



Skills & Expertise of Power Plant Workers Save Ratepayers a Fortune

When municipal light plant officials in the town of Merrimac, Massachusetts need to build a power plant or complete some other big project, they don't turn to high-priced, profit hungry construction firm. Why? Because ratepayers already have a great in-house team, and incredibly, they're the same people who keep the power system running smoothly every day.

Despite having to handle every-day duties like repairing and maintaining lines, fixing broken

streetlights, responding to damage and power outages caused by the harsh New England weather, and fulfilling responsibilities under mutual aid agreements with surrounding communities; this four-person crew from AFSCME Local 939 has somehow found the time to complete an impressive array of special projects. In doing so, they've saved ratepayers hundreds of thousands of dollars.



\$2.1 million high-voltage substation built by AFSCME members.

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Executive Director's Column

Council 93 Teams with Affiliated Locals to Make our Mark at the AFL-CIO Convention

A concerted effort by the Council 93 Team and our affiliated locals led to historic election results at the recent 2015 Massachusetts AFL-CIO State Convention.

Five AFSCME leaders including three Council 93 Table Officers were elected as vice presidents of the state federation.

The AFSCME candidates were part of a 'Unity Slate'

that included fifty other candidates from a wide-range of private and public sector unions. The new AFSCME leaders elected to the board include:



Exec. Director
Frank Moroney

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President's Column

Resources Available to Help AFSCME Local Unions Become a Force in Municipal Elections

Over the past several years, our Council has increasingly played a more visible & active role in electoral politics. Working closely with Executive Director Moroney and his team, our Executive Board has made some bold endorsement moves. We've been among the first unions to endorse in high-profile statewide races in our region. And, unlike many other unions, we don't hesitate to get involved in Democratic Party primaries when we

come across a candidate who has earned our support. Our hard work and commitment to those who earn our endorsement has led many other candidates to proactively



President
Charlie Owen

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AFL Convention

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Council 93 President Charlie Owen

Council 93 Vice- President Kevin Hanley

Council 93 Treasurer Gerry Mills

Council 93 Executive Board Member Chet Richardson

Charlie, Kevin, Gerry and Chet join Local 419's Mike Simpson on the Board. A Suffolk County Corrections Officer and part of the AFSCME slate, Mike was re-elected to a board seat along with our four new representatives.

It's no secret that I have never hesitated to be critical of both the National AFL-CIO and its state affiliates. We believe the organization can and should do more to represent the interests of public-sector workers. But as one of the largest affiliates of the organization, we can and should be doing more to chart the direction of the AFL-CIO. We can't expect that criticism alone will force change. We need to roll up our sleeves and get directly involved. That's why we made a coordinated effort to turn out our members and our votes at this most recent convention. Over the past several months, my team at Council 93 spent a significant amount of time reaching out to our Locals to stress the importance of sending delegates to the state convention. As is always the case, our local leaders were more than eager to help. A total of 41 AFSCME Locals answered the call and sent delegates to the three-day convention, held September 30-October 2.

AFSCME clearly had the strongest presence at the convention. In fact, according to the final credentials report, forty-percent of all Locals attending the convention were AFSCME Council 93 Locals. It was truly a moment to be proud of our union and a clear indication that we will be a strong force within the organization for many years to come.

While AFSCME has had many good individual representatives on the state federation executive board over the years, I believe this group of AFSCME representatives will be the strongest and most effective team our union has ever had on the board. Working with President Steve Tolman, who was deservedly re-elected to a second term, we expect to be an integral part of a united effort to strengthen the

labor movement and build more support for our common and unique interests and issues.

On behalf of all of our members, I want to thank our five AFL-CIO Vice Presidents for their willingness to serve in this important role. I also want to thank the many AFSCME Locals who supported us by sending delegates to the Convention. Last but not least, I want to thank my team at Council 93 who work tirelessly every day to make our union the best we can be.

Privatization Fight in Nashua, NH

More than 100 AFSCME School Custodians in Nashua, NH Local 365 are working with the Council to defeat a reckless plan to privatize their jobs. In September, the city's board of education held a secret session and voted 8-1 to pursue privatization when the union's contract expires at the end of the school year. Led by Chairman George Farrington, the board also waited to take the secret vote until the deadline had passed for potential school board challengers to get on the November 3, ballot. But unfortunately for them, the school board under-estimated the strength of the union and the incredible support the AFSCME custodians have among the parents, students and teachers. Thanks to a cooperative effort between the Local and Council 93, here's a brief summary of just some of the things that have happened in the three weeks following the school board's initial vote.

