

Council 13 CONNECTION

Council 13 AFSCME, the American Federation of State, County & Municipal Employees, AFL-CIO

How to respond to union busters at YOUR doorstep



**Learn more about how these special interests
stack up against the strength of union membership**

Pages 7 & 8

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Executive Director's Message



Sisters and Brothers,

Spring is upon us and brings new beginnings and change! This year, it has brought new beginnings and change to Council 13 as well. After 18 years as your Executive Director, David Fillman has decided to move on to a much-deserved retirement. His leadership, commitment, dedication, and knowledge will be greatly missed by all of us. I have been humbled by the opportunity to serve as your Executive Director since January 1. Other personnel changes have occurred as well, and the Assistants and Department Heads have taken on additional responsibilities because of these changes.

We have all been through a lot this past year, both personally and professionally. We have been challenged by the restrictions the pandemic placed on all of us. While many AFSCME members have been able to telework, many more members have gone to work daily to provide the vital services that the public relies on. All of you worked diligently to assure the citizens of the Commonwealth were taken care of in the way you always have – with professionalism and pride.

You cared for our sick, our elderly, and our loved ones; you maintained the roads and the vehicles needed to keep those roads operable; you served on the front lines in nursing homes, hospitals, and correctional facilities; you made sure our schools and universities were ready to open; you kept our communities, parks, and forests clean and safe – just to name a few of the jobs you do. You never missed a beat. For that, I thank you!

Your union did not rest either. The councils operated as efficiently as possible with the restrictions of the pandemic and the employers. Your staff were in constant communication with those employers and with the leadership of the locals. Locals held virtual meetings and elections with the help of the Member Resource Center and its staff representatives. Contract negotiations continued, grievances were argued, arbitrations took place, Article 43 meetings continued, and labor/management meetings were held. Steward and Officer trainings occurred at a rapid pace. Our technological improvements made it possible. We were successful in minimizing layoffs across state and non-state locals, and we made sure that previously negotiated wage increases were given, health benefits were continued, and that your collective bargaining agreements were followed, or we pursued corrective action. It has been a new experience for all, and our staff is working hard as a team. For that, I thank them!

Nationally, AFSCME was instrumental in getting a stimulus package that included revenue for state and local governments passed. We demanded that any stimulus package contained assistance for our public sector employers, and we succeeded - the American Rescue Plan does just that! This revenue should be used to keep our members' jobs from being furloughed or privatized, and Council 13 and its staff will do everything we can to assure that happens. As in all things, there are no guarantees, but we will battle hard on your behalf.

We need your involvement now more than ever before. There are groups out there that are attempting to weaken our union and strip your voice from the workplace in the process. These groups do not support public sector employees, their unions, their wages, or their rights under a collective bargaining agreement. They push legislation to weaken your voice, question your wages and benefits, and eliminate your right to representation. They will not be there to represent you, negotiate your contract, or protect your job against privatization.

Your union, however, champions your dignity and respect at the workplace, negotiates for better wages and benefits, protects your pension, and defends your job from privatization. We rally against closures and furloughs. We advocate for legislation that protects you and lobby against legislation that harms you. We stand up for workers' rights, and with your membership, we are even stronger.

We need you to stand beside us and tell these anti-union groups to stay out of Pennsylvania! Encourage our non-members to become members and send a message to the employers and our enemies that we are union proud, and that we are AFSCME proud!

Your union has represented you as best it can through these difficult times, and we are all looking forward to the day we can gather in person. Nothing replaces joining together to address the issues that are before us. As we begin to see that light at the end of the tunnel, we must be patient, knowing that we will be together sooner rather than later. We are optimistically planning on our Council 13 Convention being held in person in August, provided that it can be done safely with all precautions in place.

I hope all of our AFSCME family members remain safe and healthy, and I look forward to when we are together again to properly salute you for the work that you do. Thank you and God bless you all!

In Solidarity,
J. David Henderson
Executive Director, AFSCME Council 13



MEMBER RESOURCE CENTER

1-800-5-AFSCME

**STAFF REPRESENTATIVES AVAILABLE
MONDAY - FRIDAY 9 AM - 5 PM**

Your one stop for any and all union issues and inquiries!

