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UPCOMING EVENTS

- Executive Board Meeting
July 13 at 5pm
- Executive Board Special Meeting
July 18 at 5pm
- Steward Training
July 15
- GMCFL Meeting
July 27 at 7pm
- Staff Senate Meeting
August 3
- Executive Board Meeting
August 10 at 5pm



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Illinois Has a Balanced Budget!

From Council 31

At last!

The Illinois General Assembly acted to override Bruce Rauner's veto of a budget/revenue plan that brings Illinois back from the brink of fiscal collapse. After two years, our state was facing crises on every front—road work/infrastructure projects halted, human services agencies shutting their doors, state universities losing students and faculty, a mountain of unpaid bills, and the looming threat of becoming the first ever “junk bond” state.

Legislators finally stood up to Governor Bruce Rauner and

voted to make the tough choices needed to save our state—cutting some \$3 billion in spending and raising taxes by 1.2% (from 3.75% to 4.95%). Illinois income tax rates will still be lower than many neighboring states—and less than they were three years ago.

Governor Rauner was holding out for reforms, which he claimed would be pro-business and would benefit Illinois. Those “reforms” include cutting the pensions of public employees, cutting benefits for injured workers, and slashing funding for the CMS Group Health Plan. There is no evidence at all that these reforms would close the state's

budget gap or stabilize finances for the future.

House Speaker Madigan refused to allow these reforms, claiming that the middle class would suffer unduly.

Their two year inability to reach a successful bipartisan approach to financial stability has led to painful hardships throughout the State of Illinois.

Those of us who work for State Universities can rejoice that higher education funding will be better than worst case projections, while realizing that the funding is still less than FY 2015, the last full budget year.

Janice Sunderland Receives April Employee Recognition Award

Janice Sunderland, Office Support Specialist in the Department of Computer Management and Information Systems (CMIS) and Accounting, was the recipient of the April Employee Recognition Award.

“Wonderful events that come unexpectedly are often those most cherished. Being selected as Employee of the Month is definitely one of those events,” said Sunderland. “I am so fortunate to work with such outstanding faculty members in both CMIS and Accounting. They

have been so kind and patient and always make me feel much appreciated.”

“I can think of no one who is more deserving of this award than Janice Sunderland,” said Dr. Anne L. Powell, CMIS Department Chair and professor as reported by SIUE. “Her prompt attention to problems, her great organizational skills, and her motivation to make the work lives of everyone around her easier, have made her the most outstanding office support specialist at SIUE.”



Janice joined AFSCME Local 2887 when she started working for SIUE in July of 2014.

Congratulations, Janice!

From the President:

Brothers and Sisters, we are in crisis times for the country, the State of Illinois, and for SIUE.

It is easy to feel overwhelmed, drowned in a sea of negativity. I understand that anxiety.

Fortunately, there are bright spots. One came with the news of the legislative override of Governor Rauner's veto of the legislature's balanced budget. After over two years, the State of Illinois finally has a budget.

The Chancellor explained some of what this means in his celebratory e-mail: 100% funding (i.e., the equivalent of the last budget in FY15) for the recently completed 2016-17 year which provides the additional 47% funding to the original appropriation of 53%

passed in June 2016, 100% MAP funding for 2016-17 which is between \$6 and \$7 million for SIUE, 90% funding for the 2017-18 academic year (i.e., 90% of FY15), and re-appropriation of funding to complete Science East which the entire building is now expected to be open Fall 2018 (the two auditoriums will be finished for use beginning Fall 2017).

All of this is very good news. It does not mean all our challenges disappear, but it means the bottom did not drop out. My hope is that the temporary euphoria will put us in a stronger position in negotiations, which start this month. I have some signals that HR may be more amenable to targeted increases than they have in the past. There seems to be some recognition that many of our members are honestly suffering.

We have come through a very turbulent time together. Since it did not kill us, hopefully it made us stronger.

