Who’s in Local 34?

Job Classifications Covered by Our Contract

- Case Management Assistants
- Community Health Specialists
- Chemical Clinical Health Specialists
- Child Protection Social Workers
- Child Support Officers
- Clinical Nursing Specialists
- Community Health Workers
- Corrections Counselors
- Dental Assistants and Hygienists
- Financial Case Aids
- Health Care Assistants
- Health Care Quality Improvement Specialists
- Human Services Representatives
- Interpreters
- Licensed Practical Nurses
- Medical Assistants
- Medical Examiner Investigator Assistants
- Medical Examiner Technicians
- MHP Medical Services Coordinator
- Psychiatric Social Workers
- Psychologists and Clinical Psychologists
- Public Health Nurses
- Record Information Specialists
- Sentencing To Serve Crew Leaders
- Social Workers and Senior Social Workers
- Special Programs Counselors
- Sterile Processing Technicians
- Training Specialists
- Veterans Service Representatives
- Volunteer Coordinators
- WIC Public Health Nutritionists

Final Nominations Report—Jody Stadler, Nominations Chair

Final nominations took place at the March 7, 2018 General Assembly with the following names put forward:

President: Alex Erickson, Grace Baltich
Vice President: Kay Powell, Tamika Hannah
Treasurer: Paul Madison
Sergeant-at-Arms: Andrea Lazo-Rice
Chief Steward: Brian Olson, Remy Huerta-Stemper
Member-at-Large: Bobbie Miller Thomas, Dawn Coburn-Paden, Sean Watkins, Ynuén Ávila
(3 positions)
Trustee: Christina Eichorn, Kathy Kelly
(3 positions)

Minneapolis Labor Federation Delegate: Grace Baltich, Jean Diederich, Kay Powell, Kenneth W. Garnier,
(5 positions)

Minneapolis Labor Federation Alternate: Deborah Konechne, Maggie Keating, Rhonda Griffin
(6 positions)

St. Paul Labor Federation Delegate: Justin Dempsey, Kathy Kelly
(5 positions)

St Paul Labor Federation Alternate: 
(6 positions)

The uncontested offices of Treasurer, Sergeant-at-Arms, Trustee and Regional Labor Federation delegates/alternates were all elected by uncontested ballot.

The contested offices of President, Vice President, Chief Steward and Member-at-Large have all been forwarded to the Elections Committee to prepare ballots for the election via US Mail in April.

Respectfully,

Jody Stadler, Nominations Chair
Happy Spring—right? Not so sure about that with the weather we have had recently but hope does spring eternal (my daughter would be so proud of that play on words).

April will be a busy month. We have ballots going out in the mail for our contested officer elections—see the Nominations report on page 1 and Elections Chair report on page 3. Please use your freedom to vote for the candidate(s) of your choice and return your ballot before the deadline of April 23, 2018.

We have elections for two events at the April 4, 2018 General Assembly:

**Netroots Nation** held in New Orleans August 2—4, 2018 —the local voted to send up to four members covering 3 days lost time, roundtrip airfare, lodging for 4 nights (double occupancy—if you choose to have your own room you pay for 1/2 the cost of the room), registration and per diem of $74.00 for 4.5 days.

**Midwest School for Women Workers** held at the U of M June 25—28, 2018 at the U of M campus— the local voted to send up to 10 members covering 4 days lost time, mileage and cost of registration (covers parking, lunch, snacks and 2 dinners).

Please plan to attend the April General Assembly held at 5:30 PM in HSB 110, 525 Portland Ave (corner of Portland Ave & 6th St) if you are interested in putting your name forward for either event.

**Council 5 Executive Board.** Please join me in congratulating Alex Erickson on his election to fill the West Metro vacancy at the meeting on Thursday, March 22, 2018. He joins Kenneth W. Garnier, Kathy Kelly, Sarah Sosa and myself on the Board.

**Janus related update from President Lee Saunders:**

“Well, that didn’t take long. At the AFSCME Leadership Summit we warned that our opponents will spend millions of dollars to get members to quit AFSCME. This morning, their opening salvo was reported in Politico, a Washington DC news outlet.

