Council 2
Chronicle
Washington State Council of County and City Employees — AFSCME AFL-CIO

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The group of Council 2 delegates who went to AFSCME's 47th International Convention in Chicago.

AFSCME 47th International Convention built for the moment

Every two years, delegates from AFSCME locals, councils, and retiree chapters across the country gather for a week of debate, political action, and other activities. When in session, the AFSCME International Convention is the highest governing body of the Union.

Seventy Council 2 members helped elect a new International president and supported Shedd Aquarium workers fighting for a Union contract during this year's convention in Chicago from Aug. 15–21.

Patrick Moran succeeds Lee Saunders as president

Patrick Moran was elected as AFSCME president by membership on Aug. 20. Moran succeeded Lee Saunders, who retired after 14 years as AFSCME President.

Prior to election, Moran spent 14 years as president of AFSCME Maryland Council 3, which tripled in size under his leadership.

During his time as president of the council, Council 3 secured more than $23 million in back pay for state correctional officers who were victims of wage theft and won a pandemic hazard pay settlement for frontline workers.

He ran for AFSCME President alongside Nicole Pollard, who was elected Secretary-Treasurer of the International Union. Their platform focused on growing worker power, protecting and expanding public services, and investing in direct member engagement and mobilization.

"I am honored to accept this responsibility. Nicole and I are ready to meet this moment," Moran said. "For 90 years, AFSCME members have been shaping and making history. Every generation of our Union has faced its defining moment. Now it's our turn. We will fight and build power like our future depends on it, because it does. We will protect our neighbors and strengthen our communities. This is our fight, and together, we've got the power to make change."

Michael Rainey, President/Executive Director of AFSCME Council 2, has known Moran for several years. He said Moran was one of the first leaders who reached out to offer his support and guidance when Rainey took his position in 2022.

"Moran has been a trusted sounding board and a steady

See ***Convention***, p. 3



Lee Saunders (left) **welcomes Patrick Moran** to his new position as AFSCME president. *Photo by Khalid Naji-Allah.*



A crowd of AFSCME members in Chicago for the International convention gather outside Shedd Aquarium to rally for a fair contract. *Photo by Debby Crawford.*

Olympia Waste Removal is staying local

When Local 618 members in Olympia found out their city council was considering giving its ownership of the public waste utility to a private company, the Local immediately created a letter for residents to send to councilmembers, discouraging the option. After Union members showed up to council meetings and rallied more than 150 people to send letters, the council moved away from privatization.

"This was a great example of the power of solidarity and Union voices. We were able to identify a concern and engage our members," said Council 2 Staff Representative Chuck Speece, who represents Local 618 members. "Our strength is in our membership."

At council meetings, Speece spoke alongside Staff Representative Aaron Cole about the risks of privatization. When a city privatizes a public service, they give up decision-making for the utility, including job security and service rates. Those decisions are surrendered to an entity whose primary incentive is to make as much money as possible. In Olympia's situation, the city also wouldn't have been able to regain control over the utility. Once garbage trucks are sold, it's expensive to get them back.

"When [city council] controls this utility, the city gets the best service they can. They have all the control over how they're meeting their community's needs. You have members of your workforce who live here, who are raising their families here, who are invested in this," Speece said during public comment.

Private waste haulers increasing costs isn't theoretical. In 2021, Port Angeles ended its contract with Waste Connections Inc., a for-profit solid waste company, citing "large rate instability due to increases demanded by WCI."

Cole, who also spoke at council meetings, said the timing of Local 618's campaign was important to its success. City council hadn't yet put out a request for proposals to private companies, allowing the Union to shut down the idea before it moved forward.

"The assessment of the staff reps and the call to action from members and citizens of Olympia were thoughtful and planned to receive the best outcome from the Olympia City Council action vote," Cole said. "Not only as a staff rep, but as a resident and voter in the City of Olympia, I was proud to stand up and speak to the council about how the actions of elected officials impact workers and the community our members serve."

For the full version of Local 618's letter, follow the QR code at right:



AFSCME Council 2 Staff Representative Aaron Cole discourages Olympia City Council from privatizing the city's waste utility during public comment at a council meeting. More than 100 people sent letters to Olympia City Council asking them to keep Olympia's waste removal local.

