

THE FEDERAL EMPLOYEE

FOR MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

Affiliated with the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers, AFL-CIO

High Stakes

Federal employees face most important election in a lifetime as candidates take firm positions on federal workforce issues. See pages 7-9



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William R. Dougan

Many of us over the years have acquired anecdotal evidence of the basic fundamental difference in philosophy between the Republican and Democratic parties when it comes to addressing economic issues such as the national debt and the budget. But if you are looking for a single document that clearly articulates the differences between the two parties on these and other issues, one need look no further than the 2012 national party platforms. After reading the two platforms, the importance of the upcoming election is abundantly clear.

This election is about very different views on what the role of government should be, what part federal employees should play in the delivery of goods and services by government, and how to pay for those goods and services delivered to the citizens of this nation. Following the November 6th election, federal employees and their unions will face vastly different futures based on which party controls Congress and the White House.

Republican control will dictate a future of a smaller federal government with a much-reduced role in serving the public. Refusal on the part of Republican leadership to consider raising taxes, even on millionaires and billionaires, forces reliance on cutting costs as their sole option for dealing with our debt and balancing the budget. The federal workforce would be projected to shrink by at least 10%, with the very real possibility of some federal agencies being consolidated or eliminated altogether. Federal salaries

would likely be reduced in addition to increased employee contributions to their retirement and health benefits. Simply put, federal employees will remain under attack and continue to be singled out for “unshared sacrifice.”

Democratic control will dictate a different future. Under their leadership, reliance on a combination of spending cuts and tax increases will likely result in changes to federal spending, but on a much smaller scale than that proposed by the Republicans. Little change in the regulatory role of the government would be anticipated. Fewer and smaller corresponding changes in federal salaries and employee contributions to retirement and health benefits would also be expected.

None of us can afford to sit this election out. Democracy is not a spectator sport; it demands participation. Each of us has an opportunity to shape history with our vote on November 6th. I urge you to consider supporting candidates who support the issues that are important to all of us as working men and women: creating and sustaining an economy that provides for and protects jobs; the ability to earn a living wage and benefits that help protect our families; providing for a retirement when we reach the end of our working career; and the belief that working men and women in this country and around the world are to be valued and respected for their contributions and accomplishments. The stakes could not be higher.

FROM THE DESK OF THE SECRETARY-TREASURER

On November 6th Americans will be voting for the next president, Congress, governors, and state officials who will run our country for the next four years. This article will focus on the importance of state and local labor councils and their vital role, not only in the upcoming elections, but for the labor movement. State and local labor councils are umbrella groups that include many unions in your geographic area. They are the heart of the labor movement, partnering with state and community organizations and conducting state, local and national campaigns to improve life for working families.

My local, NFFE Local 2109 in Watervliet, New York, is a current member of the Capital District Area Labor Federation (CDALF), located in Albany, NY. Local 2109 has been a charter member of this council since its founding. The CDALF normally meets monthly and addresses working family, labor, political, and legislative issues to improve the plight of the middle class and promote the labor movement. Participants include both public and private sector unions

across the capital district and state of New York. Collectively, we brainstorm and network to improve and develop working family issues to bring to the negotiating table and the halls of Congress. We participate in phone banks during local, state, and national elections. We also participate in strikes and pickets in support of our union brothers and sisters. We promote the labor movement through parades, picnics, and media interviews as a sign of solidarity for all.

The State Council of Machinists, through the IAM, has an affiliate in your state that is similar to the Capital District Area Labor Federation. It is imperative that all NFFE locals get connected with the movement in your area. By joining, you will make our collective voices heard in solidarity from the town hall to the halls of Congress!

In closing, both Finance Director Omar Arnold and I hope to see you all at the NFFE National Convention at the historic Benson Hotel in downtown Portland, OR from October 1-4. Please travel safely!



William D. Fenaughty

FROM THE DESK OF THE GENERAL COUNSEL

As you can tell throughout this edition of the Federal Employee, NFFE believes that this election will have a major impact on this country and the federal employees who support it. In thinking about the election, I was reminded of the last administration.

In 2006, when I was leaving a different federal employee union that I worked for, I filed several briefs with the FLRA for cases I was handling. I then went to work with a law firm that primarily handled private sector matters. In November 2009, as I was preparing to come to work with NFFE, the FLRA was just ruling on the matters I had handled in 2006. I know that many union representatives are frustrated at times with the Federal Labor Relations Authority, but it must be remembered that things are much better than they were.

