

## Somerville Labor Coalition:

# "We're In It Together!"

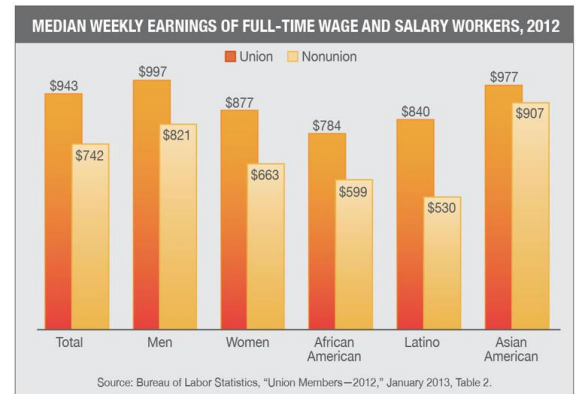


### What do unions do?

By uniting with others who do the same type of work, employees have a stronger voice on the job and in your community--and you can help create a better future for yourself and all Americans.

*Here are five good reasons to join your co-workers in a union:*

1. Working together, union members have the strength to win better wages, affordable health care, a secure retirement, and safer workplaces.
2. The "union advantage" is substantial. According to the U.S. Department of Labor, union members are much more likely to have health benefits and pensions.
3. For people of color and women workers, the union impact is even greater. Women workers who are union members earn nearly \$9,000 a year more than their non-union counterparts. For African-American workers, the union differential is also about \$9,000, and for Latino workers the yearly advantage is more than \$11,000.
4. In addition to helping employees win better wages and benefits, unions help all workers by giving working families a stronger voice in our communities, in the political arena, and in the global economy.
5. By joining together, we can build strength to hold our elected officials accountable, stop the "race to the bottom" by employers who cut wages and benefits in favor of bigger profits, and win improvements such as affordable, quality health care for all.



### How could a union help me?

*Without a union*, workers are "employees at will." That means your boss makes all of the decisions about how people are treated. Management is free to let you go or change your working conditions at any time or for just about any reason.

*With a union*, you gain the right to bargain as a group over your pay and working conditions. The right to negotiate with your employer gives everyone a meaningful voice -- not only in your terms and conditions of employment -- but in your day-to-day work life.

Once you negotiate a contract with your employer, your pay, benefits, promotions, holidays and vacations, etc. will be spelled out in writing. The union contract has job security and grievance provisions. It is enforceable in a court of law.

Unions are every working person's best defense against employer excesses and mistakes, and they are the way our collective voice is heard. Belonging to a union also means that membership in a shared community of interest where people support each other and make lifelong friendships.

## How do I join?

Massachusetts has "majority sign up recognition" for public employees. That means if a majority of your co-workers sign a petition or cards clearly indicating that you desire collective bargaining on wages and working conditions, your employer is obligated to recognize your union.

Forming a union means sticking together for the betterment of all and building an on-the-job organization with stewards to make sure that everyone is respected and the contract is followed.

### Is it safe to organize a union? Could I lose my job?

It is against the law for an employer to retaliate or discriminate against any employee who promotes or organizes for a union. In the rare case where an employee is discriminated against, the employee or the union can file charges with the state's Department of Labor Relations or with the National Labor Relations Board.



2013 at the Somerville City Club moderated by Edward Kelly, President of the Professional Fire Fighters of Mass.

## About the Somerville Labor Coalition

The Somerville Labor Coalition (SLC) was established to support, protect, promote and advance the interests of unionized workers within the City of Somerville and surrounding communities.

The SLC will endorse political candidates that best represent the values and views of organized labor within the City of Somerville. The interests of SLC in furtherance of that mission will include, but not be limited to, the health, safety and quality of life for Somerville workers and the commitment to being a friend of organized labor.

The coalition was created for the purpose of creating a united cause for the unionized workers within the City of Somerville and to inform members and others of concerns and issues of all union employees within the city. Our unity allows SLC to come together as a united group; making recommendations for political endorsements that will best meet the interests of the unionized workers it represents. The political recommendations made will not represent the views of any one individual or union, but the views of all member unions will be given serious consideration before an endorsement is provided to any candidate.

*Participating SLC unions unite nearly 600 members for the good jobs our community needs.*

### Members of the Somerville Labor Coalition.

- Somerville Firefighters Association
- Somerville Police Employees Association
- Somerville Police Superior Officers Association
- Somerville Municipal Employees Association
- Somerville Dispatchers, SEIU Local 888
- NCFO Local 3 School Custodians

### Union membership makes us strong!

Visit our website at:

[www.somervillelaborcoalition.com](http://www.somervillelaborcoalition.com)

'Like' Local 888 on Facebook at:

[www.facebook.com/pages/Somerville-Labor-Coalition/161738453922715](https://www.facebook.com/pages/Somerville-Labor-Coalition/161738453922715)