“A new campaign— “My Pay My Say” - is launching a $10 million effort around the Janus vs. AFSCME labor case, according to the donors familiar with the effort. The right-to-work supports, led by the Michigan-based Mackinac Center for Public Policy, are planning a national communication and mobilization effort aimed at all public-sector employees.”

Visit [http://www.mypaymysay.com/](http://www.mypaymysay.com/) to read the lies they will tell our members online, through phone calls, through hostile employers and even by knocking on their doors.

It’s now or never, sisters and brothers,
Lee A. Saunders, President, AFSCME

We all need to stay on top of the lies that the anti-worker and right-to-work groups are going to be bombarding us with. Their only goal is rip unions to shreds. They see us as all that is in their way to have workers be subservient to the employer. We stand for workers everywhere and for worker rights everywhere. This is a fight we cannot afford to lose. For talking points for you to use see [http://afscmemn.org/janus](http://afscmemn.org/janus) on the Council 5 web page.
Elections report—Jean Diederich, Elections Chair

The elections for the contested offices of President, Vice President, Chief Steward and Member-at-Large will be held in April. The Elections Committee will prepare the ballots which will be sent out from the Council 5 office.

Voting will be done by mail-in ballot in the following manner: Beginning Monday, April 2nd, a ballot will be mailed to each member’s last known address. A self-addressed stamped envelope and a balloting envelope will be provided to return the marked ballot. All offices will be voted on by the general membership. Members will have until Monday, April 25th, to return their marked ballot. Any ballots postmarked after April 23rd will not be counted.

Ballots will be counted on Thursday April 26, 2018 at 5:30 PM at the Local 34 office, Room 488, United Labor Center Building, 312 Central Ave. NE., Minneapolis.

If you have moved recently and want to make sure that we have your current address or if you are currently a Fair Share fee payer and would like to sign a dues authorization card in order to be eligible to vote in this election, please contact the President, Jean Diederich, at 612-348-0266 or one of the other officers or stewards listed in the monthly newsletter or call the Council 5 Member Action Center at 651-450-4990.

The following has been sent to all the candidates, officers and stewards of our local:

Congratulations on your nominations for our 2018 officer/trustee elections. Here are the rules that we follow:

You are not able to use any union resources for your campaign:

> No posting candidate information on union bulletin boards
> No posting candidate information on our social media platforms such as our Local 34 Facebook page, web site or newsletter
> You are not able to campaign for office in conjunction with any union activity such as a union meeting, Meet & Confer, labor lunch, etc.
> You cannot use any membership list you might have in your possession for conducting our union business to solicit members – per the Confidentiality and Nondisclosure agreement, you are not able to use any of the information on our various lists for your candidacy. # 4 on that agreement reads as follows: “Recipient agrees to use the data for daily business use as an affiliate of AFSCMEMN. Recipient shall not use this data for any other purpose or disclose it to other third party except where a business need arises and a Confidentiality Agreement is in place. The Recipient agrees to hold the Information in trust and confidence.”
> You cannot approach members in their worksite at their desks or workstations.

You are able to do the following:

> Ask the Council 5 office to mail out a campaign piece and they will do so but you will be asked to pay for the cost of the mailing up front before they do an actual mailing. Any requests must be submitted to our Field Representative, Jolene Catudio and the cost of any mailing must be pre-paid by the candidate before it is completed by Council 5.
> You are also able to, on your own time, set up times to do Meet & Greets in a breakroom that is away from the employee work areas.
> You can hand out campaign literature outside of the workplace as people come into or leave work.

I ask that everyone be courteous and follow the above rules. They work well and prevent any hint of campaign impropriety or fodder for an election challenge.

Notice of the elections was sent out to all our members in the same letter giving them the notice of nominations. Ballots will be mailed out April 2nd and are due back by April 23rd. Any envelope postmarked after 4/23/18 will not be accepted. Ballots will be counted in the Local 34 office the evening of Thursday, April 26th. Each candidate is allowed to have one observer present. You do need to let me know who that observer will be by no later than Monday, April 23rd.

As Council 5 recently posted on their web page, let’s make America great again – be kind.

Thank you so much,

Jean Diederich, Elections Chair
Child Protection Workers Push for More Training, Much Faster

Child protection workers and other advocates for kids are strongly backing improved training for workers and other solutions to help the besieged system.

