

SUMMER OF SOLIDARITY

The Monthly Newsletter of SEBAC



Event Hosted on Tuesday, July 13th

SEBAC Hosts Press Conference at the State Capitol with Hundreds of Members

Nearly 500 SEBAC members from all 15 unions joined together on the North Steps of the State Capitol to hear from members and service recipients about the need for vital public services.

“Before and during the pandemic, professors have been a big part of my college life,” said Aleidy Dominguez Jorge, a recent graduate of Capital Community College, “I moved to the United States when I was 18 and the faculty, staff, and other students at Capital provided a safe and nurturing environment for me to learn English and study. A fair contract is what these workers need and deserve now, working 24/7 without complaining, giving the best of themselves, and providing their service in a friendly and helpful way.”

“Our environment must be protected and the state employees working under DEEP are paramount to this effort,” said Bianca Beland, an Environmental Analyst I with the Department of Energy and Environmental Protection and member of CSEA SEIU Local 2001, “But with underfunding and understaffing, we cannot achieve the goal of the agency to conserve, improve and protect our natural resources. Fair contracts are not only the right thing to do for state employees, but the public we serve.”

“This isn’t simply about raises or Hero Pay,” said Pat Davis, an Administrative Assistant with the Legal Affairs Department of the Department of Corrections in Wethersfield and President of AFSCME Council 4 Local 318, “It’s about the Administration seeing us as partners so we can expand services, provide good jobs in Connecticut’s cities and working class communities, and make Connecticut a state that leads other employers in providing a safe and equitable workplace for all of its employees, whatever their skin color.”

University of Connecticut Professor and UConn-AAUP member Lyle Scruggs, PhD reminded the group of the negative impacts budget cuts have on our future, “Over the last two decades, the state’s flagship university has been decimated by state budget austerity. UConn faculty and staff have seen in-state enrollment at UConn increase by 40% in the last 2 decades, while the state funding has cut support. Fair contracts incentivize tenure-track faculty members to stay at our state colleges and lift our entire higher education system to create a better future for the next generation.”

Press from the [Hartford Courant](#), [CT Mirror](#) and [Channel 8](#) all published powerful stories from this successful event and it was a great kick off to the many upcoming press conferences, informational pickets and rallies to come - click on the publications to read their coverage!



SEBAC PREPARES FOR 2022

What we must do now to protect & expand state services

The Silver Tsunami - all of our members have heard of this phrase throughout the last few years, but what does it mean for SEBAC members? Regardless of whether SEBAC and the State reached an agreement in 2017, 2022 was going to be an enormously important year, but SEBAC 2017 did greatly lessen the impact by extending the Pension and Healthcare agreement through June of 2027.

If you are one of the 13,000 state employees eligible for normal or early retirement before July 1, 2022 then you will want to carefully weigh the pros and cons of adjusting your planned retirement date to avoid the COLA and retiree health care changes that will affect people who retire beginning in July 2022. The Comptroller recently issued a memo to state agencies that said this: Taken together, what these facts show is that only a very limited number of employees who were planning to retire after the Effective Date may gain a clear advantage by changing their retirement strategy.

Retirement Services Division Memorandum 2021-03. Along with the State Comptroller, we will do whatever we can to make sure retirement-eligible state employees have the information they need to make the best decisions for themselves and their families.

If you aren't one of those 13,000 members (and even if you are!), given a decade of understaffing, then any significant increase in the number of retirements that occur in 2022 means something different to you. It means the risk of losing still more of the decades of institutional knowledge and skills, the potential for attrition, increased speedup, reckless privatization, and the negative impacts this would have on vital public services.

Protecting public services starts with fair contracts and good faith negotiations to maintain our dedicated and passionate workforce that helps our most vulnerable populations across the state. Expanding public services recognizes that we have many of the answers we need to build a fairer, safer, and healthier state for everyone, but that by under-resourcing and wait listing critical state services, we all continue moving backwards. Moving in the right direction will mean a fight against the profiteers, the privatizers, and the professional disrespectors of public service employees. But it's a fight we plan to win.