Under the Bush Administration, the FLRA was severely neglected. At times, the Authority did not have a quorum, which meant that the FLRA could not issue decisions when reviewing arbitration awards. In some cases, this meant 2-3 years passed before an agency had to comply with an arbitrator's award. During the prior administration, both the general counsel and deputy general counsel positions of the FLRA were allowed to sit vacant. This meant that the regional directors were not able to issue complaints in ULP cases, no matter how strong or important the ULP case was.

To say that this brought the FLRA to a halt is an understatement. This is all a reminder that it is important to support candidates who will support collective bargaining, which means supporting candidates who will not allow the FLRA to stop functioning.



Stefan Sutich



Randy Erwin

FROM THE DESK OF THE LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR

The most important election in decades is just a few weeks away, and I am determined to do everything in my power to elect a president and a Congress that respects working people and federal employees.

So here's what I'm doing:

First, I am applying for an absentee ballot. Since I don't have early voting in my state I am voting absentee so that I will be free to participate in get-out-the-vote (GOTV) efforts on Election Day, November 6th. I'm also

requesting leave from work so I am completely free.

Second, I am contacting my local AFL-CIO central labor council and my local IAM State Council of Machinists. These are the labor groups I will be working with between now and Election Day to make an impact on this election. You can get this kind of information at www.nffe.org/takeaction.

Third, I'm researching the voting records of the candidates. I do not care

LEGISLATIVE

Up For Grabs: Key Races That Will

Although much of the excitement about the 2012 elections is surrounding the presidential candidates Barack Obama and Mitt Romney, it is likely that the changes we will see in the next few years will be influenced just as much by which of the two major parties control the U.S. House of Representatives and the U.S. Senate.

Although it's the President who signs bills into law, it is lawmakers in the House and Senate who draft the legislation. Which party controls these two chambers of Congress will have an enormous impact on the kind of change we are likely to see in the next few years.

That being said, the U.S. Senate is completely up for grabs in 2012. The Democrats are going into November with a slight majority over Republicans, but polls show Republicans are likely to pick up at least a few seats, making the margin for who will retain control of the Senate razor thin.

Below are candidates for six significant Senate races and their respective AFL-CIO voting records. These records reflect how supportive these candidates

have been on issues that impact working people, including federal employees.

Jon Tester – 88% Career Voting Record

Jon Tester (D – Montana) has voted in support of working families and federal employees on 88% of key votes as scored by the AFL-CIO. For example, on December 1, 2011 he **voted against** a proposal to extend the pay freeze for federal workers for an additional three years and significantly reduce the federal civilian workforce.

Scott Brown – 23% Career Voting Record

Scott Brown (R – Massachusetts) has voted in support of working families and federal employees on just 23% of key votes as scored by the AFL-CIO. For example, on December 1, 2011 he **voted in favor** of a proposal to extend the pay freeze on federal workers for an additional three years and to significantly reduce the federal civilian workforce.

if the candidates are Republicans or Democrats; I want to see candidates held accountable for their votes. If the candidates supported federal employees and working families, I want to see them reelected. If they throw federal employees and working families under the bus, I want them thrown out of office. My voting decisions will be informed decisions. You can find candidates' voting records at www.nffe.org/takeaction.

Fourth, I am educating myself about what I can and cannot do with regard

to politics and the Hatch Act. I want to educate the members of my local (I'm a member of NFFE Local 2) about the voting records of candidates for public office, but I want to be sure that I don't violate the law when doing so. You can get information on the do's and don'ts of federal employees and politics at www.nffe.org/takeaction.

Fifth, I am telling all my friends and family about how important this election is for me personally. If hundreds of thousands of jobs at federal

agencies get eliminated, which some candidates this election cycle are calling for, I might not have a job. The stakes are very high, and I want those that care about me to know that their vote is going to have a very real impact on me and my family.

Sixth and finally, I am getting a new pair of shoes (American-made New Balance). I'm going to be doing a lot of canvassing between now and Election Day, and I'm going to need a new pair to get me through this election cycle.

Decide Which Party Controls the Senate

Chris Murphy – 98% Career Voting Record

Chris Murphy (D – Connecticut) has voted in support of working families and federal employees on 98% of key votes as scored by the AFL-CIO, a truly outstanding voting record. For example, on February 19, 2011 he **voted against** an amendment to do away with step increases for federal workers.

