

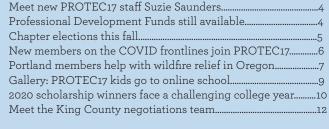


On the Cover:

From working from home and helping kids with online school, to finding alternative childcare and learning options, PROTEC17 members talk about the struggles and joys of parenting in a pandemic, and how employers can help. Read more on p. 8. Cover photo by Elliot Levin.

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insight

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insight

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Resilience. Courage. Community.



n top of everything else we are going through at the moment – COVID-19, the need to address racial injustice, and impending budget cuts – the wildfires of recent weeks have been stifling.

How will we get through all these interconnected crises?

During this tumultuous time, I have been inspired by the resilience and courage of our members. Your efforts have convinced me that there is only one way possible through this - together.

This issue of *Insight* highlights amazing PROTEC17 members doing just that, all while pulling together for their families, their communities, and for a better world. You'll read about the strength and flexibility of working parents taking on remote learning with their kids (p.8). You'll get inspiration from the story of member Jacqueline Rocha who pursued work at a COVID-19 testing site as a way to help fight the pandemic (p.6). You'll see courage in member Paul Cone joining an Emergency Response Team to help contain wildfires (p.7). And you'll hear about the dedication of Leland Adams, one of this year's PROTEC17 scholarship winners, who will start off his year with courses in African-American studies and environmental sustainability to advocate for the wellness of his community (p.10).

Together, we will need to embrace these qualities to get through the next several months. We have a tremendous fight ahead of us against the cuts that are inevitably coming our way, even when data from the 2008 Great Recession shows that states that made severe cuts to public spending experienced deeper job losses and a slower economic recovery than those that maintained public services.

We know austerity measures do not work, but it will be up to us to remind our management and elected leaders, who do not always seem to understand that. Voting is but one of the important ways we do this. This year, dozens of members volunteered in our process to interview candidates and discuss our values as working people – you can find the endorsements that came out of that process on page 11.

Through coming together, in coalitions, in the workplace, and in our communities, we will meet these challenges. Members of PROTEC17 are mobilizing. And you can and should too. Read on to learn how to get involved and join members in the formation of a coalition facing all these challenges and more, while centering racial justice (p.4). We are, after all – as our mission states – a member-powered union, inspiring action, advancing equity and building community. The time is now – join in.

In unity,

Karen



Karen Estevenin Executive Director

Meet PROTEC17's first Eastern Washingtonbased Union Rep



ROTEC17 hired it's first Eastern Washington-based staff member, Suzie Saunders, who started in July. The Spokane resident and former PROTEC17 member is excited for her new role and has hit the ground running.

Saunders comes from a long-time union family and joined her first union at age 15 when she worked as a courtesy clerk at Safeway in Palouse, Washington. She started working for Spokane County in 2014 as a Stormwater Engineering Technician in the Roads division, and became involved in PROTEC17 right away. In her six years at the County, Saunders served on the bargaining team, as Steward, Labor Council delegate, and Chapter President.

"I am extremely honored to work for PROTEC17 as Union Representative for Eastern Washington," said Saunders.
"I know there are cultural differences between the east and west sides of the state, but I'm hoping to bridge that gap and bring people together for values we all share: standing up every day for the rights of working people."

In her spare time, you can find Saunders in her garden, cooking, camping, swimming, hiking, and spending time with family or friends.

PROTEC17 members form union-wide group to take action on big issues



n Sept. 2, PROTEC17 members from across the Pacific Northwest joined a virtual meeting to talk about the cre-

ation of a union-wide group to share ideas and inspiration on how to to advance worker issues using a racial justice lens, and to elevate critical issues in the community. Over 100 members from a wide range of PROTEC17 chapters registered for the session.

During the meeting, members from the City of Seattle, City of Portland and King County's Young Members of PROTEC17 group shared their experiences launching chapter-centered coalitions to take action on issues of racial justice, public health, the economic impacts of COVID-19, and more.

There is an interest in the group in developing the ability to communicate union-wide in order to build power and work collaboratively across employers to tackle many of the same issues.

PROTEC17 staff is helping assess the needs of the group, and looking into integrating new technologies – like Hustle, Signal, or an online discussion board in our member portal – to stay connected.

While they don't have a name just yet, the group was in agreement that they want this to be a group of action, not just talk.

If you would like to get more involved, please connect with your Union Representative to learn more about the group. You can also take our open survey to let us know your interests and to get added to the email list: https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/W7ZQ57Z.