[Hundreds of parents, teachers and other supporters](#) turned out for a school board meeting to criticize the plan and urge board members to reconsider.

The Council worked with Local leaders and the [media to highlight the pitfalls of privatization](#) and the important work the custodians do every day. They also helped the Local establish a [Facebook page](#) and create a process and questionnaire which the local has used to endorse candidates in municipal elections for the first time. A [slate of write-in candidates](#) has emerged to challenge the school board members.

Interested in helping with this campaign? [Email us](#) for more information.

Municipal Elections

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reach out to us for support, including candidates for municipal office and state legislative seats. Unfortunately, the volume of municipalities and legislative seats in our four-state region makes it impractical for the Council Executive Board to consider what would literally be hundreds of endorsements. However, Local leaders and members should know that resources are available through the Council that will help them establish and implement a comprehensive endorsement process. Moreover, the Council can provide Locals with the guidance needed to run internal membership campaigns that will help the Locals implement an action plan aimed at turning out votes on Election Day. This assistance includes but is not limited to: creating candidate questionnaires that can be customized to include local issues; teaching members how to run phone banks and providing the needed scripts and call lists; offering guidance and resources needed to canvass AFSCME households; and providing sample press materials to announce the endorsement. In short, the Council will provide AFSCME Local Unions with everything needed to be an effective force in elections within their respective communities, while leaving the decision up to the members.

The success of this model is clearly evident in the City of Boston where a group of AFSCME Locals, including my Local 804, works cooperatively to endorse in municipal elections and state legislative contests. The Council provides us with the tools and guidance we need to make informed decisions. But the decision on who we endorse is ours and we are responsible for doing the work needed to get our candidates elected.

It's a model that can and should be duplicated throughout our four-state region, especially when one considers that it is our city and school department employees who are most directly impacted by the decisions of mayors, city councilors and school board members in their respective communities. It's also important to note that these municipal candidates are often the people who move on to higher office where they have an even bigger and broader impact. For more information on how Council 93 can help your Local become an active force in politics, [email](#) the Council's Political Action office or call 617-367-6045.

Congrats to the 2015 AFSCME Council 93 Memorial Scholarship Winners!

Three AFSCME Council 93 families will have some help meeting the high cost of a college education thanks to the AFSCME Council 93 Memorial Scholarship Fund.

The fund provides \$1,000. scholarships to Council 93 members and their spouses, children, stepchildren, grandchildren, and legal dependents. The scholarship is renewable for each year of attendance allowing families to receive as much as \$4,000. over four years.

In past years, one scholarship was awarded annually. However, thanks to a number of successful fundraising efforts in recent years including our annual golf tournament, the fund is now able to assist three families.

The 2015 recipients are:

Riley Magner: Riley is the daughter of Charles Magner, the President of Suffolk County Superior Jail Officers - Local 3643.

Chelsea Callahan: Chelsea is the daughter of Mary Callahan, a member of Local 1517 who works at the Massachusetts Hospital School.

Samuel Langer: Samuel is the son of Ralph Langer an employee of the Portsmouth, NH Public Schools and a member of Local 1386.

Riley will be attending Rhode Island College while Chelsea and Samuel will be studying at the University of New Hampshire and Webster College respectively.

As part of the application process, students are required to write an essay describing the importance of unions to their family. The 2015 winners all penned compelling essay detailing how our union has made a tremendous difference in their lives. Click [here](#) to read their essays.

Click [here](#) for more information on the Council 93 Memorial Scholarship Fund and other scholarship opportunities for AFSCME members.

Power Plant

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Most importantly, they've ensured that the job was done right.

In 2010, the crew completed work on a 2.1 million dollar high-voltage substation. The two-year project saved more than \$300,000. From 2011 to 2013, they built a second supply line into town running 5,000 feet of new wiring and installing 40 new poles. The second line provides residents with a critical back-up in case the first line goes down. Most recently, in 2015 they relocated 25 poles and transformers in the downtown to accommodate new handicapped sidewalks and installed new high-voltage underground cables and transformers as part of a new subdivision project in town.

But despite their hard work every day and the significant cost savings achieved through their skills and expertise, these municipal light workers & other workers who play an integral role at the plant find themselves fighting for a fair and equitable contract from the plant's board of commissioners. The board only pays 50% of their health insurance coverage, the minimum allowed by state law. A recent 10% overall rate increase has these members paying more than \$1100 a month for their health plans. And, according to a recent wage survey of comparable plants completed by the local, the crew is underpaid by approximately \$3.00/hour. After more than three months of negotiations, the matter is now in mediation.

