

# WEEK IN ACTION!

Weekly News From Your Union ~ November 3, 2014 – November 7, 2014

## Happy Veterans Day VSEA. Thank You For Your Service.

Happy Veterans Day! VSEA is sending thanks to every VSEA member, active and retired, who has ever served, or is currently serving, in our nation's Armed Forces.

"It's an honor for me to travel around the state and get to meet so many VSEA members who have served our country, or are serving it," said Martin. "Some even share stories about how their union contract helped them with issues related to their military service, and that makes me feel even better about the work VSEA is doing. VSEA thanks our veterans and their families. We really, really appreciate your service to your country and to Vermont."

### Promoting The Vets' Home

While discussing VSEA veterans and their issues, Martin reminded that if you're a VSEA member with an aging relative who now requires hands-on care after serving in America's armed forces, please consider allowing VSEA's 200-plus members at the Vermont Veterans Home to provide your loved one with the top-level care they deserve.

"I've been working with several VSEA veterans to help spread the word about the Vets' Home, and I'd like other VSEA veterans who want to help to please contact me," said Martin. "As I've said before, having a loved one receive care at the Vets' Home ensures top-level care and helps keep one of Bennington's largest employers operating. Thanks in advance for the help to raise awareness."

### VtPAC-Endorsed Candidates Fare Well On Election Day

With the ballots all counted, members of VSEA's political action arm (VtPAC) report that 77% of the union's endorsed candidates were victorious on Tuesday, and with the 2015 legislative session just around the corner, VSEA members are anxious to sit down with these newly elected lawmakers to share their workplace issues and concerns.

"With all the talk about \$100 million-plus deficits in the coming fiscal year, VSEA members will need to be more engaged than ever in the legislative process to protect the gains we've made since the recession eased a few years back," VSEA President Shelley Martin told *WIA*. "That means both resources and positions. We trust that the candidates VSEA helped elect will work with us to advance our message and educate their colleagues about the importance of having enough workers and resources to deliver the best service possible to Vermonters. VSEA congratulates all the winners."

Martin said VSEA was especially pleased by Tuesday's general election victory by Veterans' Home employee Rachael Fields in the Bennington House District 2-1 race.

"We're really proud of Rachael's victory because it demonstrates that average working Vermonters can run for office and win," said Martin. "Rachael's victory also helps VSEA with our union's efforts to cultivate new and energized candidates to run for office all across Vermont. Rachael is a leader in VSEA and at the Vermont Veterans' Home, and I'm confident she'll be a leader at the State House too."

Martin added that, in the coming months and years, VSEA hopes to begin preparing more and more frontline state employees to run for elected office at every level.

“We believe the more workers’ voices at the State House or in our local legislative bodies, the better for Vermont,” she said. “Rachael’s victory and the successful grassroots effort behind it will be a great example for VSEA to use, and, hopefully, it will inspire other state employees to think about running for office.”

Martin acknowledged that the news wasn’t all good on Tuesday, as VSEA Union Representative Bob South was defeated in his House race, and so were a handful of other solid supporters of working Vermonters.

“Bob’s defeat is a huge loss for working people in St. Johnsbury, but VSEA members know he will never stop fighting for working people in St. Johnsbury and all across Vermont,” said Martin. “We’re glad he’s still on our team, and we look forward to using his expertise to educate frontline VSEA members on effective ways to engage lawmakers on the issues that matter most to us.”

### **Date For Election At UVM Set! Pre-Election Rally Is December 3. Mark The Date!**

The Vermont Labor Relations Board this week set dates for VSEA to conduct an election to represent 800 clerical, technical and specialized staff working on the campus of the University of Vermont (UVM). The UVM workers will head to the polling place on Tuesday, December 16 and Wednesday, December 17.

In an announcement to United Staff members, VSEA organizers and members of the drive’s in-house committee wrote, “Now is the time for UVM staff to come together to build the power needed to protect what is working here at UVM and have the opportunity to improve what you think could be done better.”

**In advance of the workers’ vote, VSEA is appealing to members to mark the date now and please attend a special pre-election solidarity rally for the workers on Wednesday, December 3. Look for rally location and time in upcoming *WIAs*.**

#### **New Video Message Posts**

Yesterday, the [UVM organizing drive’s Facebook page](#) posted a new video message to United Staff members from VSEA activist Sarah Ballou, an Administrative Assistant working at Vermont Technical College. VSEA members are urged to view Sarah’s on-target message and to “like” the workers’ Facebook page.

### **Vermont Troublemakers’ School Is Sunday! Still Time To Register & VSEA Board Is Sponsoring 40 Members**

The VSEA Board of Trustees voted recently to pay the registration fee for 40 VSEA members who want to attend the 2014 Vermont Troublemakers School on Sunday, November 9, from 10:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. in UVM’s Rowen Hall at 106 Carrigan Drive, Burlington. VSEA members who want to attend should contact VSEA Board of Trustees Clerk Katelyn Chase as soon as possible. She can be reached at [kchase@vsea.org](mailto:kchase@vsea.org).

Join fellow troublemakers for a day of discussion, training, networking, and inspiration!

Topics include:

- How to have an organizing conversation
- How to broaden member participation

- Reviving social justice unionism
- Developing rank-and-file leaders
- Winning contract campaigns
- Strikes and other worksite actions to win
- And much more

Here's a list of organizations whose members are contributing to shaping and building our Troublemakers School:

- VSEA
- CCTA Teamster Bus Drivers
- Vermont Workers Center
- United Academics at UVM
- Vermont Nurses and Healthcare Professionals (VNHP)
- VT-NEA teachers
- International Socialist Organization
- UE Locals in Chittenden and Washington Counties
- Vermont Migrant Justice
- Home Health Care Workers
- Howard Center AFSCME Local 1674
- Green Mountain Labor Council
- And more to come.