AFSCME member leads PA Dept. of Agriculture in racial justice initiative



32-year employee of the PA Department of Agriculture and Steward/Trustee of AFSCME Local 2456 Michele Brookins.

The murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, and Ahmaud Arbery, rocked our nation to its core and left many wondering what we can do to achieve racial justice in our streets, in our legal system, and in our workplaces.

Both the workers and the management at Pennsylvania Department of Agriculture felt compelled to take action. After reading a blog post that Pennsylvania Secretary of Agriculture Russell Redding wrote about agriculture's role in combating racism following the murder of George Floyd, Michele Brookins reached out to his office to thank him for addressing this issue and to discuss the topic further. Redding called her back the same day and told her he wanted to work together on an initiative to take this issue head on.

Michele is a 32-year employee of the Department of Agriculture and a member of AFSCME Local 2456 (State Professional – District 8). She is also a woman of color and an activist in every sense of the word.

When presented with this opportunity, Michele ran with it. She came up with the Project JUST (Justice, Unity, Solidarity, and Tolerance) Committee, which now includes a diverse group of department employees from each bureau and region. Secretary Redding named Michele the first Chair of the committee, which includes Michele's fellow AFSCME members Kelly Atchamou (Local 2456), Lisa Anderson (Local 2518), Anita Ashe (Local 2518), Marsha Miller (Local 2518), and Cade Holden (Local 2528), along with 12 other department employees.

The Project JUST Committee will work to achieve equity, racial justice, and positive transformational change in the department and in the agricultural industry. The committee's mission is to achieve and maintain a working environment that opposes discrimination and endorses respect, professionalism, diversity, and inclusion.

"I am over the moon with the conversations that are finally being had in Department of Agriculture about race, diversity and equality," Michele said.

"In my 32 years, I never thought I would have seen this day. We now have a seat at the table to discuss something that was taboo for way too long."

The committee is currently working on multiple initiatives for Black History Month and is developing best practices for office culture to create a more just and equitable work environment.

AFSCME Council 13 applauds our sister Michele, her fellow union members on the committee, Secretary Redding and everyone at the Department of Agriculture who is working toward a more JUST future.



Scan here for to learn more about the Project JUST Committee and to learn more about Black Americans' contributions to agriculture



Scan here to read Secretary Redding's blog post about agriculture's role in combating racism

Organizing Victories!

Berks County Supervisors

The Pennsylvania Labor Relations Board conducted a ballot count on February 3 for the Berks County first level supervisors of the Human Services bargaining unit. The supervisors voted for representation by AFSCME District Council 88. This brings 29 new workers to AFSCME ranks.



McSherrystown Borough

The workers of McSherrystown Borough voted on February 10 for representation by AFSCME District Council 89. This brings four new workers to AFSCME ranks.

Welcome to the AFSCME family!

FREE TREASURER TRAINING SESSIONS ANNOUNCED FOR 2021

AFSCME Council 13 has scheduled dates through the remainder of 2021 for virtual Treasurer Training sessions. This is a members-only training. If none of the scheduled dates fit into your schedule, please contact the Member Resource Center at 1-800-5-AFSCME or mrc@afscme13.org to set up a separate date and time to take the training. Treasurer Training is required for all current and aspiring Local Union Presidents and Treasurers. The training provides useful information and tools to fulfill your duties as a Local Union President or Treasurer and to ensure compliance with the Financial Standards Code.

Trainings are available at 2 and 6 PM on the following dates:

MAR	APR	MAY	JUN	JUL
3	7	12	2	7
AUG	SEP	OCT	NOV	DEC
4	1	6	3	1

Scan here to register!



SIGN UP NOW: MemberLink

memberlink.afscme13.org

- Union member resources
- Documents and forms
- Update your information





Congratulations to Scott Brenner of AFSCME Local 462 (Berks County) for earning the most votes from his fellow members to win the 2021 AFSCME Council 13 Sportsmen's Club Photo Contest! And congratulations to runner up AFSCME Local 2604 (Tech Services – District 3) member Jason Barrett! Thank you to everyone who participated and voted in this year's photo contest!

2021 AFSCME Council 13 Scholarship OPEN NOW

AFSCME Council 13's Scholarship Program is for Members Only. Scholarships are one-time-only payments, which may be applied toward educational expenses, such as tuition, lodging and books.

