

# THE LOCAL 34 BANNER



AFSCME Local 34 Hennepin County Social Services Unit

## Fighting Wage Theft:

Legislation Would Ensure Workers are Paid What They're Worth

By Barb Kucera, Workday Minnesota  
February 11, 2015

Workers can see their wages stolen in many ways: Not receiving the minimum wage or compensation for overtime. Not receiving their final paycheck after leaving a job. Not being paid at all.

Home care worker Robin Pikala was owed nearly \$2,000 when her employer, Crystal Care Home Health Services, shut down last year. Retail cleaner Maria Briones was victimized twice by unscrupulous employers – to the tune of \$7,000. Construction worker Gonzalo Monje completed three projects last year for which he was not paid.

"It's a problem that happens more often than most people think," said Steve Hunter, secretary-treasurer of the **Minnesota AFL-CIO**, the labor federation representing some 300,000 workers.

Pikala, Briones and Monje joined Hunter at a news conference to back legislation that would crack

down on "wage theft" by employers. It would increase penalties for violators and provide outreach to educate workers on their rights.

No specific figures are available for Minnesota, but the **Economic Policy Institute** estimates that wage theft costs American workers more than \$30 billion per year. To put that into perspective, all of the robberies, burglaries, larcenies, and motor vehicle thefts in the nation cost their victims less than \$14 billion in 2012, according to the **FBI**, Hunter noted.

Pikala wasn't the only worker affected when Crystal Care Home Health Services closed. The company owes employees an estimated \$1.4 million, she said. "This was an incredible hardship for myself and the dozens of other workers who had to experience this, and no one should have to go through what we went through."

"The legislation (introduced in the Senate by Senator David Toma-



Rep. Carly Melin, author of the legislation, said it would send a clear message to employers who commit wage theft and provide remedies for workers.

ssoni, DFL-Chisholm) we are proposing sends a clear message to employers who try to cheat their employees out of the wages for which they have worked," said House co-author Rep. Carly Melin, DFL-Hibbing, who also spoke at the news conference.

Pikala said she hopes the Legislature will pass these reforms. "It may be too late for me, but it should not happen to one more person," she said.

### Wage Theft will be the Main Topic of the March 19 Labor Lunch at the Government Center (Noon—1PM)

"Off the Clock, Working for Free"

- Working past the end of the day—Off-the-Clock—or coming in early
- Putting in unpaid hours beyond the 40 hour work week (non-exempt) or 80 hours per pay period (exempt employees)

For more, please see the Last Page

#### The legislation would:

- Increase penalties for wage theft from double to triple the amount owed to the employee.
- Provide criminal penalties for employers who willfully or repeatedly violate this law.
- Ensure wage theft complaints are confidential.
- Extend the statute of limitations on wage theft to six years.
- Allow the state to revoke a business license for non-compliance or multiple abuses in paying back lost wages.
- Require employers who violate this law to post a bond to prove

they have the ability to pay wages.

- Provide for grants to community organizations to help educate workers about their rights and how to recoup lost wages.
- Create a wage recovery fund from penalties paid as a contingency to ensure workers receive the wages owed to them.
- Protect workers from employer retaliation.
- Bring Minnesota into conformity with the federal government by extending overtime pay after 40 hours to all employees deemed eligible under federal law.

## March 2015

Special points of interest:

- **AFSCME Council 5's Day on the Hill**—Tuesday, March 24th... from Vice President Moore's column, Page 3:

... the highlight of March is **Day on the Hill**. I hope you are all planning to attend. It is always an informative day where our voices are important. If you are not going, there will be a rally at noon in the Rotunda of the Capitol...

- **Lee Saunders**—Page 9 "Unions are the agents of change that our nation so desperately needs."

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Local 34 President  
Jean Diederich,  
photo taken 2009.

First, thank you so much to all your kind words of support and sympathy on the loss of my older brother, Joe. He was your typical big brother – a pest and an ally, a tease and a protector – but always a friend and brother to me, my four sisters and other brother. He was a good uncle to his many nieces, nephews, great-nieces and great-nephews and wonderful person to his four footed pals, Goldie and Aries. My family and I thank you for the contribution to the Swift County Humane Society made by Local 34 in his name. We will miss him.

## THE LOCAL 34 BANNER

### President Diederich's Column: "If Jean Ran the World"

#### ANNOUNCEMENTS:

March 4, 2015

#### General Assembly Happenings:

**Netroots Nation**– we will elect up to two members to attend this event which will be held in Phoenix, AZ, July 16 -19, 2015.

**Nellie Stone Johnson Scholarship Dinner** – we will elect to eight members to attend this event held the evening of March 26, 2015. This event is held at the Prom Center in Oakdale. The recipients of the scholarship are honored and there is a fabulous silent auction to raise funds for the scholarship. Please plan to attend that meeting to put

your name forward or send me an email by no later than Tuesday, March 3, 2015 to express your interest in putting your name forward for either event.

**We will also work on finalizing** our list of ideas to propose for the next contract. If you have not already submitted suggestions for changes to the contract, please send them to me by Tuesday, March 3, 2015. That will allow me time to compile everything that we have for a reading by the members who attend the March General Assembly. Having things in writing makes it much easier for everyone to follow along,

as well as suggest changes. You are the best sources for new ideas.

**As noted** in Vicki Moore's Nominations report on the following page, we have the second and final round of nominations for our officer, trustee and delegate positions up this year.

Please read her article to see which positions they are. If interested in putting your name forward for the elections, please contact her as soon as possible but before the March 4<sup>th</sup> meeting.

**Vacation/PTO donations** – you may receive a request from your coworkers to donate vacation/PTO to a coworker in need of time due to their illness or surgery or that of a family member where they have taken time to assist that family member and are now out of sick leave/vacation/PTO and facing unpaid time. Your donation is converted to pay for the person in need to cover that time. HSPHD has a link for people to use for those requests: <https://dept.hennepin.us/hsphd/training/SitePages/HSPHD%20Employee%20Requests%20for%20Vacation%20Donation.aspx>.

The names on the list are only those employees who have asked to have their names posted. If you know of a coworker who has asked for donations, please let them know about this venue so that they can utilize it.

**Also of interest** to HSPHD staff is the new line in APEX for tracking our training time. We have often tried to quantify the number of hours we spend away from our work due to training but have never had a good tool to do so. I look for-

ward to seeing the results within the next 4 – 6 months as we enter negotiations. The numbers should be illuminating. For more information, visit this link: <https://dept.hennepin.us/hsphd/training/SitePages/Training%20Hours%20on%20Timesheet.aspx>.

**Next Wave meetings** – Kenneth W. Garnier and I attended the Council 5 Next Wave (group of young/new members – 35'ish or so – willing to address issues and learn how to become more involved in our union and communities) meeting held January 10<sup>th</sup>.

