

OAPSE AFSCME News

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“OAPSE Strong – United for Action” Is More Than Just a Slogan

Union Power and Solidarity Make a Difference for Thousands Every Day

In May, OAPSE leaders gathered at our union’s conference under the banner of “OAPSE Strong — United for Action.” The theme appropriately describes the solidarity and determination that union leaders, activists and members must have to take on the tough battles we face. And lately, the battles have been numerous — and serious!

“Since 2010, it seems as if we have been under constant attack. First we had to beat back Senate Bill 5, which would have gutted our collective bargaining rights. Then, we saw devastating cuts to local government, library and public school budgets. And we’ve faced the threat of privatization of our work and the possibility of “Right to Work” legislation designed to weaken unions and shift workplace power to employers,” said Joe Rugola, OAPSE executive director. It’s not a coincidence, he noted, that these threats have occurred under the leadership of Governor John Kasich and the like-minded Republicans in the Ohio General Assembly.

But the challenges for OAPSE members are not limited to the big fights at the Statehouse and the ballot box that get the headlines. *“Across Ohio, we face constant threats to our job security, our retirement security and our ability to take care of our families. It’s not just the politicians in Congress or Columbus we have to worry about. An unfriendly superintendent, school board or county commission can harm an OAPSE family just as badly as the governor and his friends. So we have to be prepared. And we have to fight back — together,”* Rugola said.

Karen Herzberger, president of Local 319 at Westlake City Schools for more

than 20 years, couldn’t agree more. She said having a strong local union has been invaluable. *“You have to stand up and defend your members. You can’t be afraid to fight when the employer ignores the contract. We’re not afraid to fight for*

WESTLAKE CITY SCHOOLS Local 319

what’s right, and neither is OAPSE,” Herzberger said.

Her local’s most recent battle with the Westlake administration resulted in a win for a head cook who under the contract should have been awarded a job she applied for. *“The principal showed favoritism and didn’t follow the contract. The language was clear, and we knew we were right and that this member deserved the job. So we fought this violation for a year and finally got justice for our member when the district settled with us during the arbitration process, and she got the job,”* Herzberger said. *“On her own without the support of her union, there’s no way she could have fought that principal and won. But she wasn’t alone, and we aren’t alone. We have our union. That’s where we get our strength to fight,”* she said.

Local 319 leaders can often directly handle issues that affect workers at Westlake City Schools, *“but when we can’t, we know that we have our field representative and our state office that we can turn to, and OAPSE will be there for us. We are taken seriously, and that means a lot,”* said Herzberger, who is the daughter of a UAW member and whose husband is a Teamster. *“Now, our daughter is teach-*

ing, and she is a union member also. I grew up knowing the value of a union. So to have a strong union like OAPSE is a big deal to me, and I appreciate the solidarity, the expertise of the staff and the leadership of the union very much.”

Local 319 won that fight because they refused to back down, and that’s exactly the same approach taken by the members of Local 546 at Martins Ferry Local Schools when the administration there tried to slash wages in the middle of a contract. In 2010, the employer asked Local 546 and its members to sign a memorandum of understanding (MOU), which would allow the school district to reduce their wages by 5 percent.

“The teachers voted to sign an MOU, but we didn’t. We had a contract that included clear wage schedules that we had negotiated in good faith. For the employer to just cut wages during the contract was a violation of the contract — and the good faith,” said Sue Jozwiak, Local 546 president. The employer reduced their wages



MARTINS FERRY LOCAL SCHOOLS
Local 546
Sue Jozwiak, President

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anyway, and Local 546 went to arbitration to stop them. The local union won when the arbitrator agreed that the pay reduction violated the terms of the contract. *“But that didn’t stop them. They appealed to the court, and we were forced into a long ordeal to try and win justice for our members. At times, it was a roller coaster for us, but we stuck together and we didn’t give up,”* Jozwiak said.

She credited OAPSE Staff Attorney Kristen McKinley with not only the final victory after more than five years, but for all the work and all the knowledge necessary to keep up the fight. *“When we lost the first court case, we didn’t give up, and Kristen took our case to the Court of Appeals. They said we were right and that management violated the contract, so we thought we had finally won,”* the local president said.

But McKinley’s skill was needed again when the school district appealed to the Ohio Supreme Court. The OAPSE attorney filed a brief arguing that the court should not hear the case, and the court agreed and refused to hear the appeal. *“Finally, we won in court. But we still faced the fight with management over how much money our members would get. Again, Kristen worked for us, and we got back pay for the entire time our wages had been reduced – \$105,000!”*

Jozwiak stressed that while local union solidarity was a key ingredient in the fight because it sent a clear message to management that Local 546 would not back down, the support of OAPSE was critical to the win. *“Without a union, how do we win this battle? The employer would have just done what it wanted, and we would have had to take it. But because we stood strong and because we had the expertise and the support of the OAPSE state office, we were able to stay in the fight for four years until we got justice.”*

Justice was also at the heart of a dispute for Kent City Schools employees, who are represented by Local 176. President Edith Damron said that during negotiations, the

KENT CITY SCHOOLS Local 176

employer talked about privatizing busing, and the local got busy making sure that was not an attractive option.

Local 176 had enlisted the help of OAPSE to save money in their health insurance plan (see story, page 5), “so we

knew there was money available to save the transportation jobs. The next step was to make sure the school board knew what a bad idea privatization is,” Damron said.

OAPSE had prepared a detailed “white paper” report on the perils of privatization, and the local union had made its case for keeping the jobs in-house. But the bus drivers got some assistance in their cause when State Representative Kathleen Clyde (D-75) met with Kent school board members and used the report in her discussions about why the Local 176 members should not be replaced with employees of a private contractor.

