

# AFSCME LOCAL 1668

Volume 1, Issue 1  
January 2013

## President's Report

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Happy New Year AF-SCME Local 1668!

I hope you all enjoyed the holidays and your extended break from work! Brought to you, by the way, by your friendly neighborhood local union!! Just another example of why it's great to belong to a union!

I would like to thank all those who either ran in, or volunteered to help facilitate, our local elections earlier this month. Congratulations to all those who were successful in their bid to help lead us for the next two years. And also to those who weren't. Even if things didn't come out the way you wanted them to, you should be proud! Everyone on the ballot showed a commitment to our local union structure, and a willingness

to help lead us into the next two years. Two years that are not going to be easy, by any means, and being willing to step up to the plate should not go unnoticed. With all that is going on in this state currently, we all have our work cut out for us, and seeing so many names on the ballot shows that we are interested in our future, and willing to do our part. Thank you to all!

I also want to thank AFSCME Local 1668 for it's vote of confidence in me as your President. I am proud to represent each and every one of you, and am looking forward to doing so for the next two years. I commit to you that I will do so professionally and

passionately. I believe in what we are doing, and our right to do it. The union philosophy is something I truly believe in. I was born and raised in a strong union family, so it is something that I believe in strongly. I honestly believe that unions have benefited all workers in countless ways over the last decades, and our right to bargain collectively and to call ourselves a union is something worth fighting for. I think this is something we owe to those that came before us. They didn't struggle, and too often give their lives, so we could just lay down now. We need now more than ever to show

**Union Meetings** are every first Thursday of the month: Next meeting will be February 7th 2013 at 4:00 p.m.

**E-board** meetings are every third Thursday of the month: Next meeting will be February 21st 2013 at 4:00 p.m.



The Newsletter can be found online at:  
[www.afscme1668.org](http://www.afscme1668.org) and  
[facebook.com/afscme1668](https://www.facebook.com/afscme1668)

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## Vice President's Report

Hello everyone

I Would like to start by saying Happy New Year to you all. I hope everyone had a wonderful time off.

Second I would like to congratulate everyone who won in the elections I am so proud of everyone who stepped up to represent our local.

Third I would like to thank all of you who supported me through out my time as Vice President. I really enjoyed doing the newsletter it was an amazing experience one that I will treasure all of my life.

We have had some unfortunate event occur these past

two months. Please take a moment and remember the Page Family, Mark Robinson, and Jimmy Nelson they all had someone pass. Our deepest condolences to you all.

Now on to business. We all have a hard road to travel as union brothers and sister, and as the late great Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. says "In our glorious fight for civil rights, we must guard against being fooled by false slogan, such as 'right to work'. Folks he said this back in 1961 so right to work is not new it has been affecting people for a long time why are we just waking up to this? The rest of the

speech was handed out at the Union meeting and when I saw the date I was shocked.

I am not giving up on my union I will stay active and I will fight until I can't anymore.

Once again thanks you all  
In solidarity

Val Armstrong

## Grievance Up-Date

Filed Two Grievances on closure pay.

have been received due to Holiday and vacations.

Scheduled to hear 6 grievances

PERA Request to make sure no one was in a no pay status

NO grievance answers

## Chief Steward's Report

Happy New Year 2013 to all. I hope the New Year finds you well. I would like to first start out by saying thank you to all of you that have supported me not only through the elections, but always. It is truly my pleasure to represent you and our great Union. I know that these difficult times find us all worried and uncertain of our future. I believe that we will all need to stand together and show a united front to our employer. Your continued support of that effort means the world to mean, not only personally but professionally as well. We are all in this together, regardless of the future and what it holds. This election has also brought to mind, the concerns that you, our members may be having. As I was out talking with people, I expressed the need to hear from you, and what your concerns are. If you do not share them with the leadership, we cannot resolve them. We cannot change or at the very least, have a dialog about the issue, if we don't know about it. Again, I appreciate your support in the past and going forward. We must remain united.