The group will be meeting quarterly to start, with the next meeting scheduled for Wed., Dec. 9. To pre-register for this meeting, visit: http://bit.ly/protec17-zoom-12-9-2020.

Professional Development Funds still available for 2020

here are still funds available in the 2020 PROTEC17 Professional Development Fund.
The fund provides monetary support to encourage the ongoing education and professional development of our members.

Now in its second year, the annual fund of \$10,000 is made available each January for awards on a first-come, first-served basis to individual members pursuing job-related, continuing education opportunities until the fund is depleted for the year. Members can apply for up to \$200 per year for seminars, classes, workshops, conferences or professional memberships that are not covered by their employer or another party.

The fund works on a reimbursement basis, so members must first pay for their course or conference, then submit invoices and receipts along with their application and other materials. Due to financial restrictions, PROTEC17 cannot reimburse for travel expenses related to work travel.

With many conferences and trainings now being offered online due to the pandemic, there are many opportunities to take advantage of this member benefit. To view eligibility requirements and/or to apply, visit our member benefits page to find the application: protec17.org/benefits. If you have questions, please contact Deidre Girard, PROTEC17 Communications Director at deidre@protec17.org or 800-783-0017 ext. 130.

Find more news on our website: www.protec17.org/news

Be a Member Leader! Chapter Elections this fall!

Your union, your colleagues, and your fellow members – over 9,000 public sector workers throughout Washington and Oregon – need your skills, experience, and enthusiasm to help our organization be the best it can be! To nominate yourself or a fellow member (with their permission) for chapter leadership, send an email to election@protec17.org with the name, chapter, and position for which you are submitting a nomination by Fri., Nov. 13 at 5 p.m. Open positions for each chapter are listed below. Terms vary – contact your Union Representative or current chapter leaders for details.

ABERDEEN: President | Vice-President | Secretary-Treasurer | REC Delegate (1) | REC Alt

BELLINGHAM-SKAGIT: President | Vice-President | Secretary-Treasurer | REC Delegate (1) | REC Alt

BENTON-FRANKLIN: President | Vice-President | Secretary | Treasurer | REC Delegate (1) | REC Alt

CHELAN-DOUGLAS: President | Vice-President | Secretary-Treasurer | REC Delegate (1) | REC Alt

CLARK COUNTY: President | Vice-President | Secretary - Treasurer

DOT-TACOMA: President | Vice-President | Secretary-Treasurer | REC Delegate (1) | REC Alt

EVERETT: President | Vice-President | Secretary-Treasurer | REC Delegate (1) | REC Alt

KING COUNTY: President | Vice-President | Secretary-Treasurer | REC Delegates (13) | REC Alt

KITSAP (WSDOT): President | Vice-President | Secretary-Treasurer | REC Delegate (1) | REC Alt

MT. BAKER: President | Vice-President | Secretary | Treasurer | REC Delegate (1) | REC Alt

NW REGION DOT: President | Treasurer

PENINSULA (KITSAP) HEALTH: President | VP | Secretary-Treasurer | REC Del (1) | REC Alt

PIERCE COUNTY: President | VP | Secretary-Treasurer | REC Delegate (3) | REC Alt

PORT ANGELES: President | Vice-President | Secretary-Treasurer | REC Delegate (1) | REC Alt

PORTLAND: REC Delegates (4)

SEATTLE: President | Vice-President | Secretary | Treasurer | REC Delegates (18) | REC Alt (2)

SNOHOMISH HEALTH: Co-Presidents (2) | VP | Secretary-Treasurer | REC Delegates (1) | REC Alt

SPOKANE HEALTH: President | Vice-President | Secretary-Treasurer | REC Delegates (2) | REC Alt

SPOKANE COUNTY: President | Vice-President | Secretary-Treasurer | REC Delegate (1) | REC Alt

STATEWIDE DOL-LSR: President | VP | Secretary-Treasurer | REC Delegates (4) | REC Alt

TACOMA: President | Vice-President | Secretary | Treasurer | REC Delegates (3) | REC Alt

THURSTON: President | Vice-President | Secretary-Treasurer | REC Delegate (1)

TRI-CITIES: President | Vice-President | Secretary-Treasurer | REC Delegate (1) | REC Alt

VANCOUVER: President | Vice-President | Secretary-Treasurer | REC Delegate (1) | REC Alt

WENATCHEE: President | Vice-President | Secretary-Treasurer | REC Delegate (1) | REC Alt

YAKIMA: President | Vice-President | Secretary-Treasurer | REC Delegate (1) | REC Alt

On the front lines: New PROTEC17 members provide a reassuring presence at COVID-19 testing sites

ore than 70 new Customer
Service Representatives
(CSRs) have been hired by the
Seattle Fire Department to

help support services at COVID-19 testing sites throughout the city. While these jobs are temporary – likely just lasting the duration of the coronavirus pandemic – many workers are signing up to be a part of PROTEC17, knowing that unions support their health and safety in the workplace.

