



Union Eyes

FALL 2015 ISSUE

"No matter how unfair, or how upset (or set-up) you might feel, PLEASE: take a breath, take a break, make a call. Protect yourself, your rights and your job!"

TAKE A BREATH, TAKE A BREAK, MAKE A CALL

by Rita Grabowski

Dearest Union Brothers and Sisters:
I want to share some recently-gained insights regarding your delegates' ability to successfully intercede on your behalf when management brings disciplinary action against any of you, and share some general information regarding grievances.

supervisor know that you are upset. Tell them that you realize that the two of you need to complete the current conversation, but that you are requesting a time out so that you can make a brief phone call to a Union representative.

To file a grievance, the actions of management must violate specific contract language. Some actions are not grievable. For example: Although it is your right to respond in writing to your performance evaluation, you cannot file a grievance based on an evaluation. If you are involved in a pre-disciplinary hearing, a grievance cannot be filed until discipline is enacted.

Then, DO EXACTLY THAT! Keep dialing until someone on the list of contacts answers their phone.



I do not want any of you to be in an emotionally charged situation where what you say, or where the volume or tone of your voice, or where any of your actions might be perceived by a member of management as any type of threat.

Remember, too, that the Union is not able to file a grievance for general "bad management," unless management does not respect you, or violates the contract in some other specific way.

If, in a hearing, someone in management makes the statement that, "I felt threatened," or says that "I was frightened" by the employee's action, or by their "angry outburst," please realize that unless their statement can be disproven beyond a doubt by witnesses, it will be virtually impossible for the Union to reverse any disciplinary action that may follow, up to and including termination of employment.

Two recent disciplinary actions have made me very aware of a type of "he said - she said" that I want all of you to know about.

No matter how unfair, or how upset (or set-up) you might feel, PLEASE: take a breath, take a break, make a call. Protect yourself, your rights and your job!

As humans, many of us may, on occasion, get upset at work. We may even get upset at our supervisors. If you find yourself in that situation, PLEASE: Excuse yourself from the conversation. Quietly and as calmly as possible, let your

MOURNING OUR UNION BROTHERS AND SISTERS

Ten of the 14 people killed in the shooting rampage in Southern California on Wednesday Dec. 2nd 2015 were members of the Service Employees International Union, according to [the Union](#).

SEIU 721, the Los Angeles-based local that represented the victims, said at least another three of its members were injured in the massacre in San Bernardino. All told, at least 21 people were wounded in addition to the 14 killed. STAY STRONG!



By Susan Moreno-Molek

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THIS IS THE TIME OF YEAR TO BE THANKFUL!

What are some of the things we can thank our unions for? Weekends without work. Before unions, if your employer required you to work all week and weekends you didn't have a choice, you worked 7 days a week or looked for another job. Before unions, employers were not required to provide breaks at work or a lunch break. You were required to work no matter how tiring the work was or how hot the work place got. Everyone can thank our unions for the Family & Medical Leave Act (FMLA) of 1993. Before this act if you had a family emergency, you had to make a choice between your family or having a job.

The 8-hour work week is another thing we can be thankful for. Before unions you worked until you were told to go home which could be after 8 hrs., 12 hrs., or 16 hrs. The worker had no choice. If they didn't like it they could find work elsewhere. I could go on and on. Anyone who has studied history can tell you what labor was like before there were unions. As time goes on, it's easy for us and our children to take what we have, for granted and not appreciate what people had to go through to get us to this point.

Are unions perfect? Absolutely not. But if you do some research and study why we have unions you will find that they are a much needed part of our life. We cannot accomplish as much as individuals as we can when we are united as a group of co-workers. I myself have worked in non-union jobs, where I had no benefits, no sick days, and if I got sick I just didn't get paid for those days. I also had no vacation days, which meant if I wanted to take any time off, I was able to, but I was not paid for those days. I pretty much worked every day I could because I needed the money. Without a union, I was working a skilled job, but was being paid a little over minimum wage.

We need to stay strong and work together. Our union is only going to be as good as we make it so let's make it a great one!

by Clifford Maslovsky

THOUGHTS FOR TODAY

As we come into the holiday season and we are being asked a multitude of times and in a multitude of ways to give, it can sometimes be frustrating. We may be thinking, "I barely have enough money for my own family, how can I do anything for anyone else?" I know that I wish that I could give to every child who is going without, but my salary doesn't allow that. So, here are a few thoughts as we go through this season—sometimes it is the simple things that count the most—like stopping and really listening to a friend or co-worker who just needs to talk. Or smiling and saying thank you to the cashier who has a never-ending line, even if you had to wait. Let us all take a minute to just stop, take a big breath and be thankful for what we do have and smile at the next person we see. It might just make their day.

by Wendy Densmore

NEW ORGANIZER

Dear sisters and brothers,

My name is Michael Wood and I have the privilege of serving as your new SEIU District 1199 WV/KY/OH Administrative Organizer. I've already had the pleasure of meeting a number of our CSU delegates at the Delegate meeting in October and look forward to meeting many more of our members in the coming months.



Michael Wood
SEIU 1199 Organizer
mwood@seiu1199.org or
(216) 548 9395.