We looked back at 2014 and discussed goals for 2015. We decided that we will share the responsibility for co-chairing the meetings with volunteers so Martin Hoerth from Local 844 and Kenneth W. Garnier from Local 34 will share that honor for the March 7<sup>th</sup> meeting. Anyone with suggestions for the agenda should contact them and they will send that agenda out a week or so prior to the meeting. Also, the tradi-

tion of asking locals to provide the lunch continues. Local 34 members approved the expenditure of up to \$200.00 for the March 7<sup>th</sup> meeting.

The schedule for the remainder of the year was set: **March 7<sup>th</sup>, May 9<sup>th</sup>, July 11<sup>th</sup>, September 12<sup>th</sup> and November 14<sup>th</sup>.** All meetings are held at the Council 5 office in South St Paul from 11:00 AM – 2:00 PM. We all agreed to bring at least one other member to the next meeting so Kenneth and I are inviting you to attend with us.



Just think, by this time next month, we will be looking for flowers poking their heads up through the snow, the days will be longer and we will have warmer temperatures outside. As Anne in in "Anne of Avonlea" said, **"That is one good thing about this world...there are always sure to be more springs."**

Happy Spring!  
Jean



Have you ever looked for a go-to place for understanding issues of employment law in Minnesota?

The State's DEED department produced such a book in 2006—"The Employer's Guide to Employment Law Issues in Minnesota."

Link:

[http://www.lindquist.com/files/Uploads/Documents/Employers\\_Guide\\_Minnesota.pdf](http://www.lindquist.com/files/Uploads/Documents/Employers_Guide_Minnesota.pdf)

Sections include:

- Wage & Hour Issues
- Benefit Plans
- Workplace Issues
- Workers' Compensation
- Safety, Health & Environmental Issues
- Terminations
- Unemployment Compensation



## VIEW FROM THE CHEAP SEATS - Vicki Moore

I love March. It is like the coda on a symphony. We have great heavy wet snow storms, usually in conjunctions with either the State Basketball Tournament or the State Hockey Tournament when all the available hotel/motel space will be full to capacity with Minnesotans from all over the State. And then the snow melts we see all the stuff that was buried under the snow and all the stuff that was discarded in a reckless fashion. However, then the spring flowers begin to emerge from the rubble of winter and in a blink of an eye all the of tree bloom. Finally, the Lilacs bloom along with my allergies.

But the highlight of March is Day on the Hill. I hope you are all planning to attend. It is always an informative day where our voices are important. If you are not going, there will be a rally at noon in the Rotunda of the Capitol and

all are welcome and encouraged to attend.

I am working on a project for Local 34 and I desperately need the assistance of someone who understands how to make a graphic on the computer. I have been assured that what I need is simple, but after months of trying, I can tell you without a doubt, it is beyond my ability. Please contact me. I know that with the needed knowledge and skills, this project will only take a few hours. Call me, email me, Lync me – please help me.

I want to thank Wes for including directions on how to get Lateral Postings sent to your inbox. I know that many of our members have been missing them and are far too busy to try to find them on SharePoint. You may have been resisting learning yet another new way to get information but it is not going away and is the repository of

all things Hennepin. To the “Loopers” I would say help us with some tutorials.

One of the things at Meet and Confer we have been discussing is how to move staff from one Regional Site to another Regional Site, based on business need and within our contract. I would say that this is one of those things termed “unintended consequences.” This topic may never have been part of any decision-tree when the decision was made to move us to Regional Sites. I am beginning to also believe that providing cell phones to staff also falls under this category as well. Now that we are all considered to be mobile staff, the Department needs to provide us with the tools to be mobile. In this area, we need to be cognizant of Wage Theft.

And that’s the View from the Cheap Seats for this month.

### Who We Are

The 1.6 million members of AFSCME (The American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees) provide the vital services that make America happen. With members in hundreds of different occupations— from nurses to school bus drivers, child care providers to sanitation workers — AFSCME advocates for fairness in the workplace, excellence in public services and prosperity and opportunity for all working families.

### Good and Welfare

The Good & Welfare Committee was established to send remembrances to dues paying members at times of happiness or sorrow. This includes marriages, the birth or adoption of a child, prolonged illness or hospitalization, or the death of a member, immediate family member or significant other – as defined in the Contract.

In the case of surgery or prolonged illness, or for the birth or adoption of a child, flowers or plants can be sent to a member. In situations involving the death of a member or a death in the family of a member, memorials can be sent. (“Family” is defined the same as in Article 16 – Funeral Leave – in our contract; it includes: spouse, child, significant other, aunt/ uncle, father/ mother, sister/ brother, grandparent/ grandparent-in-law, grandchildren, niece/ nephew, or a person regarded as a member of the member’s immediate family). In the event of members getting married, retiring, gaining U.S. citizenship, or for a death in the family of a member or in the case of the death of a member, a card can be sent to the family.

Please send all requests for remembrances to the co-Chairs for the Good and Welfare Committee - Marcia Dietz (MC L890) or Amanda Abell (MC L890). The referrals must include the name of the member and the reason for your request. If the request is for a plant or flowers, you will also need to include the person’s home phone number for delivery purposes.

### NOMINATIONS COMMITTEE REPORT

Nominations for Local 34 Officers opened at the February General Assembly Meeting. Nominations will also be taken at the March Local 34 General Assembly Meeting. Here are the Nominations to date:

- Vice President:** No Nominations
- Recording Secretary:** No Nominations
- Membership Secretary:** Deb Konechne
- Chief Steward:** Kela Williams
- Member-at-Large** (three to be elected): Kenneth W. Garnier, Miguel Salazar,

Sharon Streeter, Angel Alexander

- Trustee** (one three year term): No Nominations
- Minneapolis Regional Labor Federation** (five to be elected): Patrick Regan
- Minneapolis Regional Labor Federation** Alternate (six to be elected): Maggie Keating
- St. Paul Regional Labor Federation** (five to be elected): Kathy Kelley, Tony Parrish
- St. Paul Regional Labor Federation** Alternate (six to be elected): No Nominations

## Fifth Annual Labor Bowl

Registration is open for the Fifth Annual Labor Bowl, a team-bowling fundraiser to benefit the Saint Paul Labor Studies and Resource Center on Thursday, April 30 at [Midway Pro Bowl](#) in Saint Paul's Midway Shopping Center.

[Click here to download the Labor Bowl 2015 event flier!](#)

The [Saint Paul LSRC](#) is a charitable nonprofit organization that assists and advocates for union members in the East Metro area. Its staff members, part of the [AFL-CIO Community Services](#) program, connect union members with much needed community resources and help local unions provide their members with important services, such as strike and lay-off preparation trainings. By participating in Labor Bowl, you will be giving back to our community and supporting an organization that supports the work of organized labor.

To register a four- or five-person bowling team for Labor Bowl, or to participate as an individual, call Laura at 651-222-3787, extension 17. ([Click here to download sponsorship form as pdf.](#)) Each bowler will be asked to raise a minimum of \$100 in pledges for the Saint Paul LSRC, which will be collected the day of the event.

