

# THE FEDERAL EMPLOYEE

2ND QUARTER 2013

FOR MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

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

## Organize!!

STRENGTH IN NUMBERS  
STRENGTH IN MEMBERS

NFFE lays out new  
recruitment vision in  
updated strategic plan.  
*See Pages 7-9*



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William R. Dougan

## FROM THE DESK OF THE PRESIDENT

Michael Jordan once said, “Talent wins games, but teamwork and intelligence wins championships.” True, I am as ardent a basketball fan as anyone you’re likely to meet, but I am also a unionist, a unionist who recognizes that things need to change if our movement is to survive.

Over the past few months we have released our updated Membership Building Strategic Plan which will serve as the model for our organization’s growth in the next several years. I won’t get into the ins and outs of the plan; I want you to grasp the foundational principles that underlie its creation, and will drive its implementation. These principles are teamwork, intelligence, and persistence.

For years NFFE relied on the talents of individual recruiters, officers, or staffers to get the recruiting job done. This is a fine model so long as no one retires or otherwise moves on with their lives, but it is by no means sustainable. No offense to our Chicago brothers and sisters, but how many championships have the Bulls won since Jordan’s departure? With our new recruiting plan, we recognize the need for every NFFE-IAM member to become a recruiter by providing the unique resources they need to succeed. With all Local members engaged in the recruiting process, growing membership is no longer a job – it’s our culture. Nurturing this culture will in turn nurture the Union’s growth, leading to prosperity regardless of who is in office. Teamwork is vital to making this a reality.

We also need to be smarter about how we recruit new members. Time after time

we’ve seen people set up a booth once a year, talk to a few people, but sign up only a handful of members. Others will leaflet their members once a year or invite them to a lunch and learn. These are all somewhat effective methods of recruiting, but they are not the ideal use of our resources. Recruiting is not about giving away the most pamphlets, sandwiches, or trinkets, it’s about talking with coworkers everyday about the issues that matter to them. On the right day, anyone will join if given the right reason. So get creative and think about what motivates them. Some will join for the benefits, others because their relatives were unionists, and still others will join to participate in our veterans committee. We need to recognize and seize these opportunities.

Most important of all these principles is persistence. I spent decades as a Local and Council officer, and I know the challenges that time constraints and employee attitudes can present to recruiting efforts. Try to focus on the inherent justness of our cause. We do what we do for the common good, and it is this surety of purpose that must fuel our optimism. If we look at every conversation with coworkers as a recruiting opportunity, we’re taking 100% of the shots we’re given; you can’t win championships by showing up to one game a year.

So I ask that you read our updated strategic plan, and join us in this effort. United we stand, divided we fall. I am proud to say that I stand with you, the members, of our great Union.

## FROM THE DESK OF THE SECRETARY-TREASURER

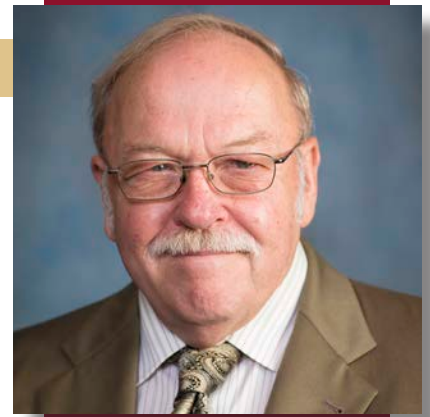
During the 2012 NFFE National Convention held in Portland, OR, convention delegates unanimously voted to form a NFFE committee on veterans' issues. The newly formed NFFE Military Veterans Committee is led by Chairman David Chevalier, Vice Chair Michelle Chandler, and Secretary Ladre Davis. As NFFE National Secretary-Treasurer and a veteran, I am a staunch supporter of organizing my brothers and sisters in uniform. I proudly served five years in the United States Navy from November 1964 through 1968. After separation from active duty I continued my naval career in the naval reserve, retiring in 1990. As a retired veteran I certainly recognize the obstacles and roadblocks to fair treatment that our veterans face in the workplace every day. We are confident that by forming this committee we will be better positioned to advocate for our veterans and their concerns.

The purpose of the NFFE Military Veterans Committee is to provide assistance, recommendations, guidance, and pertinent information to NFFE's elected

leadership and Congress on all issues and concerns related to veterans' rights. The committee will also promote activities both through NFFE National and NFFE Locals that will support the value of military veterans to the NFFE-IAM membership and representative federal agencies. For example, the committee is currently assessing employees' struggles with Post Traumatic Stress Disorder (PTSD) in the workplace, and developing proposals for reasonable accommodations.

There is much work to be done but we are all confident that the NFFE Military Veterans Committee is up to the task! For more information regarding this committee and how to participate, visit the NFFE website at [www.nffe.org/veterans](http://www.nffe.org/veterans) or contact them at [NFFEVets@gmail.com](mailto:NFFEVets@gmail.com).

NFFE Finance Director Omar Arnold and I would like to wish you all a happy summer, and thank you for all you do for our Union. Please contact us with any financial issues.



