



## WEEK IN ACTION!

Weekly News From Your Union ~ April 30 – May 4, 2018

Your union's weekly newsletter, *Week In Action*, is emailed every Friday afternoon. *Week In Action* is the best way to stay up to date with weekly VSEA news!

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### **In Advance Of Vote, Senate Committee Held Series Of Hearings This Week On Karen O’Neill Confirmation**

The Senate’s Economic Development Committee held two hearings this week on Karen O’Neill’s confirmation as a neutral to the Vermont Labor Relations Board, preceding this morning’s vote.

On Wednesday, VSEA members and retirees packed Room 10 at the State House for the Committee’s first hearing. A host of labor representatives testified in opposition to O’Neill’s confirmation, including Michael O’Neill for the Vermont Trooper’s Association, Heather Reimer for the American Federation of Teachers, Jeff Fannon for the Vermont NEA, David Mickenberg for Working Vermont and Steve Howard for the VSEA.

#### [Steve Howard’s Remarks](#)

The second hearing on Thursday was far shorter, and the Committee used the time to educate themselves more about the appointment and confirmation process, how labor got a seat on the Review Panel and how O’Neill was chosen from among 12 applicants. The Committee had wanted to question DOL Commissioner Lindsay Kurrle about her outreach to labor unions prior to selecting an IBEW representative to fill the labor seat on a VLRB appointee Review Panel. Ms. Kurrle cited VSEA’s litigation as her reason for not appearing in front of the Committee.

### **VSEA Members & Retirees Join May Day Rally At State House**

VSEA is thanking all the members and retirees who rallied with other working Vermonters on May 1 (May Day) at the State House in Montpelier. VSEA Health Department member Michelle Salvador gave a rousing and well-received speech that took direct aim at the assault on Vermont workers’ rights, as well as at the State’s imposed contract and the way it resulted.

VSEA published some photos from the rally, which members and retirees can [view here](#).

### **VSEA May 8 Deadline To Apply For A 2018 VSEA Scholarship!**

The deadline to apply for a 2018 VSEA Scholarship is Tuesday, May 8, and VSEA

members and their spouses, dependents and domestic partners are welcome to submit an application.

[A downloadable 2018 scholarship application is now online.](#) VSEA students seeking financial assistance this year in the pursuit of your post-secondary educational goals are especially urged to apply.

Scholarship winners will be announced at the June 2018 VSEA Council meeting.

## **May 11 Is Deadline To Submit Bylaw Changes**

The deadline to submit proposals for changes to VSEA's Master Bylaws is next Friday, May 11, 2018. Proposals must be mailed to: Cassandra Edson, Bylaws Committee Chair, c/o VSEA Headquarters, 155 State Street, Montpelier, VT 05602.

Proposals should reference the number, section, sub-section, etc. of the bylaw you would like to change. You should also include the language you want to add, delete or substitute. Also include the reason(s) you are making this proposal. Example: "Bylaw 0 A (1) (b) Change: Monday to Sunday. Reason: Makes it easier to work with the calendar."

Please be sure the changes you are recommending include all Articles and/or Bylaws that may be affected by the proposed change.

If you have questions, please contact Cassandra by email at [cassandraedson@hotmail.com](mailto:cassandraedson@hotmail.com).

## **VSEA Judiciary Unit Members... Did You Get Your Electronic Contract Ratification Ballot?**

All eligible VSEA Judiciary Unit members should have received an email on Monday, April 30, from [vote@simplyvoting.com](mailto:vote@simplyvoting.com). The email contains your electronic ballot to vote on the Unit's tentative contract agreement.

**Very important!** Your electronic ballot was sent to the primary email address that VSEA currently has on file for you. **If you do not recall receiving an email from [vote@simplyvoting.com](mailto:vote@simplyvoting.com) on April 30, please look in your "Other" or "Spam" folders before contacting headquarters to request that your ballot be reissued.**

Reminder: VSEA sent ballots to Judiciary Unit members' primary email address, provided the union had your correct primary email address. This is a big reason why *WIA* is constantly soliciting members to contact VSEA with your updated email address. [You can update your contact information here anytime.](#)

## **VSEA Creates Timeline Of Bargaining-Related Webpage Posts Since November 2017**

VSEA's Communications Department has created a special webpage that includes all bargaining-related posts made to the union's homepage since November 2017. It's another handy tool for members and retirees to reference to brush up on VSEA's 2018 contract fight. VSEA members can also steer your co-workers to the

page, especially those who may not be following VSEA's contract and confirmation campaigns closely, and who are looking for some historical perspective.

