

APRIL-MAY 2018

# PRESIDENT'S REPORT TO THE MEMBERS OF SEIU 721



## NOT ON OUR WATCH!

SEIU 721 Leader Summit Trains Activists to Fight “Right to Work” Attacks



**A MESSAGE FROM SEIU 721  
PRESIDENT BOB SCHOONOVER**

**F**or decades, public sector workers in California have fought for a society that lifts everyone up. We’ve stood up — sometimes literally laying our bodies on the line — to say everyone deserves better. That we’re all equal and everyone deserves opportunity, freedom from hunger and access to health care.

But a new breed of super-rich ultra-conservatives have a different vision. They imagine a society without a floor. A non-stop race to the bottom, where the rich get richer and everyone else fights among themselves for the scraps.

The billionaires created “Right to Work” to achieve this vision. They want to silence workers’ voices and put the middle class on the chopping block.

But that’s not going to happen on our watch. All over America, working people are standing up to “Right to Work.” Even in states where “Right to Work” is the law — West Virginia, Oklahoma and Kentucky, for example — teachers and other public employees are standing up to hostile legislatures and winning. The secret: ordinary workers who combine their passion

for justice with new training and tactics and come together to do extraordinary things.

SEIU 721 is made up of workers like this. On Saturday, April 28th, hundreds of hand-picked member-leaders came together for a day-long session to learn the organizing skills needed to win in the “Right to Work” era. They brushed up on tried and true techniques and learned some of the cutting-edge methods used by teachers in Right to Work strongholds. They learned how to identify undercover “Right to Work” scammers and inoculate our worksites.

This is the fight of our lives. Our jobs, our health care and our retirement security are on the line. But being in our union — and the Labor movement — is like being in a family. We all have a role to play and responsibilities. We look out for each other. And if we all do our part, we can do the extraordinary.

*Bob Schoonover*



## PRESIDENT'S REPORT APRIL-MAY 2018

# RIGHT TO WORK BACK DOWN! WE'RE A UNION TOWN!



### LEADER SUMMIT TEACHES CUTTING EDGE METHODS TO FIGHT "RIGHT TO WORK"



Hundreds of hand-picked SEIU 721 member leaders gathered to learn cutting-edge organizing techniques for fighting "Right to Work" scams in our workplaces. Recently, public employees have been turning the tables on anti-worker activists in Right to Work strongholds, like West Virginia and Oklahoma.

Hundreds of SEIU 721 member leaders gathered on April 28th to learn cutting edge organizing techniques to counter the billionaire-backed Right to Work scam. The class of SEIU 721 activists crowded into the Cathedral of Our Lady of the Angels in Los Angeles for a day-long summit on how to counter the national effort to silence workers and cripple their ability to form unions.

Funded by the Koch brothers, the Scaife family and other ultra-conservative billionaires, "Right to Work" (RTW) is a multi-pronged

strategy to roll back workers' rights across the U.S. The tools in the "Right to Work" scam: dozens of federal lawsuits aimed at limiting workers' right to organize, like the *Janus* case currently pending decision at the Supreme Court; heavy spending in state and federal races to elect anti-worker politicians; and workplace scams aimed at tricking workers into abandoning union rights and protections.

To fight back, participants hand-picked for their leadership ability learned to anticipate and counter RTW scams in SoCal workplaces.



## PRESIDENT'S REPORT APRIL-MAY 2018



### FIX LA CALLS OUT “BROKEN STREETS AND MAYOR’S BROKEN PROMISES” AT PEOPLE’S STATE OF THE CITY ADDRESS

Los Angeles Mayor Eric Garcetti’s “State of the City” address was challenged April 16<sup>th</sup> by Fix L.A., a coalition of SEIU 721 and dozens of L.A. community organizations, who used their “People’s State of the City” to demand an immediate fix to broken streets and the Mayor’s broken promises.

“The real state of the city — here, look at the pictures — the real state of the city is that neighborhoods like mine in Watts, in South L.A., still don’t have vital city services,” said Timothy McDaniel of the Alliance of Californians for Community Empowerment (ACCE).

City Hall leaders and Mayor Eric Garcetti pledged back in 2015 to create 5,000 new jobs by June 2018. These jobs were eliminated during the recession — a move city workers accepted at the time with the understanding that, when the economy recovered, these jobs would be restored.

But that has not happened. Jobs with the City of Los Angeles are an entry point to a middle-class quality of life, especially for women and people of color. Those pathways now remain indefinitely closed.

“Mr. Mayor, how do you expect to be president and fix our community when you haven’t fixed L.A.?” asked Beverly Roberts, a South L.A. resident.