Martin Heinrich – 100% Career Voting Record

Martin Heinrich (D – New Mexico) has voted in support of working families and federal employees on 100% of key votes as scored by the AFL-CIO, a perfect voting record. For example, on December 13, 2011 he **voted against** a bill to extend the federal pay freeze by an additional year, to reduce federal employees' take-home pay by significantly increasing the amount they must pay for their pensions, and to significantly reduce the value of federal employee pensions by moving from a "high three" to a "high five" calculation.

Claire McCaskill – 90% Career Voting Record

Claire McCaskill (D – Missouri) has voted in support of working families and federal employees on 90% of key votes as scored by the AFL-CIO. For example, on December 1, 2011 she **voted against** a proposal to extend the pay freeze for federal workers for an additional three years and significantly reduce the federal civilian workforce. Her opponent, Todd Akin (R – Missouri), has supported working families and federal employees on just 8% of key votes during his career in the U.S. House of Representatives. For example, on December 13, 2011 he **voted in favor** of a bill to extend the federal pay freeze by an additional year, to reduce federal employees' take-home pay by significantly increasing the amount they must pay for their pensions, and to significantly reduce the value of federal employee pensions by moving from a "high three" to a "high five" calculation.

Shelley Berkley – 95% Career Voting Record

Shelley Berkley (D – Nevada) has voted in support of working families and federal employees on 95% of key votes as scored by the AFL-CIO. For example, on December 13, 2011 she **voted against** a bill to extend the federal pay freeze by an additional year, to reduce federal employees' take-home pay by significantly increasing the amount they must pay for their pensions, and to significantly reduce the value of federal employee pensions by moving from a "high three" to a "high five" calculation. Her opponent, Dean Heller (R – Nevada), has supported working families and federal employees on just 7% of key votes during his career in the U.S. House of Representatives. For example, on February 19, 2011 he **voted in favor** of an amendment to do away with step increases for federal workers.

Seasonal Firefighters' Campaign for Health Care Victorious as White House Extends New Benefits



It is said that one must never doubt that a small group of committed individuals can change the world. John Lauer, a NFFE member and federal firefighter, did exactly that by succeeding in his campaign to extend health care benefits to the more than 8,000 wildland firefighters battling blazes all throughout the country.

The news came in late July as the White House announced an immediate end to the unfair federal regulations which left temporary seasonal employees like Lauer ineligible to buy into the federal employee health insurance plan. Under the new regulation, these firefighters may now participate in the plan – a modest change, but one that means the world to Lauer and his colleagues.

For NFFE National President William R. Dougan, a former temporary seasonal wildland firefighter himself, the victory had been a long time coming.

“No longer do our firefighters have to fear incurring thousands in medical bills if they are injured outside of the job, or if

their child gets sick,” said Dougan. “These brave individuals put their lives on the line every year to protect our homes and communities. I could not be more proud that this new policy returns the favor by giving them the protection they need.”

The campaign for benefits began two months ago when Lauer and some friends from the Custer, South Dakota-based Tatanka hotshot firefighting crew came together to start a petition on the website www.change.org. Asking friends, family, and coworkers to join the cause, the petition had just over 1,000 signatures by the time they left to battle the High Park wildfire outside of Fort Collins, CO. Working alongside his union, NFFE, Lauer used any spare time he had between shifts to spread the word and forward the cause. By the time he and his crew returned just a week later, the petition had reached over 90,000 signatures. Today that number stands at more than 126,000, with signatures from every state in the nation and several U.S. territories.

The story soon became a media sensation, spawning hundreds of print, digital,

TV, and radio appearances all across the country. Appearances in the NBC Nightly News, Associated Press, Washington Post, and other media heavyweights brought the issue to tens of millions more Americans as the campaign gathered steam. All the while, NFFE leadership continued working behind the scenes with leaders at the White House and OPM to develop a solution to this injustice.

After just two months from the petition's modest beginning, to this day, the results are unmistakable: every temporary seasonal wildland firefighter can sleep easy knowing that they are eligible to buy health insurance.

“This was one of those issues that made so much sense, it was just screaming for someone to change it,” said Dougan. “I want to thank President Obama and OPM Director John Berry for their diligent work in delivering this essential benefit to our brave firefighters. Now we look forward to working with them on developing a permanent solution.”

Finding a Permanent Solution to Temporary Seasonal Employee Health Care

Despite the victory for temporary seasonal firefighters, tens of thousands of other temporary seasonals are left uninsured. These dedicated employees work land management jobs for our government on a temporary seasonal basis, often in remote rural areas. When they reach an arbitrary annual limit on hours-worked, regulations require they be terminated until next year – irrespective of whether they are still needed to accomplish the agency’s mission. Our nation is fortunate that many of these dedicated individuals, despite the low pay and lack of benefits, return year after year to perform the same job.

