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# UNION UPDATE



# Organizing for success in new department

## New employees off to a fast start as member leaders solving problems

When the state created Covered California—its marketplace for affordable healthcare—in 2013, it formed a large, brand-new department from scratch and hired hundreds of workers, many with no previous state experience.

Those employees had little knowledge of union contracts or protections, or how to enforce them. Most of the department's management had no state experience either, and some violated Local 1000's contract and members' rights.

To address those and other workplace concerns, members have stepped up to become activists and to form member-led committees at the call centers in Fresno and Rancho Cordova to stand up for better working conditions and against contract violations.

The first meetings were small and focused on immediate, specific issues. But in each worksite a growing group of activists have branched out into broader issues where Local 1000 is active such as the November elections and actions in support of low-wage workers.

"Our members took the initiative and organized to build an effective workplace network that projects power and delivers results," said Margarita Maldonado, Local 1000 vice president for bargaining. "By having one-on-one conversations with co-workers, they're building an army of activists that continues to grow."

*"Organizing was a completely new experience for all of us. We joined together to make this the best workplace possible."*

—Regina Brooks-Fewell  
Covered California in Sacramento

## Activists, Local 1000 get a big win

Most of the new employees work at the call centers as program technicians and are members of Bargaining Unit 4. They were originally hired as Permanent Intermittent employees, but Local 1000

and its member leaders negotiated an agreement that converted 450 workers to permanent fulltime status.

"Organizing was a completely new experience for all of us, and we joined together to make this the best workplace possible," said Regina Brooks-Fewell, an activist who helped form the Covered California Organizing Committee in Rancho Cordova.



*"Our members took the initiative and organized to build an effective workplace network that projects power and delivers results."*

—Margarita Maldonado  
Local 1000 Vice President for Bargaining

Brooks-Fewell and most other committee members had never been in a union before but they took it upon themselves to learn about the union contract and to work with Local 1000 organizers.

"I knew people who were experiencing problems and felt we needed to get organized and help," said Courtney Bolden, a committee member in Sacramento. Working as a committee, we have been able to make a difference. More people are aware of the power of the union, aware of our contract and know that they have rights."

To learn more about the how members at Covered California became organized in Fresno, go to [seiu1000.org/bargaining-units/unit-4/](http://seiu1000.org/bargaining-units/unit-4/)

*Special note:* Your Union Update newsletter will not be published on Dec. 24 or Dec. 31. Our next issue will be on Jan 7, 2015. **Happy Holidays!**

## Unit 11 win offers continuing education on the job

Engineers and Science Technicians in Bargaining Unit 11 can now apply for a program that allows them to pursue academic degrees and professional licenses without having to leave state service. The so-called “20/20” program allows state employees to work for 20 hours a week and to attend classes or training for the other 20 hours.

After persistent efforts by Unit 11 member leaders to negotiate a plan that would work for as many employees as possible, agreement was reached with the California Department of Human Resources (CalHR) on guidelines for the implementation of the 20/20 education and training program.

“This program is a great opportunity for our Unit 11 employees to further their knowledge and

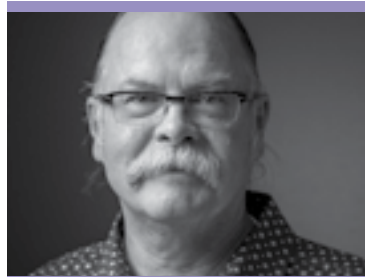
skills and to put them to use for the people of California. Unit 11 workers don’t have to choose between finishing their education and working for the state. Now they can do both,” said Brad Willis, Unit 11 bargaining chair.

### Worker input makes 20/20 plan stronger

Local 1000 sent out a survey to all Unit 11 state employees to measure their interest in the 20/20 program and to ask what they would like to see offered if such an option was made available. The results were overwhelmingly in favor of establishing a program that would allow workers to obtain training certificates, licenses and degrees in their field without having to leave state service.

The negotiation team took these results and embarked on a series of meetings with members and the state to pull together unit-specific guidelines for the program. The new 20/20 program is the culmination of hard work by Unit 11 members who had a stake in the outcome of this agreement.

Unit 11 employees who wish to use this program should take the first step by applying to their department through their supervisor or personnel section. This program is discretionary for departments and participation can be denied based on fiscal constraints and coverage considerations. If your application is denied, please contact Brad Willis at [uniteleven@seiu1000.org](mailto:uniteleven@seiu1000.org).



*“Unit 11 workers don’t have to choose between finishing their education and working for the state. Now they can do both.”*

—Brad Willis  
Unit 11 Bargaining Chair

### Resource Center

Monday-Friday  
7 a.m. to 7 p.m.  
866.471.SEIU (7348)

### Website

[seiu1000.org](http://seiu1000.org)

### Connect with Local 1000

Facebook  
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## Local 1000 leadership elections coming in 2015

### Nomination forms for statewide and local offices, delegates and bargaining unit representatives will be mailed Jan. 2

Local 1000’s membership will vote to elect union leadership from April 20 - May 20, 2015. Ballots will be mailed to members.

Elections for four statewide offices, along with officer and chief steward positions in each of 52 district labor councils will be held. Also on the ballot: District Bargaining Unit and Classification Bargaining Unit representatives. At the same time, Local 1000 members will elect delegates to represent member interests at the 2015 CSEA convention and the 2016 SEIU International convention.

Nomination forms will be mailed to all members eligible to vote on Jan. 2.

Complete details about becoming an elected leader of Local 1000, including eligibility, position descriptions, election rules and procedures, and election timelines will be posted to [seiu1000.org](http://seiu1000.org) on January 2.

You will also be able to download nomination forms online.