



Union members mobilize for change, help turn Ohio blue

On Election Day, Ohio went from red to blue with major wins for labor-friendly candidates from the Statehouse to the White House.

"Thanks to all union members who made change that matters," said OCSEA Pres. Eddie L. Parks, in a recent letter sent to OCSEA activists. "We owe much of this success to labor leaders like you that helped deliver that victory."

Hundreds of OCSEA members and thousands of labor activists led an historic ground game that was unmatched in Ohio history.

"Ohio went blue by margins that no poll could capture and that no pundit could predict. We elected by wide margins a hero of the middle class and working families to lead our country," wrote Parks, referring to the election of Barack Obama as the 44th President of the United States.

OCSEA activists also spoke loud and clear on Nov. 4 when they helped give back control of the Ohio House of Representatives to Democrats.

Democrats picked up a net of seven seats (at least) in the Ohio House, giving them control of the House for the

first time since 1994.

More than a year ago, OCSEA set out to make sure that Gov. Ted Strickland not only had partners in the White House but one in the Statehouse.

Democratic Ohio House winners include Matt Patten (18th), Nancy Garland (20th), John Carney (22nd), Connie Pillich (28th), Mike Moran (42nd), Mark Schneider (63rd) and Ray Pryor (85th).

Outcomes for the 19th and 92nd Ohio House seats are still pending as we go to press. Both Democratic candidates, Marian Harris and Debbie Phillips respectively, are leading by a handful of votes. Both candidates are confident that they could pull out a win, given provisional ballots tend to lean Democratic. Final tallies for these races are expected later in the month.

One House victory that is particularly close to OCSEA members is the triumph of Ray Pryor in the 85th district.

The former OCSEA Chap. 7100 president and steward worked as an employee of the Ohio Bureau of Employment Services for 19 years.

(see Labor 08 on back...)



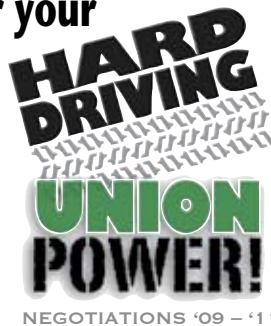
Show support for your bargaining team

As the Dec. 2 contract negotiations start date quickly approaches, members of the OCSEA bargaining team are making final preparations and asking for the support of all OCSEA members.

One thing members can do throughout bargaining is email ideas and feedback to NegotiationsInput@ocsea.org.

"In these days leading up to bargaining and throughout the process, we want to hear from the membership, so we know we're on the right track," said OCSEA Executive Director and lead negotiator Andy Douglas.

The latest bargaining news can be found at www.ocsea.org/bargaining. Members are encouraged to visit the bargaining page often.



Also, members can get the most up-to-date bargaining news by email or text message. For email updates go to www.ocsea.org/update. To have news delivered directly to your cell phone, sign up at www.ocsea.org/TextMe.

"Knowledge is power, and when our membership is in the know, they are more empowered and supportive of the tremendous effort of the team," said Douglas. "It's important that each and every member do their part to take advantage of these bargaining tools." *

Ohio, nation continues to feel economic squeeze

Let's face it. Fixing the country's economic crisis is not something that President-elect Obama can do overnight. It will take time and teamwork by both the executive and legislative branches.

In the meanwhile, Ohioans, and those in surrounding states, continue to pay the ultimate price for the poor economic policies of the Bush administration.

Just this month, the German shipping company DHL Express announced it would be closing its Wilmington, Ohio distribution hub. This closure will result in 7,000 layoffs (9,500 nationwide) and will be harshly felt by families and businesses in the 12,000-person town located just north-east of Cincinnati.

(see Economy on back...)

Union wins long-fought battle over "vacation dump"

It's been a long time coming, but OCSEA has finally won a settlement on lump sum vacation accruals for part-time employees.

Part-timers had not been receiving the lump sum vacation accrual on their five-year anniversaries, also known as the "vacation dump" to which OCSEA full-time bargaining unit members are entitled.