Recent retirements



Above: A sign spotted at Terry Leigh's (Local 433) retirement from the streets department of Coeur d'Alene after 32 years of service. Local President Bryan Eiting and Secretary Matt Spann joined to celebrate Leigh.



Above right: From left, **Local 1845-I President James Kunz, Nancy Holbrook, and VP Aaron Holmes** celebrate Holbrook's retirement. Holbrook worked for Island County and Local 1845-I for 27 years, serving many of those years as an officer on the Local Executive Board.

Council 2 provides support and resources to local Unions, empowering our members to improve their work lives through collective bargaining, contract enforcement, and group advocacy.

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(Snohomish County)
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(City of Coeur d'Alene)

Council 2 relief fund aids fire victims

In early August, Spokane-area communities experienced the worst natural disaster the region had seen in decades.

According to reporting in *Washington State Standard*, "across the state, 649 primary residences were destroyed—mostly in Spokane County"—and more than 2,500 homes and other buildings were damaged.

Those damages exceeded $188 million, with the total financial hit running to hundreds of millions of dollars. Three blazes in Spokane County—dubbed the Spokane Complex Fires—forced tens of thousands of residents to evacuate.

Some of those residents were Council 2 members. Other members were affected by the Walla Walla fires.

When news of the displaced members reached Council 2, Executive Director Michael Rainey and the Council 2 Executive Board leapt into action to develop a relief fund.

"We stood the fund up on a moment's notice," Rainey said. "Our Executive Board established a relief fund with an initial investment of $20,000 to provide assistance to members in Eastern Washington."

Council 2 created a webpage (council2.com/spokane-wildfires.html) to collect donations.

"As they always do, our members contributed an additional $14,810," said Rainey. "To date, Council 2 has distributed $9,000 to 18 members affected by the unprecedented disaster, helping them to recover and rebuild."

Eight of those checks were given to affected members in the Spokane area—seven of whom had lost their homes.

"They were appreciative. It was an unexpected relief for them; they weren't aware that the Union had help coming," said Council 2 Staff Representative Jimmy Dorantes, who represents members in Spokane. "Many members had insurance, but there's a lag there for relief. The checks helped with groceries, fuel, and other basic necessities, such as multiple visits to their homes that were burned down. The money helped bridge a gap," he said.

Dorantes added that Council 2 directly represents the Spokane County Department of Emergency Management. "Those members help to coordinate emergency response and share critical information to support emergency services. We also represent 911 dispatchers, who fielded calls to help support the effort."

Dorantes called the fire relief program "a godsend."

"It's crucial relief for people who are living through the worst time of their lives, something they never planned for. I think it goes a long way for our members, feeling like their Union has their back."

Rainey said he is pushing for the fund to be a long-term benefit. During an October meeting, the Executive Board discussed "how to sustain the fund and establish policies and procedures so we can continue answering the call whenever our members face hardship. This is the heart of our Union: When crisis strikes, we do not turn away; we make certain that no member faces hardship alone."

Rainey said he hopes to have the fund formally in place by the first of next year.

News in brief



AquaSox Union Solidarity Night

Snohomish and Island County Labor Council provided Council 2 members with free tickets to an AquaSox game in Everett for Union Solidarity Night on Aug. 29.

Council 2 joined UFCW, OPEIU, LiUNA, and SPEEA tabling.

Go Frogs!



Golf Tourney raises $20,000+

Council 2 members and their guests raised more than $20,000 in scholarship funds at their annual golf tournament this year.

Jeff Jesmer from Local 113 and his guests brought home the 1st Place prize. Local 109, Snohomish County; and Local 3845, City of Bothell, came 2nd and 3rd, respectively.

Member events and actions

Across the state, local leaders are always working to engage members, plan, or gather everyone for a fun event. Here's a glimpse into the work Council 2 members do to keep their locals—and their communities—going.



In Coupeville, Local 1845 President Stephanie Montgomery put on a member appreciation event. She did a wonderful job planning games, raffles, and telling her members about her time at the AFSCME International Convention earlier in the year.



