



TEAMSTERS LOCAL 117

The Guardian

News from the hardworking men and women of DOC

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Teamsters Local 117: 14675 Interurban Ave. S, Suite 307 • Tukwila, WA 98168 • 1-888-872-3489 • www.teamsters117.org

FUND OUR CONTRACT!

Over 200 DOC members hit the State Capitol to talk with their legislators



Teamsters gather on the steps of the Cherberg building on January 27.

Over 200 Teamsters from the **Department of Corrections** converged on Olympia on January 27 for our 2015 DOC Teamsters Lobby Day. Members from all across the state met with dozens of legislators to talk about the importance of getting our DOC contract funded.

"Legislators need to understand that funding our contract is our most important priority," said Charles Cline, an officer at the Stafford Creek Corrections Center in Aberdeen.

Dana Carroll, an AC Cook at WCCW, agreed:

"We are the lone rangers that nobody sees. People don't realize the heightened anxiety that we go through every day. My family doesn't even know. I wouldn't even tell my husband half of what goes on."

Carroll and her group met with Senator

Tim Sheldon (35 LD), who pledged his support. "Our group was so big we had to meet with him on the Senate floor," Carroll said.

"It was a great experience," added Samantha Logan an officer at CBCC. "We got some good outcomes. All three legislators we spoke with said that they fully support us. They also thanked us for the work that

we do in keeping the community safe, keeping families safe, and keeping them safe. They said they admire the work that we do. It was good to hear that."

In addition to advocating for a fair DOC contract, members spoke about the need to expand the PSERS retirement program to include DOC medical staff and to pass a statewide paid sick days bill.

Thank you to all of the members who took time out of their busy schedules to attend the event. Your voice makes all the difference! ●

ACT NOW! Call the legislative hotline in Olympia at 1-800-562-6000 and urge your legislators to fund our DOC contract! **DON'T WAIT. CALL NOW!**

By Joschue Reyes

REFLECTIONS ON LOBBY DAY

A CBCC Counselor on his experience



Joschue Reyes

WHEN WE FIGHT... WE WIN! This is the Teamster slogan which echoed through the halls of our Lobby Day rally point in Olympia, Washington.

With a room full of over 200 Department of Corrections members, Teamsters 117 personnel, and their families, January 27 became an important day with one specific goal. This goal mirrored itself in the minds of all present and those unable to physically be present but who sent their best wishes.

Our goal was to show the legislature that we are affected by the decisions they make and that we will stand up and have our voices heard. We wanted those with the ability to create change to see the true faces of corrections.

Corrections should not be viewed as a bill, a contract needing ratification, or words on a piece of paper, but rather it should be viewed for exactly what it is.

Corrections is made up of the men and women who together keep our public safe and who operate 24 hours a day, 7 days a week without the ability to hang the CLOSED sign on the window.

Corrections is made up of people who must wear different masks and facilitate different roles. Correctional employees do not have the luxury of a guaranteed return home after a long day of work but must operate with a heightened sense of awareness to deal with situations that are both dangerous and unpredictable.

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Remembering Officer Jayme Lee Biendl

Officer Jayme Lee Biendl - In memoriam (1976-2011)

January 29 marked the four-year anniversary of the death of our fallen Sister. For all of us, Officer Jayme Lee Biendl made the ultimate sacrifice, and we will never forget her.



MCC Walk of Remembrance

A message from your Director of Corrections & Law Enforcement



Michelle Woodrow

SOLIDARITY RULES

Brothers and Sisters:

It's amazing what we can achieve when we stand together.

Recently, six members of Teamsters 117 who work in the parking industry were reinstated after being wrongfully terminated by their employer. The workers are part of a newly-organized group that came together seeking strong representation and a voice. As such, they don't have a contract yet or the just cause protections that a contract provides. Still, even without these protections, the group was able to pressure their employer to reinstate workers who were targeted for their union activity. How did they do it? They did it through direct action. They did it through solidarity. They did it through leafleting, wearing buttons, calling the mayor's office, and standing strong together.

DOC MEMBERS: WE HAVE THE POWER

At the DOC, members are also standing together and it's making a tremendous difference. At last month's Lobby Day, over 200 members and their families met with dozens of legislators to talk about funding our DOC contract. With the event, we achieved our best attendance for any DOC Lobby Day. The strong turnout is a testament to the growing strength of our political program. More members are understanding that we are exponentially more powerful when we get involved.

But we can do better. With 5,600 Teamsters at the DOC, we have incredible potential to affect change. We can fund our contract, expand our retirement security, pass statutory interest arbitration, and much more, but we have to get involved.

