

# Candidate Statements

*The OCSEA Constitution permits candidates for statewide office to run a 200-word or less statement in the Public Employee Quarterly. Below are the candidates' own statements seeking support for their candidacy for President, Vice-President and Secretary-Treasurer of OCSEA. The election will take place at the OCSEA Biennial Convention August 23-25.*

## OFFICE OF: **PRESIDENT**

### **Tim Shafer**

Brothers and Sisters: Not everything gets better because of change, but nothing gets better without change. The time for change has come. When the special wants of a few outweigh the needs of our membership, status quo isn't working for the members. The two plus decade experiment is no longer effective. It's time for a change.

I've been a steward, chapter vice president, chapter president, and, for the past nine years, I have had the honor to serve as president of the corrections assembly. I have testified on behalf of our members, I have organized, and I have worked on many political campaigns. I have the will, drive, ability, experience, appreciation and respect for local leaders and our members. Empowering the chapters, districts and assemblies will be the key to our future successes and a priority of mine. Empowerment will be the key to building trust in our union. It will also be the most effective way to fight attacks on our benefits, retirement, and restore faith, power and pride in our union. We need a president who isn't just a speaker of words, but a doer of deeds. I ask for your support to be our union's next president.

### **Eddie Parks**

My name is Eddie L. Parks, your current Vice President. I have served our Union for 20 years holding various offices in my local Chapter. My experience includes serving on Board committees, such as Chair of JIAC. As I announce my candidacy for President, I do so humbly and with respect. I ask for your support. I am running because I believe it is "Time for a Change." That will be our theme for 2008. We have a new collective bargaining agreement, a new state administration, but still the same old tired leadership of OCSEA. I have a new vision. Spending less of our money on non-essentials, I would instead promote more programs for our members. Chapters, District Council and Assemblies should be given more authority of the affairs of the Union. One person-rule doesn't work for our members anymore and only promotes internal conflict. We should be spending our resources while seeking improved benefits, job security and protection from management, rather than fighting each other. If elected, I pledge to be responsive to our local leaders and members, and to lead a union we can all be proud of! Give me a chance and you'll see the difference.

### **Richard Smith**

We constantly hear from the current leadership of how experienced they are. Let me remind you what this "experience" has imposed. From 2005 to 2006 they have allowed the termination of 343 union jobs, while numerous management positions have been saved. The current leadership allows management to enforce the contract, at the same time they will not enforce the contract on management. At every contract negotiation we lose ground. Our members say: "80% of this contract is in favor of management," "we have a terrible contract which is not being enforced," and "there is a lack of customer service from the OCSEA." Again, I will remind you, all the candidates running for President negotiated the current contract, except for me. If you feel these actions benefit our members, then vote the current leadership back in. If you feel differently, then change is the only solution.

I will give the power back to the 35,664 union members. With the help of our members, we will work together and bring about change. This change will be the beginning of something new, something different.

If you have any questions/comments feel free to contact me at [electricrichardsmith@hotmail.com](mailto:electricrichardsmith@hotmail.com). Thank you in advance for your support.

### **Ron Alexander**

As President of OCSEA and Vice-President of AFSCME International and the AFL-CIO, I have worked tirelessly to position our Union in an environment that is labor-friendly and willing to work collaboratively with labor to address unfair working conditions, disparate treatment, health insurance costs, and pension security. During the last four years OCSEA has successfully mobilized and positioned our membership to address workforce issues. The voices of our members were finally heard during the gubernatorial election as we elected a governor who is focused on the needs and concerns of our members, opposed to corporate needs that place personal financial gain over us. We, as a Union are finally in a position to take advantage of relationships forged with the newly elected governor. If re-elected to the position of President, I will fully take advantage of our new relationships with the governor/state legislature to assure our pensions are not privatized; health care coverage remains affordable; wages stay in line with inflation; and our members are afforded the right to work in an environment that is not dependent on political partisanship. Help make sure that our Union does not lose our recently achieved momentum and re-elect me as President.