Some recent issues that have arouse I would like to address now. There is language in the contract that speaks of the Designated Eligible Individual. (DEI) This is the new Article

20. As we have members who can take advantage of this language, I feel the need to explain some of the benefits. It is designed so that individuals living together, can receive benefits such as Health Insurance, for their significant others. There are certain obligations you have to meet which are outlined in the new Article 20. The reason for my explanation is this; you do not have to add this you DEI to your Health Insurance to take advantage of all the benefits. For example, if you and your DEI both work here, you don't necessarily want to cover each other on the same insurance plan. However, other benefits can be useful, such as the unfortunate event of death. You still should claim each other as DEI's in order to use these other benefits such as bereavement leave, sick leave, etc.... You would have to fill out a form at Human Resources in order to do that. The rules and information needed are listed in Article 20 and I encourage you to take advantage of these benefits.

The Annual Leave language has also been miss understood. You can still "plan" for your annual use of Annual Leave in the month of January. This allows us to make travel arrangements and the University to plan for their need for

staffing as well. Planning in January is done in advance of and that is allowed for by seniority for requests made in January for another time frame, except for that current month of January. If you make a request on January 5, to take the 3rd week off, in January, that would still be considered a first come first serve request. If you are denied Annual Leave ( in advance) then you have the right to grieve it, but you also have the right to work out with the Supervisor, a mutually agreeable time that would be beneficial for your request. **There should not be any "blanket" denials because its too far to project, or you don't have the time in your bank at the time of your request, assuming you can reasonably have that time available at the time period requested.** The whole point of the January Request model is to prepare and plan for a vacation. Obviously there has been a lot of discussion around this issue and I hope that this will clear it up a bit. I also want to remind everyone that after July 1, 2013, they will not approve Annual Leave for days requested in advance. If you request two weeks in January, to be used in December, and for some unforeseen reason, you run out of time, you will be considered AWOL by the employer if you

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do not report to work. You have to keep track of your A/L on your own. They are not going to do it for you. One last reminder, you can only carry over 60 hours of Annual Leave into July 1, 2013. So make sure you use it before you lose it.

We recently signed a Letter of Understanding in regards to a new Baker Position in the BC. This was voted on at our last Membership meeting as this results in a slight change to the CBA. It is understood that this opportunity will lead to job security and a future plans to fill the current F-5 Baker Position, should it become vacant in the future. This position will require some on the job training for

the incumbent. The person that goes through this training should ultimately have the skills necessary to fill that position and thereby keeping that work in house!

We are working with the University to establish a training program in Landscape services. There are not many details to share right now. Several details need to be worked out as of this date. I for one, am excited about this opportunity and will continue to inform you of this as we move closer to an agreement. This issue has been a very sore subject in regards to some grievances that we have processed and I hope that this opportunity will be a huge success for Land-

scape services and its employees.

I would like to thank all of the former Officers, Divisional Stewards, Stewards and Bargaining Representatives and those continuing to on to serve in those capacities. This work is never easy and take great dedication by those who are elected to fill them. I congratulate those who will be serving for the next two years. There will be District Steward elections in the very near future. We will also schedule Steward Training following those elections. Thank you again for all those who are willing to dedicate themselves to our great Union! Past, Present and Future!

In Solidarity,  
Kathi Babbitt

***"Solidarity is what made us so great. Solidarity is what makes us strong."***

our solidarity, and our resolve. We need to stay together as one. Solidarity is what made us so great. Solidarity is what makes us strong. Solidarity is what will get us through these challenging times! We are one Union, and together we cannot be destroyed!

Another thing to think about going into this new year, is taking a moment to recommit ourselves to our jobs, as well as our union. The long winter weeks can get us down a little bit, so take a moment to reflect

on the things we have. We all are fortunate to enjoy steady employment with decent wages and benefits. We're fortunate to be part of such a great organization as AFSCME, and even better to be part of Local 1668. Sometimes we lose sight of the good things. We forget that in this day things could be a lot worse. We all know somebody who isn't as fortunate as we are. So let's all recommit ourselves to continue doing what Local 1668 has been doing for over 50 years... Making WMU happen! You all do

things each and every day that makes WMU happen. You all provide a service to the WMU community with a level of expertise and dedication that we should all be proud of. We make a difference in our student's lives every day. We are AFSCME, we are proud, and we are going to make 2013 another year in the great history of our local!

Thank you to each and every member of AFSCME Local 1668!

In solidarity,  
Dennis