To tackle the larger problem of all temporary seasonal employees lacking health insurance, the NFFE Forest Service Council and its former president, Mark Davis, worked tirelessly with Congress to introduce H.R. 6306, the Land Management Workforce Flexibility Act.

As the U.S. Forest Service firefighters working tirelessly out west demonstrate, our country greatly needs and benefits from its skilled temporary seasonal workforce. Providing these dedicated men and women with the rights and benefits they have earned through years of hard work is long overdue and the right thing to do.

Federal land management agencies have the power to convert temporary seasonal positions to permanent seasonal positions. However, they do not have the ability to convert temporary seasonal employees to permanent seasonal employees. This bureaucratic barrier often prevents high performing temporary seasonal employees from being selected for open permanent seasonal positions. As the Merit Systems Protection Board noted, “legal and procedural barriers...often preclude the consideration of many temporary employees for permanent positions regardless of how well they have performed.” This illogical personnel system is neither efficient nor effective.

H.R. 6306 would fix this dysfunctional system by removing outdated bureaucratic

barriers. Under H.R. 6306, after an employee accumulates 24 months of temporary service time (more than four seasons) and meets other relevant criteria, such as good performance, the employee would be authorized to compete for permanent jobs within their employing agency under the same merit promotion procedures available to other federal employees. An employee would also be eligible for placement in vacant permanent positions that feature identical duties as the temporary work he or she has already been performing effectively for more than 24 months.

To be clear, this legislation does not force agencies to convert temporary seasonal employees to permanent seasonal employees. It merely removes unintentional bureaucratic barriers preventing common sense and cost-effective conversions. It also establishes an efficient avenue for filling seasonal vacancies caused by attrition with experienced and skilled temporary seasonal employees.

We urge all NFFE-IAM members to call their members of Congress and ask them to support H.R. 6306.





Head to Head:

A Federal Employee's Guide to the 2012 Election

We are just weeks away from Election Day. As Americans, we have an enormous choice before us. Are we going to stick with President Obama and the change for which we overwhelmingly voted into office in 2008, or are we going to change course once again and elect Mitt Romney the 45th president of the United States?

By now you've probably heard the candidates and know where they stand on a variety of different issues. But do you know where the candidates stand on the issues that impact you most directly? Do you know where the candidates stand on issues that have a genuine effect on federal employees, like your pay, your retirement, your health insurance, or even your job?

In this article, we hope to give you an honest snapshot of where President Barack Obama and Governor Mitt Romney stand on issues impacting the federal workforce so you can make your own informed decision on Election Day.

Obama

Pay

President Obama agreed to a two-year pay freeze for civilians starting in 2011. After initially calling for a 0.5% pay adjustment for federal employees in fiscal year 2013 in the President's budget, Obama issued a letter to Congress indicating his intention to exercise the 0.5%

percent pay adjustment on April 1, 2013. This pay adjustment will go into effect unless the President is directed otherwise by Congress in funding legislation yet to be passed or other legislation.

Benefits

President Obama used his discretion under existing regulatory framework to extend health care benefits to seasonal

firefighters in the Forest Service and other land management agencies. He also signed into law a benefit giving federal employees credit toward their retirement annuities for accrued sick leave.

President Obama used his full discretion under the law to extend some benefits to the same-sex partners of federal employees. Although he is prohibited by law from offering full benefits to same-sex



partners, the Obama Administration has been supportive of legislation to level the playing field with regard to benefits for federal employees in same-sex domestic partnerships.

As part of a greater deficit reduction plan, President Obama has proposed raising the portion that federal workers pay for their pensions from 0.8% of their salary or wages to 2.0% over three years. He also signed into law a measure to increase pension contributions for new federal employees by 2.3% as part of a deal to extend unemployment benefits earlier this year.

Workforce

President Obama has not proposed any plans to reduce the federal workforce.

In his first term in office, President Obama directed agencies to hire more veterans and disabled employees. The Administration is committed to hiring 100,000 Americans with disabilities by 2015 and is encouraging government contractors to make similar workforce commitments.

President Obama overturned Don't Ask Don't Tell, a policy which prevented gays and lesbians from openly serving in the military.

Budget

As part of his reelection campaign, President Obama is proposing \$2 trillion in spending reductions as part of a balanced plan to reduce our deficits by over \$4 trillion over the next decade.