Randy Weston, director of political action and legislative affairs, said OAPSE has a great relationship with Clyde, whose district includes Kent City Schools. *“Kathleen Clyde is solidly pro-worker and pro-union. She made the case to some of her friends on the school board that good-paying union jobs are better for the workers and for the local economy than jobs that pay minimum wage and offer no benefits. She told them that quality and accountability would suffer, and that privatization just isn’t worth the few dollars that might be saved.”* Damron said that local union leaders had already made those points to the administration, but that *“it was great that Representative Clyde stepped in and reinforced our position. She was there for us because of the relationship OAPSE has built with her over the years. That political clout is another benefit of belonging to the union.”*

Ultimately, the district did not move to privatize the transportation services. And Local 176 members won a 1.25 percent raise in their contract. *“So we had professional representation at the negotiating table. We had political action help. We had experts in health care to help with saving money. We had the whole package that OAPSE offers, and it paid off for the members of Local 176,”* Damron said.

A comprehensive plan also paid off for the members of Local 138 and Local 719 at Westerville City Schools. Ron Duckworth is president of Local 138, which represents custodial, maintenance, facilities and grounds, and food service workers. His local union worked with the bus drivers of Local 719 and their president, Shirley Timberlake, to save jobs and score wage hikes for their members and the secretaries, who have their own association. He said their battle goes back several years and involves privatization, a school levy, the Tea Party, school board elections and a multi-year contract with raises for the nearly 200 members of the local. *“The*



WESTERVILLE CITY SCHOOLS
Mike O'Brien, Member
Ron Duckworth, Local 138 President

Westerville Chamber of Commerce recommended to the school board that they get involved in outsourcing our jobs, and they were listening, which was really disappointing because we had been involved in passing the levy and had worked hard to be good members of the community,” Duckworth said.

A divided community had turned down several levies, but Local 138 and 719 members helped lead the way for this measure’s passage by *“talking to parents, answering their questions, communicating with the public and telling them how much we care about our students and that they come first.”* He said that work and the money the levy generated did little to persuade the school board members that Local 138 and 719 members should keep their jobs.

Some of them were members of the anti-tax Tea Party movement, who opposed paying good wages and benefits to workers. They put out a Request for Proposals (RFP) to start the process of contracting out jobs. *“So we called on OAPSE to help us beat that, and our first step was to find good candidates to replace those people on the school board. We ended up with three really good candidates we could support because we knew they would support us.”*

OAPSE’s political action team put together a campaign plan, developed messaging and made phone calls for the candidates, and on election night, *“all three of our candidates won. It was the beginning of a much better relationship that has really paid off for our members,”* Duckworth said. Privatization came off the table, and the local union was able to negotiate a four-year contract with raises in each year and no concessions.

“We had lots of help from OAPSE with the political piece and from our field rep-

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OAPSE Member Killed Saving Student

OAPSE member and bus driver Laura Zborowski was killed September 15 saving a child from a moving bus. She pushed the 10-year-old girl out of the way of the bus, which started rolling backward during a routine safety evacuation drill.

Laura was a member of the newly organized Local 113 at Akron Petermann and transported students to a charter school, Middlebury Academy. According to Akron police, she "sacrificed her life to save the life of this girl." When she saw the bus rolling backward, Laura tossed the girl onto the lawn and was run over by the bus, which stopped after hitting a tree. Laura was taken to the hospital where she was pronounced dead.

"Laura Zborowski is a true hero. She sacrificed her own life to save a little girl in her charge. The entire OAPSE family honors Laura's selfless act and her example of dedication and service. We will remember her for her courage and

her sacrifice on the day she died but also for the work she did every day to keep her students safe on the ride to and from school," said OAPSE Executive Director Joe Rugola.

Walt Burgan, president of Local 113, said Laura was a popular and enthusiastic member of the union. *"Laura was a nice, caring person. She never stopped giving and was constantly getting involved in helping people. At the holidays, she helped with feeding the hungry people in our community and other projects to help the needy. She was involved in a prison ministry. And every summer, she organized a project that took neighborhood kids to a camp. She took a week off work to do that. That's just who Laura was,"* Burgan said.



He said Laura was part of Local 113's organizing committee and was very instrumental in getting a union for bus drivers and making OAPSE the exclusive representative for the drivers at Akron Petermann. She also served as the local's vice president. *"She was at the OAPSE Conference this year and was very excited about coming back to our local union with everything she learned. We will all miss her."*

Laura was a recent breast cancer survivor and was active in her community. She leaves behind a son, Tyrese.

A fund is set up for Zborowski's family at KeyBank under the title "Laura Zborowski Heroic Memorial Fund." Contributions can be made at any KeyBank location. ■

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representative when it came time to negotiate the contract. We couldn't have done this without that support and that professional help," Duckworth said.

Professional help in the form of legal assistance occurred for members of locals 318 and 368 at Warrensville Heights City Schools, where the 108 members found out that their health insurance co-pays and prescription drug costs had been

WARRENSVILLE HEIGHTS CITY SCHOOLS Locals 318 & 368

increased without their agreement or their knowledge. According to OAPSE Legal Services Director Tom Drabick, the employer claimed that because it had reached agreement with the teachers' union to increase the health care costs, it could also increase them for OAPSE members because of the "me too" language in the OAPSE contracts. *"We went to arbitration, and won the case because the ruling said the employer had to bargain with OAPSE before making changes to the contract,"* Drabick said.