[VSEA 2018 Bargaining Fight Posts' Timeline](#)

## **Labor Relations Director's Contract Summary Now Online**

VSEA Labor Relations Director Gary Hoadley's comprehensive summary of the contract recently imposed on VSEA members belonging to the Non-Management, Corrections and Supervisory Bargaining Units is now available online.

## **DOC "Reparative Program" Program Wins Award! Thanks For Your Votes!**

Back in late January, *WIA* and DOC Community Corrections Specialist II Herb Sinkinson and his colleagues asked VSEA members to cast a vote for their statewide "reparative and restorative justice" program, which was one of five finalists in a national contest to recognize "innovators in community supervision who are championing innovative programs and empowering clients," as well as victims and community members.

Herb let *WIA* know this week that their program had won the contest sponsored by cFive Solutions; a company that provides software solutions for Community Supervision and Probation agencies. Sinkinson and the Reparative Program were up against programs located in Ohio, Nevada and two in Kansas.

"I think the fact that Herb and the Reparative Board program at Burlington Probation and Parole garnered the most votes speaks highly of his program, cFive Solutions representative Karrie Patterson told the *Burlington Free Press* on April 26.

"It is great that this national award recognizes the collaborative efforts of many staff and volunteers from Vermont Probation, other parts of the criminal justice system, and the community, which led to the development of a myriad of restorative justice services in Vermont." Sinkinson tells the paper."

Sinkinson and his colleagues are thanking VSEA members and retirees who voted.

## **Upcoming Steward Training Dates**

VSEA Field Services Director Gretchen Naylor asked *WIA* to announce a revised series of Steward training dates in the coming months. The dates are:

- May 9: (originally scheduled for December 7), VSEA HQ, Montpelier
- June 8: Holiday Inn, Rutland; and
- September 18: VSEA HQ, Montpelier.

Trainings begin at 8:30 a.m.

## **Brattleboro Chapter Staffing Table For "Green-Up" Day Volunteers**

VSEA Brattleboro Chapter President Robin Rieske and other Chapter members will be staffing a Green-Up Day member-volunteer table tomorrow morning, May 5, at the corner of Elm and Elliot Streets in Brattleboro. VSEA members are welcome to stop by the table from 8:00 a.m. to 12:00 p.m. to pick up some collection bags and some VSEA giveaway items. Donuts served!

## **Global Labor Film Festival Comes To Barre On May 6**

The Old Labor Hall in Barre is adding itself to the growing list of places and cities participating nationwide in the 2018 Global Labor Film Festival.

On Sunday night, May 6, there will be a special screening of Barbara Kopple's Oscar-winning documentary *Harlan County USA*, which tells the story of the 1973 UMWA coal miners' strike against the Brookside Mine of the Eastover Mining Company in Harlan County, Kentucky. The film begins at 6:00 p.m.

Admission is free and there will be light refreshments available. Donations are accepted and appreciated.

[For more information](#)

Email: [info@oldlaborhall.org](mailto:info@oldlaborhall.org)

text 802-331-0013

phone 802-479-5600

## **Brattleboro Employee Appreciation Day Event Is May 8!**

VSEA's Brattleboro Chapter will hold an Employee Appreciation Day event on Tuesday, May 8, at 11:30 a.m. in the State Office Building's first-floor conference room, located at 232 Main Street in Brattleboro. Chinese food and beverages are being provided.

Please RSVP in advance—or direct any questions or comments—to VSEA Brattleboro Chapter President Robin Rieske via email at [Robin.rieske@vermont.gov](mailto:Robin.rieske@vermont.gov).

