



SEIU 517M
PUBLIC EMPLOYEES

The **E-Former**

The Official Electronic Newsletter of
SEIU Local 517M

May 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

Operations 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:

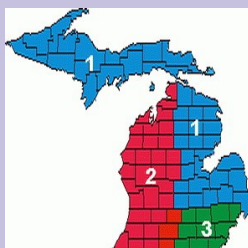
[Christine Stressman](#) - 616.696.2141

[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.



SEIU Partners with Governor to Proclaim May as Public Service Recognition Month

Beginning nationally in 1985, the first week of May has been set aside as Public Service Recognition Week, a time to thank dedicated public servants from federal, state, and local governments across the country.

In Michigan, we couldn't agree more with acknowledging our amazing public employees but believe one week is not enough to capture the depth and scope of the services our members provide.

With that in mind, SEIU is proud to announce that we have teamed up with Governor Gretchen Whitmer to proclaim the entire month of May as Public Service Recognition Month.

As a public sector union, SEIU Local 517M knows firsthand the importance of public employees and has championed their dedication, resilience, professionalism and adaptability throughout the pandemic.

From scientists and engineers to paraprofessionals, road commission crews, unemployment insurance examiners, technicians, librarians, city employees and more, we appreciate your hard work and sacrifice.

As we celebrate Public Service Recognition Month, we encourage all members to join us by taking a few pictures of themselves at work, write up a brief description about what you do and send to corried@seiu517m.org for use in future publications.



STAND TOGETHER — STAND STRONG

www.seiu517m.org

[Facebook at: SEIULocal517M](#)

Register for the 2022 Scholarship Golf Outing by June 3rd!

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. Check-in 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**. As always, the outing's proceeds will help fund scholarship awards. We are excited to announce that both the number of scholarships and the dollar amounts for each award have both been increased! You can read more about the awards and how to apply in the article below.

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 with any questions. **The registration deadline is June 3rd so reserve your spot today!**

Apply for the 2022 Scholarship by May 27th!

The deadline for submitting applications for the SEIU Local 517M Scholarship Program is Friday, May 27th.

A number of changes and enhancements were made this year:

- Eligibility criteria was expanded to include spouses.
- Number of scholarships awarded was increased from 8 to 15.
- Amount of each scholarship was increased from \$500 to \$600.
- SEIU 517M - Tomorrow's Michigan Today was created as SEIU Local 517M's 501c(3) to offer and fundraise for the scholarship.

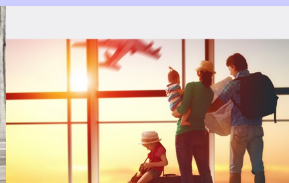
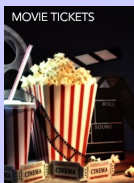


These non-renewable scholarships will be awarded to students based on successful completion of the application process and meeting certain criteria. Awards will be made via a lottery system from all eligible submissions. Scholarships are awarded without regard to gender, race, religion, sexual orientation, disability, or political affiliation of the applicant. Scholarships are limited to one per household for each academic year.

Deadline for applications is Friday, May 27, 2022. The winners will be notified by July 1, 2022.

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

Maximize Your Union Membership, Sign-up for [SEIU Member Benefits](#) and Start Saving Today!



Persistence and Participation Pay off for City of Saginaw Members

By Clint Bryant, Region 1 Labor Relations Specialist.

At the onset of the pandemic, City of Saginaw members were hit hard. The first two reported cases in the County came from SEIU Local 517M members at City Hall.

“During the height of the pandemic, our members in all classifications continued to serve the community. There was no pause to the lead and copper rule or any city operations. For example, our members in the water shop were forced to wear hazmat suits and enter homes where residents were in hospital beds suffering from the severe effects of COVID-19.” Leticia Trevino, SEIU Local 517M Region 1 Divisional Vice President.

Member-Leaders at the City of Saginaw engaged their members by sending hundreds of postcards, meeting with community leaders, phone banking members of the city council, and initiating “Purple Friday’s” (a solidarity action across all departments to show union pride).

Through discussions with SEIU Local 517M Executive Director Jeremy Tripp and City Manager Timothy Morales, it was agreed that the City of Saginaw would honor city staff during the week of May 9th – May 13th as “Public Service Recognition Week.”



Although the approval of premium pay was not slated on the May 9th council’s agenda, the city council unanimously approved a four tier system of premium pay ranging from \$750.00-\$3,000 for each city employee who worked during the pandemic totaling \$864,000. See [here https://www.mlive.com/news/saginaw-bay-city/2022/05/saginaw-council-oks-864k-in-pandemic-hazard-pay-for-municipal-employees.html](https://www.mlive.com/news/saginaw-bay-city/2022/05/saginaw-council-oks-864k-in-pandemic-hazard-pay-for-municipal-employees.html)

“As employees of the City of Saginaw and members of SEIU 517M, we have remained dedicated to give the best services possible for our residents throughout this pandemic. We’ve worked around the clock to maintain services for our residents. Our members fix sewage pipes with their hands, in the cold and in the dark. We would arrive home, weary, mentally, and emotionally drained. Often, we spent more time serving the city, than with our own families. We’ve missed concerts, birthdays, anniversaries, and ball games, so that when the citizens need our help, we are there for them. Thank you to every member who helped us secure the recognition we so deserve.

