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## UPCOMING EVENTS

- Chancellor's Open Forum, February 24 10:00am
- Membership Information Meeting, February 25 11:30am-1:30pm
- Staff Senate Meeting, March 5 9:00am-11:00am
- Executive Board Meeting, March 10 5:00pm
- General Meeting March 17 11:30am-12:30pm



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# PEOPLE Conference Sets Legislative Agenda for Council 31

AFSCME Council 31 held their PEOPLE and Legislative Conference in Springfield, IL on January 24. President Anne Hunter and Vice-President Anna Broadfoot represented Local 2887 as voting delegates.

The main focus of the conference was to look at the major challenges we are facing in Illinois. According to the Economic Policy Institute, Illinois ranked 8th in the nation for income inequality, and the fiscal situation of the state continues to decline.

Governor Bruce Rauner has made it clear that he is anti-union and wants to make Illinois a "Right to Work" state. While he talked about working together for a better Illinois in his State of the State speech, he is pursuing an aggressive agenda designed to undermine the rights of employees to have a voice on the job and to participate in democracy.

At the conference, Executive Director Roberta Lynch stated, "It is not about one governor. It's about the entire wealthy elite." She noted that AFSCME and its members could not outspend Rauner or the corporations behind him even if every one of our members were PEOPLE MVPs. Rauner and his supporters have used their dominance of the media to paint a picture of state workers receiving excessively generous benefits and pensions without paying into them while doing nothing to earn them.

Senator Sam McCann was a guest speaker at the conference and shared his stories of the individuals he encountered who serve their communities as state employees. He stressed the importance of putting a real face on state workers and the services provided to our communities.

Designed to define "state employee" in terms of faces and locations, the break-out session presentation and exercises demonstrated a need to redefine our jobs from titles to actions and the impact on the community at large. The numbers show that we earn less than our counterparts in the private sector; if we all worked for free it would barely make a dent in the expenditures of the State.

The 2015 Legislative Agenda was adopted unanimously. The main goals are to protect workers' rights, address revenue shortfalls in state and local governments, fight privatization of public services and assets, promote adequate staffing levels and quality service, improve wage levels in human service agencies, seek adequate funding for state universities, and oppose further cuts to public employee pensions.

## Local Committee Operating Papers Ratified

At the December General Meeting, Local 2887 ratified operating papers for the Solidarity Committee, the Stewards Committee, and the new PEOPLE Committee. These papers describe the function and structure of the committees and includes procedures for joining and chairing these committees.

Committees are made up of

volunteers from the membership of Local 2887 and are open to all Members. They meet every two months at a minimum.

The Solidarity Committee promotes unity within Local 2887 and the larger labor movement, and also organizes Local events and meetings. The PEOPLE Committee implements political, legislative, and fundraising pro-

grams designed to meet the needs of AFSCME members. The Steward Committee works together on grievances, problems, and workplace issues as well as coordinating Member Action Teams (MATs) and defining issues for negotiations.

The operating papers will be available on our Local website in the near future.

## From the President:

A new year is a great opportunity for a new start. Much of 2014 was spent bringing things up-to-date for our Local—from a new contract to updating our documents and information to the election of a new Executive Board, the focus was on setting the stage for new goals and smoother operations. We will continue to evaluate the way we do things, but 2015 is our opportunity to start on the right foot and put all of that ground-work into practice.

It is understandably hard to be optimistic

considering the current state of Illinois and the budget issues facing the University. In addition to those uncertainties, our new governor has made it very clear that he wants to take away our rights and benefits with his anti-Union, anti-state employee agenda. It is a scary time to work for Illinois, and we face constant criticism for the benefits we have worked so hard to gain.

Despite that, we cannot give up. It would be easy to say there is nothing we can do, and just let the State and the University take what they want. It would not be the right thing to do, however—for us or for our

communities. If we do not stand up for our own rights and for the good things we provide to our community, who will?

It is not enough just to stand strong. We need to grow stronger and show our commitment to each other through our Local. We need every person covered by our contract to acknowledge that the work we do as a Union is worth more than just a “fair share” and sign a membership card. If we are to succeed, we need to be in it together.