You can also help by:

- Promoting [this event](#) at your membership meetings, as well as via union newsletters, fliers, emails, bulletin boards websites and on social media.
- Making a cash donation to support other bowlers if you are unable to participate. All donations are tax deductible. Send checks payable to St. Paul LSRC to 2015 Labor Bowl, Attn: Laura, 411 Main St., Room 202, St. Paul, MN 55102.

The St. Paul LSRC is a 501(c)(3) charitable non-profit organization. **Donations are tax-deductible.**



## THE LOCAL 34 BANNER

### Report from the February 2015 General Assembly Meeting

Nominations began for the Local 34 Executive Board and other positions. For the 2015-2017 officer terms, nominations in February were:

**Vice President**—None  
**Recording Secretary**—None  
**Membership Secretary** (Heather Hemmer is not running for re-election) - Deb Konechne was nominated  
**Chief Steward**—Kela Williams was nominated for re-

election  
**Members-at-Large (3 positions)** - Angel Alexander, Miguel Salazar, Sharon Streeter and Kenneth W. Garnier were nominated (Alexander, Salazar and Streeter are incumbents).

For a 3-Year term as **Trustee**—None

For 1-Year terms as Minneapolis Regional Labor Federa-

tion delegates (5, plus President Diederich) - Patrick Regan was nominated; for MRLF Alternate—Maggie Keating was nominated.

For St. Paul Regional Labor Federation delegates—Kathy Kelly and Tony Parrish were nominated; there were no SPRLF delegates identified.

Nominations will close at the March GA meeting; any election will be conducted in April.

### Business of the Local

The Local approved a donation of **\$500** to the Mark Baker (former Business Representative for Hennepin AFSCME locals) fundraiser on February 28th in Frederic, WI. Mark was seriously injured in a car accident, and is unable to work.

The Local approved as motion to elect 8 members at the March GA meeting, to attend the Nellie Stone Johnson Scholarship Dinner, March 26th at the Prom Center in Oakdale.

The Local received the SPRLF invitation to its Thursday, April 30th **5th Annual Labor Bowl** (see article at left). The intent is to benefit labor studies, with shifts at 2, 4 and 6pm. A first motion - to contribute **\$100**—was approved. A second motion was approved to **have Local 34**

**members form teams of 4 or 5 individuals, and have team members raise \$100 each from friends, family, and fellow AFSCME members, to bring to the Labor Bowl fundraising event.** Vice-President Vicki Moore has agreed to be our point person, collecting names of interested bowlers/members and connecting them to teams that have formed.

Kenneth W. Garnier was added as an Administrator for the Local 34 Facebook page.

Members (up to 34) volunteered to attend the March 24 Council 5 Day on the Hill. Initial names received were: Jean Diederich, Laura Ross, Kay Powell, Pat Regan, Kenneth W. Garnier, Deb Konechne, Sharon Streeter, John Herzog,

Vicki Moore, Elizabeth Allison, Andrea Lazo-Rice, and Claudia Salzer. To fill remaining spots, President Diederich has permission to appoint additional names. The Local also approved a motion to pay the \$20 Registration fee for the attendees.

The Local elected 6 members to attend the U of MN L.E.S. Union Woman's Retreat at Ruttger's Bay, April 22-25: Tywana Gray, Kay Powell, Deb Konechne, Sharon Streeter, Elizabeth Allison and Deb O'Neill.

The Local continued to gather suggestions for the 2015 Negotiations. **A motion was approved to hold a separate General meeting next month—or a meeting before the GA—to discuss the items that have been proposed for negotiations.**

### Committee Reports & Negotiations

Chief Steward Tywana Gray reported on the first 2015 Steward's meeting—they discussed Steward behavior. Note that there has been some change in the steward ranks.

VP Vicki Moore previewed the February Meet & Confer—a number of HSR issues were on the Agenda. These included the impact of the Workflow Management Process, the Onboarding process numbers, and the difficulty of promoting to HSR, Senior. Also on the Agenda—should there be a Hub van service? This came after Support Staff complained

about being made to travel "on their own time." And, there is concern about Child Protection workers being "frozen" in the field with limited lateral opportunities.

Recognizing Council 5's "Month of Service" Local 34 considered ideas for service activities. Ideas included collecting food shelf donations at our GA meetings, to scheduling an event to help Second Harvest (Kay Powell volunteered to organize this) to voluntary service preparing meals at Ronald McDonald House (Jacquelin Poole volun-

teered to check into this).

Business Rep. Matt Nelson offered a somber report. One Social Worker's case—a 5-day Suspension—is headed to Arbitration. A number of grievances are stemming from the HSR Onboarding Team concerning performance issues and concerns with how performance is measured or calculated—which has led to dismissal. Matt also described reorganization efforts underway at Council 5, which includes hiring new Business Agents, setting up a separate Arbitration Team, and separate State Employee Negotiations teams.

March 2015

## All Workers Deserve Earned Sick & Safe Time

Mon, 02/09/2015 – AFSCME Council 5

**{Also—see Related Story at Right...}** Every day a family in Minnesota is forced to make an impossible choice between caring for a loved one or keeping a paycheck. That's because four out of 10 workers – more than one million hardworking Minnesotans – don't earn paid sick days.

AFSCME is part of a coalition that can guarantee every working Minnesotan has earned sick and safe time. A bill introduced in the Minnesota Senate this week would require employers to grant workers one hour of earned sick and safe time for every

30 hours of time they log on the job.

Businesses with 20 or fewer employees would need to allow workers to bank up to five days of sick and safe time per year, and larger employers would need to allow for the accrual of up to nine days. Employers who violate the act would be fined.

Authors of the Earned Sick and Safe Time Act are Senator Sandy Pappas (SF 481) and Representative John Lesch (HF 549). Both bills would also ensure that survivors of domestic violence, stalking or sexual assault have access to paid sick time while they recover.



**Minnesota Benefits – a campaign for earned sick and safe time – kicked off in Duluth this week with strong support from AFSCME leaders, including Council 5 President Judy Wahlberg, Local 66 President Dennis Frazier and Northeast Area Labor Federation President Alan Netland.**

Last session, we successfully raised the minimum wage. This is our next opportunity to make Minnesota a state that truly values working families.

### PLEASE CALL YOUR LEGISLATORS TODAY. TELL THEM:

No one should be forced to choose between caring for a loved one or losing a paycheck. Please support Senate File 481 and House File 549 to guarantee that every working Minnesotan has access to earned sick and safe time.

## Young Unionist Leading the Way



by Olivia Sandbothe, AFSCME Blog | January 26, 2015

**Rick Pospichal** {who also serves with President

Diederich on the Council 5 Executive Board} is one of the two newly elected members of the AFL-CIO's Young Workers Advisory Council, a board of young union members who care about the issues that matter most to people newly joining the workforce.