OFFICE OF: **VICE PRESIDENT****Christopher Mabe**

My name is Christopher Mabe, I am running for the position of Vice President of OCSEA. I have been a member and activist with this organization for over 17 years. Starting as a Chapter Steward at Ohio State Reformatory back in 1990, to Mansfield Correctional as the Chapter Secretary, District 3 Secretary and Chief Steward. During my tenure as a state employee and a union activist I was also asked by OCSEA to be involved in the internal organizing process here in the state of Ohio. Shortly after I was invited by AFSCME international to travel to Minnesota and assist AFSCME international in an organizational drive. If elected it is my major goal to mobilize our newest members, to teach them and be taught by them. At present time I am the Chapter President of Lorain Correctional, as well as the District 3 President. If elected I know I have the knowledge, the tact, the political savvy and the fight to be the best Vice President this organization has ever elected. Over the years I have learned one thing: You can live on your knees, or Die on your feet. I will never surrender.

**Kelvin Jones**

Kelvin Jones has been with the Ohio Environmental Protection Agency for over 15 years. Kelvin is Chapter President and serves as a member of the EPA Assembly Executive Board. He took over as Chief Steward in 2000.

Kelvin is on OCSEA's State Board of Directors. He is the Labor Co-Chair for the Combined Charitable Campaign and Joint Internal Affairs Committee and was elected to serve on the 2006 Negotiation Team and Arbitration Committee.

Kelvin is District 6 Treasurer, where he chairs the Community Service and the Veterans committees. Kelvin is Treasurer of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists. He was appointed to chair the collaboration for re-uniting labor and church families, which reiterates to church leaders that our goals of serving people are the same.

Kelvin believes it is time for our people to stop compromising the integrity of the Union and its members. We must unite and search out the best leaders for the future. The Union's needs are very important to Kelvin. His motivation and strength is what sparks him into action when members' rights have been violated. It's time for OCSEA, as an organization, to take action as the leader or get out of the way.

**Jim LaRocca**

My name is Jim LaRocca and I am announcing my candidacy for Vice President of our union. I have been an employee of the State of Ohio for over 23 years. I have been a union steward almost twenty-one years, a chapter president for 17 years and a member of the state board of directors over 14 years. Being president of a conglomerate chapter has given me a unique experience. I have represented union members in over 15 different agencies and a wide range of classifications. I have gained a breadth of knowledge from representing this broad union membership base, which should serve you and me well as your Vice President.

I believe in a decentralized union. I feel that too much influence has been centered in too few individuals. More authority should be given to our members. Too much of our time is spent in internal strife; this energy could be much more effectively utilized if channeled in a positive direction! Our goal should be to use this energy for the benefit of our members.

Working together, we can make a great union even stronger! I respectfully ask for your support. Together we can make it happen!

**Hugh Williams**

Dear Brothers and Sisters: I seek your support for the position of Vice-President of OCSEA. As we look to the future, things look bright outside of our organization, but inside, the roads are dusty and the water isn't clear. I seek this position to bring clarity, stability, strength and, above all, unity back to this once proud organization. I have served in nearly every capacity from Steward, Chief Steward, Chapter President, District 6 Vice-President, ODOT Assembly President and on the State Board of Directors. I am a 24-year employee of the Ohio Department of Transportation who has worked his way up through the Department to help mold some of the most important job-saving negotiations in the Department's collective bargaining history. During the same period, I've worked to bring people together on divisive issues that have proven to separate many others. Sisters and Brothers, I ask for your support and your guidance to help lead OCSEA into the future.

OFFICE OF: **SECRETARY-TREASURER****Kathy Stewart**

It has been my honor to serve as your current OCSEA Secretary-Treasurer since 2003. The OCSEA Secretary-Treasurer is the chief financial officer of your Union, overseeing how your dues are spent and safeguarded. In that role, I have designed and deliv-

ered new treasurer's training across the state including creating a standard treasurer's form for reporting chapter and subordinate body's spending, assuring compliance with all financial codes of the OCSEA Constitution.

My background includes serving on the OCSEA State Board of

Directors since 1987. During that time I have been both a member and chair of the OCSEA Finance Committee. I currently serve as the Treasurer of OCSEA's Benefits Trust and OCSEA Union Education Trust.

As an Accountant Examiner 3 in DAS, I manage nearly \$200,000,000.00 a year in construction funds for the State of Ohio. As your OCSEA Secretary-

Treasurer, I believe that every dollar of your dues money is important and must be spent wisely, protecting your interests with every dollar spent.

Many members have asked me what I would do, if re-elected. My answer is, I will continue to bring the Union to you. That's what you will see if I'm re-elected. Thank you for your support.