Hello, welcome to our first edition of the SEA news for February.

Monday, February 1, 2021, we introduced our new Town Hall listening sessions. Our first event was with Dr. Benjamin Chan, Chief Epidemiologist for the State of NH. We received many questions and learned quite a bit about the state of COVID-19 here in NH. If you were unable to make it, the meeting was recorded and will be posted to our website shortly, so stay tuned.

Our next listening session will be held on February 22, 2021, from 5:00 pm - 6:00 pm, and will feature Commissioner Catherine Keane and Lorrie Rudis from the Department of Administrative Services.


Continued on page 2
MEMBER – ONLY SPECIAL TOWN HALL EVENTS CONTINUED

JOIN US FOR AN SEA/SEIU 1984 Members Only Event:

Ask Admin Services about COVID-19, Monday, February 22nd, 5 pm

Register at:
https://us02web.zoom.us/meeting/register/tZMldu6tqzojE9ypRRGCrsyiEUEV_ZwF5ZaV

Submit questions at https://forms.gle/JyB1viwxxbdErmXr8

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

Details for our Monday, March 1, 2021, online event via Zoom will be made available shortly.

RESPECT AND CIVILITY IN THE WORKPLACE

The Department of Administrative Services is excited to announce the launch of the statewide Respect and Civility in the Workplace initiative to all employees and state officials in the executive branch. This initiative includes:

- Governor Chris Sununu’s Executive Order 2020-01 Regarding Respect and Civility in the Workplace.
- The Respect and Civility in the Workplace Policy and Employee Core Values.
- Accompanying Standard Operating Procedure.
- The Respect and Civility in the Workplace website, https://respect.nh.gov, where you can find the above documents.
- Mandatory Respect and Civility in the Workplace Training for all employees and state officials, including board and commission members and volunteers.
- Mandatory Respect and Civility in the Workplace Training, Executive Leadership Edition for Commissioners and Directors.
- Periodic additional Respect and Civility in the Workplace training.
- Surveys, data collection, and compliance reporting to help us identify opportunities for improving our work environment.

MANDATORY TRAINING:
All employees (including executives and supervisors) and state officials are required to complete the Respect and Civility in the Workplace Training course by March 14, 2021, available on the Statewide Learning Portal.

STATEWIDE LEARNING PORTAL ACCESS
You will need to use your NH FIRST username and password to access the Statewide Learning Portal. If you need to reset your password, navigate to the following link: https://sson.nh.gov/.

Next, click the “Change Your Password” option. If you do not have NH FIRST credentials, please contact your agency’s Human Resources Office for assistance. If you experience technical difficulties with the Portal or the training, please contact Stephen Mason, Division of Personnel, Stephen.J.Masonedas.nh.gov.

Respect and civility in the workplace is an important and timely issue. Cultivating a respectful and civil work environment is a responsibility we all share. We are pleased to provide this guidance and training to the State workforce. For more information about this initiative, contact your agency Human Resources Administrator.
In response to our state’s failure to denounce white supremacy, we’re launching the No Racist Granite State Pledge. The pledge will serve to hold elected officials accountable for committing to using all available resources to stop white supremacist violence in our state. This includes supporting legislation that works to address these issues and opposing legislation that will cause further harm.

Please contact your elected officials and ask them to sign the No Racist Granite State Pledge. By completing this form, you can [email, text, call] your representative and ask them to join us in ending racism in the granite state.

Send a Letter and Tweet to Your Representative Demanding they Sign the No Racist Granite State Pledge.

https://www.nhyouthmovement.org/no-racist-granite-state/

https://bit.ly/noracistNH is the link to the pledge where you can take it, too.

TAKE THE PLEDGE

I pledge to stand against racism, xenophobia, islamophobia, and anti-semitism in our state. I will hold myself and my colleagues accountable when we make mistakes or perpetuate white supremacy through our work or our words. Racist, anti-Semitic, islamophobic, and xenophobic actions and words have no place in our public or private forums. I commit to using all available resources to stop white supremacist violence in our state. This includes supporting legislation that works to address these issues and opposing legislation that will cause further harm. I believe it is lawful and moral to expel any colleague or subordinate who participates, shows support for, or allows violence of that nature to happen without intervention.