**William D. Fenaughty**

## FROM THE DESK OF THE GENERAL COUNSEL

We all know that being a Union representative is a tough job. There is so much to learn but so little time to actually sit down and learn it. Those that are lucky enough to attend formal training at the IAM's Winpisinger Center receive great assistance. But if we are to remain a truly great Union, we need to make training available to all NFFE reps at all times. I'm proud to announce that after several months of work we've launched the all-new NFFE Rep Center to accomplish exactly that.

The NFFE Rep Center offers in-depth instruction on five major representational duties of a Union leader: collective bargaining, contract and statutory enforcement (including grievances and ULPs), information requests, investigatory meetings and formal discussion, and representation elections and clarifications. Each section contains anywhere from 5-10 samples, models, and templates to guide you through the issue at hand. Each document was carefully selected to give you the best idea of how to accomplish that task.

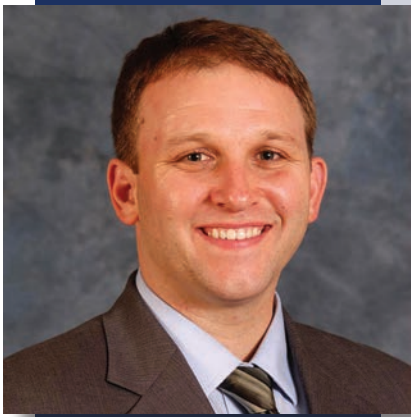
The Rep Center is particularly geared to newer representatives who are just starting to get their feet wet in Union representation. For those who have yet to attend one of our federal basic programs at the Winpisinger Center, the Rep Center is a great starting point to build your representational chops. For those who have, this is a great place to refresh your memory. There are also plenty of useful resources for our more experienced reps to work with and learn from.

As with NFFE's other toolkits, the Rep Center was designed to be a continual work-in-progress; if there is anything that you think would be helpful to include, just email NFFE Communications Director Cory Bythrow at [cbythrow@nffe.org](mailto:cbythrow@nffe.org), and he and I will consider adding it. Our goal is to make your job easier, and we are open to any and all suggestions.

See for yourself at [www.nffe.org/repcenter](http://www.nffe.org/repcenter).



**Stefan Sutich**



Randy Erwin

## FROM THE DESK OF THE LEGISLATIVE DIRECTOR

We are reaching the mid-point of the first session of the 113<sup>th</sup> Congress, and the battle lines for legislation impacting federal employees are starting to form. Consistent with the 112<sup>th</sup> Congress, we have seen attacks on federal workers' pay, retirement, and jobs coming on all fronts. We suffered a tough setback when Congress made the disappointing choice to freeze federal workers' pay for a third straight year back in March, but we are determined to end the federal pay freeze in Fiscal Year 2014 once and for all.

Of course, the biggest concerns for many NFFE-IAM members right now stem from across-the-board budget cuts known as sequestration, and their impact on federal employees.

Due to sequestration, numerous federal agencies and departments have seen their budgets slashed by billions of dollars virtually overnight. The impacts of these drastic cuts have been nothing short of devastating.

As a result of sequestration, thousands of federal workers have been laid off or forced into early retirement. In addition, mandatory unpaid furloughs have been planned for hundreds of thousands of federal workers throughout the government. The number of furlough days varies from agency to agency, but the Department of Defense, which employs more civilian workers than any other federal department, has announced that the vast majority of its 800,000 civilian

## LEGISLATIVE

# Administration Orders Extensive Study of Gender Pay Gap in Federal Workforce

This May, President Obama issued a memo to federal agency leadership calling for a government-wide effort to study and ultimately reduce the gender pay gap in the federal workforce. With the study, the Administration hopes to find answers to this persistent disparity despite the government's extensive efforts to equalize pay.

The gender gap has been an obstinate and deeply complex issue in the federal workforce for decades. Despite increasingly strict rules ensuring fairness in the hiring and promotion process, the gap survives. This is not to say that substantial progress has not been made. The gap shrunk from 28 cents on the dollar in 1988, to 19 cents in 1998, to just 11 cents in 2007. Nonetheless, the figures have not improved much since then, and more needs to be done to eliminate it once and for all.

"The principle of equal pay for equal work is sacrosanct," said NFFE National President William R. Dougan. "We fully support this

review and urge our elected leaders to take positive action to pay our sisters the honest wages they have earned."

The focus of the study will be on "administrative discretion" in the federal hiring process, where some salary considerations are left to supervisors. This discretion is currently limited only to employees that demonstrate "superior qualifications" or meet a "special need" according to a recent piece in the *Washington Post*. The report will also review the implications of extended leaves of absence on pay patterns, since they are more common among female employees for purposes of childrearing.

The Office of Personnel Management (OPM) was given until November to complete the report and return it to the White House for review. Agency leaders have until August to report their findings to OPM for aggregation and analysis. The review will cover employees paid under the General Schedule.



workers will be furloughed for 11 days. Federal employees being furloughed will experience up to a 20% pay cut for the period of time they are being furloughed. These drastic pay cuts will be devastating to middle class federal employees and the communities in which they live.

In Washington, we are urging Congress and the Administration to end sequestration. When budget shortfalls do arise at federal agencies, federal employees should not be forced to pay for the deficit through furloughs. It is unfair to continue to make federal employees pay for crimes they never committed.