Rick Pospichal works in the registrar's office at Winona State University in Minnesota, where he's surrounded by young people who are preparing for a life beyond campus. But Pospichal believes that this generation needs more than a diploma to make it in the working world. They also need a

strong labor movement that responds to the needs of young workers.

Pospichal is one of the two newly elected members of the AFL-CIO's **Young Workers Advisory Council**, a board of young union members who care about the issues that matter most to people newly joining the workforce. He is already president of AFSCME Local 945 and an active member of Minnesota Young Workers. "I became involved because I think we can make a difference," he says. "I think we can determine the future of the labor movement, and make sure it doesn't fade away."

At a meeting in Washington, DC, this month, the advisory council developed a youth platform that outlines the path to a strong new workforce. From free public higher education and more union apprenticeships to strong protection against

discrimination and bigotry, there's a lot of work to be done. And that work takes a union, just like it did when previous generations fought for safety standards and an eight-hour work day.

These efforts are more crucial now than ever, Pospichal reminds us. Millennials are graduating into an economy where good union jobs have been replaced with temp and hourly work. Unless young people can organize and advocate for workplace rights, they're looking at a bleak future.

"We're trying to provide young activists with the tools they need to build power," Pospichal says. To start, he's working with the council to organize the **Next Up Summit** this spring, March 19-22, in Chicago. Workshops will help activists launch statewide campaigns, start worker groups, and build support for issues like LGBT rights and racial equality.

## Minnesota Tries to Move Forward on Sick Leave

by Dan Burns—MN Progressive Project—  
February 10, 2015

Minnesota Benefits advocates for new legislation to create earned sick days for more than one million Minnesotans. This would benefit people who currently don't have the right to earn any sick days whatsoever. The plan will allow one hour of earned sick time per every 30 hours worked.

Those with full-time jobs will be able to earn up to nine sick days, and those with part-time jobs can earn up to five. Small companies will also have a maximum



of 40 hours of sick leave for employees per year.

Sick leave is not the only issue that Minnesota Benefits aims to address. The proposed legislation also brings up "safe time," or time taken off because of domestic violence, stalking or assault. Some women are currently in danger of losing their job because they choose to stay home for reasons relating to domestic violence. ([Minnesota Daily](#))

The bill is [HF 549](#). I don't know what its chances might be, in this largely gridlock session. I have my doubts, and hopefully am in for a good surprise. Minnesota would become the fourth state in the country, to deal with this.

Here's the [Minnesota Benefits website](#).

## Will Public Employee Unions Survive in Illinois?

*Wisconsin, Indiana, Ohio, Florida, Michigan... battlegrounds past for anti-union Republican governors... Now, with the election of Republican Bruce Rauner in 2014, it is Illinois unions under attack!*

FRIDAY, FEB 13, 2015

### Illinois Billionaire Gov. Bruce Rauner's Anti-Union Plan Hits a Roadblock

BY DAVID MOBERG



Illinois Republican Gov. Bruce Rauner, long accustomed to giving orders without constraints as head of a private equity firm, just discovered that as a governor, democracy and the law provide a check on his powers.

The discovery unfolded after Rauner launched the first of what will surely be many attacks on unions in the state—an executive order prohibiting the assessment of “fair share” payments by non-union state employees to unions that negotiate and enforce contracts for all workers within their jurisdiction, whether or not they are members.

Rauner, however, could only try to apply the new rule—in violation of a state law that remains valid even if the governor believes it is unconstitutional—to the share of all state employees considered to be under the governor’s office. (That includes roughly half of the state workforce, for example, excluding employees of the university system.) In any case, for the executive order to have an effect on the unions, Rauner had to prevent them from receiving the fair share money. So he ordered comptroller Leslie Munger, whom he had appointed to the post after the elected Republican comptroller died before taking office, to put the funds in escrow. But Rauner’s actions seem to have surprised Munger and many others, including elected officers, appointees and managers.

Munger decided to check with the state’s attorney general, **Democrat Lisa Madigan**, on the legality of the executive order on holding the fair share payments in escrow. As Capitol Fax newsletter publisher Rich Miller first reported, Madigan gave her advice: **fair share fees are constitutional, and the comptroller must follow the law.**

Rauner, however, refuses to follow the law himself. Late in the week, his office announced that the governor will order agency heads under his control to withhold the fair share fees and put them in escrow, then send the request for issuance of checks to the comptroller, letting her off the legal hook by breaking the law himself.

For more on this, go to *“In These Times.”*

## THE LOCAL 34 BANNER

### Hennepin County's Mental Health Court Becomes Model Approach

Effort takes big-picture look at crimes by the mentally ill.

Article by: DAVID CHANEN, Star Tribune - Updated: February 5, 2015

Additional News Coverage is at [MPR](#) and [HSPHD's In the Loop](#) featuring our [Integrated Access Team](#)

Mental health can be a key factor in many crimes and confrontations. For many, mental health court can be their first exposure to comprehensive services and a real push to succeed from a judge, a prosecutor, a probation officer and a social worker. A referral to the voluntary program usually comes from an attorney or probation officer. Once a defendant is admitted, the court provides help in finding housing, employment and therapy, sticking to a medication plan and staying away from drugs and alcohol. Meanwhile, legal issues stay on a back burner until a defendant’s situation stabilizes.

Judge Kerry Meyer runs the court, in session two days a week. If funding could be found to hire more staffers, she said, she would have no problem filling her courtroom all week. “What Hennepin County has done for mental health the past couple of years, it’s really coming to a head,” said Kellie Charles, an assistant public defender. “Our mental health court is a good model for the country to follow.”

The court’s 2003 start-up was one of the county’s fledgling efforts to help the ever-growing population of people with serious mental illness. It grew into the chief way to han-

dle legal concerns stemming from this vulnerable group. More recently, other county and state initiatives will reduce the amount of time those with mental illness spend in jail.

Competency hearings for legal proceedings have been expedited, and an in-house team at the Hennepin County jail can quickly screen inmates with mental illness. The county has added another probation officer to help process cases. And at the Legislature, an effort is underway to provide \$8 million to build four statewide “recovery centers” as an alternative to jail for repeat minor-crime offenders who are mentally ill.

Hennepin County Sheriff Rich Stanek is among those who have advocated for mentally ill offenders. About 30 percent of the nearly 40,000 people each year have mental health issues, he said. “We don’t treat people in jail or run a mental health facility,” he said. Even before Hennepin County’s formal court kicked off, former Judge Richard Hopper had tried a smaller version after seeing the same group of mentally ill defendants cycling through his courtroom for low-level crimes. Since then, the criteria have crystallized: Potential participants must have a mental illness, brain injury or developmental delay that has signifi-

cantly affected their lives, and be screened by a team that will be active in their cases.

Defendants can be considered for the court when charged, as part of a plea agreement or after a Meyer said the court tries to resolve cases in six months, but some defendants stay in the program much longer because “they are dependent on our support.” Defendants must abide by a few basic rules: Take prescribed medications, don’t self-medicate with drugs and alcohol, show up for court and other appointments and commit no new crimes.

