

**CALENDAR**

Check [www.opeiu8.org](http://www.opeiu8.org) for latest details

**Mon., January 19**

- Martin Luther King Jr. Day March & Rally

**Wed., January 28**

- Membership Meeting, 6:15 p.m., Hall 8, Seattle Labor Temple, 2800 First Avenue. *Agenda: 2009 Budget Review*

**Thurs., February 5**

- Know Your Rights Training, 5:30 p.m. to 8:30 p.m., Everett.

**Wed., February 25**

- Membership Meeting, 6:15 p.m., Hall 8, Seattle Labor Temple, 2800 First Avenue. *Agenda: Nomination & Election of One Local 8 Trustee (3 year term)*

**Sat., March 7**

- Leadership Training, 9:30 a.m. to 4:30 p.m., Seattle.

**Wed., March 25**

- Membership Meeting, 6:15 p.m., Hall 8, Seattle Labor Temple, 2800 First Avenue. *Agenda: Nominations and Election of Central Labor Council Delegates*

**WE DID IT!**  
**An unforgettable election.**

Local 8 members volunteered nearly a 1,000 hours to help elect Barack Obama and Governor Gregoire as well as many other candidates who supported working families. The Political Action Committee's goal? Clock 400 volunteer hours.

Local 8 members more than doubled that goal by conducting workplace voter registration, making phone calls and knocking on doors for the Labor Neighbor Program. A big thank you to our Local 8 members who helped make a difference:

Charlie Best, Paul Bigman, Maureen Bo, Angela Boehlke, Lily Wilson-Codega, Al Colter, Marie Cook, Corinne Cosentino, Kathy Cummings, MJ Davidson, Craig Davis, Maureen Flaherty, Anthony Forte, Cynthia Fuller, Cyndi Gongora, Janice Griffey, Cathy Harger, Shannon Halme, Kamaria Hightower, Benita Hyder,

Ruthie Jacobs, Jeff Johnson, Rebecca Johnson, Traci Kenney, Benjamin Lawver, Paul Lee, Mary Maloy, Jaime Martinez, Kellie McGuire, Suzan Merritt, Suzanne Mode, Shelby Mooney, Patrick Neville, Chelsea Orvella, Lori Province, Tracy Reeves,



*Members Angela Boehlke and Kellie McGuire (holding the "volunteered hours thermometer") contributed the most hours for the Labor Neighbor program, pictured with other dedicated Local 8 leaders.*

Lori Risteyn, Carol Rozumalski, Amanda Saylor, Cindy Schu, Kathi Scott, Robby Stern, Anna Strahan, Ligia Velázquez, Joan Weiss, Ruby Wellbrock Karen White, and Alan Wolfson. Congratulations to all Local 8 members for this unforgettable election year!

# State of the Union

By Suzanne Mode, Business Manager & Cindy Schu, Organizing Director/Secretary-Treasurer

## Executive Board

Verlene Jones

President

Marie Cook

Vice President

Cindy Schu

Secretary-Treasurer

Evelyn Bowles

Recording Secretary

Valancy Blackwell

Mike Gimlin

Audrey Gunderson

Ruthie Jacobs

Kellie McGuire

Carmen Paez

Kathi Scott

Kathy Taylor

Karen White

## Staff

Suzanne Mode

Business Manager

Cindy Schu

Organizing Director

Shelby Mooney

Organizer

Ligia Velázquez

Union Representative

Mary Maloy

Union Representative

Benita Hyder

Union Representative

Shannon Halme

Union Representative

Paul Bigman

Union Representative

Amanda Saylor

Member Support

Representative

Colleen Shelton

Office Manager

Libby Alejandro

Administrative Secretary

Betty Devereaux

Secretary/Receptionist

Lori Risteyn

Bookkeeper

Mary Silver

Billing Clerk

## Social Work Interns

Thomas Walton

Jessica Osborn

The election of Barack Obama and the re-election of Christine Gregoire tops our list for momentous and transformational events of 2008. We're really proud of OPEIU members who donated so many volunteer hours with the Labor Neighbor Program or with partisan political campaigns in Washington and other parts of our Country. Regardless of your political affiliations (or non-affiliations) we're headed for a reversal of the last eight years which undeniably proved tough on working people, men and women in service, our health care system, the environment, and our now fragile economy. Despite the dismal and frankly scary economic forebodings, we're thankful our Union stands for a collective voice committed to changing the future... dramatically.

Nationally, the Employee Free Choice Act (EFCA) embodies a cornerstone of labor justice that must be passed by this Congress and signed by President Obama. As many of you know first hand, it's really hard forming a union for the first time. Most employers routinely block workers from unionizing by taking full advantage of very weak labor laws. EFCA changes the playing field and we must support its passage. Check out this website to know more: [www.affcio.org/joinaunion/voicetatwork/efca/](http://www.affcio.org/joinaunion/voicetatwork/efca/).

In Washington State, protecting precious funding sources for members working in long-term care, community and migrant health centers, the Washington State Ferries, housing, and dislocated worker support will be paramount. The Governor is committed to engaging Labor in dialogue about ways to trim

the budget with the least amount of harm to working people. We'll look to the Washington State Labor Council to guide us through this difficult legislative year.