It is very important that every NFFE Local do two things this summer: First, make certain that the people in your community hear about the pain being caused in your area by sequestration. When furloughs hit, people in your area should be hearing about it on the local news. The American public must understand how Washington's ineptitude is hurting your community by failing to address sequestration. Nobody can communicate that better than you. Second, every Local must meet with their members of Congress (from both the House and Senate) during recess this August. Members need to hear from you in their District offices. The message is simple: End sequestration and stop targeted cuts to federal employees.

Finally, I would like to thank all the NFFE-IAM members who made it to Washington, D.C. this May for the 2013 IAM Legislative Conference. We had a great showing this year, and that translated into a tremendous effort to make our voices heard on Capitol Hill. In total, NFFE-IAM members met with well over 200 Congressional offices during the conference. A special thanks goes out to the Forest Service Council which had an incredibly productive week in the halls of Congress. Congratulations to all who spent time on Capitol Hill fighting for NFFE-IAM members back home.

## President Obama Seeks to Reign in Out-of-Control Contractor Executive Pay with New Proposal

At a time when federal workers have been subject to pay freezes, furloughs, and retirement cuts, executives at leading government contractors have been making away with hundreds of millions in taxpayer dollars. How do they get away with it? Easy – ever-increasing reimbursement rates.

In fiscal year 2011, federal contract executives were eligible to be reimbursed upwards of \$763,000 in salary – nearly twice the annual salary of the President of the United States. This figure has risen substantially in the last two years because it is legally bound to an automatic formula that gauges prevailing costs in the industry. Because of this formula, the maximum executive reimbursement rate will increase to over \$950,000 next year. This huge leap in pay over such a short period is no surprise, sadly, as federal contractor pay has increased by an estimated 300% in the past 15 years.

“It is absolutely unconscionable that contractor executives are getting five and six figure raises from the taxpayers while federal workers have had their pay frozen,” said NFFE National President William R. Dougan. “We should be rewarding the employees on the ground actually doing the work, not contractor executives. Federal workers have sacrificed more than any other group, and they deserve a fair pay adjustment.”

President Obama, agreeing that something must be done about the runaway spending, will soon offer a proposal to cap reimbursements for executive pay at \$400,000 – his own salary. The measure does not stop contract companies from paying the amount they choose to pay their employees; it simply addresses the amount American taxpayers are forced to pay. Other proposals have been put forth to tackle this issue in the past, most notably by Rep. Paul Tonko (D-

NY), who has dedicated years to reigning-in this gross waste of funds. A similar proposal was included in last year's National Defense Authorization Act, but the limits only applied to the top five highest earning executives at each firm. The President's proposal is the latest, welcome step in the right direction toward ending this shameful practice.

“We are encouraged that the president is tackling this issue, but there is more that can be done,” said Dougan. “Addressing contractor reimbursements is just one side of the matter, and it is long past due that we address the other. Federal workers have endured years of sacrifice after sacrifice, and the time for a pay increase has come.”



# NFFE-IAM Members from Across U.S. Speak Out for Feds on Capitol Hill

At NFFE we believe that the only way to accomplish our goal is to constantly demand change. To this end we hold all elected officials accountable for their promises to American workers, in Washington, D.C. and across the entire country. This year, members like you represented federal workers in over 200 meetings with Representatives, Senators, and staffers, visiting approximately 220 Congressional offices in total.

Members spoke out against furloughs, unfair cost-cutting on the backs of federal workers, and attacks on the rights of the Union to bargain, among other key issues. Thanks to your hard work, NFFE is one of the most vocal Unions on Capitol Hill.

This year, your efforts were more important than ever before. Opponents of labor have used the current financial mess to issue rolling furloughs and layoffs and have tried to cut basic benefits that hard-working Americans rely upon. Even worse, they have attempted to undermine the bargaining power of the Union, limiting official time and other opportunities for Union representatives to advocate for the rights of their members.

These changes do not only harm Union members, they also have unforeseen impacts on the effectiveness of the American federal workforce. By furloughing essential staff on military bases, national forests, and elsewhere, our elected officials are playing politics with the readiness of the military and the safety of all Americans. It is critical that we let Congress know exactly the role that NFFE and other Unions play in helping Americans. It's very easy to justify a bad policy on paper, but much harder to do so in person.

NFFE National Vice President Mark Davis was especially proud of the hard work members put in lobbying for the protection of temporary seasonal employees. After many meetings with representatives on both sides of the aisle, HR 533, the Land Management Workforce Flexibility Act, received six new co-sponsorships from both Democrats and Republicans.

*Members of the NFFE Legislative Conference delegation gathered for a reception in Downtown Washington, D.C. after days of lobbying elected officials.*



*National Business Representative Liz Pittaluga and Legislative Director Randy Erwin joined NFFE delegates Lisa Foust and Karen Buondonno for a meeting with Rep. Frank LoBiondo (R-NJ)*

"Bring the truth on the big issues from your agency to the Hill, and don't expect it to be easy," said Davis. "Members need to learn the rules of the game if they are to play to win."