AFSCME Council 28, which represents state employees in Washington, planned a statewide walkout to demand a fair contract for their 2027–29 contracts.

Council 2 member Rachel Barnett traveled to Everett to stand in solidarity with state workers.

In Port Angeles, Local 1619 handed out copies of its Union contracts at a city benefits fair, with a helpful cheat sheet about the benefits it has won them. Member David Freed and Local Secretary Matthew Moore helped staff the booth.

Patrick McJunkin, President of Local 1837, and **member Ryean-Marie Tuomisto** helped organize a mini-golf evening for the Local.

Convention, from p. 1

resource for the work we're doing for members of Council 2 across Washington state," Rainey said. "Patrick has dedicated his entire career to the labor movement, and while he has big shoes to fill following Lee Saunders, I know he is more than up to the challenge. His focus on growing worker power, organizing new members, defending public services, and making sure every worker has a seat at the table and a voice on the job is what our members need."

Council 2 joins Shedd Aquarium workers

On the fifth day of the convention, thousands of AFSCME members dressed in green and rallied outside of Shedd Aquarium in Chicago in support of Shedd workers fighting for a fair contract. Shedd workers formed their Union two years ago and are negotiating their first contract. During negotiations, management refused to agree to guarantee annual wage increases or a higher pay floor for new hires.

Former AFSCME President Lee Saunders spoke at the rally.

"I'm so proud that AFSCME has become the Union home for workers at Shedd and every major cultural institution in the city of Chicago," Saunders said. "The folks who staff our museums, libraries, aquariums, and zoos provide an invaluable public service, and they deserve a voice on the job and a seat at the table. Shedd workers aren't asking for a lot, just a fair contract that allows them to pay their bills and live a decent life. AFSCME's 1.4 million members stand with these workers in demanding management stop digging in their heels and agree to a fair contract for Shedd workers."

Council 2 delegates were happy to join the crowd.



Fashioned with Council 2 pins, Council 2 President/Executive Director Michael Rainey poses with newly elected AFSCME President Patrick Moran.