The employer, he noted, tried to vacate the award of the arbitrator, but Drabick successfully argued before the Cuyahoga County Common Pleas Court that the award should be confirmed and enforced. The employer appealed the decision, but while that case was pending, agreed

to pay the employees represented by OAPSE a total of \$162,000 – or \$1,500 per employee – to make them whole.

FIRELANDS LOCAL SCHOOLS Local 220

Drabick and the legal department were also instrumental in winning \$150,000 for a Local 220 member and custodian at Firelands Local Schools. Matt Galloway had been an employee there for 16 years when he was terminated. OAPSE and Drabick took his case all the way to the Ohio Supreme Court before it was settled. Galloway was paid the \$150,000 he was owed, and he resigned.

ORANGE CITY SCHOOLS Local 561

And a \$30,000 settlement was won by OAPSE for a member of Local 561 at Orange City Schools who was improperly terminated.

Big dollar victories are great, but, *"Sometimes, it's not about the money. It's about standing up for what is right and making sure our members get the best deal possible – even if it only means a few dollars. Protecting jobs and protecting a strong contract is critical,"* said Anita Cordell, president of Local 249 at Gahanna-Jefferson Local Schools. When the ad-

ministration cut the number of workdays for bus drivers, Cordell worked with Central Ohio Regional Director Jim Gollings to find a solution to their loss of wages. *"Ohio legislators changed state law to say that schools would operate on hours and not days, so we lost four days of work. So Jim and I started working with management to see how we could make up the days like they did for teachers when they allowed them to have meeting days and conference days,"* Cordell said.

She and Gollings negotiated the return of three days to the bus drivers and a better system in overtime status that will help them make up for the six total hours they lost. *"Without the union, our drivers would have lost four days, but we were able to get most of that back. Our strength as a local and Jim's knowledge and help made the difference in this fight,"* Cordell said. ■



GAHANNA-JEFFERSON LOCAL SCHOOLS Local 249

OAPSE Members “Make a Difference” Through New Program

Tax-Free Donations Help the Union Help Needy Families

OAPSE members are known for the quality public services they deliver to thousands of Ohio families every day. *“It’s a given that we are going to do the best job possible for the people we serve. We take great pride in that, and we don’t*

settle for less. The jobs we do improve the lives of people everywhere, so we are very serious about quality and about being the best we can be at work,” said Sandy Wheeler,



OAPSE state secretary. She said the focus on performance and outstanding delivery extends beyond the job for many OAPSE members, who regularly volunteer to improve their communities. *“Some of us do it through our churches. Some volunteer through neighborhood groups. And now, we have the opportunity to do it through our union, and that is just great,”* Wheeler said.

As a member of the International Union’s Women’s Rights Committee, Wheeler helped launch a community service program that carries out projects in neighborhoods during AFSCME conferences and conventions. For example, during the 2013 Women’s Conference in Denver, hundreds of volunteers worked alongside AFSCME members at the Denver Metropolitan Housing Authority, where workers are members of our union. *“We had such a good time and felt so good about the work we did that afternoon, that we decided to see if we could make community service a part of OAPSE. Our top officers and executive board loved the idea, so we launched the “OAPSE Making a Difference” program,”* Wheeler said.

During the May 2014 conference, more than 300 delegates, alternates and guests participated in the **“Read, Feed and Weed”** project through **“OAPSE Making a Difference,”** which is registered with the IRS as a 501(c)(3) tax exempt organization. That means donations to **“OAPSE Making a Difference”** are tax deductible.

Wheeler serves as president of the new organization, which will spearhead projects in the future and oversaw the successful **“Read, Feed and Weed”** project in the spring. *“We raised more than \$13,500 in cash and received thousands more in donations of books and food so we could help the students at Columbus Public Schools.”* OAPSE members stuffed bags with books and food and delivered them to four of the most economically disadvantaged elementary schools in the district. And about a hundred volunteers spent several hours beautifying two school campuses. *“It was hot, grueling work. But it was so satisfying. We really did make a difference that afternoon, and we look forward to our next project,”* Wheeler said.

She noted that the community service focus will continue next spring, even in the absence of a conference. *“Our members see poverty and need every day, not just in big urban districts like Columbus City Schools, but in small, rural districts from Northwest Ohio to the Southeast corner of our state. We want to make sure we help children wherever the need is greatest,”* Wheeler said.

OAPSE will select a school district and determine a project in the next few months. Tax-free contributions may be made payable to **“OAPSE Making a Difference, Inc.”** and sent to the state office.

“Our project this year was a huge success thanks in large part to Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, which provided \$40,000 worth of books to help kids learn to read,

and Champion Foods, which gave us the lowest price possible for tons of snacks, meals and drinks. But every donation helped. We had gifts of \$2,500 from some districts, and \$10 from some members. We appreciate every contribution and every person who worked to make this possible,” Wheeler said. ■

OAPSE AFSCME STRONG
UNITED IN ACTION



OAPSE Helps Save Millions in Health Care Costs

Money Used to Save Jobs, Increase Wages and Improve Benefits

For at least 20 years, the rising cost of health care has been in the headlines – and on the minds of OAPSE members, who have come face-to-face with skyrocketing premiums and copays every time they negotiate new contracts. The good news for thousands of OAPSE members is that they have the professional assistance of health care experts as they tackle the complicated process of securing decent, affordable health care coverage.

“Our union has helped employers across Ohio save millions of dollars, and that money was used to save jobs and to give

our members wage increases. It’s a big deal to have this level of assistance. And I think it’s especially valuable because in the process of working with employers to reduce costs, our



members are part of the training and part of the conversation about how and where to save money in health care costs. Knowl-

edge is power,” said OAPSE State President JoAnn Johnntony.