And it was not only Union members who connected with their elected representatives during the Legislative Conference. Numerous pro-labor Congressional leaders came to show their support of federal employees and to express a bold new agenda for the future. As House Minority Leader Nancy Pelosi (D-CA) stated, "The most important thing we can do for our competitiveness, our families, and our country is to create jobs right here in America." Rep. Steny Hoyer (D-MD) spoke out against the shortsighted furloughs in all sectors of the federal government, stating that "The 'S' in sequestration stands for 'stupid.'"

Thanks to the dedicated efforts of all our members who traveled to Washington, D.C., the 2013 IAM Legislative Conference was a great success in bringing together not only NFFE brothers and sisters, but also pro-worker elected officials in Congress.



# Obama Budget Proposal Includes \$35 Billion in Federal Retirement Cuts

Just when federal employees thought the worst may be over, the White House released an annual budget including another \$35 billion in cuts to federal retirement benefits. The Fiscal Year 2014 budget plan was released April 10<sup>th</sup> after several months of delays due to uncertainty caused by reckless sequestration cuts.

In the proposal, the White House recommends a 1.2 percent increase in the amount federal workers pay toward their pensions. The increase would be phased in over three years and impact all current federal workers. Sadly, this is just the beginning. The plan would also eliminate the FERS Annuity Supplement for new employees, destroying a critical bridge to retirement for many federal workers. Adding insult to injury, the recommended move to 'Chained CPI' – code for 'benefit reduction' – as a means of determining Social Security benefits will further erode retirement security for federal employees.

"We expect certain politicians to make federal workers the scapegoat of first resort. But for the Administration to perpetuate the idea that federal employees haven't sacrificed enough is absolutely unacceptable," said NFFE National President William R. Dougan. "The White House has said time and time again that they value the contributions federal workers make to their country, but this budget tells a different story entirely. With friends like these, who needs enemies?"

Sadly, this proposal is just the latest in a long series of betrayals by elected officials over the past several years. These cuts come at an incredibly difficult time for millions of federal workers. Most are facing furloughs, new employees are already paying more for their pensions, and all have been subject to a three-year pay freeze. All of this has happened at a time when agency budgets are shrinking fast and employee workloads are increasing even faster.

"Federal workers are not an ATM that elected officials can draw from whenever they're in a fiscal pinch," said Dougan. "Federal workers are already hurting after more than \$100 billion in cuts to pay, hours, benefits, and jobs. The bank is closed."

For what it's worth, there is a small silver lining buried in the budget – a recommended one percent pay increase for federal workers next year. Fierce opposition is anticipated in the Republican-dominated House of Representatives, where any talk of a pay increase has been rapidly put down. In fact, the House has already passed two appropriations bills without including a federal pay increase in either. Though the Administration insists it will fight for this increase, it capitulated on a proposed 0.5% raise without much resistance last year.

"Though we applaud the president for requesting a one percent pay adjustment next year, it falls dramatically short of what is needed to keep hundreds of thousands of federal families above water," said Dougan. "Federal employees need a real advocate in Washington to stand up and fight for the pay raise they have earned. It is clear our politicians won't do it for us, so we will all have to do it for ourselves. Call your elected leaders and demand a raise for your hard work."







# NFFE Rolls Out Exciting New Features in Revised Membership Building Strategic Plan

The NFFE National Office is excited to announce the release of the updated Membership Building Strategic Plan. For the past several years, NFFE has seen a steady increase in the number of new members being signed up, both from existing and new units. It is evident that our Locals are taking the importance of membership building to heart. Going forward, NFFE wants to ensure that Locals have the skills and resources necessary to maintain, and expand upon, this positive trend.

This plan builds upon the successes of previous versions and makes important changes that are necessary to build a stronger, better Union for tomorrow. Membership is the heart of our Union, and the updated plan reflects our ongoing commitment to continued growth.

The plan lays out the roles and responsibilities of everyone within NFFE. It

explains both what is expected of NFFE's Locals and Councils, and what services they can expect to receive from the NFFE National Office, elected officers and staff. It is critical that everyone involved understand their roles and make a genuine commitment to growing our Union.

The vision statement emphasizes how NFFE plans to empower all members, Locals and Councils with the tools necessary to build membership. This will be done by working collaboratively at every level and strategically choosing organizing and recruiting targets.

In January, NFFE's nationally-elected officers, staff, and invited representatives from a few of our Union's top recruiting Locals met at the William W. Winpisinger Center to review the 2012 Organizing and Recruiting Strategic Plan. The group spent two days discussing the previous

version of the plan and NFFE's progress in recruiting and organizing during the previous year.

By the end of the two-day meeting, the group had agreed to a number of general modifications to the previous version. While the changes to the plan are not extensive, there are a few key changes of which your Local should be aware.

First, the recruitment incentive was renewed, so Locals are still receiving \$100 for each new member they sign up and submit an 1187 form to the National Office, to be used at the Local's discretion. However, more stipulations were added in order to receive the funds, including the need for agency and personal email addresses for BUEs and members (when possible), a list of Local officers, and confirmation that the Local wishes to participate in the program. The previous re-



quirements still remain in place, including the need for a bargaining unit list which is less than one year old, and the stipulations that Locals must have their dues set in compliance with section 5.2 of the NFFE bylaws, must participate in electronic fund transfer, and must not be in arrears.