Citing the end of the war in Iraq and the drawdown of troops in Afghanistan, President Obama in his nomination acceptance speech pledged to use money we're no longer spending on war to pay down debt and create jobs. He also advocates rolling back large tax cuts for the wealthiest Americans that were implemented under the Bush Administration.

President Obama has indicated his preference for a balanced approach to reducing the deficit and preventing impending sequestration, but has stated he is prepared to implement the automatic cuts if that does not happen.

Contracting

In his first term, President Obama discontinued the contracting abuses that occurred during the Bush Administration's competitive sourcing program. He also implemented an initiative to bring work back in-house that is inherently governmental, closely related to inherently governmental, or was inappropriately moved to contractors.

President Obama also pledged to end unnecessary no-bid contracts and cost-plus deals, changes the administration said would save taxpayers \$40 billion annually.

Romney

Pay

Governor Romney has said that in his first term as President he would seek to align federal pay with that of workers in the private sector. According to his campaign, "Federal compensation exceeds private sector levels by as much as 30 to

40 percent when benefits are taken into account. This must be corrected." This figure includes both pay and benefits, and Romney has shied from putting an exact amount to the pay cut thus far in the campaign.

Governor Romney's campaign has also indicated support for the concept of so-called pay-for-performance pay plans. It is likely that Romney would seek to implement a move to pay-banding in the federal government similar to that which was implemented under the failed National Security Personnel System (NSPS) at the Department of Defense (DoD), a personnel system that was fully repealed in January of 2010.

Running mate Paul Ryan's fiscal 2013 budget would freeze federal pay through 2015, an additional three years. Governor Romney expressed strong support for the Ryan budget early in the campaign, but has since been quiet on the specifics of the plan.

Benefits

As mentioned above, Romney has indicated his intention to align federal compensation with that of the private sector. He has also stated that he believes federal employees are compensated 30-40 percent more than private sector workers. He has yet to specify how much he would cut from pay, retirement, and health care to meet his 30-40 percent goal.

Running mate Paul Ryan's fiscal 2013 budget proposed substantially raising the amount that federal employees contribute to their pensions and eliminating the supplemental benefit given to early retirees until they become eligible for Social Security. Again, Romney has been supportive of Ryan's plan in the recent past, but has shied away from endorsing the specifics outright during the campaign.

Continued on page 9

Workforce

Governor Romney supports a 10 percent reduction in the federal workforce, which would be achieved through a “1-for-2” system of attrition. This would result in the loss of roughly 200,000 federal jobs. He has also promised to review every federal program from top to bottom and eliminate those he perceives are not critical to our nation.

Budget

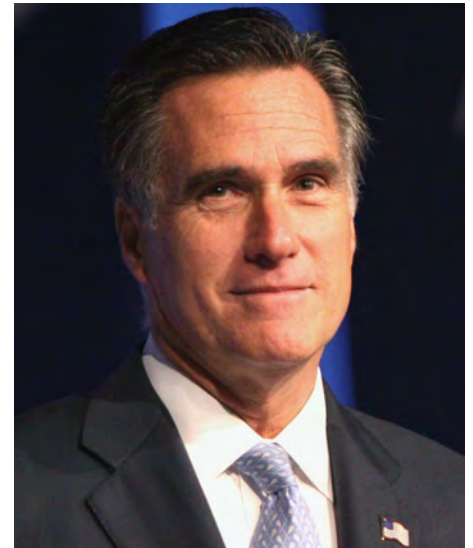
Governor Romney has pledged to greatly reduce funding for federal agencies. Romney has indicated that he would cap federal spending at 20 percent of gross domestic product (GDP). This would be accomplished by making deep cuts to ‘non-security discretionary spending,’ budget speak for the money that funds your agencies.

Governor Romney has vowed to repeal the 2010 Affordable Care Act, which he claims is adding billions to the budget deficit. His goal is to balance the federal budget and bring an end to borrowing money to fund the government.

Contracting

The Republican Party platform calls for privatization of airport screeners at TSA wherever possible. It also calls for a move toward privatization of mail delivery.

Industry groups believe a Romney Administration would trigger a shift to government privatization efforts more akin to the Bush Administration than the Obama Administration. “A Republican president and at least one house of Congress controlled by the Republicans would bring a strong likelihood of outsourcing coming back to the forefront of



the management debate,” said Larry Allen, president of the Allen Federal Business Partners in a recent quote picked up in *Federal Computer Week*.

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FEEA has helped thousands of federal families with millions of dollars in emergency relief and college scholarships over the past twenty years. As a founder and executive board member of FEEA, NFFE encourages the membership and indeed all federal employees to contribute to the cause.

