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January 2021

- [RSVP for Zoom General Meeting - Tue Jan 26 at Noon and 5 PM](#)
- [Dues Adjustment Information](#)
- [Survey Question - Last Chance to Participate](#)

[Please RSVP for Zoom General Meeting](#)

Use the links below to RSVP for our first Local 1890 General Meeting of 2021. Bring your ideas, questions and concerns to share with Executive Board officers, stewards and other members of our local. Your ideas and input make our union stronger!

[Click here to RSVP - Tue Jan 26, Noon](#)

[Click here to RSVP - Tue Jan 26, 5 PM](#)

Or send an email to afscmelocal1890niu@outlook.com

[AFSCME Dues Adjustment Information, January 1, 2021](#)

AFSCME Council 31 has sent us notification that semi-monthly dues rates have been adjusted effective January 1, 2021. Here are the new rates.

- Member - Full Time \$19.41 (additional 36 cents)
- Member - Part Time (75% rate) \$14.51 (additional 27 cents)
- Member - Part Time (50% rate) \$9.86 (additional 19 cents)

[Survey Question - Last Chance to Participate!](#)

so, what is it? Please use this survey form to tell us more. You do not need to give your name. We hope to share some interesting insights about our members' hard work in a future newsletter. Thank you to folks who have already shared their stories!

[Use this link to complete our 2nd Job Member Survey.](#)

Your Local 1890 officers and stewards remain accessible to help you with information and support. Should you have questions or concerns, or if you need assistance from a union steward, contact us at afscmelocal1890niu@outlook.com

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Angie Gasero*

Vice President

Rave Meyer*

Recording Secretary

Jennifer Gregory

Treasurer

Ellen Smith

Members at Large

Beatrice Kooken
Kristin Sherman*

Membership Chair

Debbie Williams*

Chief Steward

Tom Kapraun*

*certified stewards

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Concerns about workplace issues

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General questions

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February 2021 Newsletter

- [Members are invited to join new committees in February!](#)
- [Fact-based vaccine information from AFSCME Council 31](#)
- [January General Meeting summary](#)
- [Baker, retail clerk, performing musician, adjunct professor and more: Union members share 2nd jobs and side hustles!](#)
- [Ideas for improving communication – Episode 2](#)
- [Next General Meeting February 16, 2021 - RSVP to attend](#)

[Members are invited to join new committees in February!](#)

Your Local 1890 Executive Board has decided to form three new committees:

Constitution Committee

The initial goal of the Constitution Committee is to research, edit and finalize a constitution for Local 1890, based on a sample constitution provided by AFSCME International.

Once our executive board has approved a finalized constitution, our members will vote on whether to adopt it.

This committee will meet less frequently after our constitution has been approved by members, remaining available to consider proposed amendments in the future.

Member Action Team (MAT) Committee

MAT Committee members organize outreach and communicate information to Local 1890 members throughout the year in the areas where they work.

By communicating directly with union members at work, MAT Committee members will connect all members with important union information and resources, and will inform

members and with our executive board, with the goal of helping members find solutions.

Giving Back Committee

Members of the Giving Back Committee will discuss our local's responsibility to be active helpers in our communities and gather ideas from members about how we can give back and make a positive difference.

This committee will devise a framework for making donations on behalf of our union local, with membership approval, and will identify and develop opportunities for our members to work together on future community service projects (food drives and blood drives for example).

To become an inaugural member of these new committees, please read the committee descriptions and complete the survey questions.

[Use this link to go directly to the Local 1890 Committees Survey.](#)

[Fact-based vaccine information from AFSCME Council 31 Executive Director Roberta Lynch](#)

To members of Local 1890:

The arrival of safe and effective vaccines against COVID-19 give us hope that together we can defeat the pandemic and return to normalcy in our daily lives.

AFSCME members who work in health care and long-term care settings were designated part of Group 1A—the first to receive the vaccine—and many have already received their first or even second doses.

Many more AFSCME members will soon have the same opportunity, whether in your workplace, a public health agency in your area, through your doctor or at a pharmacy. Be sure to sign up when it's your turn. Getting vaccinated is the best way to protect yourself, your family and your community.

To make sure you have the most accurate and up-to-date information—including answers to frequently asked questions about the vaccine—Council 31 has put an array of resources on our web site.