In Solidarity,  
Anne Hunter

## Get to Know Your Union: Local 2887 and Council 31

Per our contract with SIUE, AFSCME is the “exclusive collective bargaining agent in all matters established and pertaining to wages, hours, and terms and conditions of employment” for all Clerical and Kindred classifications included in the Local 2887 bargaining unit. Our Local is part of Council 31, who represents all Locals in Illinois.

Our Members are the Local, and employees covered by our contract who do not elect to become Members are considered Fair Share. When meetings of the Local are not in session, the Executive Board acts as the governing body of the Union. All members of the Executive Board are elected by the membership. There are three Trustees elected for three-year terms, one per year. All other officers are elected for

a term of two years in the even-numbered years. Our current Executive Board was elected in November 2014. Anne Hunter is President, Anna Broadfoot is Vice President, Sherie Gottlob is Treasurer, and Lori Huntley is Secretary. Ex-



ecutive Board Members are Vicki Daggett, Diane Schilling, and Vickie Sumner. Marlee Graser's term as Trustee expires in November 2015; two Trustee positions are currently vacant.

Assisting the Executive Board are the Stewards. All Stewards have been certified by Council 31 after a two-day training session. To help them, we will be establishing Member Action Teams (MAT) across our campuses. These MAT teams will help to identify workplace issues and share information.

Our Staff Representative Ed LaPorte is our liaison with Council 31. Eddie Caumiant is the Regional Director for Southern Illinois. The Council also has an Executive Board made up of union members from across the State. The Deputy Director for Council 31 is Mike Newman, who joined Council 31 as the Legislative Director in 1982. Roberta Lynch became the Executive Director of Council 31 in 2014 after two decades of service as Deputy Director.

## New Dues Rates for 2015

In accordance with Article IX, Section 6 of the AFSCME International Constitution, the minimum dues rates have been adjusted for 2015. The calculations are required to be audited and certified by an independent certified public accountant who is not otherwise connected to AFSCME. The audit has been completed and confirms the following increases.

For Local 2887, the dues rates for Members

and the Fair Share rates have been updated and will be effective February 16, 2015. For full-time employees, the semi-monthly Member rate is now \$20.36 and the Fair Share rate is \$13.84. This is an increase of \$0.38 and \$0.26 respectively. For part-time employees, the semi-monthly Member rate is now \$15.25 and the Fair Share rate is \$10.37.

Member dues support the activities of our

Local, Council 31 and the International Union and provide member-only benefits. As we are obligated to represent all employees covered by our contract, Fair Share fees help to cover the costs of representation.

The law prohibits union dues and fair share fees from going to political campaigns or to support elected officials. All of those types of efforts are funded through voluntary PEOPLE program contributions.

## Member Benefit Spotlight: Opportunity Knocks

We often talk about the opportunities available to Members, but what does that really mean? Members can take part in meetings, committees, and Local leadership, but what are the benefits of doing so?

Being involved makes sure that you are informed—of your rights, your benefits, and issues affecting others in the bargaining unit. You may not be facing any issues right now, but knowing what you are entitled to and how things are supposed to work is important to a good

work environment and can help identify things that could affect you in the future. Active membership makes the union stronger, giving us a greater collective ability to affect changes.

Opportunity is more than showing up at meetings, though. Getting involved with activities provides a way to learn more about the union and those represented by our contract. Taking part in union activities helps create a network of contacts across campus that can benefit both your work and personal life.

You can also gain valuable experience by volunteering for leadership positions and participating on committees. Not everyone thinks to put volunteer positions on their resumes, but doing so can showcase talents and abilities that are not always reflected in job descriptions.

Most importantly, being active in the union gives you a voice in our workplace. By knowing what is important to our members, we can focus on improving benefits and issues that mean the most to you and your co-workers.

*In addition to the benefits listed at [afscme.org](http://afscme.org), Members are also eligible for discounts through Union Plus at [unionplus.org](http://unionplus.org).*

## Membership Information Session Scheduled for February 25

If you would like to learn more about the benefits of membership and what our contract provides, please attend an informational session scheduled for Wednesday, February 25 between 11:30am-1:30pm. The session will take place in Lovejoy Library's third floor conference room (LB3021).

