

# SEIU Local 140 Newsletter 6.2.23

## Take Action!

- **Attend bargaining** Tuesday June 6<sup>th</sup> 2-5 PEC or Monday June 12<sup>th</sup> 10-2 at 525 NE Oregon St.
- **Membership meeting** June 10 at SEIU 525 NE Oregon St.
- **Join the board meeting** Tuesday June 13<sup>th</sup> when they're voting to adopt the budget

## UNION UPDATES

### Bargaining Update

The bargaining team will make our wage proposals at the next two bargaining sessions with management. We will be proposing \$25/hr starting wage for nutrition service and custodial workers which means 30% raises across the board for custodians and 45% for nutrition service who have historically been extremely underpaid for the essential work they do.

Due to the high cost of rent, food, gas, and other basic necessities, we believe \$25/hr is a reasonable and necessary starting wage for workers in the Portland area. It is unacceptable for PPS to pay management 6 figure salaries while the workers who feed our students and keep our schools clean cannot afford to live in this city. Many of us are less than a paycheck away from being evicted. We also know that offering a livable wage will make it easier for PPS to hire and retain qualified workers and will increase worker morale.

If we are going to be able to win the wages we need, it will take all of us to put pressure on the district. One way to do that is to join an upcoming bargaining session. It is important for management to see that we are united and ready to stand up and fight for a living wage. If you are off the clock you can join our bargaining session at PEC on June 6<sup>th</sup> from 2-5pm or at the SEIU office (525 NE Oregon St) June 12 from 10-2pm. Invite your coworkers and come show your support for a strong contract!

### Know Your Rights

#### Sick Leave:

When it comes to sick leave, it can be confusing what our rights are. Here are some tips regarding using sick leave at PPS:

- Management can only require a doctor's note if you are out sick for more than 3 consecutive days.
- Workers earn 1 day of sick leave per month and there is no limit to how much sick leave you can earn

According to state law, sick leave covers the following circumstances:

- to care for yourself or a family member
- to care for an infant or newly adopted child

- grieving the death of a family member or attending a funeral
- absences related to domestic violence, harassment, sexual assault or stalking

### **Schedule changes:**

As summer approaches, custodians should know their rights when it comes to their shift schedule. Management must give at least 14 days notice if they wish to change a custodian's start or end time. Exceptions include when an employee is being transferred or promoted or if the shift change is mutually agreed upon.

If you believe management is violating your rights it is important to contact a steward and save as much documentation of the incident as you can including emails. A steward can help identify what parts of the contract are being violated and file a grievance to resolve the issue.

## **LOCAL SOLIDARITY**

### **PPS Student Walkouts**

Students at Ockley Green and Harriet Tubman continue to protest removal of 3 educators of color from their schools. On May 23, students from both schools marched to the district building where they were locked out and prevented from even using the restrooms. They are demanding the reinstatement of 3 educators who are on administrative leave with no public explanation. It should be no surprise that PPS permits [racist behavior](#) from management while continuing to ignore and dismiss the voices of students, parents, and educators of color. At the rally, students demonstrated solidarity with PPS workers by acknowledging how management also ignores the voices of their custodial and nutrition service workers among others. These students remind us that our power lies in our solidarity with one another.

### **Unions Sign Resolution to Free Mumia Abu-Jamal**

In recent months, several local unions have signed resolutions calling to finally free Mumia Abu-Jamal, a writer, president of the Philadelphia Association of Black Journalists, and former Black Panther, who has been a political prisoner for over 40 years and was on death row for nearly 30. While on death row, Mumia was saved from execution several times throughout the 90s by international protest and labor actions, such as the ILWU (International Longshore and Warehouse Union) who shut down 29 ports on the west coast in 1999. The recent re-emergence of the fight was heightened again by ILWU, [specifically local 10](#), in February when they [shut down the ports for the day](#) to demand that Mumia's case be retried in order to exonerate him. This [initiated international labor actions](#) by South African and German metal workers, and Japanese railroad workers, who also demonstrated to free Mumia.