Full-time OCSEA bargaining unit members receive a vacation credit lump sum amount on the occasion of their 5-, 10-, 15-, 20- and 25-year anniversaries.

For years, OCSEA been fighting so that part-time employees receive a similar benefit.

(see Vacation Dump on back...)

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RECOGNIZING UNION POWER!

It's time to think about what your chapter, district council or assembly has done this past year and apply for OCSEA's...



HIGH PERFORMANCE INITIATIVE Award

SUBMIT APPLICATIONS BY JAN. 12, 2009

To learn more and to download an application form, go to www.ocsea.org/hpi or to receive a brochure and application by mail, call Labor Education at 800-266-5615, ext. 2656.

(From Labor 08 on front)

"I am feeling great, and looking forward to hitting the ground running," said Pryor in the days after the election.

"I didn't win this election alone," he said. "Everyone has been calling me and congratulating me on a good campaign, but it was the people who supported me, like OCSEA members, that won this election." *

(From Economy on front)

The bad news comes just off the heels of the Hershey chocolate company's October announcement that it would be closing several plants in the U.S. and Canada, resulting in 1,500 layoffs.

In neighboring Pennsylvania, hundreds of families will feel the pain just in time for the holidays with the December closure of the company's Reading plant.

In an attempt to highlight the extreme price our state has paid for the economic policies of the last eight years, Ohio AFL-CIO Pres. Joe Rugola toured Ohio on foot this fall and met with individuals who are suffering firsthand by these policies.

The "Road to Recovery" foot tour began in hard-hit Youngstown on Oct. 5 and ended in Columbus the day before Election Day.

During the tour's final rally at the Ohio Statehouse on Nov. 3, union members and leaders from across the state, including OCSEA Pres. Eddie Parks, stood with Pres. Rugola to protest the cutting of more than 180,000 good-paying jobs as the result of 1,098 Ohio factories and businesses shutting down or laying off.

"Let's make America look right," Rugola said in a video message encouraging union members to get out the vote for Barack Obama. "We need real change here in Ohio – so that none of us ever again have to deal with the devastation of these plant closings and job loss." *

OCSEA-supported Issue 2 passes

Sixty-nine percent of Ohio voters said YES! to ballot initiative Issue 2, the reauthorization of the Clean Ohio Fund Act. Passage of this issue will not raise taxes. Instead, the project will be paid for with state bonds and existing state revenue.

The Clean Ohio program helps keep the state's drinking water clean, protects Ohio's lakes, rivers and streams, funds the clean up and redevelopment of polluted and abandoned areas and preserves and protects wildlife habits and working farms.

In October, the OCSEA Board of Directors voted to support Issue 2.

Clark Scheerens, an active OCSEA retiree member of ODNR Chap. 2515, who brought forward the issue to the board said, "The importance of Issue 2 is that it uses money to reclaim and make better use of land in Ohio that has been used for other purposes."

Scheerens said this money will mean more jobs for Ohioans. *

AFSCME Family scholarship deadline: Dec. 31

Each year the AFSCME Family Scholarship Program provides at least 13 \$2,000 scholarships to high school seniors who are the children of AFSCME members. The scholarships will be renewed for \$2,000 each year for a maximum of four years, provided the student remains enrolled in a full-time course of study. The scholarship may be used for any field of study.

To be eligible, the individual must be:

- A graduating high school senior in 2009.
- A daughter, son or financially-

dependent grandchild of an active or retired AFSCME member.

- An applicant to an accredited college or university and subsequently accepted as a full-time student in a four-year degree program.

To learn more about this scholarship and other union scholarships and to download an application, go to www.ocsea.org/scholarships.

The AFSCME Family Scholarship deadline is Dec. 31. *

(From Vacation Dump on front)

In 2007, OCSEA won an arbitration that led to the most recent settlement. In the settlement, the state agreed with the union that all part-time permanent employees will receive half of the lump sum vacation accruals to which full-timers are entitled, regardless of the number of hours part-time employees work. Implementation of the new policy began Nov. 1, 2008. *