## **Next NEK / St. Johnsbury Chapter Meeting Is May 9!**

VSEA's NEK / St. Johnsbury Chapter will hold its next Chapter meeting on Wednesday, May 9, at 12:00 p.m. at the St. J District Office, located at 1016 U.S. Route 5 in St. Johnsbury. Pizza and beverages being provided, or you can bring your own lunch. Lots on the agenda to cover.

Please RSVP in advance—or direct any questions or comments—to VSEA NEK / St. Johnsbury Chapter President Ellen Hinman via email at [ellen.hinman@vermont.gov](mailto:ellen.hinman@vermont.gov).

## **Now Is The Time To Enroll In VSEA's Popular Delta Dental Supplemental Plan Benefit**

VSEA members should have received a letter by now, announcing a new, open-enrollment period to participate in your union's very popular Delta Dental Supplemental Plan. The enrollment period is also when members already in the program can amend their number of dependents also using the program, if this number has changed in the past year.

All enrollment forms will be due back on a May 2018 date to be announced.

*Note: If you are already taking advantage of this benefit, and you have no changes this year to your coverage, **you do not need to send back a new form**, as you will be automatically renewed.*

## **It's Time! Please Donate Today To Your Unit Sick Leave Bank**

### ***Donations Being Accepted April 1 To June 30***

VSEA member Dawn Carrillo staffs the Non-Management Unit Sick Leave Bank, and she is once again asking *WIA* to help her solicit time donations to the bank from VSEA members. Carrillo is also announcing that the donation period is April 1 to June 30, 2018, and she reminds that **donations to the Corrections and Supervisory Unit Banks are also needed.**

"Just donating an hour of your time can mean the world to a fellow employee," reads a DHR flyer. It also informs state employees that they can **donate any amount of annual- or personal-leave time** to their respective Unit sick leave bank. "Know that you are performing a wonderful service by helping your friends and fellow employees, who, along with their families, are struggling due to serious health issues," the flyer concludes.

[VSEA members interested in donating some much-needed time to the NMU, Corrections and Supervisory Sick Leave Banks can find a donation form here.](#)

"I want to thank every member for considering a donation to your Unit sick leave bank," says VSEA President Dave Bellini. "Even if you only donate one hour to the bank, these one-hour donations add up. It's so worthwhile because your donation is going to help a fellow state employee who is battling a serious illness."

## **VSEA Members Eligible For 2018 Vermont State Colleges Staff Federation Scholarships**

If you are a VSEA member—or a member's spouse, dependent or domestic partner—you are eligible to receive a 2018 Vermont State Colleges Staff Federation (VSCSF) scholarship award!

**The fund is intended help VSEA members and their spouses, dependents or domestic partners who are seeking financial assistance to pursue post-secondary educational goals at one of the following:**

- **Castleton University;**
- **Lyndon State College;**
- **Johnson State College (soon to be Northern VT University) or**
- **Vermont Technical College.**

The Scholarship Committee will base its decision for the scholarship eligibility on the following criteria:

- Career goals;
- Financial need;

- Abilities and initiative;
- Life experiences; and
- College attending

The scholarship application must be completed in full and one \$500 scholarship will be awarded. The deadline to apply is May 31, 2018.

[Application Here!](#)

VSCSF scholarship applications and essays should be sent to:

Samuel Read Hall Library  
c/o Monique Prive  
P.O. Box 919  
Lyndonville, VT 05851-0919

If you have any questions, please contact Scholarship Committee Chair Denise Doyon by phone at 802-626-6350 or by e-mail at <mailto:denise.doyon@northernvermont.edu>.

*Note: VSCSF scholarships are not to be confused with VSEA's annual scholarships, also being offered right now [here](#)! Eligibility does not require attendance at one of the VSCSF's four designated colleges or universities.*

## **VSEA Legislative Team Publishing Weekly Updates**

VSEA's legislative team at the State House is now publishing a short, information-packed, weekly recap of what's happening in Montpelier that VSEA members need to know about.

This edition's topics include: State's private-prison proposal, overview of anti-privatization legislation, outcomes of the recent Budget Adjustment Act and a piece on the success of the Legislative Committee's recent dinner receptions with lawmakers.