Opens 3/1; Closes 6/1

Essay question:

How do labor unions improve pay, benefits and conditions for both the workers they represent and non-union workers?

AFSCME Council 13's Member-Only Scholarship Program will award the following:

- A total of 48 \$500 undergraduate scholarships (6 per District Council).
- The top 4 of the 48 will be selected to receive an additional \$1,000.
- One additional \$500 statewide scholarship for a graduate student.

Eligibility

AFSCME Council 13 members in good standing, their children and grandchildren (as well as grandchildren of RPEP members in good standing) who are full-time students enrolled in an accredited program of higher education are eligible to apply for AFSCME Council 13 Scholarships. Sponsors must be active members at the time that the Scholarship Awards are processed.

How to Apply

- Complete the Application Form found on AFSCME13.org (scan QR code, must print form). Please be sure to enter the Social Security Number of the sponsoring AFSCME or RPEP Member.
- Attach a copy of the student's most recent transcript (high school or college).
- Attach an essay completed by the student (typewritten, double-spaced, not to exceed two pages) responding to a question.
- Attach 3 character references who are not family members. Include name, address, phone number and relationship to student.
- Mail the completed Application Form, transcript, essay and 3 character references so they are received by June 1, to:

AFSCME Council 13 Scholarship Program
4031 Executive Park Drive
Harrisburg, PA 17111-1507

Selection of Winners

Winners will be chosen by a Selection Committee comprised of knowledgeable, exemplary individuals. Selections will be final and binding and are NOT subject to appeal.

Scan here for link to scholarship application form:



AFSCME'S FREE BACHELOR'S DEGREE PROGRAM IS HERE TO STAY

In addition to AFSCME's Free Associate Degree Program, your union has made its Free Bachelor's Degree Program a permanent benefit.

That means that AFSCME members and their families can earn a bachelor's degree for free, making an even wider choice of career options a possibility for more people.

Just like the free associate degree through AFSCME Free College, the bachelor's degree program is conducted exclusively online, making it tailor-made for those who work full time.

Remember: AFSCME Free College is open not only to union members, but retirees and family members of union members, including children, spouses, siblings and others.

AFSCME Free College is just one of many ways AFSCME members experience the union difference.

Scan the QR codes to learn more!



Free Associate Degree!



Free Bachelor's Degree!

STAFF ANNOUNCEMENTS

Carla Insinga named Chair of Judicial Panel for AFSCME International



AFSCME District Council 90 Director Carla Insinga has accepted the position of Chairperson of the Judicial Panel for AFSCME International.

Insinga began her activism with AFSCME in 1985 as a member of Local 2377 at Lincoln University, where she served as Local Union President.

She started her career with AFSCME as an Organizer for Council 13 in 1999 before becoming a Staff Representative. She went on to become the first Director of Organizing for Council 13 in 2005, and in 2010, she became Director of Education. She became District Council 90 Director in 2017.

Insinga served as adviser to Council 13's Next Wave Program, which was designed to recruit and engage young workers. She is also active in constituency groups of the AFL-CIO. She was elected to the National Officers Council of the Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW) in 2013 as the Vice President representing AFSCME, and she was elected Executive Vice President of CLUW in 2017. She also served on the board of the Harrisburg Chapter of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists (CBTU) and CBTU's Region II Board. In 2014, Carla was elected as a Vice President to the Pennsylvania AFL-CIO's Executive Council representing AFSCME. In 2012, she was named Union Woman of the Year by the Pennsylvania AFL-CIO.

Insinga has led and taken part in a variety of education and training opportunities with her union. She received a bachelor's degree in Labor Studies from the National Labor College in 1999 and a Master's in Public Administration from the University of Baltimore in 2001. She is a member of the United Association for Labor Education (UALE).

"I'm grateful to my International President Lee Saunders and the International Executive Board for this opportunity, and I pledge to the members of our union that I will perform my duties with integrity," Insinga said.

"To all of those who have been part of my Pennsylvania journey, thank you! And to my AFSCME family in Washington, DC, I'm looking forward to planting new roots."

Darrin Spann named new Director of AFSCME District Council 90



Darrin Spann was named the new Director of AFSCME District Council 90 by a unanimous vote of DC 90's Executive Board.

