



February 2025

Feeding Communities: Boxes on Break in Saginaw

By: Claire Corr, SEIU Local 517M Executive Director

Boxes on Break began with a simple question Clint Bryant asked himself: What more can I do for my community? Already known for giving his heart and soul in service to others, Clint turned that question into action, focused on supporting children during school breaks.

For many students, school provides consistent meals, and long holiday breaks - especially the two-week stretch over Christmas and New Year's - can be especially challenging for families facing food insecurity. Boxes on Break was created to help fill that gap.



Over the holiday break, volunteers packed and distributed more than 800 boxes for school children in Saginaw, each filled with cereals, snacks, soups, and other essential items. These boxes offered more than food - they provided peace of mind, stability, and care during a critical time.

SEIU Local 517M was a proud sponsor of this initiative, helping turn compassion into meaningful support for local families. Boxes on Break is a powerful reminder of what's possible when one person's idea and a community's commitment come together to make a difference.



Staff Directory

Labor Relations: State Units

Scientific & Engineering: [Howard Gordon](#) - 517.267.2070
Human Services Support: [Larry Sedrowski](#) - 313.246.1137
Technical: [Kevin Karpinski](#) - 517.267.2088

Labor Relations: School and Local Government Units

[Clint Bryant](#) - 989.797.4258
[Christine Stressman](#) - 616.696.2141
[Brandell Tomanica](#) - 517.237.0426
[LaMont Williams](#) - 313.314.6511

Executive Director: [Claire Corr](#) - 517.267.2065

Information Services:
[Jacob Tkaczyk](#) - 517.267.2090

Office Manager: [Ashley Konyha](#) - 517.267.2095

Dues & COPE Deductions: [Andrea Valerio](#) - 989.797.4241

Member Strength Director/
Member Only Benefits: [Marian Wilcox](#) - 517.744.5393

STAND TOGETHER — STAND STRONG

2026 Scholarship Applications Now Available!

The SEIU 517M - Tomorrow's Michigan Today Scholarship is open to dues-paying members in good standing (as defined in the SEIU Local 517M Constitution and Bylaws), their spouse, children, stepchildren, adopted children or grandchildren with college or trade school expenses.

There are 15 scholarships available and the amount of each scholarship is \$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.

2026 Scholarship Applications are now available. [Click here.](#)

2025 Scholarship winners were:

- Lee Bonnette
- Haley Nagel
- Christian Gross
- Madison Leach
- Terry Green III
- Sharon Thompson
- Ericka Melendez
- Kayla Thompson
- Cadence Glass
- Isabelle Freeland
- Isla McCubbin-Green
- Camille Lozmack
- Alexis Deephouse
- Kenzy Triezenberg
- Madison Sherrett



SEIU 517M
PUBLIC EMPLOYEES



New Years Welcome Back Appreciation Gathering for Flint Schools Paraprofessionals

By: Marian Wilcox, Member Strength Director

On Friday January 9, 2026, SEIU 517M Divisional Vice President (Board Member) Carmella Johnson, Unit President for Flint Public Schools Paraprofessionals hosted a welcome back appreciation gathering for the paraprofessionals at the Flint Farmers Market. This was an awesome way to kick-start the new year by showing the paraprofessionals that they are valued, appreciated, and that their hard work does not go unnoticed.



The work of a paraprofessional is extremely important, but it comes with some challenges that can be very stressful. Paraprofessionals do this work because they care about the kids and the desire comes from their hearts. This appreciation gathering was a perfect way to celebrate the wonderful work that they do every day. SEIU 517M Members, Leadership, Staff, SEIU Executive Director, and President all came together in solidarity to celebrate the wonderful work that they do. The event included a beautifully decorated space which included snacks, refreshments, a DJ, and a great space for members to show off their best dance moves.

SEIU 517M Thanks all Paraprofessionals for the amazing work that they do and we are dedicated to continuing to negotiate the best contract and give the best representation on behalf of our members.



API Caucus— Show of Solidarity in Minnesota

By: Rabia Keo, SEIU API Midwest Region Committee

On January 23, SEIU API Caucus members from across the country took action to show solidarity with Minnesota under the banner "ICE OUT! National Day of Truth and Freedom." From the Twin Cities to Orlando, Columbus, Phoenix, Seattle, Boston, Los Angeles, San Jose, Detroit, and New York, we are calling for an end to ICE's actions in our communities when due process is ignored. Working people have historically driven progress, fighting for civil rights, cleaner air, healthcare access, and family security.



The SEIU API Caucus community stands united from the West Coast to the East Coast and everywhere in between. In solidarity!

Long Time Staff Member Announces Retirement

After thirty-six years with SEIU Local 517M, Dave Corrie has advised the Local that he will be retiring on February 13, 2026.

Dave began his career on October 4, 1989, as part-time clerical help at the Michigan Professional Employees Society (MPES) —the original name for SEIU Local 517M only representing the Scientific and Engineering bargaining unit. He continued in this role while attending Lansing Community College and Michigan State University.

Upon graduation from Michigan State with a degree in Human Resources, he was retained as a full-time staff representative in July 1993.



During his years of service, he has held many roles. His full-time duties after graduation were that of a staff representative handling grievances, arbitrations, technical appeals and Civil Service subcontracting challenges. He also participated in two bargaining cycles. As the least senior staff representative he was responsible for publishing the MPES newsletter.

His role with MPES changed in 2000. Local 517M began growing through mergers of other SEIU and independent locals. The workplace was changing with the increased use of technology. With the management and building of computers, running the email system, continuing to publish the newsletter, and creating and maintaining a website, there was enough work to focus full-time on communications and technology. He also started handling the Scientific and Engineering Professional Development Fund. During this time, he served as the technologist for the SEIU Michigan State Council and Change to Win in Michigan.

During his years he has been active with the Michigan Labor Press Association which provides training for union communicators. He has served on their Executive Board as a Board Member and as Secretary.

“It has been an honor to uplift and assist our membership over these past 36 years”, said Dave. “I have been blessed to work with great members and staff -- it has truly become a family.”

We wish Dave the very best for his future endeavors.