Since 2001, OAPSE has provided health insurance education and consulting for local unions across Ohio through the education and research departments. Our union offers two comprehensive health insurance training programs – one which trains local officers and members and another designed to jointly train employers and members on how to form a labor-management health insurance committee and instruct the committee on plan design, obtaining a plan, wellness initiatives, risk management and cost savings. These sessions are facilitated by Director of Education and Research Larry Malone.

According to Fred McGraw, a former OAPSE education director who serves as our union’s health care consultant, “One of the keys to success in the process of health care negotiations is to take the emotion out of it and deal with the facts. When employers and employees work together as equals through the labor-management committee to evaluate the worth of their health insurance program using data, they can improve cost management and lower utilization. That saves money

and makes dollars available for wages and other benefits.”

He said the labor-management health care committee is vital to success. “When we meet with employees and employers, our success rate is 100 percent. We have always found some way to cut costs while still protecting our members.”

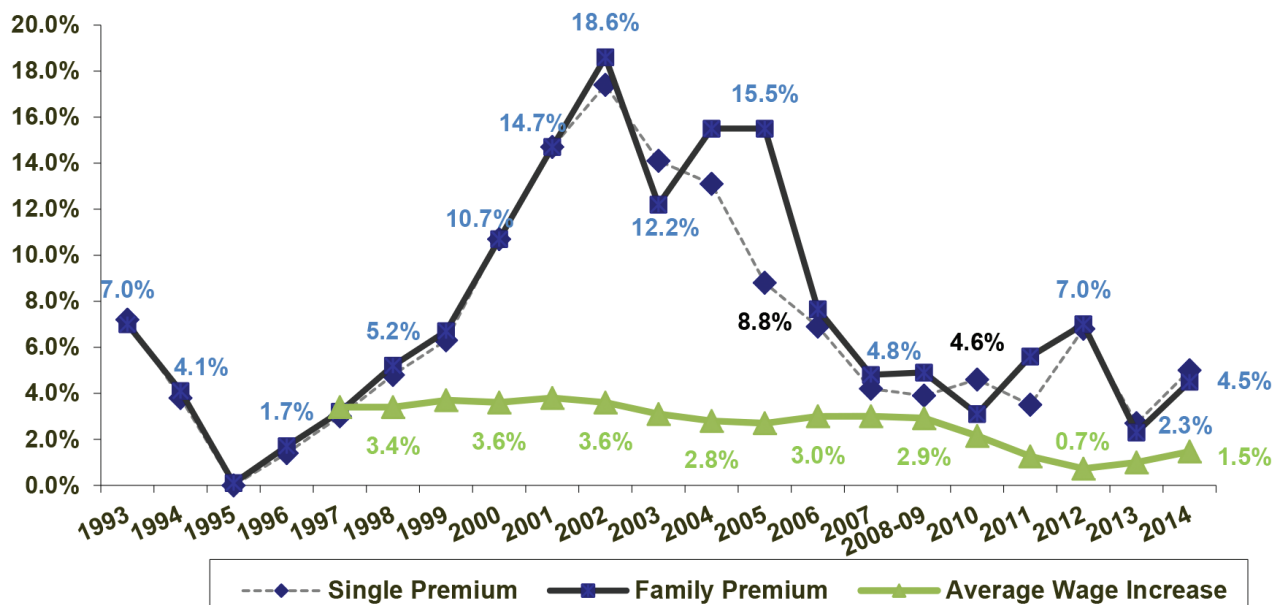
“Where these committees are in place and are trained together and really buy into the process of working together, we save money. And we do it because all parties are open to what will work for that group to save money and still give our members the best possible health care. We have shown over and over again that you can do both,” McGraw said.

He said that in 2005, because of the success OAPSE was having in saving health care dollars, our union was asked to develop training for federal mediators and 40 Ohio school districts. “The Federal Mediation and Conciliation Services folks came to us because they said that in 90 percent of their cases, the cost of health insurance was a bigger issue at the bargaining table than wages. They wanted help with understanding plans

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Annual Percent Increases in Medical Premiums and Average Wage

Increases - 1997-2014



Since 1997, health care costs have dramatically outpaced wage increases. That’s why many OAPSE local unions look to the health care experts on the union’s staff for assistance in lowering costs – which has helped saved jobs and made wage hikes possible.

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and what to do to save money without harming workers.” OAPSE, the Ohio Education Association (OEA) and the Ohio School Boards Association (OSBA) received a \$95,000 grant to develop health care training. McGraw was one of the authors of the training manual that remains in use today by all the original partners.

OAPSE locals across the state have formed committees, received the training and have saved hundreds of thousands – even millions – of dollars. “Ideally, we want to start the conversation about health care costs before a crisis occurs. We need to review the health care plans and bring them up-to-date. We ask ourselves, ‘What can be changed to save money without adversely impacting our members?’” McGraw said.

The leaders of Local 233 at Ashland City Schools were some of the first OAPSE members trained under the grant. Local President Barb Phillips has been involved from the start more than 15 years ago. “I am so grateful for OAPSE’s expertise and guidance on health care. We have been through the intense training and worked as a committee to save hundreds of thousands of dollars. We have saved jobs. We have improved benefits. We have done a lot of good work. It hasn’t always been easy, but it has been worth it,” Phillips said.