AFSCME members from Locals 34 and 151 testified along with other children’s advocates before the Senate Committee on Human Services Reform Finance and Policy Wednesday.

Caseloads across the child protection system have soared since well-intended reforms led to an increased number of reports, a jump in investigations, more children being placed out of their homes and a shortage of foster care placements.

“Our workforce is in crisis,” said Traci LaLiberte, who heads the U of M’s Center for Advanced Studies in Child Welfare. “Our state training system is unable to meet the needs currently and into the future … and to address all the needs that have been created as a result of the child welfare reforms that really have tried to move the state in a positive direction.”

She encouraged lawmakers to pass Senate File 2979 to create an academy to train workers and study high turnover rates.

“What is happening now is people are not getting training,” LaLiberte testified. “They’re getting full workloads, and they’re leaving before they even get to the training.”

David Yang of Local 34 says it took him four months to get training in Hennepin County after he started. AFSCME members in some counties report that wait is now as long as nine months. The training issue is made worse by high turnover.

Ramsey County child protection worker Melissa Dolan of Local 151 has a caseload of 18 families and 34 children, and a 19th case just arrived, a common scenario. The three AFSCME members who testified Wednesday represent 100 children between them.

When Dolan started her job in 1980, her caseload averaged 10 families. That’s the recommended amount. “It gave me time to mentor other workers,” Dolan says. “It gave me time to work intensively with families. When we build a trusting relationship with families, they’re much more willing to listen and the chances of reunification greatly improve.”

Now, she says, senior workers have little time to train new coworkers. “We need more workers, we need more training and we need more support,” Dolan told lawmakers. Eric Jayne of Local 151 told lawmakers that child protection workers like him are responsible for making sure kids and their families get services including mental health and addiction treatment, medical referrals and behavioral support. They visit kids and check in with their parents, foster families, Guardians ad Litem and schools.

Then there’s the paperwork, which takes 40 hours a week, and a computer system that’s so antiquated, it requires 150 clicks just to change an address on a case plan, Jayne says. (He counted.) Caseworkers often have to put paperwork aside so they can focus on kids, but that can result in financial penalties for counties.

Along with a training academy, AFSCME members are asking lawmakers to:

● Establish and enforce safe caseload standards and provide adequate funding to meet those standards in a reasonable time.

● Hire case aides so workers can spend more time doing social work, and less on onerous paper work. Repeal or suspend financial penalties that counties incur – 10 to 20 percent of child protection grant allocation dollars – when they can’t meet timeline standards.

● Fund opioid treatment programs to reunite families faster and more often.

● Provide automatic eligibility to the Child Care Assistance Program for foster care providers to help cover the cost of child care. That would help recruit more foster parents, provide more placement options for kids and reduce caseloads.

“These are children who are valuable, they are lovable,” Jayne says. “They deserve a permanent home. They deserve to have child protection workers who have the time so they can actually be a positive force in their lives. Currently, it’s difficult to have the opportunity to be that positive force in their lives – and not only their lives, but their parents’ lives so the kids can come safely home.”

The committee recommended the training academy bill pass, and sent it on to the Committee on State Government Finance and Policy and Elections.

Hat tip: Lynette Kalsnes, AFSCME Council 5
After months of back and forth, Community Health Specialists and the County reached a tentative agreement on wage opener negotiations after first voting to join AFSCME Local 34 in August 2017. Community Health Specialists will be receiving a 1.5% increase across the range retroactive to August 20, 2017. With regularly scheduled contract negotiations right around the corner, Community Health Specialists have made a big jump forward, but it wasn’t easy, and their determination and dedication eventually made it impossible for the County to say “no”.

When a job class “accretes” through a previous agreement that allows a job class with 50% + 1 support to join our union as Community Health Specialists did, there is no legal necessity for the employer to enter into wage negotiations. Often, an employer will offer nothing whatsoever to the newly organized group. As time is on the employer’s side, workers will often grow frustrated or begin to feel like their efforts to organize, not immediately bearing results, were perhaps not worth their time and effort.

Community Health Specialists resisted the temptation to turn against each other or give into despair. Instead, they spoke to other organized workers in their workplaces and found solidarity. Community Health Specialists and other Local 34 members spoke loud and clear at the negotiations table and away from it—calling key County leadership and urging them to improve their offer for a job class that serves our County’s most disadvantaged residents and diverts “crisis outcomes” from our emergency rooms, shelters, jails and other public services.