Charles said the court’s program “is no cakewalk.” For defendants who make it through, the legal benefits can range from having charges dismissed or lowered to avoiding jail time. The court is so effective, she said, that she would like to see it take in more clients with crimes more serious than the typical theft and property offenses. Meyer said about 60 percent of participants graduate from her court. Yet success also can be measured in some who fail — if they require less hospitalization and incarceration, or if subsequent crimes are less severe or less frequent.

“In a regular court, a client may feel like the attorneys and judge hate them and that things move fast,” said Richard LeRoy, a defense attorney with the Legal Rights Center in Minneapolis. “This court ... [is] one of the best programs I’ve seen in 27 years of doing this.”

## Teen Birth Rate Drops in Hennepin County

(WCCO) - In 2013, Hennepin County reported a **15 percent** drop in the number of babies born to teenage mothers. Across the state, the decline was nine percent and nation-

wide, it was 10 percent. The county credited programs that divert teenagers from risky behaviors or help them stay safe when they do have sex. “Our young people are making smart

decisions, thanks to a lot of support from a range of community partners,” Katherine Meerse, manager of **Better Together Hennepin**, the county’s teen pregnancy prevention initiative, said.

## Minnesota's Government Staff Numbers Grow 5 Percent Since 2007

By Rachel E. Stassen-Berger, St. Paul Pioneer Press on Feb 12, 2015

**Ed. Note—The Republican agenda has long included the desire to reduce government. As County workers, we should be aware of this Republican effort to focus on state employee growth, at the Legislature. Some call this the “petty politics” season. This month, Local 34 members are going to the Legislature for Day on the Hill. It's important to stand up for the benefits of our government work—and the actual need for more of us to get it done!**

ST. PAUL -- Minnesota employee numbers have grown — 5 percent bigger since 2007 — and a state House committee is asking why. “What are we getting for the 5 percent increase?” asked House State Government Finance Chair Sarah Anderson, R-Plymouth. Anderson's committee requested the employee data and will bring Minnesota Management and Budget Commissioner Myron Frans to the committee to answer for it.

In the summer of 2007 the state had the equivalent of 35,730 full-time employee spots, according to the new state data. By last summer, it had 37,412. That's a jump of about 1,700 jobs. “State employee level increases are comparable to private sector job growth over the same periods,” said John Pollard, Minnesota Management and Budget legislative and communications director.

While much of the employee growth has happened during DFL Gov. Mark Dayton's tenure, he was also governor when the state saw its lowest recent employee count. During the three months that included July 2011, Minnesota Management and Budget figures show an employee count of 31,686. The reason for the big dip was three-week long state government shutdown when a Republican Legislature and the Democratic-Farmer-Labor governor deadlocked on a budget, shuttering offices, furloughing employees and halting hiring. It took until the middle of 2012 for employee counts to bounce back to their pre-shutdown level — even then the numbers were below what they had been in 2007. Still, Anderson noted, there was a surge in state employment between the summer of 2011 and last year.

Don't blame the \$2 billion tax increase from 2013 for the growth in staffers. Many of the new jobs are funded by fees, dedicated funds and federally funded duties. The figures from the state are for full-time equivalent, which is not a strict body count of state employees. Still, they still show where and how government has changed and where it has not. Among the notable trends:

**Big guys didn't get much bigger**

The four largest state departments — the Departments of Natural Resources, Human Services, Corrections and Transportation — increased their size very little in the past seven years. Back in the summer of 2007, the quartet had 18,967 employee positions. In the summer of 2014, they had 260 more employees, clocking in at 19,226 FTEs. During that time period, the Human Services Department, which has an employee count of nearly 7,000, actually decreased in size and the Transportation Department, which clocks in with about 5,000 FTEs, added 281 spots.

### Governors do not control all

Nearly a quarter of the growth in government full-time equivalents came from boards, commissions and the non-executive branches of government. Trial courts have added 256 spot to their ranks just in the last four years.

### “Other funds” paying for the growth

Since 2007, the state has added nearly 3,000 employee numbers whose salary is taken care of by funds dedicated to that purpose. Many of the state's transportation, veterans affairs, human services and natural resources employees fall under that “other” category. That means, in general, increased income taxes, which go to the so-called general funds, are not paying their salaries. According to Minnesota Management and Budget data, the general fund takes care of about 50 more employees than it did seven years ago.

### The digital age has arrived

When Republican Gov. Tim Pawlenty left office at the start of 2011 the Office of Enterprise Technology, which handles information technology for state departments, had a full-time staffer count of about 300. At the end of last year, it had more than doubled and now clocks in at 725 full-time spots.

### Full-time employee counts fluctuate

During the summer months, natural resources agency employee numbers tend to increase and then dip again when fall arrives. The same is true of the transportation department.

### 40 is enough

Back in 2007, Pawlenty had a 39-employee governor's office. In 2014, Dayton had a 40-employee governor's office. The only major dip in the size of a governor's staff appears late in 2010, when Pawlenty was packing up his office to set off on his presidential run. In the last three months of that year, Pawlenty only had 25 staff positions.

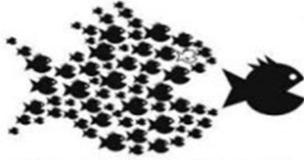
## Keep Your AFSCME Calendar Up to Date

- AFSCME Women's Leadership Academy: **March 7** is the deadline to apply for the 2015 Academy sponsored by AFSCME International.
- Labor Studies Skills Course: The Wonderful World of Google: **March 14, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.**, Minneapolis (Labor Education Service)
- **Labor Lunch – Wage Theft**: **March 19, noon-1 p.m.**, Minneapolis (Hennepin County Government Center Auditorium)
- Nellie Stone Johnson Scholarship Dinner: **March 26, 5:30 p.m.**, Oakdale (Prom Center)
- **Minnesota AFL-CIO State Retiree Council Fundraiser**: **April 25, 3-7 p.m.**, Maplewood (Sheet Metal Workers Hall)
- Minnesota AFL-CIO Scholarship Application Deadline: **April 30** is the deadline to apply for college and continuing education scholarships from the Minnesota AFL-CIO.
- AFSCME Scholarship Application Deadline: **May 8** is the deadline to apply for college and continuing education scholarships from Council 5.
- Nellie Stone Johnson Scholarship Deadline: **June 1** is the deadline to apply for scholarships for students in union families who are attending college in the MnSCU system.
- **AFSCME Family Picnic**: **Aug. 16**, Maplewood (Battle Creek Regional Park)
- **Financial Responsibility Training**: **Sept. 24, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.**, South St. Paul (Council 5)

## Some Informative Notices from HSPHD's “In the Loop”

- **Saying 'Human Service Center' instead of 'Hub' Helps Clients**
- **Get an Email when Lateral Transfer Jobs are Posted**
  - ◇ HSPHD Lateral Transfer Opportunities
- **Learn more about Plans for South Minneapolis Site in Newspaper Blog**
  - ◇ Lake-Hiawatha Overhaul Prepares for 2015 Liffoff
- **Reset your Password Yourself! Find out How**
- **All Staff: Start Tracking your Training Hours on your Timecard**
- **Health Care for the Homeless Donation Reflects Strong HCMC Tie**

## Member Tip: Your Role in Organizing



**ORGANIZE!**

There are two reasons for you to become personally involved in organizing activity outside of your workplace. **First, a healthy, effective union is one in which the members pitch in to do the work**, greatly increasing the people-resources of the union.