Council 2 Scholarship Program 2026 Scholarship Recipients

$2,000 Award


Logan Barnes, 492


Lucas Brazier, 120


Ella Strenge, 1308


Zander Pulliam, 1845


Blythe Chen, 2083

$5,000 Award


Taylor Johnson, 1516


Delaney Wood, 2617

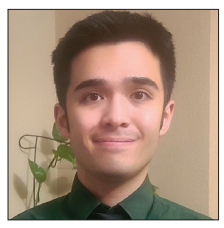

Rylend Merritt, 1849


Hailey Shenfield, 120

$2,000 Golf Award


Joseph Baker, 618


Benjamin Kurowski, 492-CS

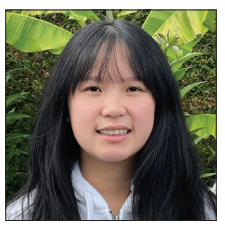

William Root, 120


Mylene Aguila, 2083


Sienna Little, 334


Andrew Rezabek, 1849


Lena Fleming, 3787

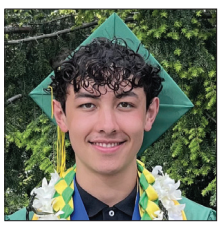

Anna Le, 2083


Aleda Kouthong, 113

$1,000 Award


Bobby Raiford, 1553


Amelia Harris, 1858


Elias Westby, 21-C

$1,000 Continuing Education Award


Hugo Sotelo, 2170

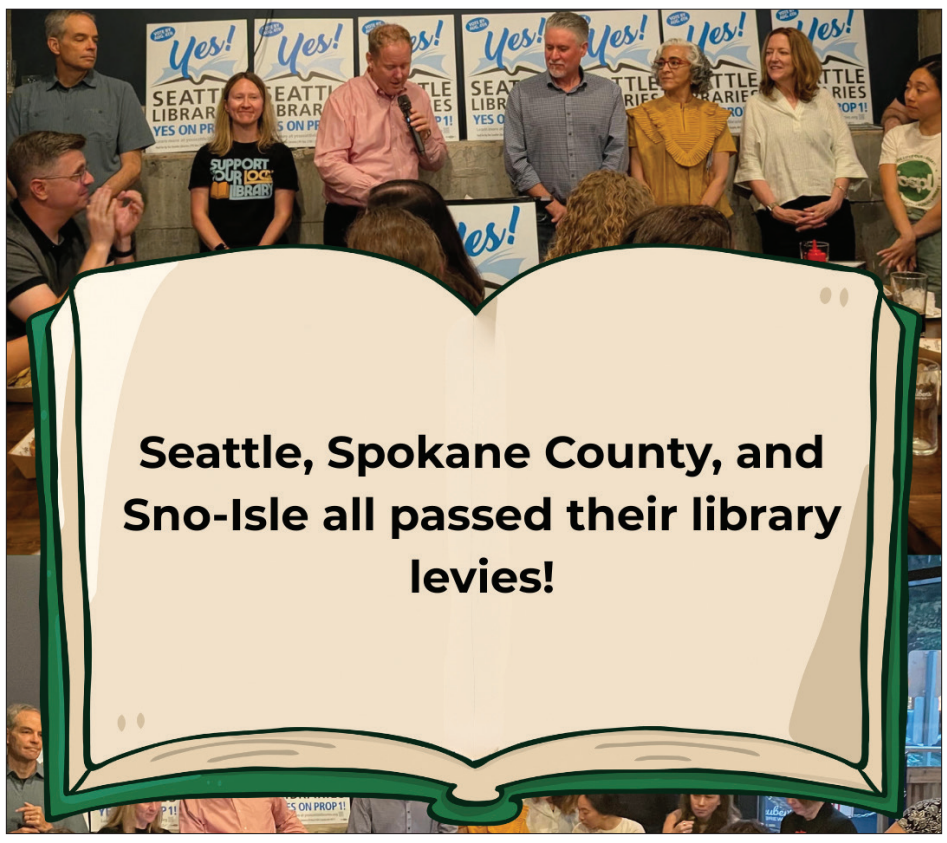
Not pictured

$2,000 Award: Jacob Rough, 846-AA

$5,000 Award: Nusaibah Charosny, 2083; Baylee Fry, 275

$2,000 Golf Award: Kennedy Colman, 113

$1,000 Continuing Education Award: Nazario Urueta, 1191-W



Save the dates

- **Local Union Steward Fundamentals:** Saturday, Nov. 7, Spokane
- **Council 2 Library Summit:** Nov. 13–15, Des Moines
- **Scholarship applications due:** mid-January
- **Legislative Conference/ Executive Board:** Feb. 11–13, 2027, Olympia
- **58th Council 2 Biennial Convention:** July 2027, Wenatchee

Four-year Scholarship Award ($5,000 per year for four years)

Katelyn Ancich, 275-0

Dear Council 2:



I am writing to sincerely thank you for your generous support through the Council 2 Scholarship Award. I am deeply grateful to have been chosen as the recipient of the $5,000 Four-year Scholarship Award.

This scholarship is helping lift a significant financial burden. Your support is allowing me to focus more fully on my education and goals without the added stress of financial strain.

I am from Aberdeen, Washington, and began my academic journey with a strong interest in the nursing program. Before coming to Grays Harbor College, I was a 3.8 GPA student at Aberdeen High School, where I chose to pursue my Associate in Arts degree through the Running Start program. I graduated with both my high school diploma and my associate degree. Outside of academics, I enjoy working at the hospital as a per diem phlebotomist, and I also love playing tennis with my friends and family.

I am currently pursuing an associate degree in nursing. I am passionate about nursing; it's a meaningful and versatile career that allows you to help others in times of need, build strong patient relationships, and continuously grow through hands-on experience and education. It offers purpose, stability, and the opportunity to make a lasting impact on individuals and communities.

My short-term goal is to complete my Associate's Degree of Nursing ADN and pass the NCLEX-RN as a Registered Nurse. In the long term, I hope to build a fulfilling career as a pediatric oncology nurse or a PICU nurse.

Once again, thank you so much for your generosity. Your investment in my future means more than words can express, and I am committed to making the most of this opportunity.

—Katelyn Ancich
Local 275-0

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