Additionally, a grant program has been instituted, whereby Locals can request financial assistance in implementing a creative or unique recruiting effort. This program was designed to ensure that a lack of funds does not prevent Locals from trying

new members during the previous month, we will also be recognizing Locals' annual membership building effectiveness. New awards will be presented next spring, and Locals that show the greatest increase in density will also receive a visit from one of NFFE's national officers. Local officers will also receive periodic updates throughout the year from the national organizing directors, updating them on their membership building progress thus far.

Finally, we have made some changes to the roles and responsibilities of our Na-

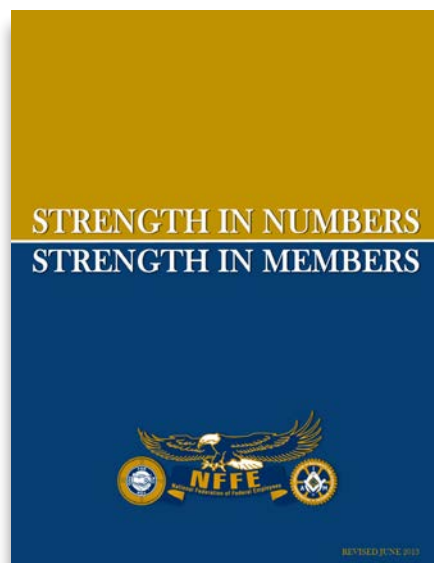
tional Organizing Department staff. Under the old plan, NFFE had two national organizing coordinators who were responsible for satisfying the needs of Locals within a respective geographic territory. Now NFFE has two national organizing directors, each with responsibility for certain areas of the Union's organizing and recruiting operations.

National Organizing Director Cassie Bond will now be responsible for tracking contact and recruitment data and analyzing it to inform the Union's strategic

<b>Effectiveness Level</b>	<b>New Members Recruited</b>	<b>Increase in Member Density</b>	<b>End-of-Year Density</b>
<b>Platinum</b>	100 new members	10%	50% density or greater
<b>Gold</b>	50 new members	6%	35-49% density
<b>Silver</b>	20 new members	3%	20-34% density
<b>Bronze</b>	10 new members	1.5%	10% density

new means for reaching out to prospective new members. Locals may still participate in the \$100 incentive program, but will not be reimbursed for their new members until they have signed up enough to offset the grant given. The grant form is available in the Organizer's Toolkit on the NFFE website, and the national organizing directors are happy to help any interested Locals put together a plan and proposal.

We are also expanding and improving upon our system for rewarding Locals who are top performers in recruiting. In addition to the monthly awards given out to the Locals that submitted the most



decision-making with regards to allocating resources. National Organizing Director Brittany Cardinal will be responsible for strategizing and attending recruitment drives in the field and training Locals on how to become better recruiters.

This, of course, is just a broad outline of what you can expect from NFFE's National Organizing Department. For a detailed explanation of the new organizing department structure, please reference the image on page 9.

If you have not yet read the plan, it is available in the Organizer's Toolkit on

NFFE's website. It's important that every Local is aware of the changes in the current plan, so you can take full advantage of the incentives and resources available from the NFFE National Office.

"We are excited about the changes to the new plan," said National Organizing Director Cassie Kerner Bond. "We'll now be able to provide recruiting support that is even more tailored to individual Locals' needs, and in a more efficient manner. We will have more opportunities to recognize Locals that are really making a commitment to building their membership. I am excited to see what we are all able to accomplish in the coming year."

Our previous plans contained many components that have worked well, and many of these remain in the new plan.



NFFE Locals will still have full access to NFFE's organizing department to assist with recruiting and organizing needs. The national organizing directors will work with Locals, providing them with the tools and resources they need to be successful recruiters, and will assist with recruiting campaigns as needed. They will also track national membership data and recruiting trends. Together, NFFE's organizing department ensures that information, organizing, and recruiting assistance is made available to every member and potential member who seeks it.

The NFFE National Office will also continue to provide supplies to assist Locals in their recruiting efforts. New member and recruitment kits, membership cards, and welcome letters are all available to Locals free of charge. Welcome letters are sent out to new members directly each month, and membership cards are printed and mailed quarterly for the members who have entered the system during the previous three months. It is the Local officers' responsibility to sign and distribute the cards. Kits are available any time, but must be requested from the national organizing director at least two weeks in advance.

In addition to these items, there are a number of brochures, flyers, and posters

## NFFE Organizing Directors

### Who should I contact for...

	
<p><b>Cassie Bond</b> cbond@nffe.org   (703) 303-2047</p>	<p><b>Brittany Cardinal</b> bcardinal@nffe.org   (202) 216-4425</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tracking &amp; sharing Local contact information</li> <li>• Processing member kits &amp; materials requests</li> <li>• Submitting completed 1187s</li> <li>• Eligibility &amp; assistance with \$100 recruitment incentive</li> <li>• Tracking &amp; providing membership data &amp; recruitment gains</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Assistance developing a Local strategic action plan</li> <li>• Coordinating recruitment drives</li> <li>• Providing Local training</li> <li>• In-person visits to aid recruitment efforts</li> <li>• Grant requests</li> <li>• Membership cards</li> </ul>

available to aid Locals with their recruiting efforts. Many of these items are available for download from the NFFE website, [www.nffe.org](http://www.nffe.org). Copies can also be printed and mailed directly to any Local. The NFFE communications department is happy to customize any of these items for a specific Local or to create something new if we don't already have what is needed.