AFSCME members are encouraged to take a minute to call board members Norman Denault, Larry Fisher and Paula Hamel at 978-346-8311 and urge them to provide Local 939 members with a contract worthy of their skills, dedication and hard work. You can also [email the board of commissioners with your thoughts and comments.](#)

Local 1702 Members Make Way for Ducklings

AFSCME public works employees work hard every day to ensure that citizens arrive safely to and from their destinations by keeping our roadways and public infrastructure in top shape. They pave our streets, clear our roads of snow and ice, and fill the potholes left behind from long, harsh New England winters.

In late July, a pair of Local 1702 members working for the Mansfield MA Highway Department took that hard work to a new level when they helped a panic-stricken mother duck avoid tragedy and get her family of twelve back home safely.

Highway Department workers Jay Beckett and Andrew Littig teamed up to rescue the dozen ducklings from a sewer drain following a call from residents of Mill Road who heard the mother duck's frightened quacks. The ducklings were about three feet deep into the drain, but the pair was able to scoop all twelve from the drain and, according to coverage in the Brockton Enterprise, the delinquent ducks quickly fell in line with the mother duck and made their way safely to a nearby pond.

According to the Patriot Ledger, it was the first duckling recovery effort for Littig and Beckett, who has been with the department for 15 years, though Littig said he has pulled cats from drains before.

Watch video of the rescue [here](#).



Jay Beckett and Andrew Littig work to free the ducklings.

Finance Purchases Interest-Free with No Credit Check via New Benefit for AFSCME Members

Are credit problems preventing you from being able to get the bank loan or credit card you need to make a critical purchase? Are you looking to get a head start on holiday shopping but you don't want to pay the high-interest rates associated with credit cards and personal loans? If so, you may be able to benefit from *Paycheck Direct*, a new benefit exclusively for AFSCME members. Through *Paycheck Direct*, AFSCME members can make planned or unplanned purchases and finance them interest free, over 12 months. The payments are automatically deducted from your bank account. You can choose from tens of thousands of brand name products, including computers, TVs, appliances, furniture and more. Learn more about

Paycheck Direct [here](#) and get started today!

And, for even more valuable savings for AFSCME members, check out AFSCME Advantage. Being an AFSCME member doesn't only get you an advantage at the bargaining table – it also gets you access to discounts and benefits that can help make life a little easier. Click [here](#) for more info.



Council Teams with 911 Dispatch Members to Derail Reckless Regionalization Plan

What seemed like a surefire plan to regionalize 911 emergency dispatch services in four Massachusetts municipalities is now in "critical condition" thanks to a comprehensive public awareness campaign by AFSCME and the knowledge and commitment of our experienced dispatchers.

The shortsighted plan, put forward by the Northern Middlesex Council of Governments (NMCOG), would have combined emergency dispatch services in the City of Lowell and the towns of Chelmsford, Tewksbury and Dracut. The Dracut dispatchers are not represented by AFSCME, but the dispatchers in the remaining communities are all part of our union.

Discussion over regionalization began about three years ago when the NMCOG was awarded a state grant to explore combining the dispatch centers in about a dozen communities. As time passed, more than half of the municipalities dropped out, leaving just four. In recent months, it appeared as though the four remaining towns would partner on a regional center. AFSCME members were told they would be laid off but would be allowed

to reapply for jobs with the new center. Even if they were ultimately hired at a new center, the plan would have unfairly stripped workers of all accrued leave time, seniority rights, and other important benefits that they have worked hard to obtain over many years.



Local 1703 member Lisa Demers speaking at Chelmsford Board of Selectmen meeting.

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Reckless Regionalization

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But most importantly, the loss of seasoned dispatchers who know every inch of their communities, would have led to slower response times by emergency personnel, thereby placing the property and lives of citizens in danger.

Tewksbury Selectmen were the first to vote on the plan and in a shameless move, they refused to hold a public hearing and limited comments from the union to just one dispatcher. The selectmen quickly fell in line with proponents of the plan and voted unanimously in August to be part of the regional center. The measure also won the support of the Dracut Board of Selectmen but proponents ran into a brick wall in Lowell and Chelmsford. Lowell City Councilors rejected the plan in a 9-0 vote citing serious public safety concerns and the potential loss of our experienced dispatchers. Lowell councilors also doubted the savings promised by NMCOG. It took two separate meetings over two weeks in Chelmsford but ultimately selectmen in that town did the right thing and rejected the proposal by a 4-1 margin. While he was the sole vote in favor of the plan, Chelmsford's board chair Matt Hanson gave the matter a fair hearing and deserves to be commended for providing AFSCME with ample time to speak and rebut claims by NMCOG executives. While the plan is still technically alive in Dracut and Tewksbury, making it feasible to run a regional center with just two small towns will be difficult at best.