CHANGES TO YOUR HEALTHCARE FSA

Notice regarding special changes to the 2021 Healthcare Flexible Spending Account and Dependent Care Flexible Spending Account (FSA) plans.

As part of the federal Consolidated Appropriates Act 2021: the grace period for spending unused funds from 2020 Healthcare or Dependent Care Flexible Spending Accounts will be extended from March 15, 2021, to December 31, 2021.

The maximum age of eligible dependents for daycare purposes will increase to age 13 (rather than 12) for the plan year 2021 for a limited time, employees may increase, decrease or stop their Health Care FSA or Dependent Care FSA election for 2021. Certain restrictions and time limits apply. Read the FAQ thoroughly for more information. After reading the attached FAQ, if you still have questions about your Health Care FSA or Dependent Care FSA, please contact ASIFlex at (800) 659-3035.

Any employees electing to make a change to their 2021 FSA elections should complete a 2021 FSA change form and forward the form to their agency HR representative no later than Friday, February 26, 2021.
FEBRUARY 11, 2021 | ISSUE 3

CHAPTER ELECTIONS, Friday February 26, 2021

As you may be aware, it is time for the election of Chapter Officers, Councilors, and Alternate Councilors as dictated by the SEA Constitution. To meet Federal Union Officer Election Law as stated in Labor-Management Reporting and Disclosure Act (Landrum-Griffin), these elections follow strict procedures. And locally, elected Officers and Councilors have an important role in our member-led Council and Annual Convention.

As a member-driven organization, the work that we do and the efforts we take on are directly related to your involvement in your Chapter. If you’re willing and able to step up to a leadership role, there is a Chapter Nomination Form on our website, which are due back by Friday, February 26th. The forms can be emailed to Chapters@seiu1984.org or mailed to SEA/SEIU Local 1984, 207 N. Main Street, Concord, NH 03301, respectively.

Chapter elections for contested seats will follow in March.

We are committed to assisting you in building strong Chapters and continuing to grow your involvement and leadership role. If you have questions about the procedure or if you need assistance, please call or email us directly. Thank you for all that you do in your jobs and as a union member.

We are truly blessed to have such a strong membership.

SEA/SEIU ANNOUNCEMENTS

Updates from SEA

- **Master Bargaining Update** - The union committee representing NH State employees declares bargaining impasse. On Thursday, February 4, 2021, the four unions representing NH State employees in contract negotiations declared an impasse with the Governor’s bargaining team. The reason for the impasse was a lack of progress in reaching an agreement.

  The parties began meeting for contract negotiations in October 2020. By mid-December, the individual teams that make up the union committee had presented their contract proposals to the State bargaining team. From the middle of December and throughout the month of January, the State repeatedly requested to postpone meeting for negotiations in order to prepare responses for the union proposals. The union committee met again with the State on February 2nd and 4th in an attempt to move the bargaining process forward. The State team responded to a small handful of the SEA’s proposals and left a large number of them unanswered.

  Negotiations happen while the Governor is developing the biennial State budget. This allows cost items that are agreed upon by the parties to be included in the Governor’s budget when it is submitted to the NH Legislature. With the deadline for the Governor’s budget being February 15, 2021, the union teams felt that it was necessary to declare an impasse and seek the assistance of a mediator. The union committee will continue to meet with the State’s team and hopes that the mediator will be able to assist the parties in reaching an agreement.

- **FACT FINDERS** - Supreme Court Appeal Update - We are appealing the decision from the PELRB, which denied the SEA’s and the NH Trooper Association’s motions for reconsideration and rehearing concerning the Board’s decision on the legislature’s vote on the fact finder’s report. The report found that the legislature’s vote on the fact finder’s report is non-binding on the parties. We still assert the vote was binding and imposed contractual terms as recommended by the fact-finder. As a result, the SEA has filed an appeal with the Supreme Court on January 25, 2021.
FUEL ASSISTANCE PROGRAM, STATE OF NEW HAMPSHIRE

If you or someone you know is having trouble paying for heat during the winter season, the Fuel Assistance Program (FAP) may be able to provide some relief.

