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UNION UPDATE



Unit 15 custodians use JLMC tool to improve workplace conditions

Joint Labor Management Committee provides quick, effective results

Bargaining Unit 15 custodians in state buildings around the Capitol have organized to achieve a string of recent improvements in working conditions through their Joint Labor Management Committee (JLMC).

“We started the committee last year, and we’ve made real progress in the last several months,” said Local 1000 committee member Shavone Brown, a custodian in the state treasurer’s office. “We find that the JLMC is an effective way to work with management because it’s less adversarial.”

The workplace conditions that were at issue included health and safety and rodent abatement. Brown said that, through the JLMC process, custodians were able to get their issues addressed, including cases in which custodians were ordered to remove potentially toxic material or to perform work beyond regularly scheduled cleaning and building maintenance.

Brown and her coworkers were especially bothered by the presence of a smelly, rat-infested collection of uniforms in the basement of a state building near the Capitol.

“These were discarded uniforms that had been sitting there for years—untouched—and we saw rodents living there,” Brown said. “We had complained about it for years, but when I brought it up in a [JLMC] meeting, management said it would be removed right away. A few days later, it was.”

Local 1000 is using the JLMC process to provide upward mobility opportunities for Unit 15 members. Custodians at the Employment Development Department in Sacramento have secured computer



“We started the committee last year, and we’ve made real progress”

—Shavone Brown, Local 1000 Committee Member and Custodian, State Treasurer’s Office

access to upward mobility information at work. Unit 15 is working to obtain similar access for all custodians, regardless of their work location.

Local 1000’s member-led bargaining team expanded opportunities for the formation of JLMCs in 2012. Since then, members have organized committees to address departmental issues—such as classification studies—or to solve issues specific to a single worksite.

“It took some time to get everyone used to the idea of working with management in a more collaborative setting,” said Maria Patterson, vice chair of Bargaining Unit 15. “Once our members stepped up and committed to the process, the state began taking us seriously, and we started to see results.”

Leadership Apprentice Program for Stewards builds our Leaders for tomorrow

New graduates prove program value

Local 1000's comprehensive training program for new stewards is entering its second year as graduates are already reporting success at their worksites.

The Leadership Apprentice Program for Stewards (LAPS), which began last year, was developed to provide new stewards the tools they need to be more effective leaders in their workplaces and in their communities.

"This program is an investment in the grassroots strength of our union," said Tamekia N. Robinson, vice president for organizing/

"I had an opportunity to see it all. I got to work on representation cases at the Union Resource Center, listen in on calls at the Member Resource Center and go out in the field with organizers," said Mark Levingston, a LAPS graduate at the Department of Social Services in Sacramento. "LAPS did more than give me the tools I need to succeed as a steward. It really opened my eyes about the power and potential of our union."

Participants spend the first month learning about the workings of the union and the role of stewards.



"This program is an investment in the grassroots strength of our union."

— Tamekia N. Robinson,
Vice President for Organizing/
Representation

"Even before I was certified as a steward, my LAPS training gave me the tools to help coworkers with problems at the office," said Joel Chan, a business tax specialist at the Board of Equalization in Oakland.

"The LAPS training helped me really realize that politics is much more important than I previously realized because the political process is connected to everything we do as state workers and members of the middle class," Chan said.

"We can't just exist on an island. We really need strategic alliances to accomplish things," according to Chan. I now see that the union is more than just organizing state workers. The union is a powerful tool for economic and social progress."



"Even before I was certified as a steward, my LAPS training gave me the tools to help coworkers with problems at the office."

— Joel Chan, Steward,
Board of Equalization, Oakland

representation. "The collective power of Local 1000 is based on the ability of our stewards to share union values and to connect with coworkers and their communities."

The first LAPS class began in July 2014 and 36 members graduated in December. The program is a mix of online courses, in-person meetings and hands-on training where participants shadow field organizers and union representatives.

Then they spend three months in intermediate training that includes several half-day sessions with organizers, representatives, lobbyists and other stewards. The final two months include deeper hands-on training, as participants spend a week working full-time on representation and then work another week with an organizer. LAPS participants also were active in the 2014 elections and attended rallies for the Fight for \$15 an hour and a Union.

Resource Center

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To learn more about the LAPS program, send an email to:
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