Spann has been with AFSCME for more than 30 years in a variety of positions. He most recently served as Assistant to the Executive Director for Council 13, but he started in 1989 as a member of Local 1738 at Lancaster County Prison, where he held the positions of President, Vice President, Chief Steward, and Steward.

He went on to start his career with AFSCME in 1999 as an Organizer for AFSCME International. In 2000, he was hired by Council 13 as an Organizer. In 2001, he became a Staff Representative for District Council 89.

Spann has assisted the International Union in various areas during his time. He served as the Interim Executive Director at Council 36 in Los Angeles, California, and in 2012, he went to AFSCME International for two years to serve as the Assistant Director of Organizing and Field Services.

He has taken part in a multitude of education and training opportunities and was chosen in 2006 to attend the Harvard Trade Union Program in Cambridge, Massachusetts. He also serves as President of Harrisburg Coalition of Black Trade Unionists (CBTU).

"I cannot overstate my gratitude to the members of District Council 90 for the opportunity to represent them. I also want to thank Carla Insinga and wish her the best in her new role," Spann said.

"I look forward to applying what I have learned in my time at AFSCME — from Council 13 to Council 36 to the International Union — and fighting for the workers who make Dauphin County happen."

District Council 90 represents nearly 9,000 workers in Dauphin County.



**WORKERS' COMPENSATION AND COVID-19:
THE IMPORTANCE OF THE
"NOTICE OF COMPENSATION PAYABLE"**

by Michael G. Dryden, Esquire

You already know that if you are injured on the job, you must report the injury to the employer in order to have your treatment and lost time covered under the Pennsylvania Workers' Compensation Law. The same is true for workers who contract COVID-19 on the job. But reporting alone is not enough. It is important to insist on receiving a copy of the Notice of Compensation Payable (NCP) if the employer accepts the claim. This is a form that the employer must file with the Bureau of Worker's Compensation in Pennsylvania after every accepted work injury. If the NCP is not on file, the injury has not been accepted, and the employee has none of the protections provided by the law.

Receipt of the NCP is particularly important to people diagnosed with COVID-19 due to exposures on the job. After a worker notifies the employer that he or she has contracted COVID-19 due to a workplace exposure, the employer has 21 days to respond by filing either an NCP accepting responsibility, or a notice of compensation denial. If the claim is denied, or the NCP is simply not filed, the employee has no right to benefits unless they file a claim petition within three years from the date of their COVID-19 diagnosis, seeking an award of benefits from a Workers' Compensation Judge. If nothing is filed for more than three years, the claim is forever barred.

Given how much we are still learning about the long-term effects of this virus, the failure to protect this right could be catastrophic for an employee and his or her family. There have been multiple reports of long-term health issues related to COVID-19. People across our nation have experienced persistent respiratory, neurologic and other problems that can require expensive treatment and significant time away from work. If the virus is accepted as a work injury, the employer will be required to pay the cost of that treatment and cover the employee's wage loss. However, if a worker does not confirm that the virus has been accepted with the filing of a NCP, or fails to pursue benefits by filing a petition if the claim is denied, the sick worker may find himself or herself without a paycheck and receiving medical bills.

As result, anyone who has contracted COVID-19 due to exposures at work must confirm that the virus has been properly accepted by the employer. Even if the employer pays some bills or lost wages, that does not equate to accepting the illness as work-related in Pennsylvania. An NCP must be filed that specifically lists the accepted injury as COVID-19 or the worker has nothing guaranteed.

If you were exposed to the virus at work, and are unsure whether your employer has accepted your claim, you should immediately contact the management employee responsible for handling work injuries. You have a right to know whether the employer is accepting responsibility for the virus. If you do not get an answer that includes a copy of the NCP, you must file a claim to protect your rights.

The Workers' Compensation Department at Willig, Williams and Davidson is available to discuss your status and to file the claim, if necessary. You may contact Michael Dryden at 215-656-3645 with your questions or concerns, or call the toll free Worker's Compensation line at 1-866-413-COMP (2667). There is no fee for the consultation if you are a member of AFSCME.