NFFE has seen great organizing and recruiting success since the first strategic plan for increasing membership was put in place four years ago. NFFE has consistently signed up more members year after year since our organization renewed and redoubled our focus on increasing our membership. Although the labor movement continues to face some significant challenges, this plan has put the pieces in place for us to achieve great things in the coming years.

The support for building membership is visible at all levels, and it is thanks to all of your hard work that so many new members are becoming a part of our NFFE family. We look forward to continuing to work with you, and helping you put the framework in place to become even more effective recruiters. Please take the time to read the updated plan.

"Making a commitment to organizing and recruiting has never been more important," said National Organizing Director Brittany Cardinal. "With this new plan our Union will grow stronger than ever before. Now is the time for every member and non-member to get off the sidelines and stand up for what is right."

Remember, divided we beg for continued existence, united we shape a prosperous future together. We need YOU to be with us!



# National President Dougan Makes Recruiting Trips to Locals Across the Country

Many NFFE Locals were busy this spring working to increase their membership. While recruiting happens every day at most Locals, some opt to hold formal recruiting drives to help increase Local visibility and hopefully boost membership even more. NFFE National President William R. Dougan became a familiar face at some of these Locals, hitting the road and lending a hand with their recruitment drives.

This April, President Dougan, along with NFFE Business Representatives Gary Johanson and Jan Thompson, and National Organizing Director Cassie Kerner Bond, visited Local 2049. Located near Alamogordo, NM, the Local represents roughly 850 employees at White Sands Missile Range. The Local is highly committed to growing, and has seen an almost 75% increase in membership since 2010. Dougan and staff spent April 10<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> on the base, visiting with potential members, updating them on what NFFE is working on nationally, and talking about the importance of being a part of NFFE and the Local.

On April 12<sup>th</sup> and 13<sup>th</sup>, Dougan, Johanson and Bond visited employees at neighboring Holloman Air Force Base. NFFE represents approximately 570 employees at Holloman. Thanks to a recent change in leadership and an influx of new energy, the Local has seen steady growth during the last several months.

Dougan addressed members and potential recruits during a Union-sponsored lunch, talking about NFFE's recent accomplishments and encouraging more bargaining unit employees to get involved. Dougan, Johanson, and Bond also had the opportunity to tour the base, learning about the type of work NFFE-IAM members perform there, and visiting with members and bargaining unit employees.

In June, Dougan traveled to Alaska to aid in recruiting efforts at Local 251, which represents hundreds of Forest Service employees throughout the state. During a four-day whirlwind trip from



*President Dougan joined NFFE Local 1 leadership at the retirement party for long-time Local president and NFFE National Vice President Patricia La Sala.*

June 10<sup>th</sup>-13<sup>th</sup>, he was able to visit employees in Anchorage, Juneau, Ketchikan, and Sitka. At various lunchtime events, he met with bargaining unit members, talking about all of the reasons it is important to be a Union member.

Finally, at the end of June, Dougan and NFFE National Secretary-Treasurer William D. Fenaughty traveled to San Francisco, to attend a retirement luncheon for Local President and NFFE National Vice President Patricia La Sala. In addition to being on hand to celebrate La Sala's long and impressive career as a federal employee and unionist, Dougan and Fenaughty had the opportunity to visit with many of Local 1's San Francisco VA Medical Center members and employees.

It was a busy spring, but all of these trips were highly beneficial, both for the Locals and for NFFE as a whole. Increases in visibility and membership continue to be seen in all of the locations visited.

"I'd like to thank all of these Locals and their officers and members for the hospitality they showed us," said Dougan. "Having the opportunity to spend time with our members, see the work they do, and hear firsthand about their interests and concerns, is an invaluable experience. I hope to have the chance to visit many more NFFE-IAM brothers and sisters this year."

*Dougan meets with Local 2049 leadership along with National Business Representative Gary Johanson and Organizing Director Cassie Bond.*



# HUD Announces Closure of Dozens of Field Offices Under Reorganization

This May, the Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) announced a major reorganization that will result in the closure of dozens of offices throughout the country. Targeting the Office of Multifamily Housing Programs and the Office of Field Policy and Management, the proposed reorganization will affect roughly 900 of the department's 9,000 employees, or about 10 percent of the total workforce.

The reorganization will play out as follows: Over the next two and a half years the department will consolidate the 50 current Multifamily Housing Program offices nationwide into ten regional offices. These regional offices will report to five "hubs" located in Atlanta, Chicago, Fort Worth, New York, and San Francisco. At the Office of Field Policy and Management, 16 of the Office's 80 locations nationwide are slated for closure or consolidation with other area offices.

"Whenever an agency conducts a reorganization, the first question must be, 'How does this impact our clients and our employees?'" said NFFE National President William R. Dougan. "How long should they travel to get to the nearest office? Should they take their children out of school and move to the new location? Will they have access to the same job or services at the new location? Changes like these are very disruptive and costly events for people and their families."