The Fuel Assistance Program in New Hampshire’s arm of the federal Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) is funded through the US Department of Health and Human Services. While OSI administers the program, the on-the-ground work is done by local Community Action Agencies with whom OSI contracts.

As funds become available, the Fuel Assistance Program benefits qualified New Hampshire households to assist with heating costs. The Fuel Assistance Program can also help families during a heating emergency by securing an emergency delivery of fuel, delaying a shut-off notice, or referring clients to another source of assistance.

Fuel Assistance benefits are a grant and do not have to be paid back. Fuel Assistance benefits range from $158 to $1,575, depending on household income and energy costs. Benefits are calculated considering household income, energy costs, number of heating degree days within a region, and housing type. This targeting allows FAP to provide those households with the lowest incomes and the highest energy costs with the highest benefits. (See the eligibility guidelines.) The average benefit is $889.00. Fuel Assistance benefits are not counted as income when applying for other assistance programs.

For information on how to apply, please visit https://www.nh.gov/osi/energy/programs/fuel-assistance/index.htm or call 211.

FREE COLLEGE DEGREES PROGRAMS

Open to eligible SEIU members and their families. You can choose from several online programs offered by Eastern Gateway Community College (EGCC) and Central State University (CSU).

Your college degree is within reach! Federal, state, and employer grants don’t always cover the full cost of earning a degree online. SEIU is proud to partner with Eastern Gateway Community College and Central State University to help eligible students fill the financial gap.

Associate’s Degree or Certificate
EGCC welcomes anyone with a high school diploma or GED regardless of past academic performance. Associate’s degrees or certificates available in Accounting, Business Management (with certificates in Advertising, Cyber Security, Data Science, Digital and Social Media, and many more.

Eligible SEIU members and family members may also enroll in other online programs at EGCC, such as Medical Coding, Health Information Management, IT, Fire Science, and more.

Bachelor’s Degree available in Business Administration, Criminal Justice, Education – Early Childhood Education, Education – Intervention Specialist, Interdisciplinary Studies/Humanities

Please find out how to apply or read our Frequently Asked Questions at https://www.seiumb.com/education/seiu-free-college-benefit-faq or call 1-855-469-SEIU (7348) toll-free to talk to an advisor.

Take the next step toward your future—apply now!

"SEIU is investing in you and your future and now it’s time that you do the same!"
"I’m forever grateful for this opportunity..."
-Denee, SEIU HCIIMK
SB61 RTW will be coming to the House soon and we will need all hands on deck to DEFEAT this bill being passed. This is very important legislation for us here in the State of NH, so stay tuned, we will keep you updated.

HB497: allowing a school district to exempt its chief administrative officer from compulsory participation in the retirement system.

Original Policy Committee: House Education - virtual meeting
Sponsors: Patrick Long
Coalition Position: DEFEAT
Public Hearing @ 1:00 p.m.

SB119: relative to the ordinary death benefit in the retirement system

Coalition Position: SUPPORT
Sponsor: Kevin Cavanaugh
Original Policy Committee: Finance - virtual meeting

For a full list and status up please visit: 2021 Legislation

SEA CONSERVATIVE MEMBERS

If you cannot make tonight’s event, here are a few more ways you can help the Conservative Committee.

• Join our next Conservative Members Committee meeting on Zoom held on the Second Tuesday of each month at 5:00 PM.
• Connect with legislators in your district. If you don’t know who they are, you can find them here.
• Donate to SEAPAC, our Political Action Fund. As little as $1.00 a month helps. The link is here.

For more information or if you have any questions, please contact Mason Petit, mpetit@seiu1984.org.
On Friday, January 30, 2021, Donna Dyment lost her battle with ALS. Donna was a state employee with the Department of Education as a receptionist and retired in April 2015 and had been an SEA member since 1993.