If not for the strong cooperative effort between the Council and the dispatchers represented by Locals 1703 and 1705, it's doubtful that the plan would have been defeated in Lowell and Chelmsford. Council 93 Executive Board Member and Lowell dispatcher T.J. Cooper played a critical role in gathering information and educating members of the public and elected officials. Tewksbury dispatcher Matthew Carapellucci and Chelmsford dispatchers Rich Demers, Lisa Demers and Dave DeFreitas also did an incredible job on research and generating public awareness.

The campaign was bolstered by strong media coverage coordinated by the Council. Read some of

the Lowell Sun coverage [here](#) and view Fox News coverage [here](#).

Vermont Local 1343 Member Retires After 47 Years of Service

Congratulations to Vermont Local 1343 member Thomas Dion who is retiring after nearly a half century of public service in the City of Burlington.

A chief water plant operator, Thomas began his career in 1968 and was part of the team who worked with Lindol Atkins to bring the benefits of AFSCME membership to the city employees.

According to virtually everyone who worked with Thomas over his 47 year career, he served his union admirably and was well liked and strongly respected by management and co-workers alike.

On September 28th, Council 93 Executive Board Member Karl Labounty joined Local 1343 e-board members in honoring Thomas for his service to the city and the union. AFSCME Council 93 congratulates Thomas and we wish him all the best in his well-deserved & hard earned retirement.



Karl Labounty presenting Thomas Dion with a certificate of recognition upon his retirement from the City of Burlington.

Fight for Payment of Negotiated Pay Raises at U-Mass Ends in Victory for AFSCME!

AFSCME's year-long fight to secure collectively bargained pay increases for workers at the University of Massachusetts -Dartmouth ended in victory recently, when newly-appointed U-Mass President Martin Meehan announced in early September that he would pay the increases retroactively to July 1, 2014.

Meehan's predecessor, Robert Caret, refused to fund the raises claiming the legislature and former Governor Patrick failed to provide adequate funding for the increases in a supplemental budget. Both former Governor Patrick and the legislature disagreed, stating the increases were included in the U-Mass FY15 operating budget. Current Governor Charlie Baker and the current legislature held the same position, leaving the workers waiting for pay raises that were negotiated in good faith and included in a signed collective bargaining agreement. While Meehan said he still believes U-Mass was shortchanged by the legislature, he has agreed to put the money in the pockets of workers sometime in October but will continue to pursue supplemental funding from the legislature.

Many unions joined the fight against U-Mass but AFSCME Council 93 was the first to lead. AFSCME was the first union to take the fight public with a [paid radio campaign](#) calling attention to the injustice and detailing the outrageous salary and perks of U-Mass Dartmouth Chancellor Divina Grossman. The two-week campaign aired throughout Southeastern Massachusetts in January and February of this year.

In March, AFSCME became the first union to take formal legal action against U-Mass by filing a Charge of Prohibited Practice with the Massachusetts Division of Labor Relations. Other unions would eventually do the same. The charge filed by AFSCME was coupled with a second two-week [paid radio campaign](#) targeting Grossman and then U-Mass President Robert Caret. Momentum continued to build on campus with other unions joining AFSCME in a series of rallies and informational pickets. The pressure forced

U-Mass to begin paying the negotiated increases in May of 2015 but Caret refused to fund the increases retroactively leaving the workers in AFSCME Local 507 waiting for a ten-month retroactive pay increase.

The pressure by AFSCME and the subsequent commitment by Meehan will put that ten-month retroactive payment in the pockets of Local 507 members before the end of October. AFSCME members in Local 1776 at U-Mass Amherst will also benefit. Local 1776 reached a contract agreement in **July** of 2015, which means they will also be in line for a retroactive check.

Join Us for the 22nd Biennial Convention!



The Council 93 Biennial Convention provides local union delegates with the opportunity to help chart the union's direction on legislative and collective bargaining matters through the submission of resolutions, which are voted on by delegates to the convention. In this forum, the Delegates also elect the Council 93 Executive Board Officers. Attendees also participate in a wide-range of training programs designed strengthen the union by building skills and knowledge of leaders and activists. See you there!

2nd Annual Family Day & Softball Tournament a Success!

On September 19th, Council 93 hosted a Family Day and Softball Tournament. A big thank you to all the members of the AFSCME Council 93 family who made our 2015 Annual Family Day and Softball Tournament a tremendous success. Great food, competitive softball and lots of fun and games for the kids! We're already looking forward to next year.



We look forward
to seeing you next
year!

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