VIDEO FAQ

In a virtual town hall meeting presented by the Illinois Department of Human Services, [Dr. Emily Landon](#)—an infectious disease specialist at the University of Chicago—[answered many of the most commonly asked questions about the COVID-19 vaccines](#):

- [What is an mRNA vaccine?](#)
- [How do we know the vaccine is safe?](#)
- [Trials showed no serious adverse effects -- only minor side effects. What's the difference?](#)
- [Dispelling common myths about the vaccine and fertility, pregnancy, microchips and more.](#)
- [What about for people with allergies, such as to the flu shot?](#)

If you wish to watch Dr. Landon's full, one-hour presentation, you can do so [here](#).

FACT SHEET

[print out](#), [click here](#).

SOCIAL MEDIA

If you're on Facebook, you may see paid posts featuring one of more than a dozen different members who've recently been vaccinated or pledged to do so. [To help spread the word, please be sure to like and share these posts!](#)

Getting vaccinated is the most important single step we can take to protect ourselves, our families, our co-workers and our communities from the coronavirus pandemic.

Remember, we're all in this together.

In solidarity,

Roberta Lynch

Executive Director, AFSCME Council 31

[January General Meeting summary](#)

Our president, vice president, treasurer, membership chair, and chief steward shared their reports with members attending the meeting. Highlights included:

- According to information from the most recent labor-management meeting, additional NIU furloughs or layoffs are not expected at this time.
- Management continues to promise to answer our questions about how the FY21 salary market adjustment and allocation decisions were made.
- Members should continue to be mindful of performing additional duties not included in their job descriptions, and work with their supervisor to seek additional compensation if they are working above their current job description. Many members find themselves in this situation due to retirements or layoffs in their departments. Union stewards can help members navigate the pertinent NIU HR or payroll processes.



AFSCME Local 1890 President Angie Gasero (right) presents a donation check for \$720.21 to Jeannine Kannegiesser (left), Development Officer for Corporations and Foundations at Northern Illinois Food Bank in Geneva, Illinois, December 2020.

It is no surprise that our members are hard-working and resourceful - we are all proud Huskies working for NIU! Current members shared some of what they do after work for fun and supplemental income, including:

Organist

Bookkeeper

Office administrator

Retail clerk

Tutor

Artist/art teacher assistant (pottery)

Adjunct professor

Translator/interpreter

House cleaner

Part-time maintenance work

Dog sitter

Freelance classical musician

Baker, custom orders and farmers market sales

Website design

Custom crochet items

Buyer/seller antiques and art objects

Several members shared that they have worked a 2nd job for more than 10 years (some more than 20!) and many report working 15 - 20 hours or more each week in addition to full-time employment at NIU.

Many members mention their need for additional income to "make ends meet".

One mentioned that they have received annual pay raises at their part time job and that the employer provides PPE such as masks and gloves.

At a later date we hope to share more information about services or products offered by our members!

If you missed sharing your 2nd job or side hustle story with us, it's not too late - we will keep the survey open and we encourage you to tell us about your skills and what you do after work to make ends meet.

[Use this link to find our 2nd job survey.](#)

[Ideas for Improving Communication – Episode 2](#)

Top 3 facts about communication:

- Communication is more than just the spoken word
- Communication involves more than one individual.
- Communication is on the listener's terms.

Top 3 communication tips:

- Don't listen to respond. Listen to understand.
- Be clear in what you are trying to say. Simplify and be direct.
- Be honest and sincere. Say what you mean, mean what you say, and don't do it in a mean way.

as important as verbal communication.

Managing communication effectively with supervisors and coworkers can help you succeed in your work area and reduce frustration by increasing understanding.

We would love to know if these ideas for improving your personal and professional communication have helped you!

Share your story of successful communication personally or on the job, or share your communication tip – send us an email at AFSCMELocal1890NIU@outlook.com

[Next General Meeting February 16, 2021 - RSVP to attend](#)

The next Local 1890 general meetings are Tuesday February 16 at noon and 5:00 pm on ZOOM. Bring your ideas, questions and concerns to share with Executive Board officers, stewards and other members of our local. Members will discuss serving on committees, communication and mindfulness at work, and our upcoming election to select new officers. We look forward to "seeing" you online.