There are lots of opportunities to participate in your Union. For DOC members, a good place to start is with our **Contract Funding Strategy Sessions** that are taking place over the next several weeks. At those meetings, we'll be talking about how we can reach out to small businesses in our local communities to build support for funding our contract.

Securing the support of small businesses in our community is one more way that we can convince legislators that a fully-funded DOC contract is not just a priority, but a necessity.

Thank you for your service and stay safe.

In Solidarity,

Michelle Woodrow
Director of Corrections & Law Enforcement

REYES

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Therefore we ask that our contract be funded so that we are compensated for the job we do.

The turnout for Lobby Day was impressive to say the least. Logistics did such an excellent job at organizing the event that we could not help but be "pumped" for the opportunity to have our voices heard.

Knowing that wherever we turned we were surrounded by our Teamster brothers and sisters only fueled the excitement because we knew we had the support of each other.

We were able to speak our minds to the senators and representatives of each of our districts who, for the most part with the exception of a few, were receptive to our concerns and our request for their support in funding our contract.

Lobby Day was not about an individual gain or an individual institution, but rather Lobby Day was about a collective gain.

Teamsters 117we need to continue to be informed, involved, and ready to fight, because until our contract is funded we are not done for this round.

Solidarity is a must because it is what makes us louder, stronger, and powerful. I encourage all to meet with your local Shop Stewards and Business Representatives and find out what is next. Be proactive.

Call the legislative hotline at 1-800-562-6000 and tell your legislators to fund the contract. ●



WCC Teamsters at Lobby Day on Jan. 27.

HELP GET OUR CONTRACT FUNDED!

CONTRACT FUNDING STRATEGY MEETINGS*

Contract funding strategy sessions have been scheduled at facilities across the state. Join the effort to get our 2015-2017 contract funded!

- **WSP** - Monday, Feb. 9 - 4 P.M.
- **CRCC** - Wednesday, Feb. 11 - 4 P.M.
- **AHCC** - Friday, Feb. 13 - 4 P.M.
- **MCC** - Thursday, Feb. 19 - 4 P.M.
- **LCC** - Friday, Feb. 27 - 4 P.M.
- **WCC/CCCC** - Tuesday, March 3 - 4 P.M.
- **WCCW/MCCCW** - Tuesday, March 10 - 4 P.M.
- **OCC/CBCC** - Tuesday, March 17 - 4 P.M.
- **SCCC** - Tuesday, March 24 - 4 P.M.

***Check your Union bulletin board or talk to your Shop Steward for times and locations.**

WELCOME NEW DOC BUS. REPS!

Talisa Boad and Eric Smith come on board



Eric Smith

We are excited to announce two new Business Representatives for Teamsters at the Department of Corrections. **Talisa Boad** and **Eric Smith** assumed their representational responsibilities effective January 15.



Talisa Boad

Talisa will represent members at CBCC, OCC, and SCCC, while Eric will represent members at MCC.

Both Talisa and Eric have strong Union backgrounds. In their capacity as Shop Stewards, they have experience in pre-disciplinary hearings, grievance handling, and creating better communication on the shop floor. Both have been active in the Union's political activities and both served on the Union's bargaining committee in contract negotiations last year.

In talking about the Union, Eric said: "By standing up and being united as Teamsters, we can get things done."

Talisa concurred: "I'd like to see more of us get engaged and come together in solidarity so that we can make positive changes at DOC."

Eric can be reached at 1-888-872-3489 ext. 1247 or 360-722-2308 or by email.

Talisa can be reached at 1-888-872-3489 ext. 1246 or 360-722-0891 or by email.

In addition to these jurisdictional changes, Business Representative Sarena Davis will be returning to represent members at the Cedar Creek Correctional Center (CCCC). View a complete listing of Business Representatives and their jurisdictions on your Union's website at www.Teamsters117.org. ●

In Our View

A FAIR SHAKE FOR THE CORRECTIONS WORKERS WHO PROTECT US ALL

By Tracey A. Thompson, Local 117 Secretary-Treasurer

Corrections workers protect us all although the work they do is hidden from the view and consciousness of most Washingtonians. This difficult work involves many sacrifices, so many that our state's prison system has a serious problem recruiting and retaining qualified staff. The State Legislature has an opportunity to address these shortcomings in its current budget. In doing so, it can improve the safety and well-being of communities across our state.

Our state's corrections workers earn much less than their peers. Custody officers, the most common job classification, earn 55% less than those doing the same work in county-run facilities. Mental health counselors earn 53% less than their peers. Cooks, 39% less.

These correctional employees have not had a raise in six years, and they have seen their real earnings shrink by more than 10%. Some full-time workers' families qualify for public assistance.

