

# THE POWER SOURCE

## Santa Rosa Junior College Classified Employees Local 707

The Newsletter of the SRJC Unit, SEIU Local 707

March 2004

### CANDIDATES SOUGHT FOR SEIU ELECTION

**Bill Lambert**  
**CEC Elections Committee**

SEIU is seeking interested candidates for an April/May 2004 election of the Classified Executive Council (CEC) President, Vice President, Secretary and Communications Officer. In addition, two of the four members of the Negotiations Team, also CEC members, will be elected.

Due to a directive from Local 707 this election will also give SEIU members the opportunity, for the first time, to elect six Job Stewards to represent them in the workplace. While this election requirement will replace the previous "petition" procedure, elected Stewards will still be required to complete the training program with Local 707 in labor relations. This specialized training qualifies them as volunteer advocates for all classified employees in a broad range of workplace disputes and resolutions.

All SEIU members are eligible and encouraged to run for these positions for a two-year term of service beginning on July 1, 2004.

For your information the duties of Officers and Negotiation Team Members are specified in the Classified Executive Council Rules and Procedures. These can be reviewed on the SEIU Web Page (<http://www.santarosa.edu/seiu>).

All candidates are required to submit a Nomination Form (attached) with a 250 word (maximum) Candidate's Statement no later than 5:00 pm on Friday April 2, 2004. All Candidates' Statements will be published and distributed

through Campus Distribution no later than Tuesday April 6, 2004.

Voting will be conducted at both noon and afternoon General Membership Meetings on all campuses on Wednesday April 28, 2004. The room locations will be announced shortly. Provisions for Absentee Ballots may be arranged for those unable to attend by contacting the members of the Election Committee (Jana Conley 522-2656/[jconley@santarosa.edu](mailto:jconley@santarosa.edu), and Bill Lambert 527-4398/[wlambert@santarosa.edu](mailto:wlambert@santarosa.edu)). Absentee ballots must be returned to the SEIU mailbox in Bailey Hall or to SEIU Local 707 no later than 5:00 pm on Thursday April 29, 2004.

The Elections Committee and a Local 707 Representative will count the ballots on Friday April 30, 2004 at the SEIU Local 707 office. Election Results will be announced by e-mail on that date.

The CEC encourages all SEIU members to join us in this election both as Candidates for Office and as Voting Members. Your Union exists to protect your wages, benefits and working conditions. We have strength in numbers. We have strength in participation. We have strength in you, our members. If you are not currently a member, call our Elections Committee or any member of the CEC today. You can sign up to become a member and will immediately be eligible to participate fully in your union.

### TENTATIVE AGREEMENT RATIFIED **Doug Kuula** **CEC Communications Officer**

On January 28<sup>th</sup> and 29<sup>th</sup> the membership of the Santa Rosa Junior College Chapter of the SEIU, Local 707, ratified the January 9<sup>th</sup> Tentative Agreement with the District covering the contract period from July 1<sup>st</sup>, 2002 to June 30<sup>th</sup>, 2004. Of the 152 members that voted there were 142 yes

votes, 9 no votes, and 1 abstention. The Tentative Agreement can be accessed at the SEIU Web Page (<http://www.santarosa.edu/seiu>).

SEIU and District negotiators met on February 4<sup>th</sup> to iron out implementation details of the agreement.

## PAID TIME OFF

**Doug Kuula**

According to our current contract ratified in January, members of the classified staff are to receive paid time off (PTO) according to the following agreement:

*Spring break 2004 (April 11 - 15, 2004) shall be 40 hours of paid time off for 12-month full time employees, and shall be prorated for less than full-time and less than 12-month employees: supervisor approval required for scheduling and time is to be taken between date of ratification and June 30, 2004, preferably between April 11-15. Eligibility requires that the employee be in paid status as of July 1, 2003. If time is not taken by June 30, 2004, time shall be forfeited. Under no circumstances can this time be converted to pay.*

Some departments (e.g. campus operations) may have to maintain minimal staffing which will require some flexibility to give department employees their entitled PTO. If you have any questions or experience difficulty in setting up your PTO call Sabrina Meyer (527-4821).

## FOR YOUR BENEFIT

**Becky Brown**  
**SEIU Negotiator/CEC Member**

Based on the responses we received from our August and December surveys, it is very clear that a large percentage of our members feel that benefits are a hot issue. A majority wants the District to continue paying 100% of the benefit costs, the Kaiser members are upset at the unexpected large increase in copays, and many are questioning how dramatic changes in benefit coverage can occur. We are addressing these concerns.