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NFFE Locals, National Office, Smash Records with 19 Awards in 2012 IAM Newsletter and Website Competition

In what is quickly turning into a proud tradition, NFFE once again made an incredible showing in the IAM's annual newsletter and website competition. NFFE received a total of 19 awards in the 2012 IAM Newsletter and Website Contest, our highest total yet.

This impressive result reflects a great deal of time and effort spent on communications at both the local and national level. 13 of the 19 awards went to five different locals, spread throughout the country and representing four different agencies. The remaining six awards were received by the NFFE National Office.

Locals recognized in this year's competition include Local 125, representing Forest Service employees in Ogden, UT; Local 1450, representing HUD employees in California and the southwest; Local 1998, representing Passport employees across the country; Local 2109, representing Army employees in Watervliet, NY; and Local 2197, representing Forest Service employees in Albuquerque, NM.

In the website category, Locals 2109, 1998, and 2197, as well as the NFFE National Office, were recognized for General Excellence. Local 2109 and the NFFE National Office were recognized for Best Layout and Design. Locals 1450, 2109, and the NFFE National Office also received awards for Best Social Media.

In the newsletter category, Local 125 and the NFFE National Office were recognized for General Excellence. Locals 125, 2197, 1998 and the NFFE National Office received awards for Best Layout and Design. Last but not least, Locals 125, 1450 and 2197, as well as the National Office, placed in the Best Feature category.

"I'm quite proud of how our Local 125 newsletter has been received by our members and larger audience around NFFE," said Local 125 Communicator Dave Chevalier. "Communications, keeping one another informed and in touch with issues and concerns, is an imperative element of our union work. People want and need to know what we've done for them, what we are doing today, and what we can look to tomorrow in our efforts to make their work lives better for them."

"To see so many NFFE locals participating and winning awards in this year's competition is just outstanding," said NFFE Communications Director Cory Bythrow. "This is simply confirmation of what all of us have seen over the past several years—NFFE locals are committed to engaging their members and conveying a passionate voice to the federal labor movement. Congratulations to you all on a truly amazing performance."

If you are interested in developing communications within your local, there are many resources available to you. The William W. Winpisinger Center offers a number of classes, including Basic Newsletter Development, Web Development, and a Communicators Class. NFFE's communications director is also available to work with you, to help you set up a local website, and develop or improve your communications strategy. You can also learn more by visiting the 'Communicator's Toolkit,' located within the NFFE Toolbox at www.nffe.org. Please consider taking advantage of these great resources.

Congratulations again to this year's winners, and we hope to see even more locals represented in next year's competition!



NFFE Enjoys Sustained Membership Building Success; 18 Locals Recognized at National Convention

NFFE has enjoyed a great deal of recruiting success during the previous four years. Not only are we consistently signing up more members year after year, but more locals than ever are submitting 1187 forms. In 2008, 72 locals submitted 1187 forms for new members to the NFFE National Office; by 2011, that figure had increased by an impressive 75%, to 126 individual locals submitting new members.

A number of factors working in tandem are likely responsible for these increases. First and foremost, more locals are making membership building a priority and are devoting greater resources to recruiting. Locals from every agency and every part of the country are consistently holding both formal and informal recruiting events, and reaping the benefits.

Additionally, recruiting and organizing have been at the top of NFFE's priority list during the past four years. The NFFE National Office now has staff devoted solely to supporting locals in their membership building efforts. Every one of NFFE's departments has also increased their focus on recruiting, making sure that locals have the resources they need to grow in every area. This includes everything from helping locals get a local website up and running to making sure local officers can talk to potential members about pending legislation that will affect them.

In addition to this support, the NFFE National Office has also devoted significant financial resources directly to recruiting. Since September of 2010, locals have been reimbursed \$100 for each new member they sign up, and for whom they submit an 1187 to the NFFE National Office. This financial commitment helps offset the costs of recruiting at the local level so locals do not have to divert resources from other important areas in order to focus on building their membership.

All of these efforts have produced great success at the local and national level, with the numbers of new members being signed up and the number of locals they come from increasing every year.

Several of these locals are being recognized at NFFE's 49th National Convention for their recruiting success since the previous convention.

The Organizing and Recruiting Strategic Plan was utilized to determine the award winners. All locals were selected by meeting specific criteria written in the plan.



