

SEIU 1021 Sonoma County Chapter Bargaining Update #15 March 3, 2023

# THE COUNTY IS TRYING TO DIVIDE US



## OUR UNITY LUNCH RALLY WAS A RECORD TURNOUT, EVEN IN THE RAIN! **SI SE PUEDE!**





## **IN-PERSON GENERAL MEMBERSHIP MEETING** SANTA ROSA VETS BUILDING

1351 Maple Ave Thursday March 2nd Dinner at 5:30pm, Program at 6pm What is the County doing at the table? What are our possible paths forward?

All Union Members are expected to attend. Don't miss it!

Tuesday's Lunchtime Rally was a hit! Despite the rain, we showed up in giant numbers and enthusiastically let the Board of Supes know we're not backing down.

The time to show up for our actions is NOW. Once we ratify our contract, we're stuck with it for several years. Let's get up out of our seats and get this money!

#### Where the County moved Wednesday

The County has indicated they will tentatively agree to the following proposals:

- Granting Safety Shoes increase (\$120 to \$200/year)
- Undergoing 15 classification studies instead of 10
- Retiree Medical portability (w/o Medicare Part B) for pre-'09 hired retirees
- Dropping state-registered Domestic Partnership reqs for partner benefits
- Adjusting HSD Standby in our direction

#### Where the County didn't move on Wednesday

#### The County is still not budging on the following proposals:

- COLAs (Cost of Living Adjustments)
- Legacy/Plan A retirement takeaways (paying an add'l third plus 3.03%)
- Extra-Help paid holidays
- SART Nurse assault exam standby & training stipend
- Vacation accrual and cap improvements
- Callback benefit
- Paid Family Leave

### The County is Counting on us to be Divided.

Based on the current numbers, the potential equity adjustments at the table are all over the board. A bit more than 60% of us will receive something, but the range is WIDE. This is why it's so important that we continue fighting for a better COLA than the County is currently offering (12.5% over 3 years). They can afford more, and with so many of us relying on the COLAs alone to bring us up, we have to stick together to win that fight.

A good third of our bargaining unit is in the Legacy/Plan A retirement system, meaning they were hired prior to 2013 or transferred to the County with reciprocity. This group is being strongly targeted by the County to not only contribute an additional third toward their pension costs, but also continue to pay an additional 3.03% (set to sunset in June 2024). This is a lot of money to ask from our seasoned employees and flies directly in the face of the County's supposed interest in retention of our most knowledgeable and experienced workers.

We need to stick together to win the best contract for all of us.

## BARGAINING TEAM MEMBER SPOTLIGHT DEBBIE STEEN

It doesn't take long after meeting Debbie Steen that you'll realize she possesses a strong command for fairness and equity. Therefore, it makes sense that she's a Social Worker III at Human Services' Economic Assistance division.



Debbie's been at the County for 9 years and the very nature of her job is to advocate for those who need our services the most. This keen sense of justice translates beautifully into her role on our chapter board as our Chief Steward, a responsibility many consider to be our board's most important (an opinion shared by our current chapter President). Debbie is a reliable source of help when our chapter of 2300 employees encounter any problem you can think of. She also oversees our growing group of over 60 shop stewards.

Debbie speaks American Sign Language, minored in Deaf Studies when she got her B.A. in Psychology, and even helped write the 1997 ADA Laws for the Deaf and Hard of Hearing. She is on our Bargaining Team because she recognizes the importance of using her voice--a right she wouldn't have if we weren't unionized. Debbie loves to negotiate and is unafraid to face management to stand up for what is right for our members.

Debbie's hero is her grandpa. She loves Metallica and the Violent Femmes. Her favorite book is The Patient by Jasper DeWitt and her favorite movie is The Usual Suspects. She loves refurbishing and painting furniture. Debbie has an uncanny talent at winning game shows in addition to Scrabble. When she was a child she wanted to be a marine biologist. Out of everything she's achieved, Debbie is most proud of raising her 21-year-old daughter on her own.