[Click here to RSVP for ZOOM General Meeting Tue Feb 16 at noon](#)

[Click here to RSVP for ZOOM General Meeting Tue Feb 16 at 5:00 pm](#)

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Local 1890 
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March 2021 Newsletter

- [Statistics from Crain's Chicago Business Regarding Work and Employment](#)
- [February General Meeting Notes](#)
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- [Committee Members Needed](#)
- [Vote in Your Local Election on Tuesday April 6](#)
- [Upcoming NIU Info Sessions - Not To Be Missed](#)
- [Union Scholarships Available](#)
- [Next General Meeting Tuesday March 16 - See You on Zoom!](#)

[Statistics from Crain's Chicago Business Regarding Work and Employment](#)

Crain's Chicago Business recently published survey results regarding work and employment which reveal some interesting statistics:

- 22% of employees leave their jobs due to a lack of career development. Other top reasons include lack of support with work-life balance (12%), their manager's behavior (11%), unsatisfactory compensation and benefits (9%) and poor well-being (9%).
- 47% say their workload is among factors contributing to burnout, 39% cite balancing work and their personal life, 37% mention a lack of communication, feedback and support, 30% point to time pressures and a lack of clarity around expectations, and 28% list performance expectations.
- 87% of employees expect their employer to support them in balancing their life between work and personal commitments.
- 56% of employees say additional paid time off would make them more loyal to an organization.

years.

- 53% of HR professionals say employee engagement increases when onboarding is improved.

Do any of these examples relate to your own experience at NIU?

Please tell us what is most important to you about your employment at NIU. By understanding what our members prioritize, your union can more effectively advocate for everyone.

Please help us and your coworkers by taking this short survey today!

[Use this link to go to our Local 1890 Work and Employment Survey.](#)

*1 Feb 2021: [Crain's Chicago Business](#). Sources: SilkRoad, Work Institute, PR Newswire, Glassdoor, Fierce, MetLife.

Accessed 3.6.21

February General Meeting Notes

Our president, vice president, treasurer, membership chair, and chief steward shared their reports with members attending the meeting. Highlights included:

- Our wage re-opener is coming up later this Spring. AFSCME Staff Representative Rick Surber will be contacting bargaining team members in March to schedule training and begin to strategize.
- Your Local 1890 has elections once a year- have you thought about running for an office?
- Membership chair Debbie Williams reports that the number of clerical employees in our local has been reduced to around 200 due to many factors including recent retirements and the current hiring chill. Previously our local included as many as 250 clerical employees.

New Feature - Steward Spotlight!



This month's featured union steward is Heidi Carlson, Senior Events Coordinator at the Barsema Alumni and Visitors Center and Altgeld Hall on the DeKalb campus. She joined NIU two years ago and has been a Local 1890 steward for six months. Heidi also serves on the Operating Staff Council's Scholarship Committee.

importance in respectful and healthy relationships between our union members and the university.

Q. What is something important for a union steward at NIU to know?

A. It is very important for a union steward to be an active listener and to be empathetic to a variety of personalities.

Q. As a steward, what do you think is important for all members to know about our union?

A. We must work together to maintain the work of our past members and build a future for our new members.

Q. If you could tell our members anything about working at NIU, what would you want them to know?

A. If you are a member and see an opportunity, GET INVOLVED! I have had job fulfillment since beginning my professional journey at NIU, however I see that there are opportunities. It will take many voices and perspectives to represent our union members.

Q. Anything else to share?

A. I think that having job fulfillment is so important! It gives employees a natural motivation and genuine sense of purpose. A team that has job fulfillment will be happy, have greater productivity, and be less likely to have staff turnover.

Thank you Heidi for sharing your thoughts with us!

Committee Members Needed

Your Local 1890 Executive Board has decided to form three new committees:

Constitution Committee

The initial goal of the Constitution Committee is to research, edit and finalize a constitution for Local 1890, based on a sample constitution provided by AFSCME International.

Time commitment – Monthly meeting until constitution presented to Executive Board, and subsequent member election.

Member Action Team (MAT) Committee

MAT Committee members organize outreach and communicate information to Local 1890 members throughout the year in the areas where they work.

By communicating directly with union members at work, MAT Committee members will connect all members with important union information and resources, and will inform everyone when member action is needed - especially during upcoming wage negotiations.

Time commitment – Occasional communication with other members who are close in proximity to your office location.

