



A **Real Voice** for Quality Public Services

October 25, 2010

ARE COLA's (COST OF LIVING ADJUSTMENT) BACK FOR GENERAL COUNTY EMPLOYEES? 1000 FOR STRENGTH

After stacks of petitions, untold numbers of phone calls to Supervisors and members attending the Personnel and Reorganization Committee meeting, FCGEU members have another victory to celebrate!

Just recently, the Personnel Committee directed staff to move forward with a proposal, which would

- **Award MRA's (COLA's) to general county employees in the first pay period in July, just like uniform employees and teachers!**
- **Cash bonus for employees who do their job well.**

FCGEU members will now work on lobbying the board to fund the MRA in the next budget cycle.

Members aren't spending too long celebrating this victory, though, as there is still work to be done to make Pay For Performance truly fair for all general county employees.

Under the current proposal, Pay for Performance still has a variable rate based on scoring from your supervisor. This amount – though subject to change - has been reduced to 4% since the MRA may now be awarded. This will help to reduce the disparity between grades and also the disparity with pay for minorities. However, this only reduces that disparity, it doesn't eliminate it. FCGEU will continue the fight to reform the Pay for Performance system until a system is in place that allows all county employees to obtain a fair and equitable raise.

Watch this space, <http://www.fcgeu.org> and make sure to attend monthly membership meetings to stay informed on the latest developments!

FCGEU just hit another milestone with over 800 members! And the fastest growing union in Fairfax County (and in Virginia!) continues to move towards the goal of hitting 1000 by the end of 2010. That included voting in 81 new members at the October membership meeting.

How can you be a part of helping your union grow? Have you talked to your co-workers about becoming members and shared with them our recent victories?

The staff is always happy to come to your work site and provide more information to your co-workers about the union. Call our office at 571-432-0209 to set up a meeting at your location.

And, you'll notice all our newsletters now have a membership card on page 4. Why not use it today to add another new member?

FCGEU ELECTION RESULTS

Elections were recently held for the offices of President and Secretary of FCGEU. President Karen Conchar has been re-elected to a two year term.

Our new secretary is Paula Woodrum. Paula has worked in Fire and Rescue for 25 years where she's currently a Management Analyst II and sworn Assistant Fire Marshall assigned to the Hazmat Technical Support Branch of the Fire Prevention Division. Paula got involved in FCGEU because "as a long time employee in public safety I know the importance of a strong employee union."

Have you been wanting to get more involved in your union? There are lots of ways you can help! Contact any of the officers for more information or call us at 571-432-0209.



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UPCOMING HEALTH CARE CHANGES

The changes to health care options for general county employees continue to be a major concern to FCGEU members. A survey monkey online poll sponsored by FCGEU showed a surprisingly high number of county employees were still unaware of the upcoming changes and how they would be affected.

Your union has been working on this issue from two perspectives.

1. Education— FCGEU held Health Care Forums throughout the county, educating employees about the upcoming changes and giving members a chance to ask representatives from Human Resources, including the Director, about the changes directly.
2. Changing the County’s Proposal— Advocating that the Board of Supervisors take action that will offset the proposed costs to employees. The survey and forums made it clear that general county employees are being burdened with additional costs for health care at a time when they can least afford it.

You as FCGEU members will have the opportunity to make your voice heard. Continue to watch the website, attend membership meetings and read these newsletters for information on how you can help effect change.

LEADERSHIP RETREAT

Earlier this month, 15 union members from across the county came together for an energetic and inspiring 3-day Leadership Retreat. The theme was “Building a Strong Union at the Worksite.” Members discussed what it takes to build a strong union, shared their stories of why they joined FCGEU, and spoke about how we can partner together to make Fairfax a better place to work and live.



“Being a Union member has empowered me and allowed me to share my vision with others,” said FCGEU member and library employee Karol Quinn, who attended the Retreat. “It’s important that county employees join FCGEU so that we can have an impact on the decisions that effect us all.”

Plans are already under way for the next retreat for this energetic group of leaders.

To find out how you can become a Leader in your Union, contact the office at 571-432-0209

NEW MEMBER SERVICES HOTLINE

Our new toll-free members services hotline is here to serve you!

If you’ve run into something you need our help with, call us at 877-934-4460. A staff member will call to get the details of your concern and a representative will follow up within 48 hours to provide assistance.

We’re here to help!

FCGEU Executive Board

Karen Conchar,
President (DPWES)

Joe Wilhelm,
Vice President (FMD)

Paula Woodrum
Secretary

Travvis Mahrer,
Director (Police)

Yvonne Dabney,
Director (Fire & Rescue)

John Bails,
Director (FMD)

Jon Miskell,
Director (Housing)



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The Union at Work

NEW MEMBER BENEFITS

The benefits of being an FCGEU member continue to grow. In addition to the benefits available to all members through our Union Plus affiliation (<http://www.unionplus.org>), BJs has just announced special discounts available to FCGEU members who join or renew their membership.

FCGEU members pay only \$35 for a membership, a savings of \$10 off the regular price. And the membership is for 15 months rather than the normal 12. FCGEU members will also get a second card at no extra charge.



For those who are BJs rewards members, you will earn 2% back on most purchases. And for new or existing rewards members, the membership fee is only \$70.

These special discounts are not available at any BJs store. You can only get them by getting an application from FCGEU. Call the union office at 571-432-0209 to get the form.

The other exciting new benefit is a discount for FCGEU members at XSport Fitness Clubs. They have locations in Alexandria and Merrifield and are offering FCGEU members an annual membership for only \$125, rather than the normal \$149 fee. And monthly membership fees are \$42 for union members, an improvement over the \$49 for non-union members. You can find out more at <http://www.xsportfitness.com> To get this discount show your county ID and tell them you're with FCGEU.

NEXT FCGEU MEMBERSHIP MEETING - CHANGE

There has been a change of location for our next membership meeting. The November meeting will be held November 10th from 12 noon to 1 p.m. in the Burkholder Building at 10700 Page Avenue. We hope to see you there!

ELECTION 2010 - MAKE YOUR VOICE HEARD!

Want to make sure your voice is heard on election day?

Want to help pro-working families candidates? Join your fellow union members in knocking on doors and making phone calls for candidates who support working families.



Meet at the Union office (11198 Lee Hwy, Suite D3, Fairfax, VA) for canvasses at 10 am on Saturday, October 23rd and 10 am on Saturday October 30th; or meet at the Union offices for phone banks at 6 pm on Tuesday, October 26 and Thursday, October 28. But space is limited! So, reserve your spot today by contacting David at david.broder@seiu.org or calling the union office at 571-432-0209.

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