Among the offices slated for closure are Tucson, AZ, Fresno, CA, Sacramento, CA, San Diego, CA, and Flint, MI – all of which are represented by NFFE Locals 1450 and 1804. These employees work in critical areas such as affordable housing occupancy and development, and homeless/veterans issues.

According to NFFE Local 1450 President and NFFE National Vice President Elizabeth McDargh, everyone from low income households (including seniors, disabled, and Section 8 tenants) to the developers and landlords who create affordable housing options for them, will be affected by the change. Closures will result in upwards of three-hour commutes for workers and customers, making it hard for people to access these key services when they need them the most.

"Morale and productivity have taken a dive since this was announced," said McDargh. "The issue is not so much on the trans-formation, but in how it was handled and how little transparency and information is truly available."



According to an agency press release, most of the downsizing will take place over the next two and a half years, but the first 16 offices will be closed effective October 1, 2013. HUD estimates the closures will save upwards of \$65 million annually, a figure McDargh challenges since the department has provided little hard evidence to support its claims. Regardless, the true cost of the reorganization goes far beyond the topline estimate.

"This reorganization will make it more difficult for some of America's most vulnerable citizens to access basic housing services," said Dougan. "Travelling hundreds of miles to reach the nearest HUD office is simply not a viable option for these people. Cutting costs on the backs of the poor is the wrong approach, and this reorganization deserves serious review."

We cannot and must not go down silently on this struggle. The work these dedicated employees do is simply too important. We need to reach out to our political representatives, neighbors, family, and friends, and ask that they support making HUD leaner and smarter, not top-heavy and ineffective.



# NFFE Local 2109 Takes Action with Rally to Stop Furloughs

We've all known for months that they were coming: 11 days of mandatory unpaid furloughs for more than 650,000 dedicated Department of Defense employees. Rather than sit on the sidelines, NFFE members are standing up and taking action.

NFFE Local 2109, at the Watervliet Arsenal in upstate New York, has been demonstrating against mandatory sequestration furloughs over the past several months. The Arsenal is the oldest continuously active arsenal in the United States, and today produces much of the artillery for the Army, as well as gun tubes for cannons, mortars, and tanks. NFFE represents over 600 employees at the facility, all of whom serve vital roles in ensuring America's military readiness and national security.



*NFFE Local 2109 members were joined in their protest by brothers and sisters from the Capital District Area Labor Federation. (John Carl D'Annibale / Times Union)*

The Local held its first demonstration, an informational picket, in April. Organized by NFFE Local 2109 President and NFFE National Vice President Tim Ostrowski, the picket was attended by more than 150 Arsenal employees and members of the community. Joining the protest in solidarity were longtime union supporter Congressman Paul Tonko (D-NY), and the Capitol District Area Labor Federation, a coalition of 44 Unions in the Albany region representing more than 100,000 Union members.

"Enough is enough – we are fed up with federal workers being the punching bag for certain members of Congress," said Ostrowski. "These furloughs are going to have a huge impact not only on the workers, but in the communities where they live. Congress cannot expect federal employees to make ends meet after a 20% pay cut overnight."

News of the rally quickly spread as media outlets from across central New York picked up the story. More than two dozen stories across television, radio, print and online media lit the local airwaves with news of the workers' struggle. The message of solidarity was clear: anti-worker legislation has hit an all-time high in Washington and the cycle needs to be broken.

In the coming months, NFFE Local 2109 is planning even more pickets to educate the public and put Congress on notice that its anti-worker policies will not go unchecked.

"Since the picket, the number of furlough days has dropped from 14 to 11, but that doesn't mean we stop fighting," said Ostrowski. "It's imperative that we don't give up and give in. I encourage all NFFE Locals and workers across the country to come together to fight for their rights. Our message of solidarity needs to be taken from town halls to the halls of Congress."



It is important that every Local take the time to empower their members to stand against furloughs and anti-worker legislation. There are a tremendous variety of resources available through NFFE to help you make your voice heard in your community, in the media, and in the halls of Capitol Hill. We need you to become a part of the solution. Visit our website, [www.nffe.org](http://www.nffe.org), and find out how to do your part.

*Long-time NFFE supporter Rep. Paul Tonko stood in solidarity with protestors, calling for an end to the reckless policy of furloughing Defense workers. (John Carl D'Annibale / Times Union)*

# Young Federal Leaders Pledge to Serve at this Year's Legislative Conference

Young members from throughout the country traveled to Washington, D.C. this May for the annual NFFE-IAM Legislative Conference. Not only did they pound the pavement on Capitol Hill, lobbying their elected officials to support hard-working federal employees, they also made another commitment to our great Union.

On Tuesday, May 14<sup>th</sup>, young unionists gathered at NFFE's legislative reception to take an oath and pledge their dedication to making our Union stronger. In front of their Union brothers and sisters, young members promised to respect the pioneering unionists of our past while fighting to protect the labor movement for the future.

Our Union's young workers will not stop here – every day Young Federal Leaders from coast to coast are not only representing members in their workplaces, they are also working together to create educational, mentorship, and leadership opportunities for other young unionists.