**Second**, no matter how skilled professional union staff may be—if there is one at all—**there is an extra measure of credibility when an already-organized employee speaks directly to an unorganized worker about day-to-day experiences.** The successes of member-to-member organizing are clear: one study issued by the AFL-CIO, for example, documents that unions win representation elections in 73 percent of the organizing drives conducted by ordinary members but in only 17 percent of those conducted by professional staff.

—Adapted from [The Union Member's Complete Guide](#), by Michael Maurer

## THE LOCAL 34 BANNER

### Minnesota Child Protection Workers are Swamped

Counties cite heavy caseloads, high turnover.

Article by: BRANDON STAHL, Star Tribune - Updated: February 7, 2015

Almost half of Minnesota's county child protection directors say they are so short-staffed that they cannot respond to reports of child abuse in the time required by law. Only 60 percent of counties said they have the staff needed to make monthly visits with children and families in open cases, while 40 percent said they cannot adequately supervise the social workers who manage those

cases, according to a survey conducted last month for the Star Tribune.

The concerns come as the state re-examines its ability to protect children from abuse. After the Star Tribune reported last year on systematic failures of the child protection system, Gov. Mark Dayton commissioned a task force to recommend reforms, and legislation intro-

duced this session seeks to put a new focus on child safety. The task force wants social workers to respond to more abuse reports and spend more time with families. Yet even if the Legislature approves those changes, there have been no proposals to increase funding for county child protection agencies.

**Article Continues Below...**

In the most populous Minnesota counties, child protection workers who screen initial reports of suspected abuse handle 900 cases each year. Child abuse investigators in those counties are assigned about 39 cases annually. "Unless something is done, there will only be the illusion of safety," said Judith Brumfield, Scott County's Health and Human Services director and a member of Dayton's task force. Brumfield said Scott County's workers can meet with families once a month, but that's not nearly enough. "Many families need to be seen in person once a week," she said. "We don't have the time to spend with families that we'd like to."

The stress on child protection workers is most glaring in the areas of the state with the most children. Ninety percent of the counties of 90,000 residents or more say their average caseload per worker is too high. Most counties said that being able to hire one to five workers would make caseloads more manageable. But one said that it will need 10 to 15 more if the state heeds the task force's call for more investigations and follow-up with families.

The new head of child protection for the Department of Human Services, Jim Koppel, said his agency will likely recommend increased funding to counties, but cautioned it will take more than that to repair the system. "If

we want the outcome to be that every child that comes into the child protection system should be better off as a result of the actions that we take, then we need to make changes in lots of areas," Koppel said.

About 66 percent of county child protection directors said workers' caseloads are too high, while another 44 percent say turnover is too high, the survey found. Some county officials said new workers are often inexperienced and take up cases before they are fully trained. Faced with excessive caseloads, those workers often leave, said Jodi Wentland, Olmsted County's child and family services director.

## New Anti-Public Employee Union Book Released

*What types of arguments do the anti-public employee unionists make? Here's part of a review of a new book by Daniel DiSalvo.*

As Daniel DiSalvo argues in *Government Against Itself*, public sector unions threaten the integrity of our very democracy. DiSalvo, a third generation union member, sees the value in private sector unions. But in the public sector, unions do not face a genuine adversary at the bargaining table. Moreover, the public sector can't go out of business no matter how much union members manage to

squeeze out of it. Union members have no incentive to settle for less, and the costs get passed along to the taxpayer. States and municipalities strain under the weight of their pension obligations, and the chasm between well-compensated public sector employees and their beleaguered private sector counterparts widens. Where private sector unions can provide a necessary counterweight to the power of capital, public employee unionism is basically the government bargaining with itself; it's no wonder they almost always win. The left is largely in thrall to the unions, both ideologically and financially; the

right would simply take a hatchet to the state itself, eliminating important and valuable government services. Neither side offers a realistic vision of well-run government that spends tax dollars wisely and serves the public well. Moving beyond stale and unproductive partisan divisions, DiSalvo argues that we can build a better, more responsive government that is accountable to taxpayers. But we cannot do it until we challenge the dominance of public sector unions in government.



## We Built the Middle Class, and We Can Rebuild It | Commentary

• By Lee Saunders, Feb. 2, 2015

Most members of Congress today are millionaires. Their wealth has increased 28 percent since 2007, while that of the average American fell 43 percent.

So when President Barack Obama told



But we have noticed and we're outraged. We are tired of being told that if we just work harder, we can get ahead when we know that hard work has very little to do with achieving success in a system that is rigged. There's no guarantee anymore that putting in more hours at work will result in a raise or a promotion. There's no guarantee that getting a college degree will result in anything more than crushing student debt.

A recent Oxfam study found the world's wealthiest 1 percent is on track to own more than the rest of the world combined. The report said the 80 richest people in the world have more combined wealth than the 3.5 billion people at the bottom. This staggering disparity, the authors note, hits working people twice as hard. We have to make do with a tiny slice of the pie and, as the rich accumulate more, the pie itself gets smaller.

It hasn't always been this way. There was a time in our not-so-distant past when poor Americans could work their way into the middle class. There was a time when people in the middle class could afford to buy a home, send their kids to college and save

members of Congress during his State of the Union address to try living on \$15,000 a year if they think it's so easy, the lack of response was telling.

The smackdown was an uncomfortable reminder of how far out of balance our economy is

for retirement. Today, middle-class families must make a choice — a home, college or retirement. They no longer can do all three.

This fast-disappearing upward mobility was made possible by the American labor movement, which helped workers gain a fair share of the nation's prosperity through collective bargaining and political activism. Unions were and continue to be the only organizations willing to stand up and fight for working people and the middle class. And it is unions that can get us out of the mess we're in now.

While extremists in Congress refuse to raise the minimum wage, it is unions at the bargaining table who are hammering out contracts that raise wages for working people. As corporate lobbyists seek to eliminate regulations that protect workers, it's the shop steward who fights for a safer workplace. When anti-worker governors come up with another scheme to steal pensions, it is union members who go door to door to warn the public.

The benefits to workers who form a union are concrete and undeniable. Unionized workers earn on average \$207 more per week than their nonunion counterparts, according to the latest data from the Bureau of Labor Statistics, and are more likely to have employer-sponsored

and how many of our elected officials are benefiting from a system rigged to favor only the wealthy and powerful. It's no wonder most lawmakers sat stone-faced after the president's remark, perhaps hoping Americans wouldn't notice this

health care and access to a guaranteed retirement plan.