***WW&D offers AFSCME Council 13
members free will preparation,
30 minutes of free legal consultation
and reduced legal fees:
1-888-294-2747 or 1-800-631-1233***

***Union members are also
entitled to legal benefits
through Union Plus:***



DARK MONEY SPECIAL INTERESTS ARE COMING TO YOUR DOOR

The so-called "Freedom Foundation" plans to knock on AFSCME members' doors with misinformation about your union. They want you to leave the union because they know we stand in the way of their anti-public employee agenda. Don't fall for it.

When they come knocking, ask if they will:

Negotiate your contract?

Protect your pension?

Fight for a safer workplace?

File grievances against your employer?

Represent you on the job?

When they say NO, tell them to GO,
and LET THEM KNOW:

I'M STICKING WITH MY UNION!



REPORT SOLICITATIONS:

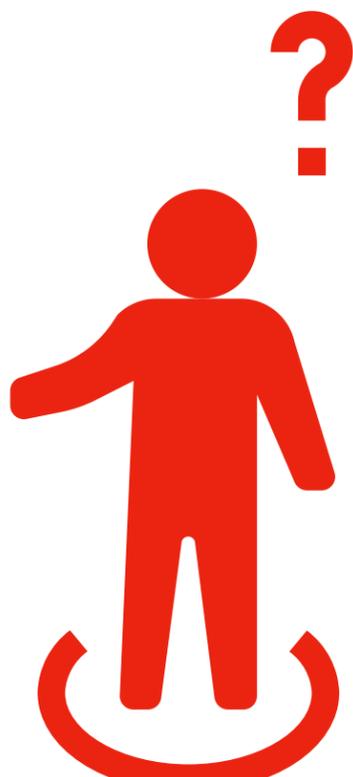
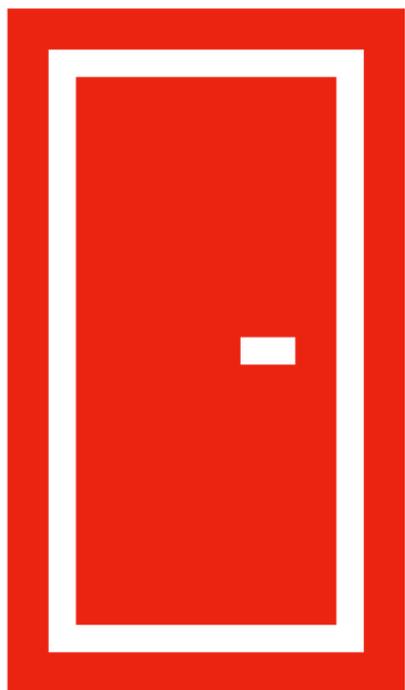
1-800-5-AFSCME

AFSCME: Always Representing YOU

"Freedom Foundation": Only Representing Special Interests



Negotiates for higher wages for public employees	WAGES	Opposes all wage increases for public employees and wants to lower your pay
Negotiates for higher quality, lower cost healthcare for public employees	HEALTHCARE	Actively wants public employees to pay more for healthcare
Negotiates for strong employment/retirement benefits and offers exclusive discounts to members	BENEFITS	Opposes adequate retirement benefits for public employees and offers no other services to working people like you
Fights for well-funded, adequately staffed public services	STAFFING	Works to defund public services and wants to outsource your job
Represents working Pennsylvanians trying to support their families and themselves	REPRESENTATION	Represents billionaire special interests and extreme political ideologies



**Your Union
Has Your Back!**

Learn more here:



LEARN MORE:

AFSCME13.ORG

Council 13
AFSCME
 CommUNITY



AFSCME Local 2944 (Swatara Township) donates to the St. Francis Food Bank and to United Way in honor of their late District Council 90 Staff Representative Juan Carter, who lived a life of community service.



AFSCME Local 246 members deliver donations collected by them and their fellow Borough of Chambersburg employees to the Franklin County Shelter.



AFSCME Local 2352 donates eight hams to their residents at PA Soldiers' & Sailors' Home and six certificates for hams to PA AFL-CIO for their food drive.



AFSCME Local 2145 (Wayne County Trades and Labor) presents a check for \$300 to Wayne County Food Pantry.

Visit our website!



afscme13.org

Council 13 Connection
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 1-800-5-AFSCME

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webadmin@afscme13.org

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