We need to stand together for fair pay, for dignity in our work environment, and for a reasonable hope for the future. We need to be mindful of the bloody history of the labor movement. Labor pioneers died trying to organize so that America stayed democratic, rejecting the European history of dynasty and feudalism.

Many parents today tell their children that they can be anything they are willing to work hard enough to become. To the extent that is true, organized labor is owed much of the credit.

In Solidarity,
Vicki K. Daggett

Get to Know Your Union: Negotiations

We are about to enter negotiations with the University. As members, you hear a lot about "negotiations", but what does that mean?

For Local 2887 it means starting well before the scheduled end of a contract to plan for the next contract.

A Pre-Negotiations Committee is appointed to "take the membership pulse". This team talks exhaustively with the membership to determine where the next contract needs stronger language or needs to be shored up. They may survey the membership or collect data from other source.

This committee starts to shape our "proposal": what we want the next contract to look like.

As the end of the current contract nears, the Pre-Negotiations Committee segues into a Negotiations Committee. Our contract specifies the size of the team who will negotiate with the University, but the Committee actually has to fill those spots with people who can effectively represent our members.

A letter is sent to Human Resources expressing our intent to bargain, at which point a target date to begin the actual negotiations is set.

The two teams sit across from each other and pick over the past contract and new proposals in the most minute detail. Proposals are traded back and forth between the Local and Human Resources. The two sides can accept a proposal, offer a counter-proposal, or refuse to consider a change. Typically issues that involve money are

the most difficult to bring to an agreement. Both sides work toward a conclusion that represents their constituencies.

It is frustrating for the members to not know where we are in the process, however we are constrained from saying much because of the legal doctrine of bargaining in good faith. If preliminary discussions become public it can damage the process.

Once the two sides have come to an agreement at the table, the proposal is brought to the membership and voted on. If ratified, the proposal is signed by both parties and becomes the new contract. If it is rejected, the negotiations team must go back to the table with management and try again.

SIUE Hosts IACAC Camp

College for Illinois Rising Seniors

SIUE's division of Enrollment Management and the Office of Undergraduate Admissions are hosting the Illinois Association for College Admission Counseling (IACAC) Camp College program July 11-14 on the Edwardsville campus.

AFSCME Local 2887 member Linda Colombara Buffo, Office Manager for the Admissions Department, is on the front lines of recruiting efforts for SIUE. Events like

"Camp College" require intensive coordination behind the scenes. Linda uses her years of experience here at SIUE to be a highly effective "first face" for prospective and new students and their families.

Camp College provides Illinois rising seniors with the unique opportunity to learn about the college search and application process firsthand from college admission professionals and high school counselors. Activities

take place in the Morris University Center, Peck Hall, Rendleman Hall, and Evergreen Hall.

Participants learn about navigating a college fair, essay writing, identifying college fit/match, financial aid, and other useful topics. In addition, campers are paired with a counselor/mentor who they retain for the 2017-18 school year.

Member Benefit Spotlight

Through the AFSCME Free College benefit, you and your family members can earn an associates degree, completely online—for free. This benefit covers any amount for tuition, fees, or books that are not covered by Federal or Employer education grants.

AFSCME has partnered with Eastern Gateway Community College to help our members qualify for promotions, finish their degrees, or enrich their lives through learning. Eastern Gateway is an accredited com-

munity college, a member of the University System of Ohio, and is one of the fastest-growing public colleges in the country. It is an open access public college governed by the Ohio Board of Regents and accredited by the Higher Learning Commission.

Programs available include Business Management, Criminal Justice, Early Childhood Education, Accounting, Paralegal, Individualized Study, and Patient Navigation. You can earn an Associates of Arts degree which parallels the first two years of a Bachelor of

Arts degree at most four-year institutions. A Patient Home Navigator Certificate is also available which prepares students to work in community or healthcare settings with jobs like Admissions Coordinator, Case Manager, Medicaid Service Coordinator, Patient Access Specialist, Patient Advocate, Patient Representative, or Service Coordinator while giving them a knowledge of medical terminology, medical codes, and Microsoft Office.

