

# LOCAL FOCUS

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER—SEIU LOCAL 503—SUB-LOCAL 085—UNIVERSITY OF OREGON

MARCH 2017



*SEIU 503-085 UO President Theodora Ko Thompson and Member Jane Brubaker present members' valentines to university President Michael Schill February 14. Greg Stripp, senior advisor and chief of staff for the president, accepted them on his behalf in the president's office; Schill was in Portland. Members wrote the president to remind him of their contributions to the university and asked for a fair contract. 📧 Evangelina Sundgrenze*

## NEGOTIATION WITH UNIVERSITIES BEGIN

By *Johnny Earl*, chief bargaining delegate

Union brothers and sisters, I thank each one of you who filled out a bargaining survey. Our team appreciates your input, and we will focus on your suggestions as we develop a sound strategy for winning a fair and equitable contract.

Workers at the UO are truly engaged. We filled out more surveys than people who work for the other six schools and it is our largest turnout ever.

The most common complaint involved our contract

**BARGAINING CONTINUED ON PAGE 2**

### STAY INFORMED, GET UNION INFO FAST

Update or add your email address to for news about bargaining, protest actions and more.



[seiu503.seiu.org/page/signup/alerts](http://seiu503.seiu.org/page/signup/alerts)

Or contact your Local 085 UO organizers to get connected and receive email updates.



Evangelina Sundgrenz  
[sundgrenze@seiu503.org](mailto:sundgrenze@seiu503.org)

David Pinsonneault  
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**LOCAL 085 MONTHLY MEETING**  
**Wednesday, April 12**  
**Noon-1 p.m.**  
**Erb Memorial Union**  
**119 Diamond Lake Room**  
*Lunch is provided.*  
**ALL MEMBERS WELCOME**

### ... MEETINGS AND EVENTS ...

**CONTACT ACTION TEAM**  
**Wednesday, April 5**  
**Noon-1:30 p.m.**  
**Erb Memorial Union-141 Umpqua Room**

*BARGAINING CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1*

## STAY CONNECTED TO GET UPDATES

language on inclement weather conditions. That section of our contract isn't legally open for negotiations now; we can only bargain specific economic issues, like wages, insurance and retirement. We also received your thoughts about what a fair deal looks like to you.

Our team will review each survey and incorporate your feedback into our proposals. We meet with people who represent the universities March 30 at Portland State Univ.

The universities may or may not deliver proposals during the first meeting, because the state's economic forecast is expected at the end of April. It can make clear the amount of money available for higher education workers.

### SUBMIT A NON-UO EMAIL ADDRESS FOR BARGAINING INFO

◀ [seiu503.seiu.org/page/signup/alerts](http://seiu503.seiu.org/page/signup/alerts)

We advise union members to provide an email address that is not owned by the university, like your uoregon.edu address is. You can create an account at gmail.com or another free email provider. An email address that is not connected to the UO allows you to directly learn about union activities and connect to members. If you don't want to receive union email, please opt out by using the link in each message.

We can't win a fair contract without your support. Tell the universities to treat workers fairly. It's not right to sacrifice our retirement to fix the state budget.

One of the best benefits of working with the UO is health insurance; that's only reality as long as we don't pay more of the premiums.

We deserve a fair cost of living increase; we worked for it. The cost of living continues to increase, and our salaries don't match market rates or the volume of work we do.

Oregon ranks 50th among states when corporate tax levels are compared. The Oregon legislature needs to develop more revenue for higher education and critical state services. Make large corporations pay their fair share, and don't take it from workers and students. ■

## BE FIRST TO KNOW ABOUT BARGAINING—BE A CAT

Join the Contact Action Team. Be a leader in your work site by sharing union news with the people you work with. Collect their feedback to guide the union bargaining team.

The responsibilities are minimal, and it's a great way to support and protect yourself and the people you work with. Involve your co-workers—more than one CAT can collaborate to organize people in a work site.

