

BOLD ACTION BIG CHANGE

FIRED UP!

■ POWER TO WIN

IN THE WORDS OF AFSCME MEMBERS

Throughout AFSCME, members, locals and councils are already taking action and making the changes that will build more power. During the 2006 International Convention, delegates heard from members whose successes represent the type of battles that must be fought and won throughout our entire union. Here is what some of them said:



Alexandra Buxbaum

MEMBER INVOLVEMENT

"We won our best contract in 17 years by asking members for ideas *before* the contract process began. We asked them what they wanted, what they thought, and then we took a survey that was based on their answers. The resulting contract was a thing of beauty. But getting members involved is not just a flash in the pan, a one-time deal. We are at a crisis level, and we must find a way to get everyone involved. Otherwise, we'll all go down the drain together."

JEAN DIEDERICH, principal child support officer, and president of Hennepin County (Minnesota) Human Services and Public Health Department Local 34 (Council 5).

POLITICAL ACTION

“In California, we took on Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger when he presented propositions that would have silenced the political voices of unions and taken away our retirement security. We talked to our members — especially the ones who had voted for him — and told them why it was so important that we fight this battle. In the end, he was defeated. He has already begun his attack for the upcoming re-election. But I have a message for the governor: We will be back!”

CHERYL OBASIH-WILLIAMS, Registered Nurse, Fountain Valley Medical Center, United Nurses Associations of California/Union of Health Care Professionals, NUHHC/AFSCME.

ORGANIZING

“I’ve been a home care provider for over three years. It’s around-the-clock care. It’s hard, and the pay is low. We have no retirement, sick or vacation days. The state used to send our paychecks a week late and there was nothing we could do about it. Then, 2,800 Iowa home care providers like me decided to step out of the shadows and form our union with AFSCME. We even took our case to the governor. A year ago home care providers across Iowa won an executive order recognizing our union, and now we’re at the bargaining table. Not long after we won recognition, 6,000 family child care providers also won their fight for a union.”

JULIE BELL, Iowa home care provider, Council 61.

PROMOTING PUBLIC SERVICE

“We are proud workers in the public service — doing the jobs that keep this great nation moving forward. We are proud members of our communities — helping our neighbors, volunteering in schools, serving as members of the National Guard and running for elected office. We stand up for ourselves and for *all* of America’s working families. We lead the fight for justice. We are AFSCME!”

HOMER POST, recreation facility director at the Claude Pepper Senior Citizen Center, City of Los Angeles Department of Recreation and Parks, and president of Local 901 (Council 36).



Alexandra Buxbaum



Jim West



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