

The 93 Beacon

We Make Northern New England Happen!



National Staff the Front Lines Tour Makes Stop in Boston

Boston, MA- On August 31st, the AFSCME Staff the Front Lines National Bus Tour made a stop in Boston, bringing attention to the dire need for more public service workers both nationwide and locally. The rate of understaffing continues to rise, with over 800,000 public sector job openings across the United States. In Boston and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts alone, there are over 1,000 AFSCME vacancies. Chronic understaffing has made it increasingly difficult to successfully carry out critical public service work. To address this crisis, AFSCME conducted a national bus tour throughout the summer to raise awareness and partner with employers in recruiting skilled and diverse individuals. The tour visited over 20 communities throughout the country, including a stop in Boston.

During the visit, AFSCME International staff held a listening session with Council 93 leaders, staff, community partners, and leaders from the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, the City of Boston, and the Department of Higher Education to discuss the staffing crisis and potential solutions.

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Council 93 Secures Significant Contract Gains for Thousands of Members

By working together in our workplaces, in our Locals, and throughout our region, AFSCME Council 93 fights each and every day to secure fair union contracts for our members. A union contract gives you a seat at the table and a voice on the job to stand up for higher pay, better benefits, safer workplaces, and time-off to spend with family and loved ones.

Over the past few months, a number of Council 93 Locals have ratified contracts that provide for significant improvements in wages, benefits, and working conditions for our members.

When we fight, we win!

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Front Lines

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Mark Bernard, Executive Director of AFSCME Council 93, noted that both local governments and the Commonwealth of Massachusetts are struggling to fill vacancies across various departments and agencies. "These are difficult jobs, where for far too long our members have been doing work that used to be done by two or more people, that needs to be addressed to attract quality candidates," he said.

To attract applicants, Bernard explained that AFSCME has focused on improving wages, benefits and working conditions for members. He also emphasized that public service work is about more than just compensation and benefits. "Our members help their communities and provide vital services, but they are feeling the strain, especially in 24/7 facilities like those for people with mental illnesses or developmental disabilities. We need support at all levels of government to promote these jobs, streamline the hiring process, and make sure that the men and women who do these jobs are fairly compensated and recognized for the difficult work they do."

Contracts

(continued from pg. 1)



Local 1489 members at Boston Medical Center voting for their 4-year contract on September 21st

Here are some highlights from contracts recently ratified by Council 93 Locals:

Maine State Contract- Locals 1814, 1825, 2089, and 2968

- Duration: 2-Years
- Wage Increases: 9%
- Non-Base Wage Gains: increased parental leave, expanded bereavement leave, increased child care reimbursement, time off, longevity pay, and shift differentials.

Local 1489 - Boston Medical Center

- Duration: 4-Years
- Wage Increases: 13%
- Non-Base Wage Gains: additional raises and upgrades for positions not previously upgraded, increased shift differentials, and the addition of the Juneteenth.

Massachusetts State and County Locals 419, 507, 1067, 1776

- Duration: 1-Year
- Wage Increases: 8%
- Non-Base Wage Gains: millions of dollars of pooled funds to address recruitment, retention, and wage adjustments within the various agencies.

Local 2413- Newport, VT DPW

- Duration: 3-Years
- Wage Increases: 16%
- Non-Base Wage Gains: increased on-call pay, increased vacation time, and increased stipend for CDL drivers.

Local 804- Boston Water & Sewer Commission

- Duration: 4-Years
- Wage Increases: 12%
- Non-Base Wage Gains: upgrades and wage adjustments, COVID bonus, increased vacation time, and personal time no longer accrued throughout the year.

Through the hard work of AFSCME Council 93 staff and Local Union leaders, our rank-and-file members will see significant quality of life improvements throughout the life of these recently negotiated contracts. These contracts are a reminder that we fight each and everyday to improve wages and working conditions for all members of the Council 93 family.

Your Rights as a Union Member: AFSCME Bill of Rights

As guaranteed by the Bill of Rights for Union Members in the International Constitution, all AFSCME members have the right to:

- Join/become members regardless of race, creed, color, national origin, sex, age, sexual orientation, disability or political belief;
- Exercise freedom of speech in union affairs;
- Conduct the union's business free from employer domination;
- Expect fair and democratic elections;
- Run for and hold union office;
- Receive a full accounting of all union funds;
- Participate fully, through discussion and vote, in the union's decision-making processes;
- Receive due process and a fair trial (when charges are made against an officer or member based on grounds provided in the International Constitution).



Council 93 Executive Board Members Jazz Guirand-President Local 1730 and Eddie Butler-President Local 470 met NAACP President & CEO Derrick Johnson while representing AFSCME as delegates to the 114th NAACP National Convention that took place in Boston. The convention brought together a diverse group of innovative change-makers, thought-leaders, entrepreneurs, scholars, entertainers, influencers, and creatives to network and exchange ideas.