In the Columbus City Schools, workers are represented by 11 OAPSE local unions and the Columbus School Employees Association (CSEA). All the locals have



participated in health care training, and CSEA leaders are part of an active labor-management health care committee. “Since 2011, we have saved more than \$16 million in health care

costs. That doesn’t happen by accident. It happens when you know the facts and you build a health care plan that works for the people who use it,” said CSEA President and Central District State Executive Board

Alternate Lois Carson. She said members voted on plan changes as part of their contracts and have embraced the wellness initiatives and the other enhancements that save money. The \$16 million in savings has come back to OAPSE members in the form of wage increases and health care rebates.

Bus driver, member of Local 336 and Central District State Executive Board Member Betty Simmons-Talley praised the work of the committee and the assistance from OAPSE. “OAPSE and the committee stay involved after any changes are implemented to make sure our members understand what’s going on. For example, after our last contract, we held many group meetings and talked with members one-on-one to make sure our members know that they need to get a doctor and see a doctor and not use the emergency room as their primary place to get health care. It just costs too much when we do that,” Simmons-Talley said.



Other examples of major health care savings that impacted OAPSE members include:

- Edison Local Schools, where the school board decided not to privatize busing after the health care committee found \$700,000 in premium cost savings. The district received \$1.2 million by leaving their health care consortium (pooling group) and came out of fiscal watch as a result. The members of Local 35 benefited from the education, the process, and the outcome.
- Indian Creek Local Schools, where Local 460 members went six years without a pay increase. Plan changes resulted in savings of \$200,000, and members have not had a health insurance rate increase in several years.
- Washington Local Schools, where the committee included members of Local 279, who went through three weeks of training, performed a plan needs assessment and made changes that saved money without adversely affecting members.
- Strongsville City Schools, where workers are represented by Local 290. Over the last five years, OAPSE has helped the committee save \$2.2 million.

- Princeton City Schools, where Local 174 represents workers. OAPSE helped the committee with comprehensive training, new plan design and found the district a new broker, resulting in savings of \$500,000.

In Akron City Schools, plan design changes included moving to one health plan and a much better deal for the members of Local 689. Northeast District Executive Board Alternate Shelia Dawkins-Flinn is a secretary in the district. She said the training and education are invaluable. “Knowledge puts us on the same level of understanding as management. We all have the same information, and together we can make decisions that benefit the district and the workers.”



McGraw stressed that the goal of any labor-management health care committee has to be to reduce overall costs, not just have the employees pay more for their health care benefits. Edith Damron, president of Kent City Schools Local 176, agreed. “We just lived through a situation that illustrates this perfectly. The board wanted to contract out busing. They said they didn’t have the money to keep transportation in-house,” Damron said.

But working with the health care committee and McGraw, Damron and her co-workers were able to lower the plan costs by 11 percent, lower the cost of doctor visits and lower the cost of urgent care visits. “Just by doing things like discouraging emergency room visits for non-emergency care and urging our members to stay in-network, we made up the money to save busing without gouging our members. And our members got a 1.25 percent wage increase. It was a big win,” she said. (See more on this story on page 2.)

Associate Director Gary Martin said the value of the health care expertise, training and assistance cannot be overstated. “Our regional directors and field representatives count on these professional services to help them negotiate the strongest contracts for our members. And our local unions are at their best when their leaders are directly involved in the decisions that impact the people they represent.” This kind of quality representation sets OAPSE apart, he said. ■

OAPSE Fighting for DD Families, Employees

In the wake of new federal rules and their questionable interpretation by Ohio's governor and his cabinet, OAPSE is fighting to protect thousands of members who provide services to the state's most vulnerable residents – those who rely on county boards of developmental disabilities.

"Yes, we are fighting for developmental disabilities workers. But we are also fighting for the clients we serve every day. They deserve the freedom to choose who their service provider is.

If Governor Kasich and his team have their way, they will eliminate our work and force our clients to choose a private company for services like transportation, adult activity day services, early intervention and children's services and employment services," said Davida Russell, state vice president and Northeast District president.



Russell, who is a bus driver at the Cuyahoga County Board of Developmental Disabilities, said that the motive of the Kasich administration is clear: to take the nearly \$1 billion of dollars raised each year through local levies and federal grants and move it to their friends in the private sec-

tor. This would impact thousands of workers who are members of OAPSE, the Ohio Education Association (OEA), Service Employees International Union (SEIU) and AFSCME Ohio Council 8.

On August 16, OAPSE convened a summit of some of our union's presidents of locals who service the developmentally disabled. Also attending were staff and leaders from the other unions whose members are affected by the changes. *"We want to build a strong coalition of workers, unions and families so we can impact the outcome of this process. We are stronger together,"* Russell said.

She explained that across Ohio, communities pass levies to fund services for people with developmental disabilities. Those levy dollars are leveraged to draw down Medicaid waiver dollars, so the federal government has some authority over how the money is spent. In an effort to make sure conflicts of interest are eliminated when counties provide services, the Obama administration has issued new rules that are designed to protect the disabled and their families.

"We applaud the federal government for looking out for our clients. Unfortunately, their rules are open to interpretation by the state, which can go in several different directions when it implements the rules. And right now, it looks like Kasich and his top people want to get rid of us and limit our

clients to private companies," Russell said. She said the current system is based on local funding and local control that holds administrators and providers accountable. But that would all change if Kasich and his directors get their way.