In the end, County management listened because Community Health Specialists’ decision to organize won not just the pay increase they deserved, but the even playing field with the employer provided by collective bargaining. County management deserves credit for bargaining in good faith when Community Health Specialists finally got the table. And based on what this group of workers has accomplished in less than a year, it’s not hard to imagine they’ll be in an even better place in 5, 10 or 15 years from now. That’s the union difference.

Your Community Health Specialist negotiation team was lead by Alex Erickson and Justin Dempsey of Local 34 and Jolene Catudio, Joe Broge and Marybeth Juesten of AFSCME Council 5.

Over the past few months you may have had somebody speak to about a contract survey. The purpose of the contract survey is to make sure that Local 34’s Master Contract Committee and eventual Table Team has a good idea of what Local 34 members want to see prioritized in the next contract. Our current contract will expire on December 31, 2018. Negotiations for the next contract are set to begin in May. Thank you to membership Secretary Konechne for her work in distributing and collecting many of these surveys, and to super tabulators Justin Dempsey, Pat Regan, Kay Powell, Grace Baltich, Alex Erickson, Brenda Louise, Lindsay Schwab and Deb Konechne who met at the Local 34 office on February 28th to tabulate survey results.

In order, the five highest concerns were:

> Yearly General Wage/Cost of Living Wage Increase
> Maintain 5% Step Wage Increases
> Add steps to top of pay range/market rate adjustment
> End to any disciplines or terminations based on race, age, gender or other discriminations
> Increase vacation and PTO Accruals/improve accrual schedule

Assorted Updates: T-Shirts, Local 34 Family & Friends Night With The Lynx, EWS Time Off Policy

After careful deliberation and research, we have approved purchase of t-shirts for every member in Local 34. We are receiving the invoice today from American Unions Screenprinting & Embroidery (March 26th) and I am hopeful we can get the t-shirts before the Contract Campaign Kickoff Rally on May 7th. We will be having people sign for their shirts (and recently arrived lapel pins) individually so nobody is left out. When / where t-shirts are being distributed will be well publicized ahead of time. If you are not able to be in the office on the day of the handout, we can arrange to get you your shirt at a later date. Our own webstore will be up in the next few months for people to purchase apparel or gear on an individual basis, with 10% of proceeds being set aside for scholarships for children of Local 34 members.

Group ticket pricing has been released from the Lynx, meaning our purchase can be finalized. Our account executive is working on a flyer to publicize the event. We are going with a maximum of (4) tickets purchased per member to ensure as many members and families can attend as possible. Local 34 Family & Friends Night With The Lynx will take place on their home opener at the Target Center on Sunday, May 20th. Get hyped! To ensure equal opportunity, Jean will be emailing out instructions when the weblink for purchasing tickets goes live. We will be publicizing ahead of time as well so people can be prepared.

The onerous EWS Time Off Policy has been submitted to arbitration by AFSCME Council 5. We will make our case about management’s decision to unilaterally change the way Sick / Vacation / PTO outside of contract negotiations to an arbitrator within, I hope, the next two months. I can’t wait.

1:1 Organizing Conversations training was a success, thank you Deb Konechne and Grace Baltich for your work here as well. We will continue to train our members on how to have these conversations with the goal of having a 1:1 conversation with everybody in our union who is not yet a member before the Janus decision arrives.

In solidarity,
Alex
March General Assembly Highlights:
Consent agenda approved

Field Presentative Catudio reported that a Meet & Confer is being set up to discuss issues of concern for our CMA and STS Crewleaders

Master Negotiations Committee members approved – Karen Anderson, Grace Baltich, Julio Blee Alarcon, Kevin Chavis, Justin Dempsey, Jean Diedrich, Catherine Dunaway, Dennis Dyce, Christina Eichorn, Alex Erickson, Kenneth W. Garnier, Sally Hoover, Maggie Keating, Kathy Kelly, Deb Konechne, Paul Madison, Sheila Mattson, Kathleen O’Brien, Brian Olson, David Paurus, Kay Powell, Patrick Regan and Lindsay Schwab. This group meets with members of other Hennepin County AFSCME locals to craft a proposal to present to the Employer for contract negotiations. A Table Team, the group that actually sits down at the table with the Employer, will be appointed at a later date.