We extend our deepest sympathies to her family and friends.

COMMITTEE UPDATES

CAMPAIGN FOR PUBLIC GOOD

TAKE THE SURVEY!

The Campaign for Public Good provides members with opportunities to ‘do good’ and give back and grow bonds that strengthen our union and the community. In recent projects, the Campaign for Public Good has organized include:

- Food drives, Purple Pages Book Drives for DCYF kids summer reading.
- Annual Backpack drives for children – and much more.

Now, we want to identify what you would like to do next. We want to activate members, showcase the good that we can all do together, and engage with non-members. Please complete the brief survey to help inform our next projects. The first 50 participants will be entered to win a new SEA backpack.

Take the survey here!

ROAD RACE COMMITTEE

The Road Race Committee has scheduled its next meeting for February 18, 2021, from 5-6 pm. The SEA 5k is registered online with Millennium Running & RunReg.com! The event is set up, and it is now live for online registration, the 5k will be held in September.

Here is the link to your registration page: https://www.RunReg.com/sea-5k

CFPG AND THE SOCIAL ACTIVITIES COMMITTEE HOST MOVIE NIGHT MARCH 1, 2021

Join us on March 1 as we stream this documentary through zoom, contact dholt@seiu1984.org for more information.

The documentary uncovers inspiring and useful history and shows organizing as rewarding, engaging, and joyous.

The feminist movement sometimes gets derided as ignoring working-class women, but in fact it was the source of urgent demands for equal pay and childcare as well as some of the most creative labor organizing of the 1970s. A new documentary, 9to5: The Story of a Movement, premiering February 1 on PBS, captures a vibrant part of this movement: the pioneering organizing of clerical workers starting in 1972. Led by feminists, 9to5 pioneered new pressure tactics, and its multi-pronged strategy of research, street heat, and legal challenges plus unionization improved conditions for clerical workers throughout the country.
The Campaign for Public Good is organizing a Virtual Silent Auction to be held online starting **February 15** to raise money to donate to the NH Food Bank. Programs like this have been stretched to the limit by the pandemic of 2020 and need our help.

There have been some great basket donations, such as a professional development basket, Spa Day, Movie Night, Camping, and Gardening!

If you have any questions or would like to help us organize the on-line event, please contact David Holt at dholt@seiu1984.org or call 603-781-8649.

**DON'T FORGET TO BID!**

Visit the CFPG Facebook page at: [www.facebook.com/campaignforpublicgood](http://www.facebook.com/campaignforpublicgood)

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**STAY ACTIVE, WITH THE ANTHEM HAT APP**

Do you want to make lifestyle changes, but aren’t sure where to start?

The Anthem Mobile Health app and its Health Assessment Tool (HAT) can support your health with personalized tips and resources. The HAT is a voluntary, confidential questionnaire that takes approximately 15 minutes to fill out online.

When you complete the HAT, you can earn $200 toward your health reimbursement arrangement (HRA).

To learn more, you can download the Mobile Health Consumer app from the App Store® or Google Play™, or access it on the web at [https://www.mobilehealthconsumer.com/web/pages/login.html](https://www.mobilehealthconsumer.com/web/pages/login.html).

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**SOCIAL ACTIVITIES, BOOK CLUB**

The SEA/SEIU’s Social Committees’ new book club meets the first Monday of every month. The book the group is now reading is entitled Radio Free Vermont, by Bill McKibben.

The publisher states the book is "A book that’s also the beginning of a movement. Bill McKibben's debut novel Radio Free Vermont follows a band of Vermont patriots who decide that their state might be better off as its own republic."

Bernie Sanders also states that "We’ve got a long history of resistance in Vermont and this book is testimony to that fact."

The book club is still open for anyone interested to join. The next meeting will be on **Monday, MARCH 1, at 6 PM via zoom.**

Please contact dholt@seiu1984.org if you’d like to join or have any questions.