It is not necessary to attend the entire time as the presentation will be repeated throughout the two-hour window. Officers will be on hand to answer questions and green cards will be available for Fair Share employees to sign. We will be covering the

protections and benefits offered by our contract, including seniority/bumping rights, auditing for reclassifications and temporary pay, grievance procedures, longevity, and leave benefits. To get the full benefit of your representation, it is important to know what is in your contract.

While Civil Service and University policies and procedures have some protections in place, our contract provides additional security and remains in place for the duration of the contract even if University benefits and protections are reduced or elimi-

nated. Unrepresented staff and other on-campus unions who recently negotiated new contracts have seen some reductions in benefits, but we were able to keep all of our existing benefits and improve many of them for our members.

If you cannot attend the meeting but would like to speak with someone about your benefits or membership, please contact any Officer or Steward to arrange a time to meet or come to our next General Meeting on March 17 from 11:30am-12:30pm in the same room at Lovejoy Library.

## Steward News: Issues at SIUE

As departments are being asked to further reduce their operating budgets, some have looked to staffing rearrangements or reductions as options to save money. In many of these situations, departments have been unaware or are attempting to ignore the rights of seniority as protected by our contract. Human Resources is aware that these discussions are happening and are attempting to guide departments on

the proper procedures as they occur. If your department is reassigning duties or looking at eliminating a position in our bargaining unit, please contact your Steward. When we know about these discussions, we can work with HR to make sure the rules are being followed.

In other news, the Chief Steward has been coordinating with Community Workers to identify workplace issues to present to Jesse Dixon,

the new Director of the East St. Louis Center.

After meetings with the Director and Labor Relations, a survey was created and presented to Community Workers. Once the results are compiled, we will be arranging a meeting with Mr. Dixon and the Community Workers to talk about ongoing concerns and find solutions to long-standing issues.

**WELCOME!**

**New Members**

**in January:**

Denyse Anderson

Samara Chapple

Nina Conrad

Anne Frosh

Aliesha Graham

**OFFICERS:**

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**Anna Broadfoot** Vice-President  
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**Lori Huntley** Secretary  
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**Vicki Daggett** Executive Board  
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**Diane Schilling** Executive Board  
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**Marlee Graser** Trustee  
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**Vacant** Trustee

**Vacant** Trustee



**LOCAL CONTACTS**

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**Vacant**

**Vacant** Solidarity Committee Chair

**LOCAL STEWARDS**

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# Larry Marquardt Scholarship Available

Larry Marquardt was a tireless organizer and union leader who dedicated his life to improving the lives of working people. He was the first executive director of AFSCME Council 31, serving in that position until his death in 1980. In his memory, Council 31 has established a scholarship fund which offers AFSCME members and their children financial assistance for higher education.

Two scholarships of \$1000 will be awarded for the school year beginning in September 2015. The Selection Committee screens qualified candidates and determines eligibility. The committee considers financial need, high school or college grades and class ranking, vocational goals as

expressed in the application, and a 300-word essay written by the applicant on why the labor movement is important to workers.

To be eligible for the award, the applicant must:

- Be either a member of AFSCME Council 31 or a dependent child or child living in the household of a Council 31 member or retiree. Membership of one year in good standing is required.
- Be a high school senior or college student under the age of 25 or a Council 31 member of any age who plans to attend school full-time and work toward an undergraduate degree or diplo-

ma in an accredited college or vocational school.

- Meet the requirements of the school he or she plans to attend.
- Applications which do not include all the information requested, including family income, copies of grades, ACT/SAT scores, and membership verification, will not be considered. All information is confidential.

To obtain an application, please go to [www.afscme31.org](http://www.afscme31.org) and follow the link "AFSCME Scholarships" on the left side of the homepage. Completed applications should be returned to the Council's Chicago office by 4pm on Friday, April 17, 2015. Early application is encouraged.