



SEIU 517M
PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

The **E-Former**

The Official Electronic Newsletter of
SEIU Local 517M

February 2022

Staff Directory

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

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Region 3:

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



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.

STAND TOGETHER — STAND STRONG

www.seiu517m.org [Facebook at: SEIULocal517M](#)

Thomas Township Member-Leaders Hard Work Proves Successful

Submitted by: Clint Bryant, Labor Relations Specialist

Member-Leaders at Thomas Township have been working diligently as they prepare for contract negotiations. Thus far, through initial talks with the Township management, the member-leaders were able to negotiate an increase in size of the union bargaining team, corrections to paid time off, and bonuses of \$3,000 for full time and \$1,500 for part time members through the federal American Rescue Plan Act (ARPA).

In addition to their work on contract negotiations, these member-leaders have stepped up to provide new member orientations, member engagement activities, and have taken active roles on the SEIU Local 517M Region 1 Board.

Way to go to the member-leaders of Thomas Township!

A Family Affair

Chapter President Steve Everett II is a second generation SEIU 517M member-leader. Steve's father, Steve Everett Sr., worked for Saginaw Public Schools and was a union representative for members in the grounds department and is now enjoying full-time retirement. It is great to see the legacy of activism and advocacy carry through generations.



Pictured L-R: Unit President Steve Everett II, Steward Connie Watt, Bargaining Team Member Tyler Branch

Saginaw Schools Campus Officers Enter the New Year with Economic Justice

Submitted by: Clint Bryant, Labor Relations Specialist



Member-Leaders and Campus Officers at Saginaw Public Schools filed a grievance against the school district over a rate of pay issue. Campus Security Officers were underpaid due to an error from Human Resources.

“I think it's very important that as an SEIU Local 517M member, that we know the Collective Bargaining Agreement. In this case, our employer was not paying Campus Security Officers the correct rate of pay - for some time,” said Saginaw Schools Campus Officer Greg H. Price.

A settlement of the grievance was reached on January 7, 2022, making each affected member whole. Officers received payroll adjustments of varying totals from \$51.25 - \$1,036.06 and were compensated their full wages.

Price stated “I recognized the error and immediately said something. Had I not said something we would have continued to be paid the wrong rate of pay. There's nothing more rewarding than when a grievance is filed and the outcome is successful! I'm thankful to the Local for giving me the tools and the knowhow of what we do with them.”

Pictured: Campus Security Officer Greg H. Price

Federal Student Loan Debt Relief Extended



In October of 2021, the Department of Education announced a major change to Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF), providing a temporary overhaul to a program that has long been insufficient for public-service workers struggling with student debt. The PSLF program is supposed to guarantee complete student debt forgiveness to those who dedicate a decade or more to working in public service, however for many of us, this process has not been easy.

[Learn more about the Public Service Loan Forgiveness Temporary Waiver here!](https://seiu.co/PSLFinfo)

This change is significant. Under this new, temporary waiver period ending on October 31, 2022, public employees can retroactively receive credit for past years of service. As the COVID-19 pandemic continues to impact our lives and student loan repayments are scheduled to resume in May 2022 after a two-year pause, this change to the program provides a path to relief and is a huge victory for working people in the public sector.

The temporary waiver of PSLF requirements is not automatic and is only for a limited time! SEIU members in public service with federal student loans need to take a few crucial steps by October 31, 2022. Have questions about whether you qualify or how to take advantage of the Public Service Loan Forgiveness temporary waiver? [See our informational sheet here!](#)

Tax Preparation Assistance Available for Veterans

Submitted by Pam Basal, RCTAA Rep

Did you know that the Department of Defense offers free tax services to our Military men and women? Being a part of the military community can bring unique circumstances to your tax returns. MilTax includes free tax preparation and e-filing software developed specifically to address common military life scenarios, such as deployments, combat and training pay, housing and rentals, and multistate filing. Service members and spouses also have free access to MilTax consultants who are versed in recent changes to tax law and specifically trained to know all the nuances of filing taxes in the military. MilTax tax preparation and e-filing software is available through October 17, 2022. You can visit <https://www.militaryonesource.mil> or call 1-800-342-9647

If you are a Veteran and looking for help with your benefits, please reach out to one of the Michigan-based Advisors:

Lower Michigan - Ronnie Cyrus, 586-337-2552, RCyrus.ctr@gapsi.com

Upper Peninsula - Pam Basal, 906-360-3890, Pbasal-c@gapsi.com

The Reserve Component Transition Assistant Advisors program was created by the Department of Defense to help those who have served at least 180 days of Active Duty Military Service with a Reserve Component (i.e. Individual Ready Reserve, National Guard, Coast Guard Reserve, Army Reserve, etc.). They help guide service members to benefits and entitlements such as: State Benefits, Physical and Mental Health Well-Being (Veterans Affairs), Disabled Veteran Benefits, Employment Assistance, Education and Training, Financial Assistance, Health & Life Insurance, Legal Assistance, Relocation/ Homelessness and Career Change.