Issue of equitable pay for Social Workers was discussed. The membership present – officers, stewards and activists – all voiced strong support for the efforts of our Social Workers who do the same work as our Public Health Nurses for as-sessments to gain an adjustment in wages to that of the Public Health Nurses – equitable pay for equitable work.

Election of Sherri Peterson, Dawn Coburn-Paden, Paul Madison and Grace Baltich to attend the Nellie Stone Johnson Scholarship dinner and President given the authority to appoint four more members to fill our table for eight at the event. (Note: Bobbie Miller Thomas was appointed after the meeting.)

Election of Rhonda Griffin, Tamika Hannah, Paul Madison and Detra Miller to attend the CBTU (Coalition of Black Trade Unionists) Convention held in Orlando, Florida May 23 – 28, 2018

Alex Erickson reported that the transition to our new Local 34 web page has been completed and the new version is up & running. Please check it out at www.afscmelocal34.org. He expressed his thanks to the former web page guru, John Herzog, for his assistance in the process. A motion was passed to send John a gift card from Jax as a small token of our appreciation for creating and main-taining the web page since 2002.

Bobbie Miller Thomas appointed our Local 34 MAT Coordinator

Motion approved to conduct a food drive at our May 2, 2018 General Assembly with the food collected being split between CEAP and VEA, our partners at our South Suburban and North-west Human Service Centers

March Executive Board Highlights
New Local 34 lapel pins have been ordered and are on their way.
Motion approved to send up to 10 members to the Midwest School for Women Workers held June 25—28, 2018 at the U of M campus. With the local to cover 4 days lost time, mileage and cost of registration (covers parking, lunch, snacks and 2 dinners) with election held at the April 4., 2018 General Assembly.
Motion approved to field a bowling team of four members to represent Local 34 at the 8th Annual Labor Bowl held May 3, 2018 at a cost of $400.00. Alex Erickson is serving as point person if you are interested in being a member of the team.
Motion approved to endorse the May 1, 2018 International Workers Day March for Immigrant and Worker Rights.
Motion approved to appoint Delia Dilday, Tasheema Hopson, Sherri Peterson & Amorette Robeck as stewards effective 4/1/18 and to accept resignation of Jennifer Merritt as steward as of that date.
Motion approved to authorize Jean Diedrich, Alex Erickson, Grace Baltich, Brian Olson and Kenneth Garnier with advice from Jolene Catudio to approve housekeeping changes to contract prior to the opening of negotiations. The changes will not affect the terms or conditions of the contract but will clean it up.

Get discounted tickets for holiday events and family activities
The Minnesota Employee Recreation and Services Council offers many discounts on entertainment, sporting events, travel, vehicle buying, and more.

Discover Omada, a new wellness tool – Beginning March 20, the county is launching Omada, a new and easy-to-use online program that may help you lose weight, keep it off and reduce your risk of type 2 diabetes and heart disease. The program includes a wireless smart scale to track your weight, an Omada health coach, weekly online lessons and small group peer support.

Learn more about Omada
Find out if you are eligible for this program by watching a short video and taking a one-minute quiz. (https://go.omadahealth.com/hc). It is free for adult members (age 18+) who are enrolled in the Advantage or Standard health plans. You can earn 20 wellness points towards the 2019 health incentive.

To my fellow Local 34 members,
Very kind of you to send the well wishes and plant. I am working hard daily. I want the best result.

Paul Garaffa
I had the pleasure of attending the Nellie Stone Johnson Scholarship Program 31st Annual Dinner in March. The Nellie Stone Johnson Scholarship Program, founded in 1989, offers scholarships to minority students from union families. Nellie Stone Johnson left a long legacy of Activism, Union organizing, Community Organizing, Education Advocacy, and Political Involvement. A long-time resident of North Minneapolis, Mrs. Stone Johnson was the first black elected official in Minneapolis. She shaped Minnesota politics for 70 years, having served on the Democratic National Committee from 1979-1988. She served as Vice-President of Hotel and Restaurant International Union Local 665, VP of Minnesota Culinary Council Minneapolis Library Board, served on the Minnesota State University Board, Minnesota State Colleges and Universities Board of Trustees, and Minneapolis Urban League.