According to Randy Weston, director of political action and legislative affairs, *"This is a policy shift, pure and simple. And it is in keeping with the Kasich agenda of putting the needs of private business above all else – even Ohio's most vulnerable adults and children. To top it off, Kasich's people won't even talk about their agenda until after the election because they don't want their callous disregard for the disabled to be an issue for voters."*

OAPSE is working to persuade the Obama Administration to revisit the rules for Ohio. *"The rules don't have the same impact in other states. But because of our unique funding system of the blended local levy/federal money, we could lose quality services and thousands of jobs. We will be asking for the help of OAPSE members across the state as we work with the Obama Administration to change the rules before the November election,"* Weston said. *"Together with the International union, we have met with U.S. Senator Sherrod Brown's office and U.S. Representative Marcia Fudge (OH-11), and they are working with us to address the problem,"* he said. ■

OAPSE Supported Striking Reynoldsburg Teachers

In a show of solidarity, OAPSE staff and Central District Executive Board Alternate Lois Carson walked the picket line with members of the Reynoldsburg Education Association who were forced off the job and on strike on September 19. Executive Director Joe Rugola said OAPSE was proud to support the teachers, who battled a superintendent who has close ties to Governor John Kasich and attempted to implement policies that were

contained in Senate Bill 5 legislation.

The teachers ratified a contract on October 9, and headed back to the classroom with a win. Parents and students from Reynoldsburg and union members from across Central Ohio rallied around the teachers during their 15 days on the picket line.

The new contract includes guaranteed wage increases and step increases, as well as incentive pay based on student perfor-

mance. The district had wanted to limit wages to merit pay. Teachers also kept their health insurance. The school board had insisted that they buy their own insurance with a lump sum check. And teachers won a commitment from the district to continually work toward reasonable class sizes.

Teachers said they will be looking to do what OAPSE does when we encounter a lack of true leadership on the school board – replace them at election time! ■



Executive Director Joe Rugola joins picketers.



OAPSE members from Central District show support for striking Reynoldsburg teachers.

AFSCME Announces New MVP Levels of PEOPLE

AFSCME has announced new levels of participation for the AFSCME PEOPLE Program. The new levels, referred to as "Champion" levels, were introduced at the International Union Convention this past summer in Chicago.

Although many OAPSE members have been participating proudly at higher levels for years, the change will give union members across the country the opportunity to be recognized for their "above-and-beyond" contributions.

The "MVP" level will remain the same as the baseline annual contribution of \$100. With an annual contribution of \$250+, you will be designated as "MVP Bronze," contributions of \$500+ will be "MVP Silver" and contributions of \$1,000+ will be "MVP Gold." OAPSE has adopted these levels to be used in the PEOPLE Program going forward.

Sign up today to become a "Champion" for worker's rights, your fellow union members and your family! ■

MVP Bronze \$250

MVP Silver \$500

MVP Gold \$1000

Get Rewarded for Building PEOPLE

OAPSE members know that money talks – especially when it comes to our wages, benefits, working conditions and job security. So how can we raise the money that helps strengthen our position at work and in our communities? Through AFSCME PEOPLE and the new OAPSE recruiter incentive program, of course!

"We are at our best when we have a strong political action program highlighted by a well-funded PEOPLE program. After all, that's how we raise the money

that enables us to fight the important battles that affect us every day – like Senate Bill 5. It's how we determine everything from whether we get raises to if we



back privatization schemes to what our retirement security is going to look like," said Barb Ward, chair of the OAPSE State PEOPLE Committee.

The PEOPLE Committee recently unveiled a program that lets OAPSE members earn cash rewards for signing up new PEOPLE members through payroll deduction. "PEOPLE is the tool we use to raise money that lets us help win levies, elect union-friendly school board candidates

and stop employers from contracting out. It's critical to our success as a union that we raise PEOPLE money. So we are offering OAPSE members the opportunity to make some money of their own every time they sign up a new PEOPLE member through payroll deduction. It's a cash-back program that will build PEOPLE and the pockets of OAPSE members," Ward said.

Here's how you can get rewarded:

1. Sign up members(s) to the AFSCME PEOPLE Program as either a new contributor or as an increase in contribution through payroll deduction.
2. Put your name and local on the recruiter line located on the bottom of the PEOPLE form before it is turned in to either your field representative or the state office.
3. As the member(s) you signed up start getting deductions taken from their check(s), you will earn 5 percent cash back for the first \$500 collected by the PEOPLE Department and 10 percent cash back for everything after that! You receive cash back for the first full year of new collected money for that member(s). Cash back checks go out every six months – April and October. First checks will be mailed in April 2015, but you start earning money right away!



"Our jobs are under attack – no question about it," said OAPSE Executive Director Joe Rugola. *"The Republicans are slashing our budgets. School boards and local governments are exploring privatization as THE answer, even though we know nobody can do our jobs better and more efficiently than we do. And voters are constantly asked to pass levies to keep our schools and county programs operating. This new PEOPLE recruiter program will help us raise the money we need to make a difference for OAPSE members. The money raised will give us the resources we need to win campaigns and elect candidates who support our rights."*

Recruiters must be signed up at the MVP level, which is \$100 per calendar year. To get additional PEOPLE applications, contact your field representative or PEOPLE Committee member. For more information about the new PEOPLE recruiter incentive program, contact your district PEOPLE Committee member or call Rob Fantauzzo at the state office, 1(800)786-2773. ■

Become an



Champion!

FOUR (4) EASY WAYS TO CONTRIBUTE TO AFSCME PEOPLE

Please complete this section of the form (PRINT CLEARLY), then select from the options listed below.