At the four COVID-19 testing sites located around the city, CSRs help patients register, schedule, and check-in to appointments to get tested for the virus, and work alongside firefighters and EMTs, many of whom have volunteered to serve the sites.

New PROTEC17 member Jacqueline Rocha works at the Rainier Beach test site,



"This virus has disrupted everyone's life, in every respect, and in every country. So working to fight this virus in even a small way interested me."

Jacqueline Rocha, PROTEC17 member and Customer Service Representative, *City of Seattle*



New PROTEC17 members (in blue t-shirts) stand with union members from IAFF 27 (firefighters) and Teamsters 763 (EMTs) working on the front-lines at the COVID-19 testing site in SODO.

which is a walk-up site located at the high school. She is the only Spanish-speaker at her site. As she registers patients, she helps them feel comfortable and tries to dispel any fears they may have about the cost of testing, the need for insurance, the privacy of the results, and other issues.

"I go out of my way to make them comfortable," she said. "I am able to use the skills I learned in retail to be able to talk to complete strangers with warmth and even humor to ease the fear they may have taking the test."

There are four testing sites total, including another walk-up site at Chief Sealth High School in West Seattle, and two drive-through sites in SODO and Shoreline – both at former car emission testing sites. The testing is free and insurance is not required.

Rocha applied for the CSR job because she wanted to lend a hand to help combat the coronavirus.

"This virus has disrupted everyone's life, in every respect, and in every country,"

she said. "So working to fight this virus, in even a small way, interested me."

In just a few months on the job, Rocha has been impressed by the level of dedication and commitment her colleagues have to their important work, and is proud of the visible impact they are all having on the education and testing to help get the virus under control in Seattle.

As for why she joined PROTEC17 as a temporary worker, Rocha said the choice was clear.

"Unions stand up for people like me," said Rocha. "It's not just wages, but other benefits – health insurance, paid leave..."

Rocha recalled when air traffic controllers were striking for better wages and working conditions in the 1980's, and how there was an uptick in accidents after the union workers were fired and non-union employees were brought on.

"Even though I am a temporary worker, I know that I am benefiting from gains made by the union before I started working for the City."

For COVID-19 FAQs and Resources, visit: protec17.org/covid19

Portland members help with wildfire response efforts in Oregon; PROTEC17 donates to relief fund

hen wildfires raged throughout the Pacific Northwest this September, many PROTEC17 members were called into ac-

tion as part of emergency response teams to help with the relief efforts. In Oregon, where wildfires were the most destructive on record, over one million acres were burned, several towns were destroyed, and the air quality in the Portland area was the worst in the world for many days straight.

At the City of Portland, Civil Engineer Juanita Hess was assigned to be the point person when the Water Bureau partially activated their emergency response plan. As part of the plan, Hess and her co-workers assisted other water districts with water and power needs, and provided

additional materials like hard hats. They also created a contingency plan in case the watershed was evacuated.

PROTEC17 member and GIS Analyst Paul Cone also jumped to action when asked to join the emergency response team. Having worked in the Emergency Coordination Center (ECC) previously in snow incidents and other accidents, Cone was ready to help in any way he could.

"When these things happen, you just dive in and get to work," he said. "I didn't know what to expect at first, but once I was there, it was energizing to see everyone with a common purpose."

Cone worked over 50 hours, downloading and printing the latest fire maps, and creating new maps to give to firefighters and emergency personnel who need them in the field. He was assigned to monitor the Riverside fire in Clackamas County and the North Cascade fire, which was finally removed from the most dangerous list on Sept. 18 when crews were confident it could be contained.

The City of Portland has been flexible with employees as they help in these efforts. The City also allowed members who normally work outdoors flexibility in order to protect them from the hazardous air quality.

PROTEC17 is proud of our members who always jump to help their communities in need, and has donated \$1,000 to the Red Cross Western Wildfire Relief Fund and the Cascade Forest Conservancy.