Per Wikipedia, "In 1924, she was hired as an elevator attendant at the all-male Minneapolis Athletic Club, earning $15 per week. After her wages were cut to $12.50, she began quietly organizing workers with the Minneapolis Hotel and Restaurant Workers union.[3][8] In 1936, she became a member and then vice president of AFL's Local 665, Hotel and Restaurant Workers union.[4][9]

Johnson met future Vice President Hubert Humphrey in 1941 at Duluth State College. She would later mentor him in civil rights issues.[3] In 1944, she was on the committee that merged the moderate Minnesota Democratic Party with the more radical Farmer–Labor Party, forming the Minnesota Democratic–Farmer–Labor Party (DFL).[8][10]

In 1945, she was elected to the Library Board and became the first black person to be elected to a citywide office in Minneapolis.[8]

Johnson was the main force behind the creation of state and local Fair Employment Practices departments, which later became the Minneapolis Civil Rights Commission and the state Human Rights Department.[3] In the 1940s she spearheaded the drive to create the Minneapolis Fair Employment Practices department, which was the first of its kind in the nation.[11] In 1955, she led the initiative to create a statewide version of the Minneapolis legislation, the Employment Practices Act of 1955.[3][8] She also authored the 1950 initiative from the Minneapolis NAACP that led to the desegregation of the US armed forces.[3][12]

In the 1960s, she raised money for the Freedom Marches of Martin Luther King. Johnson was a trustee of the Minneapolis Public Library and a board member of MnSCU. She received a lifetime achievement award from the Black Caucus of the American Association for Higher Education in 2000.[20]

"I've always been preaching a simple message, jobs, jobs, jobs. Clear back in 1950s, it was fashionable for white liberals to go out to dinner with black people. They'd take you to a nice restaurant if we can't afford to order in them."[15]

Nellie Stone Johnson has been an inspiration to me and to many generations. Her perseverance and steadfast belief in justice and the rights of working people, should encourage us to Persist! To keep fighting for racial and economic justice, for dignity and respect in the workplace, and access to education - despite the adversities we face in life.

Grace Baltich

Member-at-Large—Tamika Hannah

THE DREAM IN ACTION

Sisters and Brothers,

I have spent years organizing our worksites with others, meeting and listening to our members, building the Member Action Team and helping to coordinate the MAT. I am grateful for the opportunity to be able to represent our members and be a part of an organization that has the strong history that AFSCME has.

I believe that now more than ever, in this political climate, that solidarity will be the driving force to get us through the rough period ahead. One of the ways of building solidarity is through 1 on 1 conversations and figuring out what our commonalities are, and what unites us rather than what separates us.

Shortly we will be honoring the 50th anniversary of the death of one of our great leaders, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. April 4, 1968 was a day that has really shaped who I am as a person. On that day, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. lost his life while standing in solidarity with AFSCME sanitation workers striking in Memphis. Being that I share his birthday, I always felt connected to Dr. King and the causes he supported. I never knew how to go about contributing to the cause until I joined our union and became active in organizing, building relationships with our members, and joining the E board as an officer.

50 years later I am continuing Dr. King’s dream and hope to continue to contribute to this great work. I look forward to working together with all of our members to make our union as strong as it can be.

Ultimately Teamwork Makes the Dream Work.

In solidarity,

Tamika Hannah
Nuts and Bolts
A brief guide to your Local 34

LOCAL 34 OFFICERS

President—Jean M. Diederich
First Vice President — Alex Erickson
Second Vice President — Grace Baltich
Treasurer—Paul Madison
Secretary—David Yang
Membership Secretary— Deborah Konechne
Sergeant-At-Arms — Andrea Lazo-Rice
Senior Chief Steward — Brian Olson
Junior Chief Steward — Kenneth W. Garnier
Members-At-Large—
Angel Alexander
Tamika Hannah
Sametta Hill
Brenda Louise
Alexandra Marzolf
Kay Powell

AFSCME
We make America Happen

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“To be free, the workers must have choice. To have choice they must retain in their own hands the right to determine under what conditions they will work.”

SAMUEL GOMPERS.