These substandard wages are for hard, dangerous work. Corrections workers suffer much higher rates of depression, PTSD, suicide, divorce, heart ailments, and diabetes than the rest of us. Their rates of serious on the job injuries are among the worst in the state.

An independent arbitrator considered these facts alongside the condition of the State's finances and awarded

corrections employees a contract with 5.5% and 4.3% wage increases in 2015 and 2016 respectively, amounts found to be fiscally feasible by the state's Office of Financial Management. It is now up to the Legislature to confirm the contract in the coming state budget.

The contract would begin to close the earnings gap between state corrections workers and their peers. It would help retain the experienced staff who are best able to prepare offenders for life after prison; high staff turnover undermines the evidence-based programming and rehabilitative work that is key to preventing recidivism. It would also help address the safety problems caused by having high numbers of inexperienced employees supervise dangerous felons.

As an additional benefit, approving the corrections contract would boost economic activity, generating \$527 million of economic activity statewide. The bulk of the economic benefits would flow to rural areas, small cities and towns that have missed out on the economic recovery.

Legislators in Olympia have the power to provide this economic boost, improve public safety and recognize the valuable service of these men and women who risk their lives every day to keep us all safe. Let's hope they wield their power wisely. ●



Teamsters 117 - Report from Olympia

News for Teamsters 117 - 2015 Legislative Session in Olympia

For the latest news about what's happening this legislative session in Olympia, check out your Local Union's **Report from Olympia**. Read about bills we are tracking, important hearings, the voting record of key legislators, and how to get involved. Visit your Union's website at www.Teamsters117.org for more info.

STEP M SETTLEMENT MEANS BACK PAY FOR MEMBERS

Retroactive Step M status for 103 members

We have good news for members who were improperly denied **Step M** pay by the Department.

Your Union has achieved a settlement agreement that provides retroactive Step M status to **103 members** including Classification Counselors, Psychologists, and Mental Health Counselors.

This will result in a back pay award for these members.

The affected members were improperly blocked from attaining Step M after the Union negotiated a salary range increase for them.

The Department maintained that the change to a higher salary range made all of those members ineligible for Step M, including the ones who had achieved Step L when the change was made.

Your Union filed a grievance over the issue and ultimately moved the case to arbitration when it became clear that the Department was unwilling to resolve the case in the early stages of the grievance process.

Prior to the arbitration hearing, Local 117's General Counsel Spencer Thal and Director of Corrections & Law Enforcement Michelle Woodrow were able to successfully settle the case in the Union's favor.

"I've been here 30 years and haven't received a step increase in a long time," said Robert Martin, a Classification Counselor at WCCW. "It's nice to see that people who have been working here for so long will finally get their increase. They deserve it." ●

Tuesday, February 24

Lobby Day

Make your voice heard in Olympia!

Couldn't make our last Lobby Day? Join us on **Tuesday, February 24** for our next trip to Olympia to talk with legislators about funding our DOC contract! We will start the day at 9 A.M. at the **Washington State Labor Council** (906 Columbia Street SW). For more information, call Political Coordinator Dustin Lambro at 206-441-4860 ext 1262.

Facility News!

Get news specific to your facility

Curious about what kind of issues Teamsters are facing at other DOC facilities around the State? Check out the **DOC Facility News** section of your Union's website at www.teamsters117.org.

The section will be updated on a bi-monthly basis and can be accessed from the website's **Member Center** page under Department of Corrections and Law Enforcement.

The work described in this section is a sample of your Union's representational work and is not intended to be comprehensive. Any feedback or suggestions you have is appreciated!

Scholarship Opportunity!

THE JAMES R. HOFFA 2015-2016 Academic Year Scholarships

For High School Seniors who are children or dependents of Teamster members.

The **James R. Hoffa Memorial Scholarship Fund** is now accepting scholarship applications for the 2015-2016 academic year. Scholarships are available to High School seniors who are the children or dependents of Teamster members.

The deadline for submissions is March 31, 2015.

View the scholarship application and eligibility requirements in the Corrections & Law Enforcement section of your Union's website at www.Teamsters117.org. ●

MARK YOUR CALENDAR!

February 24, 2015 - Teamsters Lobby Day in Olympia

March 13, 2015 - DOC Shop Stewards' Seminar

March 19, 2015 - General quarterly membership meeting

April 27, 2015 - Legislative Session Ends

TEAMSTERS 117 ON THE WEB!



Visit your Union's new website at www.teamsters117.org. Join your Union's Facebook page, follow us on Twitter @teamsters117, and watch Local 117 videos on YouTube!

For more Teamsters news, visit the Local 117 website at www.teamsters117.org.