Since February, [IUPAT Local 10](#) (Painters Union in Portland), [UAW Local 2865](#) (student workers for University of California), IATSE Local 28 (theatrical stage workers in Portland), and as of just this Thursday last night Iron Workers Local 29 have all passed resolutions calling for the freedom of Mumia Abu-Jamal through continued publicity, protest, and labor action. These resolutions also recount the litany of naked injustices and shams that characterized Mumia's trial and subsequent conviction for the murder of a police officer in 1981, such as: numerous false or coerced testimonies, a racist Judge Albert Sabo who stated he was going "to help them fry the [N-word]", and the sworn confession of another man Arnold Beverly that it was actually him who killed the officer, among [many other](#)

[peculiarities of the case.](#)

Given that IUPAT already represents several painters who work within PPS, We at SEIU Local 140 along with other PPS labor unions have the opportunity to join the fight to free Mumia Abu-Jamal, who has been a longstanding voice from both inside and out of prison against worker exploitation, racist oppression, and imperialism. In the words of Mumia thanking the support of the labor movement, “When workers unite, the Earth trembles and the heavens shake.”

## **INTERNATIONAL SOLIDARITY**

### **Ship Visit**

On Saturday, three of us joined a ship visit with the [Pacific Coast Coalition of Seafarers](#) (PCCS), a group that does outreach and mutual aid with seafarers docked at Portland ports. We met a crew of Filipino workers who gave us a tour of the ship and shared about their working conditions on board and their reasons for becoming seafarers.

Worldwide about one quarter to one third of all seafarers are Filipino, and all seafarers face long stretches away from their family and friends often without internet or data, as well as hazardous working conditions with little control over their contracts. As some of the higher paying jobs available to many in the Philippines, becoming a seafarer is seen by many as a way to a higher quality of life for themselves and their families. Back home, many Filipinos face extreme poverty due to landlessness, government corruption, and the domination of US business and military interests.

The ship we visited was docked on the east side of the Willamette north of the Broadway Bridge and south of the Fremont Bridge. The vessel had just finished unloading a cargo of cement, and the workers on board were in the process of cleaning out the hold. Later, they were set to head north to Longview Washington where they would pick up a cargo of logs to transport to South Korea.

Often, crew members are unable to leave the ship due to immigration laws, long working shifts, or the lack of affordable public transit from shipping terminals. PCCS seeks to meet the basic needs of seafarers including vaccines, access to shore leave, and support in their struggle for better working conditions and labor protections. As fellow workers, we encourage others to get involved and show your solidarity with the seafarers who are risking so much to do the dangerous work that makes global shipping and trade possible.

### **Workers oppose APEC!**

In July and August corporate lobbyists and government ministers will meet in Seattle as part of the Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) forum. APEC is an institution meant to serve business interests by negotiating trade deals which allow multinational companies like Intel, Facebook, Dole, and Nike to exploit cheap labor, and weaken environmental regulations in order to make a profit. The US is hosting APEC this year and is hoping to negotiate a free trade deal called the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework (IPEF) that would include many SE Asian countries in an attempt to strengthen US corporate interests in general, as well as against competition from China.

Free trade deals like IPEF only serve large corporations while workers around the world suffer. In the 90's the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA) resulted in the loss of millions of jobs in the US and the suffering of millions of low-wage workers in Mexico. It also meant the loss of livelihood for peasants and farmers unable to compete with cheap agricultural imports from the US.

APEC meetings are being held behind closed doors with almost no input from the public. Rather than going through congress or the United Nations, businesses are making deals in secret that will have a massive impact on jobs, wages, labor rights, climate action, consumer privacy and monopoly power. However, in the face of attempts to silence and further exploit ordinary people, workers are rising up to oppose this new round of talks. Just like the Seattle WTO protests in 1999 where tens of thousands marched against a similar event, people are planning to demonstrate against the upcoming APEC meetings. Stay tuned for more information leading up to the ministerial meetings this summer and learn more about the Pacific Northwest People Over Profit coalition which is organizing against it [here](#).