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Over 13,000 State Employees will be eligible for Normal or Early Retirement before July 1, 2022

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Without Significant Intervention, our State Risks Losing Decades of Institutional Knowledge & Skills.



JOIN US FOR STICKER WEEK

Missed our press conference on July 13th?

Join us in the Fight by Wearing a SEBAC Sticker between August 23-27th!

You won't want to miss your next opportunity to fight for YOUR contracts! Each local will be handing out stickers to workers at various sites across the State - contact your union for more information. We must begin to prepare for the Silver Tsunami now, don't miss your opportunity to be part of the fight.

HERO PAY SPECIAL SESSION PLANNED FOR EARLY SEPTEMBER

The 2021 Legislative Session came to an end without addressing the question that was on many of our member's minds - what about pandemic pay? As of now, the biennial budget includes a line item for \$20 million which would cover state workers and the National Guard, though it is unclear which state workers are covered under this amount. \$20 million is a far cry from the \$500 million SEBAC proposed for state workers, plus it doesn't address our brothers and sisters in the private sector like grocery store workers. SEBAC and our pandemic pay partners are continuing to amp up the pressure for Governor Lamont and the Legislature

SEBAC TELEWORK INJUNCTION LEADERS TO NEW AGREEMENT, AND MUCH MORE WORK TO DO

Click [HERE](#) to see the latest on our efforts to protect telework and the many benefits it offers to the public, public service employees, and the environment. We are already hearing about violations of the agreement that must be stopped.

And either way, much more work to do to get to the final agreement we all deserve. Check the website often for the latest updates.

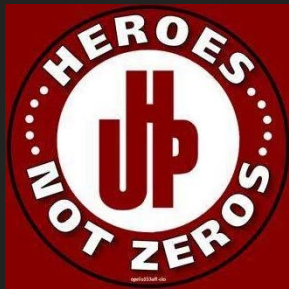
CONTRACT NEGOTIATIONS HEAT UP

Learn about updates from some of our negotiation teams



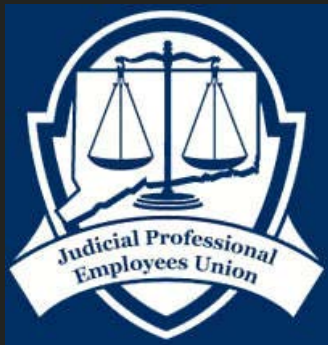
On July 16th, UConn-AAUP reached an agreement with the BOT to extend the entire expired contract for 1-year, or until such time as a successor agreement is fully ratified by the parties and the legislature. This win comes after an unprecedented number of members sent in emails, made phone calls and posted on social media to bring attention to the dire reality of the situation. UConn-AAUP's solidarity never wavered as the administration attempted to hold the extension agreement hostage while trying to remove members from the bargaining unit.

UConn-AAUP
Secures Vital
Contract Extension
Agreement



On May 27th, the University Health Professionals (UHP), AFT Local 3837 held an informational picket outside of the UConn Health Main Campus. Hundreds of members and supporters showed up and enjoyed music, chants and selfies with Scabby the Rat to demand fair contracts. Shortly thereafter, the Negotiations Team held their first session with UConn Health Management and won a 1 year contract extension!

University Health
Professionals Win
1 Year Contract
Extension after
Successful
Member Picket



JPE leadership is working hard to gather all required information for the 9/15 wage arbitration. We are working with AFT National to catalogue all fiscal and economic data needed to demonstrate support for our wage proposal. As soon as tomorrow 7/22, we will be "zooming" with AFT National's Statistic and Research Department to go over preliminary information. AFT CT is also lending a hand with legislative research on COVID payments and Connecticut specific data. We will be sending Judicial some basic documents for their approval. These documents are, in part, current CBA language and detailed proposed changes. Keep in mind please, that for this year we are arbitrating wages and wages only (effective 7/1/2021). We will keep you updated as to developments and progress.

JPE Has a Set
Binding
Arbitration
Hearing on
September 15th