Upcoming Events

AFSCME Council 93 Biennial Convention

- November 10th to 12th
Danvers, MA

Council 93 Steward Trainings

- November 4th
Lexington, MA
9:00-4:00

Register at

www.afscme93.org/calendar-events

NLRB Rules that Companies That Union-Bust Can Be Compelled to Automatically Recognize the Union

Ruling paves the way for faster and more just union certification without illegal employer interference.

The August NLRB ruling regarding CEMEX is a significant victory for the labor movement and the future of organizing. The National Labor Relations Board ruled that CEMEX, a global building materials company, violated labor laws by unlawfully restricting workers' rights to engage in protected union activities. Under the ruling, companies found to be in violation could be compelled to automatically recognize the union and enter into bargaining without a union election. This ruling reinforces the importance of safeguarding workers' rights to organize and collectively bargain without interference from employers. It serves as a reminder that all companies, regardless of their size or industry, must adhere to labor laws and respect the rights of their employees. The decision highlights the Biden administration's steadfast commitment to upholding workers' rights and promoting fair labor practices.

Council 93 Legal Update



Orono Town Employees Join Council 93 and Set Labor Law Precedent in the Process

Orono, ME- Earlier this year, workers in the Town of Orono filed a majority authorization to form a union with AFSCME Council 93. Unfortunately, the initial petition was denied by the Director of the Maine State Labor Relations Board. The Council 93 Legal Department contested the decision, and in August, the Maine Labor Relations Board ruled in our favor.

As a result of the ruling, the Town Hall, Public Library, and Parks and Recreation employees in Orono are now proud members of AFSCME Council 93.

The Labor Board decision also established two new rules for future majority authorization filings in Maine. The date of filing is assumed to be the day the cards are delivered, and majority support is determined based on who was employed on that date.

These new rules set a precedent for labor law in Maine, simplifying the process of determining majority sign-up and preventing employers from interfering with employees wishing to form a union by moving employees out of proposed bargaining units.



Council 93 Leadership and Staff supporting striking SAG-AFTRA members at an August rally on Boston Common. The union is fighting for a fair contract that respects the creative work of SAG-AFTRA members.



Soteria House Workers Win First Union Contract

Burlington, VT- In late August, employees at Soteria House, a residential facility in Burlington, ratified their first union contract under AFSCME Local 1343, marking a momentous achievement for labor rights in the private sector. The three-year agreement brings about a range of benefits for the dedicated Soteria House workers.

Key highlights of the contract include a substantial wage increase for full-time workers with a year or more of service, who will now earn a base wage of \$20.50 an hour (\$22 an hour for third shift) plus an additional \$0.10 for each year of service. Subs, who work intermittently, will also see their wages rise to \$21.50 an hour. Furthermore, annual raises of 3.5% and 3% are secured for the second and third years of the new contract.

The contract safeguards staffing ratios, introduces just cause protections, establishes a grievance procedure/arbitration system, and grants the union an influential seat on hiring committees. It also allows union members to avoid crossing picket lines, retain the right to strike, and ensures fair recognition processes for potential future unionization efforts within Pathways Vermont.

This first contract shows that the unity and power of the union can lead to significant improvements in the lives of workers. Congratulations to the members and the bargaining team, and welcome to AFSCME Council 93!

NH Governor Signs Council 93 Backed School Nurse Staffing Legislation Into Law



Local 298 member and Manchester School Nurse Trish Anglin testifying in support of SB215

Concord, NH- Legislation to address the severe school nurse-staffing crisis in New Hampshire was signed into law by the Governor on July 29th. Council 93 legislative staff and Local 298, which represent school nurses in the City of Manchester, advocated for changes in state law to address the staffing shortages being felt by districts across the Granite State.

SB215 changes the state's minimum education requirements for school nurses from a four-year degree to a two-year degree, while still maintaining the rigorous licensing standards all nurses must achieve when it comes to passing the NCLEX national licensing exam.

AFSCME Council 93 Members volunteered to staff the Maine AFL-CIO table at the Common Ground Fair in Unity, ME. Local 1373 President and Council 93 Executive Board Member Cindy Pebenito, Local 1373 member Tammy Morris, and Local 2011 Retiree Elizabeth O'Connor (Pictured Right to Left) were joined by APWU union sister Doris Poland to talk to fair goers about our work, the labor movement and answer any questions they have about unions. They also spoke with several fair goers who are interested in forming unions in their workplace, about farmworker rights, supporting state employees in contract negotiations with the Mills administration and how to get involved in Maine's labor movement. (Photo: ME AFL-CIO)

Research shows that the pass rate is statistically identical regardless of what type of degree a nurse has.