In addition to SEIU Local 721, the People’s State of the City was hosted by these members of the Fix L.A. Coalition: People Organized for Westside Renewal (POWER); AFSCME District Council 36; Food & Water Watch — California; the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) of Southern California; the Los Angeles Community Action Network (LA CAN); Ground Game — Los Angeles; Strategic Concepts in Organizing & Policy Education (SCOPE); the Community Coalition; and the Alliance of Californians for Community Empowerment (ACCE).

## PRESIDENT'S REPORT APRIL-MAY 2018

### SAN BERNARDINO SOCIAL WORKERS FACE MOUNTING CASELOADS

SEIU 721 San Bernardino County Social Workers showed up in force to the April 3<sup>rd</sup> Board of Supervisors meeting to call attention to how skyrocketing caseloads are putting child safety at risk. San Bernardino now carries 6,000 of the state's 54,000 child welfare cases. Social workers once responsible for protecting an average of 30 children now are responsible for 60 or 70.

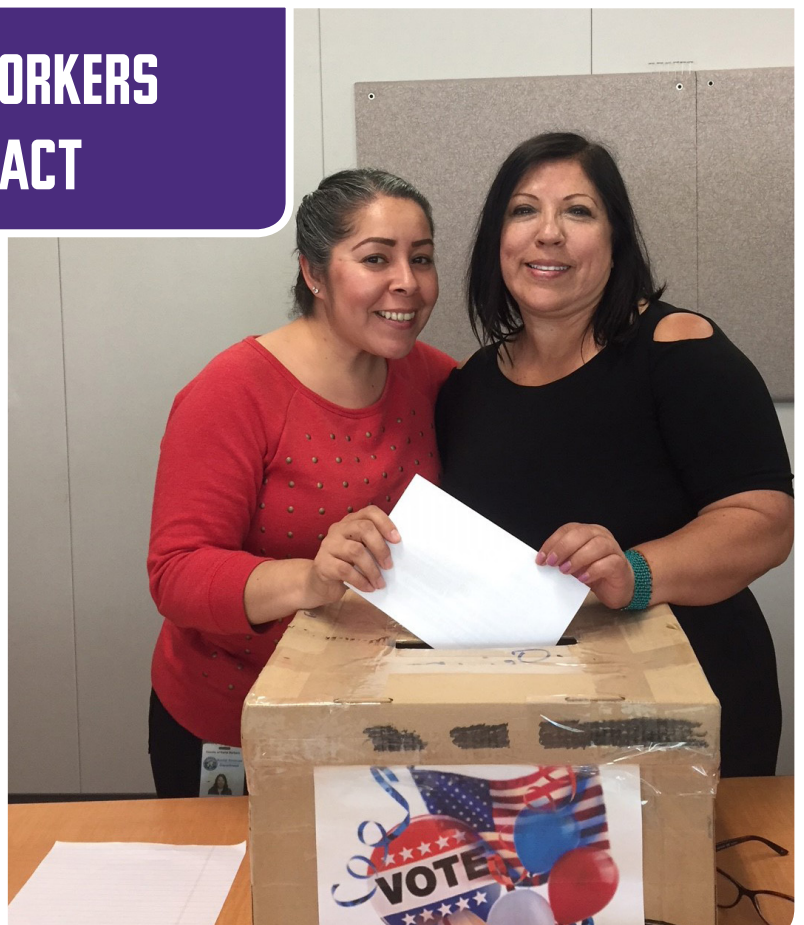


**SAN BERNARDINO SOCIAL WORKERS SAY  
HUGE CASELOADS PUT CHILDREN AT RISK**

### SANTA BARBARA COUNTY WORKERS WIN STRONG 3-YEAR CONTRACT

On April 26<sup>th</sup>, SEIU 721 Santa Barbara County workers approved a strong new 3-year contract with raises of up to 8 percent over the term of the agreement.

Santa Barbara workers began negotiations facing management proposals for significant takeaways and no wage increases. But members' unity and hard work helped deliver a strong three-year agreement that includes important gains regarding maintenance of membership and other issues.





## PRESIDENT'S REPORT APRIL-MAY 2018

Riverside County's leaders have spent like drunken sailors on contracts with European consulting giant KPMG, while making county workers walk the plank. But it looks like their pirate ship is sinking.

An impartial Fact Finder appointed by the Public Employment Relations Board (PERB) concluded in April that Riverside County workers deserve more than the regressive "Last, Best and Final" offer presented by the county management.

Among the Fact-Finder's recommendations: a new MOU through July 2019; 4% across the board raises; and the elimination of almost all takeaways.

"...all of this time, energy and money could be better spent if everyone could reach an agreement and simply get back to the business of taking care of the public," the report concluded.

We couldn't agree more!