- › Communicate important union information to people you work with in person, via email and printed fliers that we supply.
- › Distribute printed fliers that we supply to work sites and bulletin boards. You can pick them up during the monthly CAT meeting.
- › Update bulletin work site bulletin boards.
- › Forward the feedback your co-workers give you to Chief Contact Lois Yoshishige or Chief Bargaining Delegate Johnny Earl
- › Connect people you work with who have questions or need help with union leaders. Follow-up with your co-worker to ensure they connect to the right resources.
- › Help people become union members; help them complete registration and deliver it to Membership Organizer Gary Malone.
- › Encourage people who are classified workers to attend union actions.
- › Host meetings during bargaining to update people you work with about the status of negotiations and gather their feedback to guide union bargaining leaders.

### BECOME A CAT, CONTACT ACTION TEAM MEMBER

Please contact Lois Yoshishige to get started.

☎ 541 346 1251

◀ [loisy085@comcast.net](mailto:loisy085@comcast.net)

# UNION RIGHTS, BENEFITS DIDN'T COME EASY

By *Theodora Ko Thompson*, president

Dear union sisters and brothers and colleagues, we face challenges this year. Reorganization in units and departments means uncertainty about budget priorities. The truth is that any changes will impact people who work with the university and their families.

Vice-President Johnny Earl, our chief bargaining delegate, is currently negotiating with the universities over the economic terms of our contract with the help of delegates from the other six institutions. The defeat of Ballot Measure 97 during November increased the challenge. Johnny needs all of our support.

## WE ARE THE UNION

Union rights are our rights as workers. The Collective Bargaining Agreement is yours; it represents our rights to take ownership in this university. The union is not about me or anyone who stepped forward into leadership roles. Each and everyone of us who are represented by SEIU here at the University of Oregon have ownership rights, and we need to protect and preserve what we value.

If you value the medical benefits you and your loved ones receive through your job, you need to be engaged and involved. If your workload increased, and you value the overtime pay for work beyond eight hours during a day or paid vacation leave, you need to be engaged and involved. These are the rights we must protect and preserve and refuse to let the university take them away.

The phrase "Thank a union" exists, because people recognize the valuable accomplishments of labor unions for people. We owe the people who fought for our rights for the following.

## WEEKENDS OFF

Massive union strikes in the late 19th and early 20th centuries won shorter work weeks and weekends off. Americans could be home with loved ones instead of constantly working.

## PAID VACATIONS

With summer coming to a close, take time to thank your union for the paid vacation time that enabled you to rest and relax with your family.

## FAMILY AND MEDICAL LEAVE ACT

Unions lead the fight for a law that grants eligible employees the right to 12 weeks of unpaid family and medical leave annually.

## BREAKS AT WORK—INCLUDING LUNCH

Now federally mandated, breaks weren't always an employee right. People who studied breaks argue they provide important rest that improves a person's safety and productivity.

## SICK LEAVE

Without paid sick leave, many workers couldn't afford to take the time necessary to recover from illnesses and accidents.

## PAID HOLIDAYS

Labor Day is one of nine paid holidays most employers in the U.S. offer. Thank unions when you're with family and friends next holiday.

## 40-HOUR WORK WEEK

Americans once worked 60 hours and more during a week. Thanks to union negotiations, 40-hour work weeks and 8-hour work days became standard during the 1950s. ■

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## MORE REASONS TO BE THANKFUL

 [unionplus.org/about/labor-unions/36-reasons-thank-union](http://unionplus.org/about/labor-unions/36-reasons-thank-union)

# WHAT WILL HAPPEN TO OREGON WITHOUT NEW REVENUE?

By *SEIU Local 503 staff*

Published January 25 at [seiu503.org](http://seiu503.org)

During January, Oregon’s top budget writers released a gut-wrenching budget proposal that laid out what will happen if the state does not raise new revenue. This budget is a call to action: If Oregon does not address our lowest-in-the-nation corporate taxes, we all will suffer.

Here’s a closer look at the potential cuts.