Giving Back Committee

Members of the Giving Back Committee will discuss our local's responsibility to be active helpers in our communities and gather ideas from members about how we can give back and make a positive difference.

This committee will devise a framework for making donations on behalf of our union local, and will identify and present community service projects to members for a vote.

Time commitment – One quarterly committee meeting.

[Use this link to go directly to the Local 1890 Committees Survey.](#)

[Vote in Your Local Election on Tuesday April 6](#)

The April 6 consolidated election in Illinois is coming right up! DeKalb and Rockford are each selecting a new mayor and many other local and municipal officials will be on the ballot.

Need more information?

[Use this link to visit the Illinois State Board of Elections info page.](#)



[Upcoming NIU Info Sessions - Not To Be Missed](#)

NIU has really done an excellent job planning, promoting and presenting information and training sessions online for employees. We recommend these upcoming sessions as particularly relevant ones for our members. You are encouraged to talk with your supervisor if necessary to arrange time to attend one or more!

[Onboarding for Success: What to Do with the New Employee](#)

This session is designed for those who directly supervisor others: Onboarding...is a process that when done correctly allows supervisors to help their new employees find true success, which is a win-win for everyone. Supervisors will leave this workshop understanding the three important functions they own in the onboarding process as well as learn how to create a winning onboarding structure in their department.

[Recommendations for How to Write Job Descriptions](#)

This presentation will provide tips and recommendations for writing and updating job descriptions. This presentation will cover how to write job duties, including how to write qualifications, knowledge, skills, and abilities.

[Demystifying Mediation](#)

When we face challenges with other people, sometimes it can be helpful to have a third person in the middle to mediate. But when is that really worthwhile? In this interactive workshop learn the ins and outs of mediation, what it is and what it isn't, when it can be helpful, how it works, and how it works at NIU. Join us with your burning questions!

[Navigating Conflict](#)

This workshop will suggest strategies to handle conflict in healthy ways that contribute to mutual respect, open communication and professional growth. Participants will learn about conflict styles, and practice

[Maintaining Your Joy in the Workplace](#) (President Angie Gasero's choice)

Studies show that employees who are happier in the workplace are likely to be more productive on the job. But, what happens when you don't feel happy when you come in to work? This workshop is designed to help employees reflect upon what they can do to maintain their own happiness during the work-day.

[Union Scholarships Available](#)

AFSCME Council 31 Illinois is accepting applications for its annual Larry Marquardt Scholarship through April 23. Children of AFSCME members under the age of 25, as well as members in good standing who plan to attend school full-time are eligible to apply.

Two winners will be awarded \$2,000 each. The scholarship honors Larry Marquardt, the first executive director of Council 31 and a tireless union organizer who dedicated his life to improving the lives of working people. To get more information about Council 31's [Marquardt Scholarship](#), [click here](#). For a [printable application](#), [click here](#).

[Next General Meeting Tuesday March 16 - See You on Zoom!](#)

The next Local 1890 general meetings are Tuesday March 16 at noon and 5:00 pm on ZOOM. Bring your ideas, questions and concerns to share with executive board officers, stewards and other members of our local.

President Angie Gasero recently attended a meeting with all AFSCME local union presidents at state universities in Illinois - she will talk about how our recent experience at NIU compares with that of AFSCME members statewide. Members will also discuss serving on committees, applications for the Larry Marquardt Scholarships, and our upcoming wage re-opener. We look forward to "seeing" you online.

[Click here to RSVP for ZOOM General Meeting Tue March 16 at noon](#)

[Click here to RSVP for ZOOM General Meeting Tue March 16 at 5:00 pm](#)

Or send an email to afscmelocal1890niu@outlook.com

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Local 1890 
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April 2021 Newsletter

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- [Important Member Vote at Thursday 4/29 General Meeting](#)
- [NIU Retiree Stands Behind Local 1890](#)
- [Steward Spotlight - Chief Steward Tom Kapraun](#)
- [Mother Jones Podcast and Labor History Links](#)
- [New Member Surveys - Tell us What You Think!](#)

[March General Meeting Highlights](#)

Our president, vice president, treasurer, membership chair, and chief steward shared their reports with members attending the meeting. Highlights included:

- President Angie Gasero attended a meeting with all the AFSCME Local Union Presidents at universities in Illinois. They discussed many topics, including how effects of the pandemic have destabilized higher education statewide and nationwide. The university union presidents agreed that COVID-19 has been difficult for our members and we anticipate more changes as the safety situation improves. Compared to some of the other state universities, NIU administration has been working well with our employees.
- Angie presented some Work and Employment Survey results from March. Members selected wages as the most important thing about employment at NIU, with benefits ranked 2nd. Some eye-opening comments members made about working at NIU were also discussed.
- Members agreed that we would like to work with and hear from NIU retirees - they have valuable information to share!
- Our wage re-opener is coming up later this Spring. AFSCME Staff Representative Rick Surber has held two meetings with bargaining team members for training and to discuss strategy.
- Officers discussed upcoming executive board elections. Have you thought about running for an office or serving on a committee?

[Important Member Vote at Thursday 4/29 General Meeting](#)

We need a large turnout at the next Local 1890 General Meeting. Signed members will vote on an important change to our Constitution concerning the election process.

NOTE: To allow for the 15 day notification for a membership vote, April's General Meeting has been changed to Thursday April 29 at noon and 5:00 pm via Zoom.

We look forward to "seeing" you online.

[Click here to RSVP for ZOOM General Meeting Thur April 29 at noon](#)

[Click here to RSVP for ZOOM General Meeting Thur April 29 at 5:00 pm](#)

Or send an email to afscmelocal1890niu@outlook.com

[NIU Retiree Stands Behind Local 1890](#)

NIU retiree Jan Vander Meer's last position at NIU prior to her retirement in 2015 was as office administrator to the Chair of the English Department. She happily retired after a 30+ year career at NIU.

Jan changed departments a few times to manage her work/life balance, at one point "job sharing" with another co-worker who also needed a flexible schedule, each working 2.5 days per week. She and other secretaries (as they were known at the time) formed the group that would become APAC.

When NIU entered the computer era, Jan was tasked with learning early word processing programs such as Word Perfect and teaching those skills to staff. She also served on the Presidential Commission on the Status of Women.

Jan began working at NIU in 1982 and received merit pay increases during her first fifteen years. Merit pay increases ceased around 1997 and raises for hourly workers became rare after that – primarily occurring when the Board of Trustees approved small across-the-board percentage increases. Departments may have found a way to reward some workers, but most others were passed over for raises every year. NIU's management informed us "there was no money" for pay increases.

Jan received no pay increases during her final 5 years of employment which has impacted her pension. She also noticed that benefits at NIU were diminishing, as health insurance became pricier and pension options were changed for new hires.

In early 2015, Jan Vander Meer, along with another 99 co-workers, signed an open letter declaring their intent to form a union with AFSCME ([click here to see the letter](#)). She knew it was very unfair that her newer co-workers received minimal or no pay increases, even though they were earning positive performance reviews and working hard for NIU every day. Many continued earning the same low hourly wages at which they had started, and it seemed NIU had no plans to increase pay even though administrators continued to be hired at salaries larger than ever.

Jan retired before we won our first negotiated contract guaranteeing raises for our members. She is happy to know that the days of no pay raises for hourly staff at NIU are now in the past, at least for as long as our members stay united. What she misses most about working here are the friendships she made and the spirit of community on campus.

Jan has a message for our members:

organized and motivated, and a special thank-you to my friend Angie Gasero, who has taken on the challenging role of President. I wish you all the very best -- and hope that one day not so far away, you will all receive a living wage. Keep believing and keep fighting!"



We thank you, Jan, for sharing your experiences with all of us!

[Steward Spotlight - Tom Kapraun](#)

This month's featured union steward is our Chief Steward Tom Kapraun. Tom is the Office Manager for Statistics and Actuarial Science, on the third floor of DuSable on the DeKalb campus. He joined NIU nearly 19 years ago and has been a Local 1890 steward for four years.

Q. Why did you decide to serve for our union as a steward?

A. Someone has to do it; our contract does not enforce itself. As I expected, it gives me an understanding of how to use the contract to keep ourselves safe from employer abuse, and to keep the employer honest.

Q. What is something important for a union steward at NIU to know?

A. Serving as a steward does not take up a lot of your time, and our contract gives time away from the office, with pay, for stewarding a grievance through the process.