Three locals will receive awards for 'Ongoing Excellence in Recruiting.' As written in the plan, these locals have at least 100 members and a membership density of 50% or greater. Locals 1, 387, and 1697 met these criteria. Any locals with at least 35 members and a membership density of 80% or greater also qualify, but no locals currently fall into that category. The Sustained Excellence in Recruiting winners are:

Local 1: San Francisco VA Hospital, San Francisco, CA

Local 387: Northport VA Hospital, Northport, NY

Local 1697: Western Civilian Conservation Corps Centers

To determine the rest of the award winners, locals were ranked and placed in the appropriate Platinum, Gold, Silver, Bronze and Copper categories, as written in the plan. While the criteria was written to cover a single year, they were multiplied to determine their four year equivalents. Each local that fell into the Platinum or Gold category that is not already receiving an "Ongoing Excellence in Recruiting" award, will be recognized here. The Platinum locals have a density of 50% or greater, and recruited at least 400 members during the previous four years. The Gold locals have a density of 35% or greater, and recruited at least 200 members during the previous four years.

The Platinum and Gold locals are:

**Local 2: JAG School and NFFE National employees
Charlottesville, VA and Washington D.C.**

Local 12: Naval Air Station, Pensacola, FL

**Local 95: Central Alabama Veterans Health Care System
Montgomery, AL**

**Local 276: Forest Service Forest Products Laboratory
Madison, WI**

**Local 1450: Housing and Urban Development
California and the Southwestern U.S. (Region IX)**

Local 1453: Ft. Lauderdale VA Center, Ft. Lauderdale, FL

Local 1804: Housing and Urban Development, Detroit, MI

Local 1840: Forest Service Job Corps Centers, Puxico, MO

Local 1855: Forest Service Job Corps Centers, Pine Knot, KY

**Local 1904: New Orleans VA Medical Center
New Orleans, LA**

Local 2058: Aberdeen Proving Ground, Gunpowder, MD

Local 2081: Inyo National Forest, Bishop, CA

Local 2109: Watervliet Arsenal, Troy, NY

**Local 2192: Pictured Rocks National Lakeshore
Munising, MI**

Local 2189: Red River Army Depot, Hooks, TX

Congratulations to our convention award recipients for your ongoing commitment and success in recruiting!

If your local has not been submitting copies of your newly signed 1187 forms to the NFFE National Office, please start doing so today. These forms are the most efficient means we have for tracking our new union members. Sending them in ensures that new members receive a welcome letter from the national officers, mailed directly to their home. It also helps us get new members into our membership database faster, which means that they will receive a membership card sooner, giving them more timely access to all of the benefits available to NFFE-IAM members.

Thanks to all of you for your hard work during the past four years. For some of you, recruiting has long been a high priority within your local, and you continue to excel in your efforts. For others, you have made a new, or renewed, commitment during the past few years, and it is paying off. In either case, THANK YOU! NFFE has seen tremendous growth during the last four years, and we could not have done it without you.

NFFE's Young Federal Leaders Unveil Strategic Plan

Nearly every day, the NFFE National Office receives a call or an email from a member who has seen a Young Federal Leaders flyer, received an email, read a brochure, chatted with a National Committee member, or checked out the initiative's Facebook or Twitter pages. The feedback we've received has been overwhelmingly positive; in fact, when we talk with members about YFL's mission, not only are they supportive, they want to know how they can get involved and do their part.

In answer to these requests, the Young Federal Leaders initiative and its National Committee is proud to release its strategic plan. The plan will be available online at www.nffe.org/YFL as well as distributed to all delegates at NFFE's 49th National Convention in Portland, Oregon this October. It seeks both to communicate the scope and aim of our union's young worker program and provide guidance and instruction for union leaders and young workers who are eager to cultivate this program at the local level.

NFFE National President William R. Dougan, a vigorous supporter of our union's young workers and the Young Federal Leaders initiative, knows it will take our members' steadfast commitment of this program for it to reach its full potential:

"The NFFE National Office cannot ensure the success of this program alone; it will take the guidance and hard work of every member, every local, every council, and every union leader."

If you are ready to take the next steps to get involved in the YFL initiative, check out a brief excerpt from the strategic plan below. To access the plan in its entirety, please also visit YFL's page on NFFE's website.

GETTING STARTED

1. Request YFL brochures and signs from the NFFE National Office to bring attention to your local's commitment to engaging young workers. Also request copies of the strategic plan and disseminate them among your executive board and membership. All supplies are free of charge and can be shipped to your local lodge. YFL materials can also be accessed online at www.nffe.org/YFL.
2. Review your local's bargaining unit list to determine how many young workers are eligible to become members. Cre-



ate a list of young members you plan to approach and establish a timeframe in which to do it. If you have 20 eligible young members, make it your goal to contact four of them per week for the next five weeks. Once you've reached out to some of them, word will begin to spread and young members will likely begin approaching you!

