BARGAINING/FMLA UPDATE

Members of 1776,

We have made a commitment to try to keep you more informed as to what is happening. The Local’s bargaining team met with management’s team on January 14, 2010 and again on January 28, 2010. The next bargaining sessions are scheduled for March 3, 2010, March 15, 2010, and April 1, 2010. We were unable to meet in February due to scheduling conflicts. We are making progress. As we have previously discussed, we will discuss the particulars once we have a final package to present to the membership.

To update you on what is happening with the status of other state collective bargaining agreements, some of the other unions have negotiated, presented to their membership, and ratified modifications to their original agreements. One of these unions is AFSCME Unit 2 which represents AFSCME members in the Health Alliance. Since our last update, the Governor through the Department of Higher Education has approached AFSCME locals at the state and community colleges and at UMASS Dartmouth. My understanding from my colleagues is that presently the bargaining teams from the two locals are negotiating with management and a final agreement has not yet been reached. Once one has, the agreement would be presented to their members for a ratification vote. We are monitoring the situation and will keep you informed of any updates.

Although we did not meet for bargaining in the month of February, we have been very busy. Local President Francis Martin and I met with Nick Marshall, Don Teres, and Kelly Pleasant (all from Labor Relations) to discuss the process the University uses to implement the Family Medical Leave Act. The dominate concern the Union raised was over confidentiality regarding medical information. We did receive a commitment from Labor Relations that they would review the process. If you are asked to fill out FMLA paperwork, do it. FMLA is a protection. Let us know if there are issues over the process which we will continue to address.

Please don’t hesitate to contact me directly or contact the 1776 union office with any questions or concerns.

In Solidarity,
Lisa Field
Staff Representative
AFSCME Council 93

The fight is never about grapes or lettuce. It is always about people.

César Estrada Chávez, United Farm Workers