Learn more at freecollege.afscme.org or call 888-590-9009.

You can now find a list of benefits and discounts available to union members on our website.

Local 2887 Elections in September

Local 2887 will be holding elections for Trustee and convention delegates in September.

Trustees attend all Executive Board meetings as observers to ensure that rules and standards are followed. They also audit the Local's finances on a quarterly basis and reports the results to the membership. To help them in this task, Trustees attend a AFSCME Financial Standards training workshop offered by Council 31 that

covers the AFSCME Financial Standards Code, International Union reports, and required governmental filings.

The Council 31 Biennial Convention will be held in Springfield, IL on October 20-21. At our June General Meeting the Local approved up to 4 members to attend the convention, which includes the President as an automatic delegate per our constitution. Delegates represent our Local

at the state level and are eligible to vote at the convention. Workshops and training sessions are also held during the convention.

If you would like to nominate yourself or someone else for these positions, please send your nomination to the Elections Chair, Chris McClelland, at cmcclel@siue.edu. Nominations and voting deadlines will be shared with the membership once dates are finalized.

Letter to the Editor:

The views and comments expressed are those of the writer and not necessarily those of Local 2887.

While I am happy that the budget has finally been passed, I do have several questions that I would like to ask our legislators.

If you were able to override the governor's veto all along why did you not override it during the first year instead of putting all of the State workers through the stress of having their insurance payments not paid, their insurance refused, the worry of not knowing whether or not your child would be seen by your physician?

Why did it take having another dead-

line before anyone acted to get this budget passed? You had all of two years and yet you wait until the "midnight hour" and then you get it done in only a week? What were you doing during the other 103 weeks that went by in the last two years?

How do you expect us to support you in our legislature when we have to survive for two whole years of uncertainty, and then we are supposed to rejoice when you finally do the job that we elected you to do two years ago?

Now, to play the devil's advocate, I am thrilled that the budget has been passed, and although I do not like the fact that it is now our burden to pay higher taxes, since I am a worker making below-poverty wages, the difference in the amount that I would have to pay in taxes would probably not even amount to \$5 a week. If that's what it takes so that we can have job security and our students can be funded to pursue their education, then I am more than willing to sacrifice that \$5 per week.

Kathleen Stipe

DID YOU KNOW?

Meeting minutes for General Meetings and the Executive Board are available on the Local's website under the "For Members" tab.

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Vacant

Vacant

Vacant

Get Involved

By Vicki Kruse

Working in the University Governance Office at SIUE, I have met many nice, caring, intelligent people—of whom some serve on the Staff Senate or Faculty Senate at one time or another. They serve for many reasons such as to help preserve the University as the boundless place it is or want to help improve it where improvement may be needed. You see, I have a ‘bird’s eye view’ of the University where I sit.

Ironic that I am in the basement (of Rendleman Hall), but that does not stop me, as office support for both senates, from seeing the many processes that enable much work to be accomplished for a great deal of people. If you want to learn more about your employer...get involved!

It is true. Getting involved makes you

happier. Yes, by getting involved and openly sharing your suggestions with a committee or a member of the senates, you will move to the next level and find ways to make your suggestions work. It is easy to think about improving the way something



Dana Dain and Vicki Kruse at the Illinois AFSCME Convention 2011

works or to make it run more efficiently, but you put it in writing or convey it to a group such as a committee it then starts to become more than a wish or an idea. You will soon find like minds that will join you in

making a plan. With the plan, more people get involved, and the work or accomplishment becomes much simpler. The group can fine tune the plan and push it to the next phase for approval. The plan keeps moving like it is alive until final approval, and at that point the whole idea or wish becomes real. Once approved, the work is not over. Now, the plan or outcome of your initial work will surface and you can play an important role in what comes next: implementation or sending it to another group with applicable skills who will make it a reality.

At this point, you will have the satisfaction of knowing that you were part of a process that resulted in an action. It takes a chain or a process—and you were a part of that chain, a link that made it happen.