I come to SEIU 1199 from South Bend, Indiana, where I worked for Air Wisconsin Airlines (a contractor for United Airlines and USAir/American Airlines) as a Station Trainer. At Air Wisconsin I was a member of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers and the local's union Steward in South Bend. I have been a union member for virtually all of my working life, and have served in almost any capacity one could imagine while a member of one the 6 different unions of which I have been a part .

Additionally I worked for SEIU as an Administrative Organizer previously, for District 1199P in Pennsylvania. I also have a Bachelor of Science in Labor Studies from Indiana University.

I'm passionate about unions and, more importantly, union members. I look forward to working with all of you. If you want to speak with me about anything, contact me at mwood@seiu1199.org or (216) 548 9395.

WE'RE MOVING!

During Winter Break we will be relocating to the Levin College of Urban Affairs - 1717 Euclid Ave (on the corner of Euclid and East 17th street). Our office is located on the lower level in UR16.



by Sharon Bliss



SEIU1199 @ CSU Stronger Together



MEMBERSHIP NEWS

This past year Cleveland State University had the largest class admitted in over [50 years](#), and our success is due in part to having dedicated employees, and a strong union. One of the reasons we are a great University is because our employees, who have fought to become organized and treated with respect, have stepped up to engage our students, which in turn makes us a better University overall. In order to keep this momentum going in the future, it will take participation and effort on everyone's part.

If you are a non-member reading this article, please consider joining the union by filling out an application. All of your [SEIU delegates](#), your fellow brothers and sisters, are volunteers working on your behalf. We produce this newsletter to keep you informed, and the least you can do is come aboard to demonstrate support for the work that we are doing. We can only become stronger with your support. There is nothing to lose, and everything to gain. By joining, you will also have access to exclusive discounts and coupons *only* available to SEIU members which can help you save some money through the holidays.



Please ask your fellow SEIU represented employees in your department if they have signed up to be a *member* of SEIU. They may unknowingly think they are a member, but have not filled out an application yet. Tell them it is entirely free to make the change from "fair share" member to "SEIU member." There is no initiation fee, or any other fees associated with changing from "fair share" to "SEIU"!

"Remember, we are only as strong as we want to be."

By being an employee of Cleveland State University, you have a vested interest in how things operate, and what better way than to become part of a group of individuals

who are fighting for your job stability, job satisfaction, a living wage and generally a better quality of life. There is strength in numbers.

Also, in this crucial election year, please consider contributing to the Committee on Political Education (COPE) which is affiliated with SEIU. A very small amount from your paycheck, will help COPE to pass legislation that benefits working families, like you and me. Just fill out and tear the third portion of the SEIU application send it to me or to Michael Wood. If you have any questions about COPE, please contact Michael Wood mwood@seiu1199.org

Remember, we are only as strong as we want to be. **by Tom Hurray**

RECLASS OUT OF SEIU

In recent years, the University has tried to remove a number of positions from the bargaining unit through reclassification. However, a reclassified position may still meet the requirements for inclusion in the bargaining unit. **by Joe Vainner**

Last May, the University attempted to remove eight Admissions Counselor positions from the bargaining unit by reclassifying the position and tweaking the job description. SEIU filed a complaint with the State Employment Relations Board (SERB), which decided that the new job descriptions still met the requirements for inclusion in the bargaining unit. These positions will remain at the new, higher, pay grade, and the eight employees will still have all the benefits of union membership. In addition, this violation of our contract prompted six employees who had previously paid fair share to join SEIU.

If your position is considered for reclassification, you should notify a union delegate as soon as possible and document all relevant communications. Remember:

- Even if you receive a promotion, your position may still be bargaining unit eligible.
- Removal of a position from the bargaining unit must be negotiated with SEIU.

UNION DUES



Recently, it has come to light that some of our members have been misinformed about the amount of dues that both Union Members and Fair Share Members pay. The current SEIU/CSU contract states in Article 6, Section 3:

"All employees who are covered by this agreement and who are not members of the Union and who have been employed by the University for sixty (60) days or more shall pay a fair share fee not greater than the dues paid by members of the Union. Said fair share fee shall be paid by payroll deduction as provided in this Article."

Accordingly, the fair share fee at Cleveland State University is **equal to** the union dues of SEIU members. Each and every employee in the SEIU bargaining unit at CSU contributes 1.75% of their salary in Union Dues.

In addition, it is worth noting that union dues paid by members are **not used towards political campaigns**. The only money that the Union is allowed to use towards any type of politics is the Committee on Political Education (C.O.P.E.) money contributed by members. This contribution is separate from dues paid but is a very important part of the union. It is even more important for Cleveland State University Union Members because we are a state organization. Like it or not, politics control many aspects of University life from budgets to travel!

by Jami Derry

SEIU1199 @ CSU Stronger Together



UNION CONTACTS

CLEVELAND STATE SEIU 1199 WEBSITE:

www.csuohio.edu/organizations/SEIU

To submit stories for the newsletter or to nominate a member to be featured, please email:

j.derry@csuohio.edu

How can I get involved in the Union?

Go to meetings, talk with the members of the Executive Team, volunteer for a committee, or run for a position on the Executive Team or Negotiating Team yourself. You'll be glad you did!

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