



“Working Together Works!” April edition **City of Oakland Contract Negotiations — 2008**

AN ORGANIZATION FOR PROFESSIONAL, TECHNICAL & ADMINISTRATIVE EMPLOYEES

Local 21 Contract Negotiations to Begin April 3rd!

Negotiations for a new contract between Local 21 and the City are about to begin! The City and the Union have agreed on a date – Thursday, April 3rd – for our first meeting.

Our current contract, negotiated in 2002, included a 22% wage increase over 6 years, an increase in pension benefits to 2.7% at 55, and full maintenance of medical, dental and vision benefits along with many other provisions.

Beginning with our ‘Bargaining Kickoff’ event in September, we have spent the last 6 months preparing for negotiation of a new contract. Using the results from the Bargaining Survey, ‘Know Your Contract’ workshops, and suggestions received from members in all chapters, the negotiating team is finalizing language for bargaining proposals. Key issues will include wage increases, retirement and medical benefits, and long-overdue increases to retiree medical benefits which have been frozen for 6 years.

Negotiating team representatives have been selected from each of Local 21’s four chapters. In addition, we have formed Contract Action Teams to ensure that members are kept informed of developments at the bargaining table, to make sure that the negotiating team gets feedback from members, and to mobilize members.

The Local 21 staff has been providing extensive support, with participation from the Research, Communications, and Political action staff, along with our Representatives Vickie Carson and Subha Varadarajan.

One challenge we will face this year is that the City’s representatives (Employee Relations Manager Lawanna Preston and Negotiator Wayne Heine) are new and have no experience or history with previous Local 21 negotiations. With a bargaining team that is “too new to know,” one of our tasks will be educate them about who we are, the work we do, and how our contract has evolved over time.

SEIU Local 1021(formerly 790) has already begun negotiations, and we will be in close contact with their team, coordinating wherever necessary to advance our common interests.

While our contract expires on June 30, 2008, it is standard practice for both sides to agree to extend the provisions until the new contract is negotiated and ratified by Local 21 members and the City Council.

Equity Adjustment Preparations Continue

As Bargaining between Local 21 and the City is scheduled to start on April 3rd, the bargaining team expects to address non-economic issues first, and economic issues during the latter half of negotiations. Equity Adjustments will be a large component of the economic issues addressed. Local 21 has already held two workshops on Equity Adjustments. The first workshop was an

introductory session designed to help members evaluate their case for equity adjustments. The second meeting was an in-depth training on developing and executing research plans and addressing frequent challenges that arise with conducting salary surveys.

A third workshop has been scheduled as a follow-up to the first two sessions, and will take place on April 2nd at noon. The session will be a working meeting aimed at collectively and cohesively moving forward with a coordinated effort for Equity Adjustments, and selecting comparable agencies and data categories Local 21 classifications will use in their proposals at the negotiating table. Representatives from all classifications interested in equity adjustments should attend. To RSVP or request more information, please contact anjali@ifpte21.org.

Local 21 to Vote on City Council Endorsements

The Oakland Political Action Committee (PAC) held a membership meeting on March 26th to recommend endorsing City Council candidates in the 1st, 3rd, 5th, 7th, and At-Large districts. Local 21 staff and officers participated in the Alameda County Central Labor Council’s (CLC) candidate interviews in February, 2008. PAC recommendations were based on CLC interviews, candidate questionnaires, and knowledge of the Council members’ record on issues of interest to Local 21 members. All the

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Contract Action Team (CAT) Springs into Action!

The Local 21 CAT Team has been meeting regularly to ramp up for bargaining! CAT members are the life force of our 2008 Oakland Contract Campaign. As the link between the Local 21 Negotiating Team and the Membership, they are the first to get news from negotiations and share information directly with members about what’s going on at the bargaining table. They also provide information and feedback from members to the Negotiating Team, and let our members know when it’s time to show their support for our Team and our proposals.

In addition to mapping Local 21’s members across the City of Oakland and launching a city/union-wide communication system, the CAT team also began forming sub-committees including a newsletter committee, media team, research group, and a spirit & community outreach team.

CAT members will be holding regular bi-weekly meetings as bargaining begins and our CAT communication system is put into action. Contact tstraughter@ifpte21.org or subha@ifpte21.org for more information on CAT schedules and how to get involved as a CAT member or join a subcommittee!

PAC —continued

questionnaires that were submitted at that time are available online at http://www.ifpte21.org/chp_oak.shtml.