**To register, choose a registration level at bottom of page, add to your cart and check out through our online store.** (Look for "Shopping Cart" in the upper right corner of the page when you are ready to pay.) For more information or to get involved, contact Traven Leyshon at [Traven.L@gmail.com](mailto:Traven.L@gmail.com) or 802-522-3484.

**Childcare will be available.**

## **American Voters Weigh In On Tax Policy**

The national AFL-CIO contracted Hart Research Associates to conduct exit polling on how American voters feel about America's current tax policies and future reform. The findings are enlightening, and let's hope federal politicians read them.

From an article about the poll:

- Voters were asked, "Which one of the following do you think should be the higher priority for the president and Congress right now—(A) reducing taxes on businesses and individuals or (B) investing in key priorities like education, healthcare, and job creation?" A solid 67 percent said "investing in key priorities" and only 29 percent said "reducing taxes."
- To the question "What should revenue from closing corporate tax loopholes be used for?" 66 percent chose "reduce budget deficit and invest" while only 22 percent chose "reduce tax rate on corporations." and
- A whopping 73 percent of voters said they would support "increasing taxes on the profits that American corporations make overseas, to ensure they pay as much on foreign profits as they do on profits made in the United States," while only 21 percent said they would oppose this.

Hart conducted its polling in Alaska, Arkansas, Colorado, Georgia, Iowa, Kansas, Kentucky, Louisiana, Michigan, North Carolina and New Hampshire.

## **VSEA Announces New Union Representative Territories**

### ***Josh Massey Returning To Work Soon As New Union Representative***

VSEA Director of Field Services Gretchen Naylor is announcing a reshuffling of territories and agency/department assignments for VSEA Union Representatives. Please consult the list below to learn who your Union Representative is. Josh Massey, who was a VSEA Organizer before leaving this summer to work for a political party, will return to VSEA shortly after Election Day in a new role as Union Representative.

Please consult the list below to learn who your Union Representative is.

**John Brabant:** St. Albans, Grand Isle, St. Johnsbury, White River Junction, Vermont Psychiatric Care Hospital (VPCH), Middlesex Residential Facility, Lyndon State College, Vermont Technical College

**Kelly Burns :** Chittenden, Lamoille, Johnson State College

**Dave Van Deusen:** Statewide Agency of Transportation (AOT), Addison, Rutland, Castleton State College

**Bob South:** Brattleboro, Springfield, Newport, Island Pond

**Brian Morse:** Bennington, all supervisors, all of Judiciary

**Josh Massey:** Barre, Waterbury, Central Vermont (except AOT)

## **VSEA Advantage Program's Divine Align Yoga Announces New Venue**

Divine Align asked *WIA* to share this update with members:

### **DIVINE ALIGN YOGA**

Montpelier, Fusion Studio

56 E State St, Montpelier, VT 05602

Studio offering discounted membership fee through December 2014. VSEA members pay just \$40 for both November and December, as opposed to the normal \$60. In addition, VSEA members and staff participating in a class offered by instructor Melissa Massey will receive \$1 off the normal \$6 class fee. Members and staff who opt to “drop-in” on one of Melissa’s classes will receive \$1 off the normal \$16 “drop-in” class fee.

For more information, please contact:

Melissa Massey

[divinealignyoga@gmail.com](mailto:divinealignyoga@gmail.com)

You can also learn more about Fusion Studio [here](#)

## **ALERT! Post Office No Longer Recognizing Mail Sent To VSEA HQ Using Defunct P.O. Box Number**

**Stewards Urged To Review Cards**

VSEA is issuing an alert to members NOT to use P.O. Box 518 when sending mail or other correspondence to VSEA headquarters in Montpelier. The Post Office is no longer forwarding mail sent to VSEA with the P.O. Box number. VSEA Stewards and other leaders are being asked to review any cards or literature you may be passing out in worksites to ensure the address printed on the material does not include the now defunct P.O. Box number.

As a reminder, VSEA's new and correct mailing address is:

VSEA HQ  
155 State St.  
Montpelier, VT 05602

## **Retirees' Chapter Holding Special Meeting On Dec. 11 To Select Trustee For Windham & Windsor Counties**

The VSEA Retirees' Committee is actively searching for a trustee to represent Windham and Windsor Counties. If you're a current dues-paying retiree who resides in Windham or Windsor Counties, and you're interested in running for this trustee seat, please send a letter of interest by 4:30 p.m., Wednesday, December 10, to VSEA RC President Maclay at [jmaclay@vsea.org](mailto:jmaclay@vsea.org). Chapter officials will then hold a special meeting on December 11 to name a new Windham and Windsor trustee. The meeting begins at 9:30 a.m.

As always, if you are a lifetime member of VSEA and are interested in joining the VSEA Retirees' Chapter, please send your \$10 dues check to VSEA HQ or bring this payment to the special Chapter meeting on December 11.

## **Upcoming Meetings/Events/Holidays:**

### **November 13**

Board Of Trustees' Meeting  
VSEA HQ  
Montpelier  
9:30 a.m.

### **November 13**

NMU Bargaining Team Meeting  
VSEA HQ  
Montpelier  
8:00 a.m.

### **November 13**

Chapter Presidents Meeting  
VSEA HQ  
Montpelier  
9:30 a.m.

### **November 14**

Board Of Trustees' Meeting  
VSEA HQ  
Montpelier  
9:30 a.m.

**November 14**

Steward Training: AOT Stewards  
The Summit Center  
439 industrial Lane  
Berlin  
9:00 a.m.