At a time when so many Americans are feeling beat down by an economy rigged against them, the peace of mind that comes with a good union job is immeasurable. Unions provide better wages and benefits, job security and a better standard of living.

Unions have the ability and the track record to rebuild the American middle class and help close the yawning divide between the rich and the rest of us.

Obama acknowledged as much in his State of the Union address, calling for new laws that make it easier for workers to join unions. No one should have to survive in our nation today earning only \$15,000 a year.

The New York Times recently reported on a study that shows union workers are just plain happier, and no wonder. Not only do they earn more, but they've got a real voice at work. Unions are the agents of change that our nation so desperately needs.

*Lee Saunders is president of American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees.*

*For more, read the Saunders letter on Page 12!*



Imaged thank you note from Pastor Mark Boorsma, Ascension Lutheran Church, Albert Lea, for \$50 memorial gift for member Mickey Henry's father, Ray Klingbiel.



ASCENSION LUTHERAN CHURCH  
1101 U.S. Highway 69 South  
ALBERT LEA, MN 56007  
507-373-3408

January 28, 2015

Patrick Regan  
Hennepin County Social Service Employees - AFSCME Local 34 - AFL-CIO  
Box 15222 Commerce Station  
Minneapolis, Minnesota 55415

Dear Mr. Regan,

Thank you for your kind and generous \$50 gift in memory of Ray Klingbiel, the father of your member Michele Henry.

I have taken the liberty of informing Ms. Henry of your thoughtful kindness.

Thank you for your generous remembrance.

Yours in service,

Pastor Mark Boorsma

### Our Fair Share Fees System at Risk at the Supreme Court this Spring:

*From The Atlantic, February 20, 2015*

#### The End of Public-Employee Unions?

**The Supreme Court has been asked to take a case that could deal a crippling blow to the labor movement.**

*Friedrichs v. California Teachers Association*

The "fair share" fee is {Justice} Alito's current target. In a 1977 case called *Abood v. Detroit Board of Education*, the Burger Court said the fees do not violate the First Amendment.

*Abood* has become the basis for scores of public-employee contracts, and the Court has reaffirmed it at least four times over the past 30 years. The Roberts Court does not always reach conservative results; but when the two {political} parties have dogs in a fight, the majority finds itself mightily tempted to find that the GOP's preferred outcome is also the law. Overturning *Abood* would, as {Justice} Kagan noted, be a radical step.

## Coming Out at Work and the Fight for Equality

by Kevin Zapf Hanes, AFSCME Blog | January 27, 2015

ROCHESTER, N.Y. – Coming out as lesbian, gay, bisexual or transgendered at work can be one of the most difficult choices a person can make. Once it is done, it can never be undone and word travels fast – so be prepared when you do. When it goes right, it feels wonderful to be able to be yourself and not be hidden away in a closet.

AFSCME and the AFL-CIO advocate for safe and inclusive workplaces for all workers, especially those who are often left behind. The **AFL-CIO's Pride at Work initiative** plays an important role in improving the lives of LGBTQ working families, says Bess Watts, a library assistant from Monroe Community College near here who leads the local Pride at Work chapter (2nd from the Left in photo).



"Pride at Work gives our members an opportunity to be who they are both at home and at work," said Watts. "The members in the Rochester Finger Lakes chapter have worked so hard to gain the respect as an active member of the labor community. It's been our philosophy that all issues affecting workers are issues for all workers."

As New York state considered whether or not to allow for same sex marriage, Bess Watts and her chapter took to the streets, building lasting relationships and overcoming obstacles to garner the support of every major union, including police and fire, to force reluctant legislators to vote for equality. Their experience taking on their issues directly taught them that by working together, no obstacle was too great.

In recognition of their hard work, the AFL-CIO Rochester Finger Lakes Pride at Work chapter won the Pride at Work Constituency Group Award at the AFL-CIO Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Civil and Human Rights Conference on Jan. 18, 2015. "Leaders like Bess Watts, in her bravery and unrelenting resolve to advance the rights of all workers, especially those of the LGBTQ community, are an inspiration to me personally," said CSEA/AFSCME Local 1000 Pres. Danny Donohue, also an International vice president. "Together, we will continue to create safe and inclusive workplaces for all workers."

## THE LOCAL 34 BANNER

### Labor Law & You: *AFSCME International*— Fighting for the Rights of Employees with Disabilities

#### Negotiating Favorable Contract Language

The ADA states that collective bargaining agreements can be taken into consideration when making a reasonable accommodation or when deciding

- **Non-discrimination**  
Include "persons with disabilities" in the classes in the contract's discrimination clause.

*Every contract should include persons with disabilities as a protected class. This enables a person with a disability to file a grievance under the contract in addition to seeking remedies under the law.*

- **General compliance**  
"This contract shall comply with the Americans with Disabilities Act."

*In addition to enabling a person with a disability to use the contract's grievance procedure, this clause will protect the union should the federal government release any future interpretations of the ADA which conflict with the*

whether an accommodation will cause an undue hardship. However, the law does not spell out what happens if the ADA conflicts with certain provisions of a collective bargaining agreement, such as

*existing collective bargaining agreement.*

- **Joint labor/management committee**

"In accordance with the employer's obligation to practice non-discrimination in all phases of employment of persons with disabilities and to promote sensitivity for all employees, a joint committee of labor and management will be established. The committee shall meet on a quarterly basis."

*This committee can monitor problems that members with disabilities have not only at work, but also outside the workplace. Committee members can develop employer-wide programs such as training on the ADA, sensitivity training, and sign language*

seniority clauses. For this reason and in order to ensure that AFSCME members reap the most benefits from the ADA, the following are examples of suggested contract language:

*classes. The committee can work to resolve reasonable accommodation problems, create a resource and referral service for people with disabilities, and track relevant legislation.*

- **Union representation**  
"During the process to identify a reasonable accommodation, the employee has the right to have union representation, if he or she so chooses."

*The ADA suggests that an employer should consult with the employee with a disability to identify potential reasonable accommodations. This recommended clause permits the employee to have union representation present if he or she so desires.*



**The Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA):** The Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990 (ADA) prohibits discrimination and ensures equal opportunity for persons with disabilities in employment, State and local government services, public accommodations, commercial facilities, and transportation. It also mandates the establishment of TDD/telephone relay services. The current text of the ADA includes changes made by the ADA Amendments Act of 2008 (P.L. 110-325), which became effective on January 1, 2009. The ADA was originally enacted in public law format and later rearranged and published in the United States Code.