Portland Fire & Rescue workers and other emergency response volunteers gather around a fire map to get briefed on the day's tasks. Photo credit: Paul Cone



Parenting during a pandemic:

PROTEC17 members juggle work responsibilities with childcare and schooling as the coronavirus outbreak continues

virus first upended everyone's lives, working parents have had to learn how to juggle their jobs and kids more than ever before. From helping children log-in and stay on task in online school, to finding alternative childcare options for essential employees who are still heading into work, parents are needing flexibility, support, and patience in order to balance their own work

ince March, when the corona-

In a PROTEC17 survey that went out just before the start of school to members working for the City of Portland, parents shared just how taxing it is to try to keep everything afloat, even with decent sup-

port from their employers.

responsibilities with the health, safety,

and well-being of themselves and their

families.

"My employer has been accomodating, allowing me to flex my schedule," said an anoymous survey respondent. "But the reality is that after homeschooling and caring for two young children, I don't have 8 hours remaining in my day to work without sacrificing sleep and all other moments of my day. This led to burnout this spring, without a moment to myself for months, and I'm dreading it this fall."

"Showing parents support would help assure us that we won't lose our jobs as a result of taking time off, or for being less available or productive."

Juanita Hess, PROTEC17 member and Civil Engineer, City of Portland



Everyone working online in the Hess household.

The data collected from this survey is being used to create a shared proposal between several city unions to bring to City of Portland leadership to help find workable solutions for employees.

PROTEC17 member Juanita Hess is a Civil Engineer for Portland's Water Bureau. With the exception of a few visits to the field, she's been working from home since mid-March with her two children, ages 8 and 10 (photo above), who are doing distance learning through Portland Public Schools.

Hess found it a challenge to do her own work in the spring while trying to keep her children on task. This led to a lot of frustration for everyone in her family.

"We missed a lot of focus time working," she said. "We got frustrated and our kids probably didn't feel like they could even be successful."

Moving into the fall, Hess is paying for additional support for her children through a new 'learning center', which provides supplemental in-person support with teachers for a few hours each day, freeing up some quiet time in the house for her to focus on her own work.

Unfortunately, many workers don't have the means to pay for additional help, nor are there adequate facilities available even for those who can. PDXCityMamas, an affinity group for employee-parents at the City of Portland, is encouraging the City to address these issues as we all navigate this stressful time in our world.

Courtney Duke is a Senior Transportation Planner for the Portland Bureau of Transportation, a PROTEC17 member, and leader of PDXCityMamas. She recently testified at City Council about the group's proposal for working parents, which includes a voluntary, part-time furlough program that maintains job security and full health benefits, plus provides a small stipend to demonstrate the value that caregiver's provide to society, and to partially rectify the inequities in caregiving, which most often impact women and people of color.

"Showing parents support would help assure us that we won't lose our jobs as a result of taking time off, or for being less available or productive," said Hess.

"We are raising the future and we will only be successful if our village is intact," she continued. "Everyone is so alone right now compared to pre-pandemic, which was already a culture with way too much emphasis on individuals being able to go it alone."

While there has been a lot of stress over the last months, many positive moments have also emerged from spending 24 hours a day with loved ones. For Hess, there have been a lot of bright spots.

"We know our kids better now and we have had to be much more creative," she said. "They love being home and are also learning some more domestic skills like cooking and gardening. Also, we got two kittens in August and that's been incredibly fun for all of us. And more learning – kittens are lots of work!"



PROTEC17 scholarship winners face challenging school year

ince the inception of the scholarship program in 2011, PROTEC17 has awarded over \$50,000 in scholarships to the

children of members. After very careful deliberation, we are proud to announce that our 2020 scholarship winners are Leland Adams and Jamie Kojiro.

Each year, the PROTEC17 scholarship is open to the children, grandchildren or dependents of members as they enter or continue their studies in college or technical school. There are two \$3,000 awards one for an incoming freshman, and one for a continuing college student. Scholarship applications were accepted through July 31 and, this year, PROTEC17 saw an increase in the number of applications received. In the application, students are asked to demonstrate their academic achievements, educational goals, and extracurricular activities. In addition, applicants submit letters of recommendation, and a labor-related essav.