Previously, the choice of benefits was handled through the Fringe Benefits Committee. We have declared to the District that from now on these decisions will be made at the negotiating table. This is a new practice, and it will be a challenge to create a smooth benefit negotiation process.

In an attempt to be prepared for this spring's Open Enrollment period, we sent a formal memo to the District in the beginning of February, stating our intention to negotiate for better health care options effective July 1, 2004. Unfortunately we haven't received a definitive response yet. Our SEIU field representative, Steve O'Keefe, has written another memo to Ron Root, asking for a written response within 10 days.

We will continue to update you as events unfold. In fact, we are planning to have a regular column in the Power Source that talks about various benefits issues and provides information. Stay tuned!

## CLASSIFIED RETIREMENT WORKSHOPS

**Becky Brown**

If you're planning to retire in the next few years, these workshops will provide a lot of valuable information. They are all occurring in Shuhaw Room 1786. Please note that this is an updated schedule, with the new and correct dates for each workshop.

### March 19, 1-3:00 pm

- Kaiser and Health Net retiree benefits
- How health plans transition when you reach age 65

### March 26, 2-3:00 pm

- Review of Article 9.3 and 9.4 of the SEIU Contract
- Early retirement vs. regular retirement
- Stipend eligibility and its impact on benefit options

### April 2, 1-2:30 pm

- PERS benefits, specific to SRJC

## STEWARDS' CORNER

**Ann Samson**  
**SEIU Steward**

### **New members:**

A notation about new members may seem out of place in an article from the stewards, but read on:

The recent ratification vote yielded a number of new and returning members, and they fell into familiar categories:

- New hires who had been long-term student- or STNC employees. These people have had a chance to compare employment in an unrepresented status with our status and learned to appreciate the difference,
- Long-term employees who have recently experienced benefits brought about by union representation—change in job classification, promotion, etc.
- Long-term employees who have observed or experienced the protection of union advocacy.

Stewards have long known that the best organizing tactic is allowing unit members to actually experience the difference union representation can make in their work lives. We drop what we're doing to meet with employees who need us; we listen; we advise; we follow through; and we often make a difference, although I have yet to perform a miracle. This activity does not go unnoticed.

### **Evaluations:**

It's that time again. Karen Furukawa has invited me to work with her to put on a workshop for managers and department chairs on the Evaluations process; it is scheduled for the last Friday in March, and Dr. Agrella has urged managers to attend. Staff Development will hold a similar workshop for classified employees, with the help of the Stewards' Council, in late in April. (Unfortunately, all the earlier dates were spoken for.)

I just reviewed the language of Article 4 and believe that it is both clear and easy to follow. Posted on our website ([www.santarosa.edu/seiu](http://www.santarosa.edu/seiu)) are the Q&As that emerged from our Evaluations workshops last spring. Please review them before

you participate in this process this year, and call the Stewards' Shop (x2758) if you need help.

### **Current Advocacy Issues:**

We have filed grievances on the following issues:

- Hours of Employment. The recurring question of whether the District must meet and confer with us when it seeks to assign full-time employees work outside the core hours. Many people were unaware at the time of the resolution of our earlier grievance on this issue that core hours apply to full-time employees only.
- Monitoring attendance and punctuality: This is a complex issue; only the Notice of Absence form speaks to the details of the process. A number of monitoring and reporting systems are being used within the District, amounting to establishing a working condition. We are heading toward arbitration.
- In addition, we are representing members in issues of due process related to discipline, interpretation of the recent Side Letter granting paid time off, working out of class, and disability coverage.

We're in your corner!

# SEIU

## Spring 2004 Election

### Candidate Nomination Form

Name of Candidate \_\_\_\_\_ Department \_\_\_\_\_

Work Phone \_\_\_\_\_

I am willing to be nominated for election to serve for a two-year term beginning July 1, 2004 in the following position: Check One

- President (One Position)
- Vice President (One Position)
- Secretary (One Position)
- Communications Officer (One Position)
- Negotiations Team (Two Positions)
- Steward (Six Positions)

I am currently a member of SEIU  Yes  No

If answer is No, you must submit an application to become a member.

Signature of Candidate \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Candidates Statement:** Please provide a brief (250 words max) statement about your interest in serving as an elected Officer/Negotiating Team Member/ Steward in SEIU during the period of July 1, 2004 to June 30, 2006.

Note: Your name, department and statement will be published with all other candidates' information and distributed to all Classified Staff members on April 6, 2004 for consideration in the election to be held on Wednesday April 28, 2004.

**Please Return this completed and signed Nomination Form  
To the SEIU Box in Bailey Hall by 5:00 PM  
Friday, April 2, 2004**