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*Young NFFE members and staff took an oath to preserve and advocate the principles of our Union for years to come.*



*NFFE Local 1753 member Amber Kostoff attended her first Legislative Conference this year.*

NFFE President William R. Dougan remarked on the importance of engaging young workers in the organized labor movement:

“It was a tremendous honor to swear in another generation of dedicated unionists,” said Dougan. “It is our greatest responsibility to ensure the future of the labor movement is secure by providing young workers with all of the tools they need to succeed.”

When unionists of all ages and experience levels come together and make a commitment to one another and this Union, NFFE's powerful legacy will surely endure long into the future. Get started today by seeking out opportunities for greater Union education, establishing a mentorship relationship, or stepping up to serve in a leadership position. Together, all of our individual contributions will create a tremendous impact for generations to come.





# Federal Employees Fleeing for the Door as Cuts to Pay, Benefits Take their Toll

Two-hundred and nineteen thousand, two hundred and twenty. That is the number of federal employees who left the federal government last year – more than 10% of the total workforce – according to a recent piece in *Government Executive*.

This conveys a disturbing trend in the state of the federal government and the morale of the dedicated women and men who make it work. After three years of frozen pay, \$15 billion in cuts to retirement benefits, hiring freezes, layoffs, mass-furloughs, and increased workloads, it appears many feds have decided to call it quits.

“Federal employees have been targeted relentlessly for years, and every day more and more are simply saying enough,” said NFFE National President William R. Dougan. “Unfairly targeting public servants is not just morally reprehensible, it is bad policy. The government has countless essential missions to fulfill, but every policy they pursue is driving them out the door.”

Of those who left, nearly 70,000 were retirees. Similar trends are taking root this year, as a larger than expected number of workers – 59,000 in just the past seven months (as of this writing) – have opted to retire. Many others are simply leaving the federal sector altogether to seek work opportunities elsewhere. This exodus of talent poses a serious threat to a government desperately in need of in-demand skills and experience.

Another disturbing trend impacting federal employment is the failure to backfill vacant positions. A June Bureau of Labor Statistics report found that the federal workforce shrunk by 14,000 jobs that month alone, extending an eight-consecutive-month streak of federal job losses. Interestingly, it also found that the private sector had averaged job growth of between 150,000 and 200,000 per month this year. This report paints a picture of a

two-track economic recovery where private sector job growth has improved substantially while the federal sector languishes in cuts. In other words, the government is in recession while the rest of the workforce is gradually moving onward and upward.

“With the economy on the mend, it’s only logical for the government to focus on improving its services to the public,” said Dougan. “But we’ve done the exact opposite of that – the better the economy has done, the worse federal workers are treated.”

This two-track recovery is unusual, as growth in the private sector typically leads to growth in government revenues, and by extension, government services. Why, then are we seeing the federal sector shrink so rapidly?

You guessed it – Washington. Over the past several years politicians have placed draconian budget caps on all federal agencies in an effort to “control spending.” One such method was sequestration which, as you know, has indiscriminately taken tens of billions of dollars from key federal services, placed hundreds of thousands of feds on furlough, and diminished services to the taxpayer. The reality is that sequestration and budget caps were never necessary – they were purely political decisions. Sadly, federal workers are the ones paying the price.

“The federal government employs one of the most skilled and diverse workforces in the world,” said Dougan. “We can’t continue to pursue policies that undermine their livelihoods. The surest path to a second-rate federal workforce is to keep doing exactly what we’re doing today.”

Hundreds of thousands have already moved on, and if these policies continue into the foreseeable future, the government as we know it will be almost unrecognizable.

## TERMINATION OF EMPLOYMENT

# Show Your Union Pride with Swag from the NFFE Online Store!

When you step on the field, people need to know who you're playing for. At work, members need to know who to turn to for advice, leadership, and protection. In other words, we need to wear our Union pride on our sleeve, and there's no better place to find it than the NFFE online store.

There is no better way to show commitment and solidarity with your Local than to organize 'Union Days' with all Union members wearing the lodge insignia. When you do, take pride in knowing that every jacket, shirt, polo shirt, and tote on the website is American made. Not only that, the vast majority are union made. You are not only demonstrating your Union pride when you wear an official NFFE garment on behalf of your Local, but you're also supporting Union brothers and sisters elsewhere in this country.

NFFE made sure that there is something for every occasion, from sturdy casual wear to classic polo shirts for official business, to fun gifts for friends and family. And most products can be customized with your Local chapter number. We hope this will help organizers and representatives who want to maximize their visibility in their Locals and communities.

In addition, we provide a variety of free NFFE goods in each new member kit. Our red lanyards are an easy way for NFFE-IAM members to identify each other. Distributing pens and other goods in the office makes NFFE a ubiquitous presence in the workplace. We also have put up the NFFE logo and other templates online as a digital download for your own use. These materials provide new ways of promoting NFFE each and every day.

We know you work hard to organize and strengthen Union ties across the country, and we hope this added resource will inspire you in that mission. Show your NFFE pride and visit [www.gdarter.com/nffe/Default.aspx](http://www.gdarter.com/nffe/Default.aspx) today!



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