

U of M Regents Pass Shameful Budget

The University of Minnesota Board of Regents approved their 2020 budget, which includes tuition increases, the possibility of health care hikes, and a wage increase that doesn't do enough to keep workers out of poverty.

Local 3800 member Meron Negussie shared her story with the Regents at a recent public hearing on the budget. Although Negussie began at the University in 2015, she didn't earn enough money as a full-time essential employee to afford the U's offered health insurance until just last year.

Questioning the Board, Negussie spoke truth to power: "How is it that we are here 40 hours a week, considered essential employees, yet we can't even get essential benefits and a livable wage? What is the point of good health care benefits if we can't afford it?"



Local 3800's Meron Negussie speaks truth to power at the UMN Board of Regents' public budget hearing.

Local 3800's SvenErik Olsen highlighted the University's historical disinvestment in

Tentative Agreement Reached for Executive Branch State Employees

Push Week for state Executive Branch negotiations began on Monday, June 17, and by late Wednesday night, a tentative agreement had been reached. The contract proposal includes wage increases, insurance improvements, and other wins that will benefit state employees for years to come.

The TA has been unanimously recommended for approval by the state executive branch negotiating team. If you are a state employee in the Executive Branch, check MemberLink at members.afscmemn.org for more details about the tentative agreement.

frontline workers and the growing gap between the highest-paid managers and the underpaid workers who make the University run.

"In the past five years, the number of employees making more than \$300,000 a year was up by 17, while clerical workers have seen meager pay increases and further reductions through layoffs and attrition," Olsen informed the Regents.

Cherrene Horazuk, Local 3800 President, called the University's administration out on the proposed 2.25% compensation plan. She pointed out that 85% of clerical workers at the U are women, and that 22% of union workers are people of color (that's significantly more than other worker groups at the U).

"It's disingenuous to voice a commitment to racial and gender equity and claim that compensation is a top priority, while making your most diverse workforce struggle to get by," Horazuk told the Regents. "Talk is cheap. It's time to put your money where your mouth is."

Disappointingly, the Board of Regents approved the Budget on June 19. "The University continues to do a disservice to the working people of Minnesota with tuition raises and low projected wages for frontline staff," said Horazuk

following the vote. "We will fight in bargaining for fair wage increases and to fix our broken wage system so we can all make real economic progress. We also stand in solidarity with students demanding affordable education."

Met Council Local 668 Launches Direct Dues Campaign

AFSCME members who work at the Metropolitan Council have launched a region-wide campaign to grow their membership and get folks signed up for Direct Dues. After laying the groundwork by canvassing their worksites and having face-to-face meetings with 98% of the bargaining unit, last week the local launched a multi-event organizing blitz.

On Wednesday, Local 668 leaders invited coworkers for free coffee and donuts outside the Jackson Street and Robert Street Met Council sites. Bargaining unit members were able to join our union and sign up for Direct Dues on the spot, and received free Saints tickets, raffle prizes, and custom Local 668 coffee mugs and can cozies as incentives. In total, more than 100 members came to the event.

On Friday, the local hosted a tailgating party outside CHS Field in St. Paul, where members were given another opportunity to meet their coworkers, join



our union and sign up for Direct Dues.

More than 30 members joined the tailgating party. Even Metropolitan Council Chairwoman Nora Slawik joined the crew, confirming her support for frontline workers. Nearly a hundred members attended the game.

So far, the members of Local 668 have gained nine new members, and nine more have signed up for Direct Dues.

Our Local 668 members are spread over 12 worksites throughout the metro. Following last week's great results, the local will be holding similar events at their remaining worksites to continue building our union's power.

Want to get your local started on a Direct Dues campaign? It's a great way to build relationships, organize members and build power in your workplace. Talk to your field rep about the best options for your specific bargaining unit.

Election Endorsements Posted

Local government elections are ramping up across the state, and our PEOPLE committees have started making endorsements. Check out the growing list of our endorsed pro-worker candidates at afscmemn.org/election-endorsements to find out who we're supporting in your region.

Apply for the Minnesota Union Leadership Program

Now in its tenth year, the Minnesota Union Leadership Program (MULP)

through the University of Minnesota helps unions develop and strengthen leaders, equipping participants with the knowledge and skills to address the challenges facing the labor movement.

Registration is now open for the next cohort. Sessions 1 and 2 will be held on **October 23-25** at Ruttger's Bay Lake Lodge near Brainerd. The registration deadline is **July 12, 2019**.

To participate, individuals must be sponsored by their labor union or a related organization. Potential participants need to complete an application, and each sponsoring organization must provide a statement of support acknowledging the time commitment for the participant and agreeing to fund the cost of tuition.

People of color, women, LGBTQ people, and those under the age of 35 are strongly encouraged to apply.

Get more information and apply now at carlsonschool.umn.edu.

Donations Still Needed for AFSCME Family Picnic

The annual AFSCME Family Picnic is put on by rank and file union members who volunteer their time and resources. This popular event relies on generous contributions from locals and individuals.

The picnic will take place on Sunday, **Aug. 18 from 1-5 p.m.** at Battle Creek Regional Park in Maplewood. All are welcome.

To make a donation, contact Duane Gatzke at **651-472-2787** or by email at kkirk77dg@comcast.com.

Want to get your local union involved? Bring this copy of Action Update to your next local membership meeting to propose making a donation. RSVP at facebook.com/pg/afscmemn5/events.

Financial Responsibility Trainings Filling Up

AFSCME International offers Financial Responsibility trainings for union members who deal with their local's finances. The trainings are recommended for union treasurers as well as any members who sign checks for your local. A Duluth training will be held on **September 26** and another training will be held at the South St. Paul AFSCME office on **November 14**.

To register for one of these classes, please contact our MAC at the Council 5 office at **(651) 450-4990**, toll-free at **1-800-652-9791**, or by email at Council5@afscmemn.org.

Get in on the Action

Action Update comes out every two weeks for locals and activists. Download a copy at www.afscmemn.org. Email communications@afscmemn.org with news and events you'd like shared in our next update.

Mark Your Calendars

Event	Date	Place/details
Labor Movie Night - "Pride"	June 28, 2019; 7PM	4200 Cedar Ave. S., Minneapolis
MN Union Leadership Program Deadline	July 12, 2019	carlsonschool.umn.edu
AFSCME Family Picnic	August 18, 2019	Battle Creek Regional Park, Maplewood
Financial Responsibility Training	September 26, 2019	AFSCME Duluth Office, 211 W 2nd St.
AFSCME Council 5 Convention	October 3-5, 2019	DECC, 350 Harbor Dr., Duluth

