

Local 117 wins back-to-back community service awards

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Members of Teamsters Local 117 pride themselves in giving back to their communities. Union members coach little league softball, run tutoring programs at local high schools, volunteer at soup kitchens, and participate in countless other activities that help build stronger, more vibrant communities.

Until now, Local 117's community service had gone on with little notice. Secretary-Treasurer Tracey A. Thompson was determined to change all of that.

At the start of her tenure as ST, Thompson announced that the Union would place a greater emphasis on community volunteerism. The Local created a community sponsorship program, began to recruit more actively for community events, and pledged to participate in neighborhood revitalization projects.

In just one year since Thompson launched her initiative in 2009, the Union's commitment to community service has already made a tremendous impact on the lives of working people across our region. Local 117 has donated thousands of pounds of food to area food banks and over a hundred pints blood to area blood banks. Last summer, Union volunteers painted the home of 80-old Lorraine Gregg as part of the *Paint Tacoma-Pierce Beautiful* program. Over the holidays, Teamster for Tomorrow volunteers at Local 117 provided hundreds of toys to laid-off Union members.

People have begun to take note. [In March 2010, Local 117 Organizer, Brenda Wiest, received the Silver Spoon Award](#) for coordinating Local 117 member involvement in the South Sound Workers' Food Drive. The Union's efforts in the Drive yielded 90,000 lbs of food for families in need across Pierce County. Wiest received the award at an honorary breakfast at the University of Puget Sound on March 17.

Just eight weeks later, the Local was honored again with another distinction - [Tacoma's City of Destiny Award](#) - for its outstanding volunteerism in Pierce County.

In a ceremony at Stadium High School for award recipients on May 11, Wiest spoke on behalf the Union. "I am honored to be a part of a Union whose members care deeply about their communities and are willing to devote their time and energy to making their communities a better place to live," she said.

On stage with Wiest to receive the award were Local 117 members Gwen Crittendon, Brian Blaisdell, Russ Carver, James Smith, retiree Bob Francis, Dues Office Staff Amy Geltz, and Secretary-Treasurer Thompson.

Smith, a Local 117 member at Alan Ritchey, was featured in a short video about the Union's volunteer work that aired at the event and will be shown on public television in Tacoma, and again at the June membership meeting.

Congratulations to the members of Teamsters Local 117 on winning both the *Silver Spoon* and *City*

of Destiny awards and for the incredible work you do every day to build stronger communities and lend a helping hand when your friends and neighbors are in need.

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