-Barb Rasche, Unit President City of Saginaw

Federal Student Loan Cancellation May be Available

The Public Service Loan Forgiveness (PSLF) program guarantees complete student debt forgiveness to those who dedicate a decade or more to working in public service. Student loan repayments are scheduled to resume in September 2022 after a two-year pause.

On October 6, 2021, the Department of Education [announced](#) changes to the PSLF program rules for a limited time due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Under a new, temporary waiver period ending on October 31, 2022, student loan borrowers may receive additional credit for past periods of loan repayment that would otherwise not qualify for forgiveness. Nearly 50,000 borrowers will become eligible for \$4.5 billion in loan forgiveness and over 500,000 student loan borrowers will receive additional credit to meet PSLF requirements. SEIU members will need to take action during the temporary waiver period to benefit by October 31, 2022.

[More information is available here.](#)

Some of our members have had experience with this program. Here is what Barbara Barton of MDOT has to say about her experience.

In October of 2021, I learned of President Biden's limited waiver program for the PSLF program and applied for it. I didn't hear a thing until I received a letter on February 2, 2022 which said my \$58,000 student loan debt was forgiven. I have never cried such tears of joy. I had been paying on those loans since 2004. I am so grateful for the efforts of the President and members of Congress to assist public service employees with this program.

- Barbara Barton, MDOT

SEIU Members at Detroit Police Department Fight for Covid Bonuses

By Dominic Barbato, Labor Relations Specialist

Local 517M members with the Detroit Police Department continue their struggle to get bonuses they were denied. In late 2021, the city announced that all employees of the Detroit Police Department would be receiving a bonus in recognition of the work they performed during the pandemic. When the bonuses were awarded in March of 2022 however, the city reversed course and only provided the \$2000 bonus to sworn officers, thus excluding the 120 civilian employees represented by Local 517M. Local 517M members are primarily in the City's Crime Scene Services and Crime Intel Divisions, providing excellent service to their communities while also working side by side with sworn personnel at the same crime scenes.

"Not all DPD civilians sit behind a desk." said Forensic Technician Margaret Lovallo. "Every day the Forensic Technicians of the DPD go to crime scenes of all natures and severities throughout the City of Detroit. We are on scene alongside officers and investigators. Our frustration in being excluded from the DPD Retention Bonus is not just about the money. Unfortunately, it is reflective of the long-standing disrespect that the civilian members of the DPD experience from both the Department, City Council and the Mayor's Office, where our work, training and experience are often overlooked. All we are asking is that the City acknowledge our efforts, sacrifices, and dedication to the Department with a \$2000 retention bonus as was initially promised to us as well as the rest of the DPD civilians."



Since the announcement that the bonus would only go to sworn personnel, workers have been contacting their representatives on the Detroit City Council, both through letters and at in-district meetings. Local 517M members (pictured L-R) Stephanie Weier and Margaret Lovallo were recently interviewed about the subject by WXYZ Channel 7. [View the WXYZ story here.](#)

State Employees Don't Lose Your Voice - Reauthorize Today!



The state employee reauthorization campaign is starting to heat up going into the summer. Any non-reauthorized union memberships after October 14, 2022 will have their membership cancelled by Civil Service.

A Civil Service rule change in 2020 requires all state employees to reauthorize their union membership every year or their membership will expire.

Members who allow their membership to expire will lose all the benefits of membership at that time including voting rights and access to information. You also lose access to the great member-only benefits you receive as a SEIU Local 517M member such as free college, discount plans for insurance, loans, travel, discounted tickets and more!

Don't lose your access to information and benefits, [reauthorize today!](#)

[Reauthorization instructions are available here.](#)

Retiring Soon? Stay Active in Your Union!

Did you know that you can stay connected and active in your union by continuing your SEIU membership after you retire?

By joining the SEIU 517M Retirees Group, you can continue to receive information from the Union, and attend union events. You also continue your access to a wide-range of benefits offered through the [SEIU Member Only Benefits program](#). Discounted entertainment tickets, legal services, insurance and other financial benefits, travel discounts, Scholarships, and Free College for your spouse or grandchildren are just a few of the benefits that you receive with your retiree membership.

SEIU Local 517M is also involved with the Coalition for a Secure Retirement (CSR) which advocates for protection and improvements for pensions and retirement related issues.

Former SEIU Local 517M Divisional Vice President, and current retiree member David Berridge is a member of the State of Michigan Retirement Board. Involvement in the decision-making process is important for the protection and enhancement of retiree benefits. We are fortunate to have an advocate in that process.

Please consider joining as a retiree member of SEIU Local 517M and continue to have an active voice in your retirement.

[View information on the program and learn how to join!](#)

[Join Today!](#)