**Hennepin County Benefits Department Link:** <https://hconnect.hennepin.us/HR/Lists/HR%20General%20Information/DispForm2.aspx?ID=23&Source=https%3a//hconnect.hennepin.us/HR/Lists/HR%2520General%2520Information/AllItems.aspx%23InpViewHash5bd193c4-0fe9-466f-a707-8c241600dd26%3D&ContentTypeId=0x01003EC0F01041BA29448CCACE4C4C08F5B>

## Local 34 Officers

### President:

Jean Diederich  
348-0266 – HSB—961

### Vice Presidents:

Vicki Moore (1st)  
348-6051 — FJC—L890  
Kathy Kelly (2nd)  
348-6593—FJC- L890

### Chief Stewards:

Kela Williams (Sr)  
348-9152 – CP—630  
Tywana Gray (Jr)  
596-7261—CP –630

### Recording Secretary:

Laura Ross  
348-6881 — HSB—961

### Treasurer:

Patrick Regan  
348-8760 – FJC—L890

### Membership Secretary:

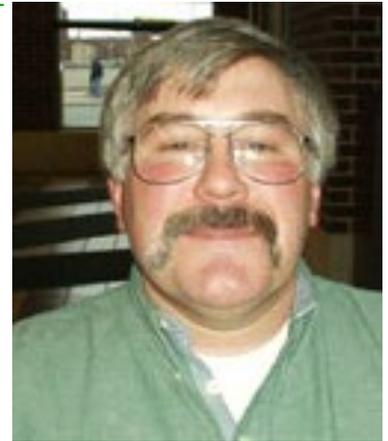
Heather Hemmer  
please contact her by  
e-mail – FJC—L890

### Sergeant-At-Arms:

Andrea Lazo-Rice  
348-6605 – HSB—961

### Members-At-Large:

- Kay Powell  
596-7820 - FJC—L890
- Jacquelin Poole  
348-4246 – HSB—961
- Angel Alexander  
596-1885 - CP —630
- Miguel Salazar  
348-8322 — NW Hub
- Deb Konechne  
543-0155 — E Side—  
701A
- Sharon Streefer  
596-9714—CP —630



Patrick Regan, who is a Principal Child Support Officer, has been serving Local 34 in the highly-demanding position of Treasurer, since he was elected to succeed the late Elizabeth Portlance in 2003.

## Local 34 Stewards

Deborah Diggins  
348-9503, Century Plaza  
Ibrahim Farah  
978-9350, Century Plaza  
Emily Frazier  
348-0810, Century Plaza  
Leah Hicks  
596-8873, Century Plaza  
Fatuma Kassim  
596-8457, Century Plaza  
Watchen Marshall  
702-9254, Century Plaza  
Ahmed Mohamed  
348-9276, Century Plaza  
Jamoda White  
596-8948, Century Plaza

Tony Parrish (new)  
543-1381, Century Plaza, MNSure  
Ruth Salik (new)  
543-3403, Century Plaza, MNSure  
Antoinette Simmons  
348-0795, South Suburban Hub  
Terry Grace  
348-7308, Juvenile Justice Center  
Lindsay Schwab  
596-7170, Family Justice Center  
Halima Said  
543-0380, Family Justice Center  
Elizabeth Allison  
651-206-2200 {C}, Family Just Ctr.  
Sametta Hill  
348-4826, HSB

Jim Edin  
763-221-4443, STS  
Aric Wiste  
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Maureen Glover  
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Sheila Lipsco  
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Dennis Moore  
879-3560, 1800 Chicago  
Mara Hill  
432-7107, 1800 Chicago  
Caroline Malone  
348-4204, 1800 Chicago  
Eve Lee  
543-1615, Eastside Neighborhood  
Services

Jody Stadler  
348-7371, Sabathani  
Shawnice Reid  
543-2622, NorthPoint Medical  
Jacqueline Coleman  
543-2605, NorthPoint

### Trustees

Paul Madison, Douglas Graham,  
3rd Trustee position is Vacant

### Delta Dental Trustee

Monica Jochmans

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Local 34 Good & Welfare:  
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612-534-0354  
or Amanda Abell (MC L890)  
612-596-8946



“Find out what people will submit to, and you have found out the exact amount of injustice and wrong, which will be imposed upon them.”  
- Frederick Douglass



"We all do better, when we all do better." - Senator Paul Wellstone

AFSCME Local 34 Hennepin County Social Services Unit

March 2015 Issue

AFSCME Local 34  
P.O. Box 15222  
Minneapolis, MN 55415-0222



**LABOR LUNCH**  
Off-the-Clock, Working for Free



Work loads are increasing and folks are feeling compelled to work off-the-clock. Come for lunch and a facilitated conversation about how we all lose when we WORK FOR FREE.

Pizza will be provided

Hennepin County Government  
Center Auditorium  
300 6<sup>th</sup> St. Mpls  
March, 19<sup>th</sup>  
12-1

Labor Lunch, Thursday, March 19th—GC Auditorium 12:00 to 1:00 - Pizza will be provided.

Recently, we published an article about the personal and professional dangers of working off-the-clock. In many departments vacant positions are left unfilled, leaving those remaining with more work than they can complete in 40 hours. Fearing discipline or termination, many of us are forgoing breaks and/or not reporting the actual number of hours we work. **The pressure to do more with less is forcing people to work for free and to do so in silence.**

Through education and action, front-line workers around the County are organizing to break this silence. In March, the Education, Engagement and Outreach Committee will be hosting "Off-the-Clock, Working for Free," a conversation about the costs of working for free. This event is a part of our ongoing Labor Lunch series and will include testimonials as well as a facilitated conversation about how we can challenge the prevailing culture of fear.

Unfair work expectations, if gone uncontested, will continue to threaten our quality of life and diminish the quality of our services. Our lives and the lives of those we serve are at risk.... *Courtesy of AFSCME Local 2822, 02/15*

We're on the Web!

**AFSCME**  
American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO

Text JOIN to 237263 for text message updates!

We're on Facebook, Too!

(It's a closed group: e-mail Amanda Abell for an Invite)



Dear Sisters and Brothers:

Ever wonder what the benefit is to being in a union?

Well here's a big one: On average, **union members make \$207 more dollars a week than non-union workers.** That's \$10,000 more each year, according to the latest report from the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics.

No wonder studies show **union members are happier.**

But it's not just about us. It's about the whole country.

As U.S. **Secretary of Labor Thomas Perez noted last week:**

*"There is a direct link throughout American history between the strength of the middle class and the vitality of the labor movement. When unions are strong, working families thrive, with wages and productivity rising in tandem. But when the percentage of people represented by unions is low, there is downward pressure on wages and the middle class takes it on the chin."*

AFSCME defied the odds last year and grew by nearly 132,000 members, thanks to the hard work of rank-and-file members who volunteered to talk with their fellow workers. This is how we can rebuild the middle class, by staying involved.



**Take action today: Sign up here for AFSCME text message alerts.**

We'll send you localized updates about ways you can help grow our union, defend the public services we provide and make a difference in your community.

**In solidarity,  
Lee Saunders  
President, AFSCME**



**The new My AFSCME Dental web site—answers to your questions, provided by Council 5**