



**SEIU 517M**  
PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

The **E-Former**

The Official Electronic Newsletter of  
SEIU Local 517M

**April 2022**

### Staff Directory

Please contact the appropriate staff person using their phone or email (click their name) below:

**Executive Director:**

[Jeremy Tripp](#) - 517.267.2065

**Information Services/PDF/Member-Only Benefits:**

[Dave Corrie](#) - 517.267.2090

**Office Manager:**

[Olivia Toretta](#) - 517.267.2095

**Dues & COPE Deductions:**

[Andrea Valerio](#) - 989.797.4241

**SOM Labor Relations Questions:**

**Scientific and Engineering Unit:**  
[Howard Gordon](#) - 517.267.2070

**Human Services Support Unit:**

[Janice Cosey](#) - 313.246.1137

**Technical Unit:**

[Kevin Karpinski](#) - 517.267.2088

**School & Local Government Labor Relations Questions:**

**Region 1:**

[Clint Bryant](#) - 989.797.4258

**Region 2:**

[Christine Stressman](#) - 616.696.2141  
[Andy Johnson](#) - 269.978.1994

**Region 3:**

[Dominic Barbato](#) - 313.314.6511

Click on the map to find out which Region your unit is in.



### 517M Saginaw Member Leaders Host Community Conversation with Michigan Lieutenant Governor Gilchrist

By Clint Bryant, Labor Relations Specialist

On Wednesday, March 9th, SEIU Local 517M Member-Leaders hosted a candid community conversation with Michigan’s Lieutenant Governor Garlin Gilchrist, members of the Saginaw County Commission and Saginaw City Council. Discussions focused on the use of the American Rescue Plan Act, Michigan’s post pandemic economy, building opportunity in urban centers, education funding and pension taxes.

“I had a great experience meeting, listening to, and interacting with Lieutenant Governor Garlin Gilchrist along with several other leaders of our city, surrounding communities, and various members of 517M that do not work for the City of Saginaw. It was very nice to converse and connect with these people on a personal level and not always just on a business level. I am very thankful for the opportunity. It was a great time and a great learning experience. I look forward to more in the future.” - Don Thom, City of Saginaw Unit Vice President.



L-R: Don Thom, Unit VP City of Saginaw, Jeanette Barnett, Unit President Saginaw Public Schools, Michigan Lt. Governor Garlin Gilchrist, Clint Bryant, Labor Relations Specialist SEIU Local 517M.



L-R: SEIU Local 517M Labor Relations Specialist, Clint Bryant, Michigan Lt. Gov. Garlin Gilchrist, Saginaw Mayor Brenda Moore, Council Member Monique Lamar-Silvia discussing Michigan’s need to create more opportunity in the State’s urban centers.

**STAND TOGETHER — STAND STRONG**

[www.seiu517m.org](http://www.seiu517m.org) [Facebook at: SEIULocal517M](https://www.facebook.com/SEIULocal517M)

## State Paid Family Leave a Success and Looks for Expansion to All

In February 2020, Governor Whitmer announced she would extend 12 weeks of paid family leave to all 46,707 State of Michigan employees. Beginning October 1, 2020, every state employee has been eligible to take 12 weeks of paid family leave upon the birth or adoption of a child.

Governor Whitmer has stated a commitment to expanding paid family leave to every parent in Michigan and has renewed the call for the legislation to grant family leave for all parents in the state.

“For the members of SEIU Local 517M, access to paid parental leave has been life changing,” said **Jeremy Tripp, Executive Director, SEIU Local 517M** which represents roughly 4,000 state employees in the Scientific & Engineering, Human Services Support and Technical Units of State Government. “With the provisions enacted by Governor Whitmer, both men and women can focus on spending time with their children, instead of worrying about insufficient leave banks or not being there when it matters most to their family. We commend the Governor for leading on this issue!”

To date, 1,958 State of Michigan employees have utilized this benefit, including 1,043 dads and 915 moms. That amounts to over 800,000 hours that new parents have spent with their newborn babies, forming lifelong bonds. The breakdown for SEIU 517M bargaining unit member usage is Human Services Support - 1 Male/12 Female; Scientific and Engineering - 72 Male/45 Female; Technical - 21 Male/7 Female.

## Community Mental Health Member Leaders Unite for Advocacy and Member Engagement

By Clint Bryant, Labor Relations Specialist

Member Leaders of SEIU Local 517M came together on Tuesday, March 29th to discuss member recruitment and retention, new member orientation, and current mental health legislation the union has opposed in Lansing.

Through site visitations and lunch time membership meetings, several members stepped up to leadership positions for their unit and the SEIU Local 517M Region 1 Board. Member leaders remain committed to fighting privatization and educating their respective legislators and membership on the ongoing struggles for funding in community mental health.

During the workplace visits, member-leaders engaged rank and file membership about the Michigan Senate Bills 597-598. These bills would open the doors to shifting local mental health funding to private entities. Although these bills remain in committee, members will continue calling, emailing, and sending hundreds of postcards to their state senators urging a “NO” vote.

“I thoroughly enjoyed my site visits in Saginaw at the 517M represented facilities”, said West Michigan Community Mental Health Unit President Laura Freese. “I feel that this unit is where my unit was a few years ago in demanding dignity. Changing workplace culture beings intentionally, can take time, and only happens when we all work together. The challenge is to have something positive in every negative situation. The desire for change exhibited by the members I met at Saginaw County Community Mental Health was invigorating. It was good to share ideas and thoughts about member recruitment and building a culture of respect and dignity.”