## HIGHER ED—1.4% CUT

The state would reduce general support to community colleges and public universities, as well as spending on specific programs. Cuts would likely result in fewer classes, diminished staff, and higher tuition.

## EDUCATION K-12—3.6% CUT

The state would reduce spending with teacher layoffs, increased class size, limited availability for music or physical education, layoffs including library staff, school nurses, counselors and mental health related staff.

## EARLY, SPECIAL, CAREER/TECHNICAL ED—12.4% CUT

The state would cut funding to early learning programs, such as Head Start and Early Intervention/Early Childhood Special Education. Service levels for youth development programs and grant-funded career/technical education programs would drop.

## HEALTHCARE—27.5% CUT

This budget proposal could kick 335,000

## REVIEW THE PROPOSAL

Search "2017 Co-Chair Document"

[oregonlegislature.gov/lfo/Documents](http://oregonlegislature.gov/lfo/Documents)

Oregonians off their healthcare plans and throw thousands of families into crisis. The end result is higher healthcare costs for everyone.

## DEPARTMENT OF HUMAN SERVICES—8.7% CUT

DHS administers critical programs like child welfare, services for seniors and people with disabilities, Temporary Assistance for Needy Families, and Employment Related Day Care. These cuts would put thousands of at-risk children and adults in harm’s way.

## PUBLIC SAFETY—3.1% CUT

## NATURAL RESOURCES—2.2% CUT

Oregon families pay for 95% of state services, while corporations pay for less than 5%. Lawmakers choose to make harmful cuts instead of addressing the fact that Oregon is 50th in the country in corporate taxes. If corporations paid their fair share, we wouldn’t be making these hard choices. We would be investing in better schools, greater access to health care, and building a better Oregon. ■

## CALL YOUR STEWARD FOR HELP

**541 346 0321**

Please leave your name and phone number for a steward to contact you.

Call for help with

- › a work problem,
- › disciplinary issues,
- › or a possible contract violation

# THANK YOU : RECOGNITION OF MEMBERS, FRIENDS

★ Thank you to Chief Bargaining Delegate and Vice-President Johnny Earl for representing workers and our interests. He and others are negotiating with people who represent the public universities.

★ Thank you to the people who made time Saturday, Feb. 25 to tell Oregon legislators who visited Lane County Community College to protect workers as they craft a budget to fit a nearly \$2 billion shortfall.

★ Thank you to people who made time to write UO President Michael Schill a valentine. You reminded him of how valuable people who are classified workers are to the UO asked for a fair contract for workers.



*In Focus is a question-and-answer series with people who are members of SEIU 503-085 UO.*

Questions by  
**Aaron Montoya**, editor

*Please introduce yourself and explain your job.*

My name is John Taylor. I work in Knight Library in the Electronic Resources Unit, where I maintain access to around 500,000 electronic journals and databases such as JSTOR and LexisNexis. I've worked in academic libraries since 2005 in various capacities including digital preservation and web development.

*What does the union mean to you? Why are you a member, and how did you get involved?*



*John Taylor works with Knight Library, contributes to the union vociferously, enjoys heavy metal.*

Belonging to a union means many things to me. Having grown up in a so-called Right-to-Work state, belonging to a union means job security, better wages, health benefits, and having a voice regarding my working conditions.

It means taking part in a proud tradition of working class solidarity and standing for core democratic values such as economic justice and the rights of workers.

It also means joining other voices within the labor movement to fight for a more

## JOHN TAYLOR

just, sane, and equitable society for all working Americans.

In addition to acting as Chief Steward with the union local at the University of Oregon, I serve on the statewide Board of Directors, Citizen Action for Political Education, Committee for the Future, and I'm currently enrolled in the Oregon Labor Candidate School.

*Beyond the UO and the union, what is John Taylor all about? Tell us about how you like to have fun or something you spend your time and effort on.*

I'm a full-time armchair politician, occasional guitar player and audio engineer, and sometimes audiobook narrator. I enjoy a good dark beer, books on philosophy and science, and all things heavy metal. ■

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