising event for the foundation at Trum Field. All proceeds benefit Somerville youth groups.

The success of the annual corn toss event led Joan and other leaders of the Harrington Foundation to want to do more. This year they came up with the idea of a road race.

"We decided to call it, 'Just One Run' because everything starts with '**one**.' *One* person, taking *one* step; *one* person getting the help they need; *one* person making a difference." The race was in memory of Sean Curtis, who died of an overdose this year.

Joan turned to her co-workers at the Somerville Police Department where she works as a 911 emergency operator to help build the event. "My department is like an extended family. They spread the word to their friends and family and it just took off."

Joan enlisted Local 888 staffers Dave Nagle and Ian Adelman to run and DJ Cronin to volunteer on race day. She also received an endorsement and financial support from Local 888.

"Nearly 400 people participated in the race," Joan said. "Local businesses donated race gear, t-shirts, food and drinks. And we raised about \$13,000! The support was just wonderful."

"We need to stop the stigma of addiction and educate people about it. All walks of life are affected by it. We need more and better treatment programs. I'm just one member, but we can all help out with a cause. I'm really glad that my union was part of it."

Learn more about the Ryan Harrington Foundation at: www.ryanharringtonfoundation.org and don't miss the corn toss benefit at Trum Field on September 10. Registration is at 10:00 am.



911 emergency operator Joan McKenna volunteers in support of drug addiction education and treatment programs.

Amherst Town Employees

Chapter Chair **Jennifer Reynolds** reports that Amherst Town Employees settled a new 3-year contract for 68 members. Workers won 2% each year, raised their Hazmat/EMD stipend, increased the boot allowance, expanded sick time to nontraditional household members, and many more gains.



"They were actually looking to cut our sick time. Who in their right mind would give up their sick days?" said Reynolds.

More about the new Amherst contract is on [SEIU888.org!](http://SEIU888.org)

Coming Attractions Support Mass

AFL-CIO Political Roundtable

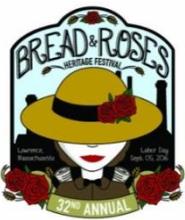
Mass. AFL-CIO monthly [Political and Legislative Roundtable](#)

Thursday, July 28 at 1:30PM
Plumbers Local 12 Hall
1240 Mass Ave, Dorchester



Last day to register to vote

(and change party enrollment) for the Sept. 8 State Primaries, Friday, August 19, 2016



Bread and Roses Labor Day Festival

Lawrence Common,
September 5, 12 to 6 PM.

State Primary Election

September 8

Pioneer Valley AFL-CIO Annual Labor Breakfast

September 9

LaborCAN! Educational Conference

September 24 Taunton, MA

State General Election

Tuesday, November 8, 2016

Union discounts on summer fun!

Six Flags:

Day Ticket	\$41.00
Season Pass	\$56.99

Water Country

Online Ticket	\$29.99
Paper Ticket	\$30.99



Canobie Lake Park

Ticket	\$31.00
--------	---------

Visit www.seiu888.org/888deals to get these discounts and more!

Defenders!

Would it surprise you if the state legislature denied hundreds of workers the right to collectively bargain in supposedly "liberal" Massachusetts?

Yet staff who work for the state's Committee for Public Counsel Services have been struggling to win a vote for their right to form a union for more than **three years**. Their legislation for collective bargaining rights is once again stalled in the Senate Ways and Means committee.

Please urge your Senator to support SB.1393 allowing public defenders to form a union.

Use this handy link to send a quick letter to your senator. <http://888.seiu.org/page/speakout/support-mass-defenders>

Membership Convention

The bi-annual SEIU Local 888 Membership Convention will be held on Saturday, September 24, 2016 from 11:00 AM until 1:00 PM at 30 Braintree Hill Office Park, Braintree, Massachusetts.

Registration opens at 10:30 AM. After the convention adjourns, there will be an office warming and celebration of our new union headquarters.

Members who pre-register for the convention by Sept. 9, 2016 will be eligible for a special door prize!

For more information and updates on the convention, visit SEIU Local 888 website at www.seiu888.org/convention

New Local 888 address

Local 888 is now located at **25 Braintree Hill Office Park, Braintree, MA 02184**

Local 888's also has a new FAX number: **617 241-3303**. All other numbers remain the same.

Directions and information about free shuttle from the Red Line is online at www.seiu888.org/my-union/directory/directions888/