Last Name _____ First Name _____ Apt./ Lot # _____

* Shipping Address _____

City _____ State _____ ZIP + 4 _____

Social Security Number _____ Home Telephone No. _____

Local Name _____ Local No. _____

☐ Initial Membership ☐ Re-enrollment ☐ Increase in Contribution E-Mail Address _____

Jacket Size (Circle): XS S M L 1X 2X 3X 4X 5X Received MVP Jacket at Sign-Up? ☐ YES ☐ NO, OFFICE TO SEND

* Cannot accept "PO Box" Addresses

In accordance with federal law, the PEOPLE Committee will accept contributions only from members of AFSCME and their families. Contributions or gifts to AFSCME PEOPLE are not deductible as charitable contributions for federal income tax purposes. My contribution and/or authorization of charges is given voluntarily, and I understand that it is not required as a condition of membership in any organization, or as a condition of continued employment, and is free of reprisal. I understand that any contribution guideline is only a suggestion and I am free to contribute more or less than that amount and will not be favored or disadvantaged due to the amount of my contribution or refusal to contribute.

☐ Check this BOX to sign up through PAYROLL DEDUCTION: AUTHORIZATION FORM — VOLUNTARY PAYROLL DEDUCTION

(Total Amount to be Deducted Annually in Equal Installments)

☐ \$100 (MVP) Other \$ _____

Or join at a Champion Level:

☐ \$250 (MVP-Bronze) ☐ \$500 (MVP-Silver) ☐ \$1,000 (MVP Gold)

I hereby authorize my employer and associated agencies to deduct from each pay period the appropriate amount which will reflect my total annual contribution certified on this form as a voluntary contribution to be paid to the Treasurer of AFSCME/PEOPLE, c/o OAPSE/AFSCME Local 4/AFLE-CIO, 6805 Oak Creek Drive, Columbus, OH 43229-1591, to be used for the purpose of making political contributions and expenditures. My contribution is continuous unless revoked by me by giving written notice to my employer and my union.

Signature _____

Date ____/____/____

☐ Check this BOX to use a CREDIT CARD:

I hereby authorize AFSCME PEOPLE to bill my credit card account listed below in the amount of \$ _____ monthly or a one-time charge of \$ _____. This authorization will remain in effect until written notice of termination is given to AFSCME PEOPLE.

Name on Card _____

Expiration Date ____/____/____

Type of Card (Check ONE):

☐ Visa ☐ MasterCard ☐ Discover ☐ American Express

Card No. _____

Signature _____ Date ____/____/____

Recruiter's Name _____

Recruiter's Local No. _____

☐ Check this BOX to use ELECTRONIC FUNDS TRANSFER (EFT):

I hereby authorize AFSCME PEOPLE to make withdrawals from the account identified below at (financial institution, herein referred to as FI) and authorize the FI to charge such withdrawals to my listed account. Such withdrawals shall be equal to \$ _____ and shall be payable monthly. If the purpose for withdrawals is restricted in any manner, such restriction is stated below. Adjusting entries to correct errors are also authorized. It is agreed that these withdrawals and adjustments may be made electronically and under the Rules of the National Automated Clearing House Association. This authorization will remain in effect until written notice of termination is given to AFSCME PEOPLE. I understand that AFSCME PEOPLE uses the money it receives for political purposes.

Name of Financial Institution _____

FI Routing & Transit No. _____ Account to Debit _____

Signature _____ Date ____/____/____

☐ Checking Acct. ☐ Savings Acct.

☐ Check this BOX for DIRECT CONTRIBUTION:

☐ Personal Check # _____ in the amount of \$ _____

☐ Money Order in the amount of \$ _____

☐ Cash in the amount of \$ _____

Attach CASH and/or PERSONAL CHECK or MONEY ORDER (made payable to "AFSCME PEOPLE") to this form.

Signature _____

Date ____/____/____

Scholarships, Scholarships, Scholarships

Apply Now for OAPSE/AFSCME Memorial Scholarship

College costs are skyrocketing and wages are down – not a great combination for those who have the dream of a higher education. But OAPSE families can get help from their union to help make college possible. Scholarship money for college is a *“huge benefit of being an OAPSE member,”* said Stephanie Wiley, chair of the OAPSE/AFSCME Memorial Scholarship Committee. *“The average wage of an OAPSE member is about \$24,000, so our members are looking for every resource available to help make the dream of a college education a reality. They know the value of a \$2,500 scholarship. It can make the difference between being able to attend college or hav-*

ing to defer the dream,” she said.

The OAPSE/AFSCME Memorial Scholarship Program is available to children whose parent or legal guardian is a member in good standing of the Ohio Association of Public School Employees (OAPSE/AFSCME Local 4/AFL-CIO). Under the program, scholarships of \$2,500 each are awarded to at least one winner from each of the ten (10) OAPSE Districts selected from the applicants who meet the eligibility requirements. Any graduating high school senior who is a child of an active OAPSE/AFSCME member or whose legal guardian is an active OAPSE/AFSCME member and

who intends to enroll in a full-time degree program in any two (2) or four (4) year accredited university, college, business or technical school is eligible to apply for a scholarship. The scholarships may be used for any field of study.

The scholarship application period opens annually on November 1. To be eligible, all information or supportive documentation requested in the application must be received by the committee by March 1 each year.

Log into MyOAPSE at www.oapse.org to download a 2015 scholarship application or ask your district scholarship committee member or local president for a copy. ■

AFSCME Family Scholarship Deadline Approaching

OAPSE members seeking financial support for college can look to our union for help. Each year the AFSCME Family Scholarship Program provides ten \$2,000 scholarships to high school seniors that will be renewed for \$2,000 each year for a maximum of four years, provided the student remains enrolled in a full-time course of study. The scholarship may be used for any field of study.