Pictured L to R: Region 1 Divisional Vice President Leticia Trevino, Saginaw City Schools Unit President Jeanette Barnett, SCCMHA Unit President Mary Beth Keenan Reams, West Michigan Community Mental Health Unit President Laura Freese, newly appointed Region 1 Board Member Robert Castillo, SCCMHA Unit Secretary Jessica Huber, newly appointed Region 1 Board member and SCCMHA Steward Patti Colpean-Decker, SCCMHA Chief Steward Rachel Slivik, newly recruited Steward-in-training Matthew Clark.

## Register Now for the 2022 Scholarship Golf Outing!

After a several year COVID pause we are back on the links for the Scholarship Golf Outing. The Outing will be held on Friday, June 10, 2022 at Wheatfield Valley Golf Course in Williamston. Registration begins at 8:00 a.m. with a shotgun start at 9:00 a.m.

We have created our own 501c3 to be the fundraising vehicle for the Scholarship Fund. The outing is now for the **Tomorrow's Michigan Today Scholarship Fund**. We are excited that this year we increased the number of scholarship awards given out and also increased the amount of each award.



The cost is the same as 2019 at \$80 per player which includes golf with a cart, coffee and donuts, lunch at the turn, chicken and pasta dinner, prizes, a donation to the fund and much more!!!  
[Download the Registration Form!](#)

Get your foursome ready and join us for a great day of golf and supporting a great cause! Contact Dave Corrie at (517) 267-2090, or e-mail at [corried@seiu517m.org](mailto:corried@seiu517m.org) with any questions.

## 2022 Scholarship Applications Are Now Available

There have been some enhancements and changes to the SEIU Local 517M Scholarship Program for 2022.

SEIU 517M - Tomorrow's Michigan Today has been created as SEIU Local 517M's 501c(3) and is now the entity that is offering the scholarships. This will allow for a greater ability to fundraise for the scholarship program.

The eligibility criteria has been expanded to cover member spouses. The scholarship is now open to dues-paying members in good standing (as defined in the SEIU Local 517M Constitution and Bylaws), their spouse, children, step children, adopted children or grandchildren with college or trade school expenses.



The number of scholarships available this year has been increased from 8 to 15. The amount of each scholarship has also increased from \$500 to \$600. These non-renewable scholarships will be awarded to students based on successful completion of the application process and meeting certain criteria. Awards will be made via a lottery system from all eligible submissions.

Scholarships are awarded without regard to gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, disability, or political affiliation of the applicant. Scholarships are limited to one per household for each academic year.

Applications must be received by May 27, 2022. The winners will be notified by July 1, 2022.

For full details and the scholarship application, [please click here](#).

Last year's scholarship winners were: **Alex Allen** attending Knox College, **John Barry IV** attending Olivet College, **Davian Bennett** attending University of Michigan Dearborn, **Anna Brown** attending Michigan State University, **Megan Budai** attending Grand Valley State University, **Andrew Ferdig** attending Oakland University, **Grace Miller** attending Ferris State University, and **Brett Potter** attending Ferris State University.

## Climate, Jobs, and Justice Summit 2022



Join SEIU International President Mary Kay Henry and Executive Vice President Rocio Saenz for SEIU's second annual Climate, Jobs, and Justice Summit on Saturday, April 9th 2022, 12:30pm via Zoom.

Come hear from experts on climate and environmental justice and distinguished guests. Learn about SEIU's national climate program and the exciting work of our locals as we fight for clean air, clean water and climate justice.

The agenda will also include topics such as:

- Climate Change and Health Impacts
- How to start a Climate Committee at your local
- Environmental Justice Member education
- Climate and Immigration
- Green and Resilient Workplace initiatives
- Climate change and Bargaining Language
- Workers capital
- Climate and Environmental Justice Federal and Legislative Campaigns

This year's summit we will have virtual networking tables before and after the event. Connect with other members on climate and environmental justice work! [RSVP Now!](#)

## Workers Memorial Day Event in Detroit on April 28th

As we approach Workers Memorial Day on Thursday, April 28, 2022, we are especially mindful of the terrible toll that the recent COVID-19 pandemic has taken on workers everywhere. We have lost many union members, family members and far too many loved ones to this terrible virus. This pandemic has had a huge effect on our work lives, our personal and collective economy, and there has been an emotional and spiritual cost as well.

This Workers Memorial Day, your union will join many others in a dedication of the Michigan Workers COVID-19 Memorial, at "Transcending" the Michigan Labor Legacy Monument, near Hart Plaza in Detroit. This memorial will be dedicated to the lives and memories of workers and loved ones lost to the COVID-19 pandemic. We will pay tribute to the lives lost to COVID-19, the essential workers, who went to work despite the risks, who went to work to keep our society functioning. We will give homage to workers who went to work to keep their families afloat through the economic shocks and shut-downs in the early days of the pandemic, and all of the friends and family who are still at risk from this awful, confounding virus. The vision is to give you a way to memorialize your members and loved ones who suffered and died from COVID-19, while we continue the work of memorializing workers who lose their lives on the job and in job-related diseases.



**Please join us: Thursday, April 28, 2022 at 12:00PM  
Hart Plaza: Transcending Labor Legacy Landmark**

We hope to see you then. In the near future, there will be an opportunity for you to contribute your fallen worker's names to this important work.

Thank you for helping preserve the history and stories of working families in Michigan.