### RIVERSIDE COUNTY'S SHIP IS SINKING: FACT-FINDER SIDES WITH 721 WORKERS

### SEIU 721 CONDUCTS SAFETY CHECK TO PROTECT WORKERS IN LA COUNTY JAILS

In early April, SEIU 721, CIR-SEIU, UAPD, and several AFCSME locals filed an unprecedented joint grievance against LA County in response to deteriorating workplace safety at Twin Towers and Men's Central Jail.

The grievance demands an immediate fix to problems endangering the lives of Integrated Correctional Health Services (ICHS) workers at both facilities.

On April 26th, scores of union members visited Twin Towers and Men's Central to conduct a Safety Check, interviewing employees to pinpoint the safety issues at both facilities.



## PRESIDENT'S REPORT APRIL-MAY 2018



SEIU 721 LA County members staged a massive show of unity and solidarity at the April 10<sup>th</sup> Board of Supervisors meeting to send a clear message: Every day, LA County workers deliver vital public services to communities in need — and we deserve a strong contract that values our work.

## SEIU 721 LA COUNTY BARGAINING TEAM PREPPING TO WIN



**On April 2<sup>nd</sup>, newly-elected LA County bargaining team members came together for a training session in Downtown LA. Members reviewed past victories, discussed upcoming negotiations and laid the groundwork for bargaining strategy. County workers are fired up and ready to STAND UNITED! #werise #unionstrong**



## PRESIDENT'S REPORT APRIL-MAY 2018



**"Live better – work union. That's my advice. Our brothers and sisters in LA County bargained a 10 percent raise. In the City of LA, we're making sure we get back the 5,000 jobs lost in the recession. The Living Wage? That didn't just happen – it's the power of the union. That's why the folks behind Right to Work want to take the union away. Don't let them!"**

**– Linda Dent  
Vice President, SEIU 721**

### CONGRATULATIONS TO GRADUATES OF 721 REPRESENTATIONAL EXCELLENCE PROGRAM!

**At our union's April 28th Leader Summit in Los Angeles, SEIU 721 members recognized graduates of our Representational Excellence program.**

**The 76 member leaders who graduated the course gave up their weekends for several months to learn how to protect workers' rights on the job and help their union brothers and sisters when they need support.**

**Graduates received special training on how to enforce our union's collective bargaining agreement using the grievance process and how to protect SEIU members using specialized legal protections available to union members, such as Weingarten and Skelly Rights.**



# SEIU 721 WORKPLACE RESOURCES TO DEFEAT THE RTW SCAM

**T**he “Right to Work” scam is real and it’s here now. Backed by billionaire ultraconservatives, like the Koch Brothers and the Scaife family, the so-called “Right to Work” is the biggest threat to the American worker in a generation. But SEIU 721 is ready. We’ve trained hundreds of member leaders in the latest methods for exposing “Right to Work” goons trying to infiltrate our workplaces. We’ve armed 721 members with a toolkit that all of us can use to fight back and win. Here’s what it includes:

## **Decision Day Downloads**

Stickers, placards and other resources to Purple Up your worksite when the *Janus* decision comes down.

## **Committee Organizing Guide**

Step-by-step instructions for identifying leaders, building a Rise & Resist Committee and facilitating your first meeting.

## **Union Board in a Box**

Layout, templates and printouts to easily update your worksite’s union board.

## **Rapid Response Tools**

Print and digital responses for when “Right to Work” goons attempt to breach your worksite.

## **New Employee Orientation**

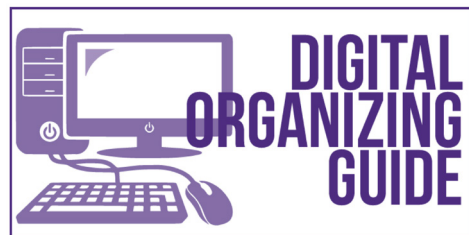
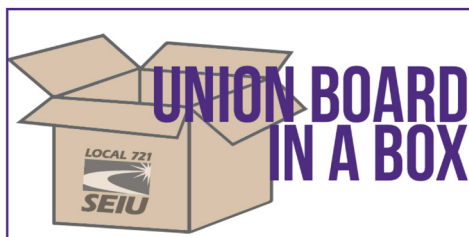
Short and sweet instructions for talking to new employees at orientation about how to keep our worksites Union Strong.

## **Digital Organizing Guide**

Directions for how to use digital tools to upgrade your organizing, including how to create a text tree, how to make a worksite Facebook group and how to get in touch with 721’s communications staff.

Talk to your worksite organizer to get access.

**Gilda Valdez, Chief of Staff**



**Want to verify that you are receiving all the benefits and protections of union membership?**

**Call SEIU Local 721 Member Connection at: (877) 721-4968.**