All Local 21 members will have an opportunity to vote on endorsements online. Voting instructions will be sent to all members during the week of March 31st, and voting will be open for one week. The Oakland Local 21 endorsement procedure requires a two-thirds majority vote by the membership for an endorsement. We encourage all members to review the questionnaires before voting.

On June 3, 2008, five of the eight Oakland City Council seats will be up for election. Local 21 members have a vital interest in these races, as ultimately it is the City Council that approves our contract. In order to support the candidates that support issues of importance to Local 21 members, we must strengthen our union's T.J. Anthony / Committee on Political Education Fund (C.O.P.E). Contributions to the union's COPE Fund go a long way towards advancing our interests: The people we elect and the issues we support have a direct impact on our paychecks, pensions and the resources available to do our jobs effectively. COPE also makes sure our jobs are secure by working on legislation and public policy issues.

Contributions to political campaigns cannot be made from membership dues. Local 21's political strength and impact in Oakland's next City Council races will be partially dependent on members making contributions to support political action through the COPE. Visit <http://www.ifpte21.org/political/tjfund.shtml> for more information. Contributions can be made through automatic payroll deduction and can be done online or by signing a COPE card. If 100 members donated as little as \$5 per pay period, we could raise \$13,000 in one year to help elect officials who support issues important to our members!

Longshore leader brings solidarity message to Oakland Engineer's meeting

Brother Clarence Thomas, International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) Local 10 leader and organizer of the October 17, 2004 Million Worker March held in Washington, D.C., addressed this month's meeting of the Oakland Chapter Engineer's Unit. Thomas described ILWU's history of linking union matters with broader social issues such as opposing South African apartheid in the mid-1980s and, this spring on May 1st, shutting down West Coast ports against U.S. war in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Dockworkers and City workers, according to Thomas, organized a coalition to support each others' contract negotiations approximately five years ago. Thomas' presentation also included a video clip of the 1934 San Francisco General Strike where striking dockworkers demanded improved wages and working conditions, coast-wide bargaining rights, and the establishment of union-controlled hiring halls enlisted the support of virtually every San Francisco and Alameda County union after attack from the SF Police. As a result of outreach to the African American community in supporting the union and not crossing the picket line, more African Americans are represented at

Local 10 than anywhere else on the waterfront on the West Coast.

When asked what City and Port workers can do to support each others' contract bargaining efforts this year, Thomas said a meeting bringing unionists and community supporters together would be a good way to promote labor solidarity.

City Issues New AI on VTN

The City of Oakland has recently issued a new Administrative Instruction (AI 511) clarifying City policy on Voluntary Leave Without Pay to Save City Funds (coded as VTN on your timesheet).

In the early 1990s when the City was facing budget deficits and following unsuccessful attempts to implement mandatory unpaid time off, it instituted a new program to encourage employees to take unpaid leave to save the City funds. As an incentive, the new program provided for continuation of benefits and seniority while on unpaid leave.

For several years, there has been confusion about the policy. Some departments continued to honor it, while others claimed (incorrectly) that it had been discontinued.

As required, the City first met and conferred with the Union before issuing the new AI. Employees are entitled to take up to 15 days per year of VTN, with supervisor approval. Up to 60 days per year can be taken if approved by the City Administrator.

Copies of the new policy guide are available on the City's Intranet (Oaknet) in the AI section.

SAVE the DATE

Equity Adjustments III

Wednesday April 2nd, Noon
City Hall Council Chambers

This third training on Equity Adjustments is aimed at kicking-off the research process for a coordinated effort for wage alignments for Local 21 members! Please bring any previously received materials to this working meeting. Please RSVP to anjali@ifpte21.org.

Cesar Chavez Celebration

Friday - April 4, Noon - 1:00 pm
250 Frank Ogawa Plaza, 6th floor lunchroom

Local 21's Oakland Council invites you to join us for our annual celebration of the life of a great labor leader, civil rights activist, and humanitarian!

Carlos Muñoz, Jr., Professor Emeritus in Chicano Studies, UC Berkeley, will talk about Chavez and why he is a treasure to us all. He will discuss Chavez's struggle for justice and will inspire us to demand a holiday for Chavez. Please join us in sharing in good food, good music, and good fun! ¡Si Se Puede!

CAT Meetings (Ongoing)

Contract Action Team (CAT) Meetings will be scheduled on a bi-weekly basis starting in April. Contact tstraughter@ifpte21.org or subha@ifpte21.org for more dates and times.

Visit Your Local 21 City of Oakland website!
http://www.ifpte21.org/chp_oak.shtml



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