You can find the first 2018 update and all future and past legislative updates at your convenience on VSEA.org. Just [log into your account](#), navigate to "[Forms, Documents & Downloads](#)" in the left-side menu, then select "VSEA Legislative Team Weekly Reports" from the menu. If you are already logged in, [you can follow this link to the 2018 report archive](#).

**Need a VSEA.org account?**

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## **Sign The Petition To Support CCV Faculty's Fight For A Fair First Contract**

More than 500 Community College of Vermont (CCV) faculty are negotiating a first-ever contract that will include job security language. Currently CCV Administration can fire faculty for any reason--and it doesn't even have to tell the faculty member why s/he has not been reappointed.

VSEA members are urged to support CCV faculty members' fight for a FAIR FIRST CONTRACT by signing the workers' petition

[Sign CCV Petition Here](#)

## ***New Republic* Writes About "The Struggle To Stay Middle Class"**

The *New Republic* published a story on April 26, titled "[The Struggle To Stay Middle Class](#)", and it's definitely worth a read to learn more about the multiple forces working to gut America's middle class.

Here's a short excerpt:

"[G]lobalization and automation aren't the only forces responsible for the loss of those reliable paychecks," [a recent New York Times story](#) reports. "So is the steady erosion of the public sector." The *Times* notes that state and local employees are the smallest share of the American civilian workforce since 1967. Yet these forces are presented as if there were no humans behind them, as facts of nature rather than facets of a particular political ideology intent on reducing the power of labor. The destruction of the American middle class didn't just happen. It was deliberately done.

## **Arizona Teachers' Strike Leads To 20 Percent Raise**

Arizona lawmakers worked through Wednesday night to pass a budget that raises teacher salaries 20 percent in four years. Teachers will receive a 9 percent raise in the fall and 5 percent in each of the coming two years. A 1 percent raise had already been approved.

Teachers, who were striking across the state, held watch at the state Capitol Wednesday, packing the House and Senate galleries as lawmakers debated and holding a candlelight vigil on the legislative courtyard.

*New York Times*: [Arizona Teachers End Walkout as Governor Signs Bill Approving Raises](#)

## **Montana Lawmaker's Column Asserts That No Public Contract Has Generated Greater Complaints & Controversy Than With CoreCivic**

*WIA* recently shared an anti-CoreCivic commentary penned by a group of Montana American Indian lawmakers, and now a Senator is following suit, blasting the state's deal with CoreCivic, which she labels a "private, for-profit, out-of-state prison corporation [that] has created ongoing problems in Montana, along with a dismal reputation across the country."

The column concludes, "Montana can do better. Accepting a bad deal from CoreCivic is not an ethical path to meeting our responsibilities to provide human services to our most vulnerable Montanans, nor would it come remotely close to addressing the gaps in the human services budget, nor is it a long term solution to meet those critical, ongoing needs."

[Read "CoreCivic Renewal Is Bad Public Policy"](#)

## **Quote Of The Week!**

*"We have to talk about rebuilding the labor movement if people are ever going to get a leg up in our economy."*

From recent remarks by Iowa Gubernatorial Candidate Cathy Glasson, an SEIU Local President who is running a competitive race so far despite having no government experience.

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

#### **May 5**

Vermont Green Up Day  
Statewide  
[More Information](#)

#### **May 8**

2018 VSEA Scholarship Application Deadline!  
4:30 p.m.

#### **May 8**

Brattleboro Chapter Employee Appreciation Day Event  
State Office Building  
First Floor Conference Room  
232 Main Street  
Brattleboro  
11:30 a.m.

#### **May 9**

Steward Training  
VSEA HQ  
155 State Street  
Montpelier  
8:30 a.m.

#### **May 9**

NEK/St. Johnsbury Chapter Meeting  
District Office Building  
1016 U.S. Route 5  
St. Johnsbury  
12:00 p.m.

#### **May 11**

Budget Committee Meeting  
VSEA HQ  
155 State Street  
Montpelier  
9:00 a.m.

#### **May 11**

Bylaw Changes Submission Deadline  
4:30 a.m.