To be eligible, you must:

- Be a graduating high school senior whose parent, legal guardian or financially responsible grandparent is a full dues-paying AFSCME member;
- At the time the scholarship is awarded, be enrolled in a full-time degree program either at an accredited four-year institution or at a two-year institution that will transfer credits to a four-year institution; and
- Have taken the SAT or the ACT.

To apply, you must meet all eligibility requirements as identified above. Make sure your complete application, with all support documentation (essay, transcripts, letters of recommendations, SAT or ACT scores, proof of AFSCME membership, etc.) is mailed together in one envelope, **POSTMARKED NO LATER THAN DECEMBER 31, 2014** to:

AFSCME Family Scholarship Program
Attention: AFSCME Advantage
1625 L Street NW
Washington, DC 20036

If you have any questions, call us at (202) 429-5066. ■

Gerald W. McEntee Scholarship Available for OAPSE Members

OAPSE members are eligible to apply for the Gerald W. McEntee Scholarship offered by our International Union, AFSCME. Awarded in honor of former AFSCME Pres. Jerry McEntee, the \$5,000 scholarship will go to the candidate who best exemplifies President McEntee's commitment to strengthening our union through organizing, building political power for working families, defending workers' rights, and supporting public services.

President McEntee served at the helm of AFSCME for 31 years and grew our union to 1.6 million members while helping defeat efforts to privatize Social Security and change Medicare.

The Gerald W. McEntee Scholarship will be awarded annually to an AFSCME member for use toward higher education expenses. It is a one-time scholarship and may not be awarded twice to the same member.

Applicants must first apply for the Union Plus Scholarship. Visit www.afscme.org/scholarships, then click Union Plus Scholarship. (The Union Plus Scholarship application also serves as the application for the Gerald W. McEntee scholarship).

Applications must be completed on-line.

In the essay portion of the application members will be asked to write an additional essay for the McEntee scholarship. Answer “yes” to the question, “Are you an AFSCME member?” Members will be asked to write an essay of no more than 500 words describing their commitment to the work led by President McEntee in areas such as new organizing, political power for working people, and support for public services.

Scholarship applications are judged by a committee of impartial post-secondary educators.

The deadline to submit applications is January 31, 2015. Winners will be announced May 31. ■

OAPSE/AFSCME Memorial Scholarships Awarded



Alexandra Drabick

Alexandra is the daughter of Tom Drabick, OAPSE, Local 1999. She will be attending The Ohio State University where she plans to major in Pre-Med.



Tara Kimbel

Tara was awarded the Nancy Sanders Memorial Scholarship. She is the daughter of Theresa Kimbel, Osnaburg Local Schools, Local 031. Tara will attend the University of Akron where she plans to major in Civil Engineering.



Nico Treglia

Nico was awarded the David Hamilton Memorial Scholarship. He is the grandson of legal guardian, JoAnn Hughes Staten, Buckeye Local Schools, Local 373. Nico will pursue a Nursing degree at the Franciscan University of Steubenville.



Kailyn Sickel

Kailyn was awarded the Gerald W. McEntee Tribute Scholarship. She is the daughter of Karen Sickel, Willard City Schools, Local 291. Kailyn will attend the University of Akron to major in Nursing and minor in Spanish.



Mathangi Sridharan

Mathangi was awarded the Pete Christopher Memorial Scholarship. She is the daughter of Bhuvanewari Sridharan, Strongsville City Schools, Local 290. She will attend the University of Pennsylvania to major in Economics and Biochemistry.



Sam Armstrong

Sam was awarded the Nick JohnTony Memorial Scholarship. He is the son of James Armstrong, Solon City Schools, Local 475. Sam will attend Cleveland State University to pursue a degree in Electrical Engineering.



Serena Parlette

Serena was awarded the Tom Joseph Memorial Scholarship. She is the daughter of Laurie Parlette, Genoa Area Local Schools, Local 462. Serena will attend the University of Toledo to major in Early Childhood Education.



Megan Webb

Megan is the daughter of Brian Webb, Hardin Northern Local Schools, Local 022. She will be attending the University of Toledo where she plans to study to become an Athletic Trainer.



Emily Hines

Emily was awarded the Lianne Vernell Memorial Scholarship. She is the daughter of Kelly Hines, Scioto Valley Local Schools, Local 013. Emily will attend Shawnee State University to major in Radiologic Technology.



Arielle Stephenson

Arielle is the daughter of Stephanie Stephenson, Ohio Valley Local Schools, Local 572. She will be attending Wright State University and plans to study Pre-Med.



Anna Semler

Anna is the daughter of Roberta Semler, Yellow Springs Exempted Village Schools, Local 644. She will be attending Muskingum University where she plans to major in Sports Therapy.

The OAPSE/AFSCME Memorial Scholarships are awarded annually to a minimum of 10 students, one from each of the ten OAPSE Districts, in the amount of \$2,500. Applications available online beginning November 1st!



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OAPSE Local Union Audits Are Due

The deadline for Local Audits was October 1!

If your Local has not submitted the Annual Audit to the State Office, please note that this is a constitutional obligation that is required by the OAPSE/AFSCME State Constitution.

To assist your Local, the Treasurer's Handbook and the Audit Committee Guide were both sent to your Local Treasurer in September and are also both available on the OAPSE Website. These publications contain details on how to properly prepare and conduct the audit (www.oapse.org; You must sign in as a member to access).

If you have any questions, please call the OAPSE State Office and speak to:

- Sue Slabaugh, OAPSE Locals numbered #001 - #354
- Molly Talley, OAPSE Locals numbered #355 - #766B

Members, make sure your officers are complying! ■

OAPSE News

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