3. Appoint a young member or members to serve as your local's welcoming committee for new young employees. Young workers are more likely to join the union if they are approached by a knowledgeable young member who can answer their questions and provide personal testimony about the many benefits of membership.
4. Ensure your local's young members have the opportunity to attend classes regularly at the Winpisinger Center. Upon their return, ensure the young members share what they have learned with other members and encourage them to

apply their new knowledge and skills at your local. Make a pledge to send at least two young members from your local lodge to the Winpisinger Center each year. If all of NFFE's locals keep this pledge, our union will see over 400 young members trained each year. Imagine how this could transform our union and the labor movement!

5. Once you have identified a group of young workers from your local's bargaining unit, start planning activities to get to know one another better, establish a young worker community, and build solidarity. Organizing happy-hours, service projects, or fundraisers are excellent ways to get started.
6. Contact the NFFE National Office and request a YFL mentor or inquire about serving as one. We will happily assist you in identifying an appropriate match to facilitate a mutual exchange of helpful information and ideas.

7. Get in touch with a YFL National Committee member who can provide information about how to get your local chapter up and running. Each of their emails are located on YFL's page on the NFFE website: www.nffe.org/YFL.
8. Reach out to Amy Burns, Special Assistant to the President, with any questions or concerns. She can be reached at aburns@nffe.org or (202) 216-4420 and would love to hear your ideas and insights.

With the unwavering support of the NFFE National Office, the commitment of our union's leaders, and the diligence of all of our young workers, the Young Federal Leaders initiative is poised to leave an indelible mark on the labor movement.

What are you waiting for? Reach out and find out what you can do today!



YFL National Committee members Samuel Nevarez and Emily Kilgore meet with Office of Personnel Management Director John Berry after his address at the 49th NFFE National Convention.

Show Your Pride with Your Own NFFE Union Card!

The single biggest benefit you get as a member of the union is a real voice in the workplace. There is strength in numbers, and when you carry your union card, you signify that you are a proud member of the labor community. Your membership card is a tangible reminder of the solidarity you share with other employees in your workplace, and around the country.

With that in mind, the NFFE National Office has updated our system and made it even easier for you to become a proud card-carrying member.

It takes several pay periods for a new member to show up in NFFE's national database, where permanent card numbers are assigned. To account for this lag time, the National Office will run a batch of new membership cards every quarter. The most recent set of cards was mailed out this September, and a new set will be printed and mailed quarterly.

Each local member should receive a card, stating their name, local lodge, and individual membership number. Cards were mailed to the local president or secretary-treasurer, who is responsible for distributing cards to individual members.

Since it may take a few months for new members to receive their permanent cards, blank membership cards have been sent to each local to be filled out immediately after a new member submits an 1187. This ensures that new members immediately feel like they are a part of the local, and the union community.

Membership cards have the added advantage of giving members access to many great union benefits. Many discounts are available through Union Plus, on everything from travel, to flower arrangements, to home heating oil. A membership number is necessary to access these great perks. A card number also entitles members to take advantage of great benefits on a variety of insurance plans, including dental, vision, auto, short-term disability, and more. A membership card number proves eligibility for these great plans.

A membership number (also known as a book number) is also necessary to register for classes at the William W. Winpisinger Center. Any member interested in participating in one of these classes must provide their number when signing up for a class.

If you do not have a NFFE membership card, please contact your local office and pick yours up. If your local president or secretary-treasurer doesn't have a pre-printed card for you, you can receive a temporary card until it arrives. Either way, carry your card with pride, and take advantage of all of the great benefits available to you.

Please contact your national organizing coordinator if you have any questions about the membership card process.

THE FEDERAL EMPLOYEE



William D. Fenaughty
National
Secretary-Treasurer

William R. Dougan
National President

National Vice Presidents

Rob Arnold
Jozef Drozdowski
Patricia La Sala
Kolleen McGrath
John R. Obst
Tim Ostrowski
Debbie Ransom

James N. Davis
Assistant Directing
Business Representative



**National Federation of
Federal Employees**
805 15th Street, NW
Suite 500
Washington, DC 20005
202-216-4420
202-898-1861 Fax

Writers/Editors
Cassie Kerner Bond
Amy Burns
Cory Bythrow
Randy Erwin
Brittany Paull