Leland Adams, son of City of Seattle member Roger V. Adams, is our continuing college student winner. He is studying business at the University of Washington

"This is definitely a strange way to kick off my college experience, but I'm glad we're taking actions to keep everyone safe. My professors are working hard to make this a good experience for everyone, and I've already made a few socially-distanced new friends."

Jamie Kojiro, Carnegie Mellon student, PROTEC17 scholarship winner and daugther of Leigh Kojiro, City of Portland



Tacoma campus. In addition to business classes, this quarter Adams is taking African American studies and an Environmental Sustainability course. As a student who is very active on campus, he is disappointed to start this school year online due to the pandemic, but values the UW's efforts to keep everyone safe and healthy.

Jamie Kojiro, daughter of City of Portland member Leigh Kojiro, is our freshman scholarship winner. While she is physically on campus at Carnegie Mellon University in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, her classes will also be online during the duration of the pandemic. She is taking a wide variety of classes as an English major, and has an

"In this pandemic, you must be adaptable, and a lot of students like myself have had to prepare mentally for the self-discipline that will be a part of learning from online instruction."

Leland Adams, U.W. Tacoma student, PROTEC17 scholarship winner and son of Roger V. Adams, *City of Seattle*

interest in using communcations as a tool to affect change in the current socio-political climate.

PROTEC17 thanks all of our applicants, and wishes them the best of luck this school year. Both Adams and Kojiro expressed their deepest gratitude to PROTEC17 for supporting their education, especially during these tenuous times.

"This scholarship truly comes at a critical time for me," said Adams. "Much like my peers, it feels as if I have been balancing the weight of the world on my shoulders as I juggle school, work, advocating for the wellness of my community, and most importantly, staying healthy."



Your VOTE is your VOICE! VOTE by Nov. 3!

PROTEC17 2020 Endorsements

WASHINGTON STATE

Governor

Jay Inslee

Attorney GeneralBob Ferguson

Secretary of State
Gael Tarleton

Legislative District 1House 1 – Davina Duerr

Legislative District 3
Senate – Andy Billig
House 1 – Marcus Riccelli
House 2 – Timm Ormsby

Legislative District 4 House 1 – Lori Feagan House 2 – Lance Gurel

Legislative District 6 House 1 – Zack Zappone House 2 – Tom McGarry

Legislative District 10 Senate – Helen Price Johnson House 1 – Angie Homola

Legislative District 11 House 1 – David Hackney

Legislative District 17Senate – Daniel Smith
House 1 – Tanisha Harris

Legislative District 18 House 2 – Donna Sinclair

Legislative District 22 Senate – Sam Hunt

Legislative District 25 Senate – Julie Door Legislative District 25 (cont.)

House 1 – Jamie Smith House 2 – Brian Duthie

Legislative District 26 House 1 – Carrie Hesch House 2 – Joy Stanford

Legislative District 27 Senate – Jeannie Darneille House 1 – Laurie Jinkins House 2 – Jake Fey

Legislative District 28 Senate – T'wina Nobles House 1 – Mari Leavitt

House 2 – Dan Bronoske

Legislative District 30 House 1 – Jamila Taylor

House 2 – Jesse Johnson

Legislative District 37House 2 – Kirsten Harris-Talley

Legislative District 38 Senate – June Robinson House 1 – Emily Wicks

Legislative District 40 Senate – Liz Lovelett

Legislative District 42House 2 – Sharon Shewmake

Legislative District 44 House 1 – John Lovick House 2 – April Berg

Legislative District 46 House 1 – Gerry Pollet

Legislative District 48 House 2 – Amy Walen



KING COUNTY

Superior Court Pos. 13 (dual endorsement) Hillary Madsen Andrea Robertson

Superior Court Pos. 30Doug North

PIERCE COUNTY

Pierce County Executive Larry Seaquist

Pierce County Council Ryan Mello

CITY OF SEATTLE

Proposition 1

APPROVE: This transit-only measure will expand city bus routes and enable the city to develop a better transportation system.

CITY OF PORTLAND

Commissioner Chloe Eudaly

Measure 26-218

APPROVE: This transportation bond measure would raise approximately \$5 billion in transportation funds for the region.

Measure 26-213

APPROVE: This levy would raise \$45 million per year through a property tax increase to keep Portland Parks employees working and continuing to provide community center and recreation services across the city.

PROTEC17 made additional endorsements after this issue went to print. For the latest list, visit: www.protec17.org/political-action

Professional and Technical Employees Local 17 PRO TEC 17

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Meet the PROTEC17 King County contract negotiations team