In 2009, nearly three-quarters of Local 8's membership will negotiate for a new contract. Sea Mar Community Health Centers and Group Health Cooperative are the first large groups up for negotiations followed by many more contracts such as Valley Medical Center, Seattle Housing Authority, Home Care Contracts and in October, Providence Medical Center, Everett. The 200 newly organized members at Kennewick General Hospital are fighting for a first contract to win community wage standards for the first time. La Clínica workers know the hard struggle and are supporting their Tri-Cities union brothers and sisters.

As for our Union's future—Local 8 must continue to evolve into a truly democratic statewide organization. Our General Membership Meetings are only held in Seattle yet so many members live miles away. A few years ago we expanded our Executive

Board to include four Regional Board Members. Now it's time to take union democracy a step further and look at restructuring Local 8 to best represent members statewide. In May, we will hold the first "Voice of the Membership" Assembly for members to possibly create a new structure of representation and decision making. We're excited and proud to be leaders of a dynamic and growing union. We welcome the Assembly to expand our union's commitment to workplace power for all Local 8 Members.



*"I'm so excited for our future and for all of the work done through this massive organizing effort! The experience of working together for a common cause was immense"*

*Anna Strahan, Local 8 Member at Solid Ground.*

# Members in Action

## Group Health and Sea Mar Bargaining Teams Join for Bargaining Power

With the Group Health and Sea Mar contracts set to expire in March 2009, preparation for bargaining begins. The combined contracts impact over 2,000 members whose priorities include fair wage increases with market adjustments, protection of pension and health care benefits and job security.



*The Group Health Bargaining Team gets pumped up for contract action.*

Besides economic issues, **Tony Sosa**, a Mt. Vernon Sea Mar workers states: “We want more communication between my coworkers and our supervisors about resolving issues in a timely way.”

The combined GHC and Sea Mar bargaining teams met together on December 6 to plan how to win a fair contract during these tough economic times.



*Mandy Koontz  
Sea Mar  
Olympia:*

*“I’m working to win a contract that’s fair for everybody.*

*I’m committed to fighting for the concerns of my co-workers.”*

## Teachers United for Change at Sea Mar

When **Marco Duran** was told to shut up during a staff meeting, the teachers decided that they had enough. **Nohora Lindo** sprang into action and called her Union Representative to ask for assistance. Together, they determined the next step would be to meet with other teachers to gather everyone’s concerns and issues. The first meeting took place on June 7, 2008, a beautiful sunny day in normally grey Seattle. **Ligia M. Velázquez**, Union Representative, thought this would interfere with attendance, she was wrong. All 20 teachers showed up to the meeting and came prepared to figure out how to approach Sea Mar Administration with their concerns.

The teachers decided they wanted to send a message to the Administration showing their unity and the need to have their concerns addressed respectfully. A ‘Unity Pledge’ was started which outlined common concerns. Every single teacher signed the petition within 24 hours. The teachers agreed to form a delegation to present the Unity Pledge to Sea Mar Administration. The petition spelled out the critical issues: Respect, Realistic Workload Expectations and Adherence to the Contract.

On September 6, 2008, the teachers had their meeting with Administration with ALL the teachers participating. Sea Mar Administration responded, in writing, to all of their concerns in October.

“Nearly all of the 20 teachers in the Child Care Center took the Shop Steward Training Class (in Spanish) this summer to further hone their leadership skills and they continue to meet as a union on a regular basis to address any concerns as they arise,” commented Union Representative, **Ligia M. Velázquez**, “The teachers know their unified voices can positively influence their work environment for the children, their families and themselves.”

## " Yes We Can: Change Begins Now!"



The 27th Annual  
Martin Luther King, Jr.,  
March and Rally  
Monday, January 19, 2009  
Garfield High School  
[www.opeiu8.org](http://www.opeiu8.org)

## Take charge of your community's future— become a Central Labor Council Delegate.

Central Labor Councils (CLCs) build relationships between unions, their members and the community they live in. Just as it is important to build solidarity in the workplace, becoming a CLC delegate builds solidarity in the labor community to work to improve the lives for all working families. Check out the Local 8 website [www.opeiu8.org](http://www.opeiu8.org) for vacant delegate positions in CLCs around the state, including 9 open positions at the Martin Luther King County Labor Council.

If you are interested, please email or write to Suzanne at Local 8 stating your wish to be a delegate for OPEIU Local 8. We will be taking nominations and holding an election at the March 25, 2009 Membership Meeting. You don't need to be present, but we do need to have your letter of interest. Don't delay in this important consideration. Also, anyone can go to labor council meetings as a guest.

*What are you waiting for?  
Get yourself elected!*

*General Membership Meeting, March 25.*



Local 8 Journal

OPEIU Local 8, 2800 First Ave., Rm. 304, Seattle, WA 98121-1114

Address Service Requested

Office & Professional Employees  
International Union Local 8's  
Meetings are held at the Seattle  
Labor Temple at 2800 First Ave.  
(between Clay & Broad Sts.) Free  
parking under the Ellington Condos  
for Membership Meetings only. After  
5:00 p.m., punch in \*011213# on the  
monitor by the garage door.

Email: [opeiu8@opeiu8.org](mailto:opeiu8@opeiu8.org)

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