Effective immediately, the new law will allow school districts across New Hampshire to start hiring nurses for 2023-2024 school year under the new minimum education requirements.

Local 298 member and Manchester School Nurse Trish Anglin was a fierce advocate for addressing the school nurse-staffing crisis. She identified the problem and worked with a number of organizations to reach a compromise on minimum education requirements that received broad bipartisan support in the New Hampshire State Legislature.

Today, there are still hundreds of thousands of open public service positions from pre-pandemic levels. States, cities, and towns are not hiring fast enough to fill the lost jobs, which is putting a strain on the everyday heroes who keep our communities running.

Passage of SB215 is just one example of AFSCME Council 93 proactively working with elected leaders and state agencies to address the chronic understaffing plaguing our communities and helping put qualified professionals to work serving our communities.

[Link to AFSCME Blog Our Victory in NH!](#)



AFSCME Council 93 Memorial Scholarship Winners Announced

Boston, MA- The recipients of the 26th Annual AFSCME Council 93 Memorial Scholarship were recently announced by the AFSCME Council 93 Memorial Scholarship Committee. The five recipients will receive a \$1,000 Scholarship (per year of enrollment).

This year's recipients are:

• **Jean Charles**, a member of AFSCME Local 1067 who works at North Shore Community College. Jean has been enrolled in the Criminal Justice program at Excelsior University since the Fall of 2021.

• **Laura Walsh**, child of Jimmy Walsh, who is a member of Local 362 at the Canton Parks and Recreation Department. Laura will be studying Music Education at UMass Amherst starting this fall.

• **Brody Michaela Kaley**, child of Michael Kaley, who is a member of Local 204 at the Central Berkshire Regional School District. Brody will be studying Communication Disorders/Speech Pathology at the University of Rhode Island starting this fall.

• **Laina Pizzi**, child of Maria Pizzi, who is a member of Local 1451 in the Town of Norwood. Laina will be studying Business at Curry College starting this fall.

• **Dan O'Leary**, child of Rosalie O'Leary, who is a member of Local 687 in the City of Gloucester. Dan began studying Engineering Operations at the Maine Maritime Academy in the fall of 2022.

Over the past 26 years, the Fund has provided more than \$100,000 in scholarships to AFSCME members, their spouses, children, stepchildren, grandchildren and legal dependents.



Local 3485 Rangers Steve Reimer, Charlie Chouinard, Rob Pantaleo, and Wayne Diskin outside the Massachusetts State House where they assisted in evacuating the building during an electrical fire in July

Council 93 Local 3485 Park Rangers Honored for Quick Action During State House Fire

Boston, MA- When an electrical fire broke out in the Massachusetts State Capitol on July 18th, four Local 3485 Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) rangers assigned to the State House's security program provided a swift and courageous response. Rangers Charles Chouinard, Wayne Diskin, Robert Pantaleo, and Stephen Reimer were recognized for their exceptional efforts during the incident.

The DCR honored these State House Rangers with Outstanding Achievement Awards, acknowledging their remarkable composure under pressure and their rapid actions in evacuating visitors and staff.

"They went from floor to floor, door to door, bathroom to bathroom, and checked every single door, bathroom, and everything in the building," said William Doherty, Local 3485 Union Steward. "They went through the building even though there was a risk involved,"

Their unwavering dedication to public safety and commitment to their duty to protect the public showcased the true essence of public service.

Council 93 has been growing and adding new members almost weekly. Here are just some examples of the progress Council 93 is making on the organizing front:

- Barrington, NH Public Works- 12 New Members
- Barnstable, MA Housing Authority Maintenance Staff- 7 New Members
- Bow, NH Fire and Police Departments- 12 New Members
- Easthampton, MA City Employees- 40 New Members
- Orono, ME Town Employees- 12 New Members

Joining Council 93 starts with a conversation - to learn more contact our Organizing Staff at info@afscme93.org

Council 93 Organizing Update



AFSCME Electronic Membership Card Now Available on Your Smart Phone



You can now access your AFSCME Membership card your smart phone! The AFSCME International Union has developed an app for both Apple and Android devices. No more rooting through your wallet looking for your union card, or waiting for months for your card to arrive in the mail!

Search for the "AFSCME eCard" app and download. When you open the app you will be asked a few simple questions, and once successfully answered your eCard will appear showing the International AFSCME member ID, which can be used to access all AFSCME vendor benefits.

Download the AFSCME eCard to your Mobile Device today!

Council 93 Member Benefit



Use your AFSCME Membership to get up to 35% off car rentals. AFSCME Members receive exclusive deals from 6 top rental car companies:

- Avis
- Budget
- Hertz
- Dollar
- Thrifty
- Payless

To start saving today, go to www.unionplus.org/benefits/travel/car-rental

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