Q. As a steward, what are two important things you think all members should know about our union?

A. 1. If you feel you have been wronged by the employer, don't wait. Act immediately. You have only 10 days from the incident to file a grievance. Call a steward.

2. Don't try to 'fix' it yourself. Call a steward. It may be solvable with a polite conversation between you, your steward, and your boss, and not actually get into a grievance process.

2A. Unlike the Miranda Rights, the employer is NOT required to inform you of your Weingarten Rights. It is in the employer's best interest to not inform you. Call a steward if you need a Weingarten Rights card. Sorry, I couldn't keep it to only two.

Q. If you could tell our members anything about working at NIU, what would you want them to know?

A. I have been lucky to have had more good bosses than not so good here at NIU. Of all the places I've worked, on and off campus, this is the only place I felt the need for union representation.

Q. Anything else to share?

negotiation team member, or other committees. AND regularly attend monthly General Membership meetings. They are scheduled to fit most persons' schedule. Even if you don't currently have a question, you may learn something.



Thank you Tom for sharing your thoughts and experience!

Have a question for a steward?

Send an email to afscmelocal1890niu@outlook.com

[Mother Jones Podcast and Labor History Links](#)

We found two fun and informative labor-related resources right in our own backyard to share with you this month!

Free Podcast Discussion of the Life and Work of Mother Jones

[The Ben Joravsky Show - Bonus Interview - March 17, 2021](#)

[Elliot Gorn & Rosemary Feurer - Chicago's Radical Past](#)

Historians Elliot Gorn & Rosemary Feurer are part of a campaign to memorialize Mother Jones, the great 20th century labor leader and radical. Chicago has a history has of radical union and organizing efforts that's largely been forgotten. Is it too controversial to pay tribute to a radical leader? Loyola's Gorn & NIU's Feurer discuss...

Labor History Links Web page

[Labor History Links](#)

"This site is the most comprehensive bibliography of information, documents and links of U.S. labor history sites on the internet. It was developed by labor historian Rosemary Feurer for the Labor and Working Class History Association. If you know of sites that should be listed here, I will be glad to add them." [Contact the developer by email.](#)

Web, accessed 4.11.21 <http://www.laborhistorylinks.org/>

[New Member Surveys - Tell us What You Think!](#)

Tell us about how your workload has changed since this time last year.

*Have you taken on additional job duties?

**Is the volume of work assignments more or less?

***How has the pandemic affected your work - has work been easier or more difficult?

[Use this link to complete our brief Local 1890 Workload Survey](#)**Tell us about how your household has been affected by COVID-19.**

*Has someone in your household lost employment due to the pandemic?

**Have you been managing your kids' online school while working full-time?

***Has the number of family members living at your home changed in the past year?

****Anything else to share?

[Use this link to complete our Local 1890 Member Survey on COVID-19.](#)**Tell us how you prefer to vote for Executive Board positions.**

*Do you prefer in person voting or electronic?

**If you had the option to vote for Executive Board position electronically, would you vote?

[Use this link to complete our Local 1890 Voting Preference Survey.](#)**Thanks for participating! We will share survey results in a future newsletter.**

Your Local 1890 officers and stewards remain accessible to help you with information and support. Should you have questions or concerns, contact us at

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[Use this link to join our union.](#)**WEINGARTEN RIGHTS****"If this discussion could in any way lead to my being disciplined or terminated, or affect my personal working condition, I respectfully request that my union representative or steward be present at**



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May 2021 Newsletter

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- [Steward Spotlight - Sarah Lindell](#)
- [Results from April Member Survey Questions](#)
- [Next General Meeting - Tue May 25 at noon on Zoom](#)

[Bargaining Committee Update and New Survey Questions](#)

In April, our union informed the employer of our request to bargain as specified in our [C.B.A. \(contract\)](#), Article XII Compensation and Benefits, **Section 7 Wage Increases: FISCAL YEAR 2022**

The parties will meet to open the Agreement for the sole purpose of negotiating wages for Fiscal Year 2022 (contract year commencing July 1, 2021) no later than sixty (60) days prior to the commencement of the fiscal year.

Our hard-working bargaining team members have now completed four meetings to share research and discuss proposals with staff rep Rick Surber. The first bargaining session with management representatives will take place in the first week of June.

These negotiations will affect our #1 employment concern

---- WAGE INCREASES ----

[Now is the time to become a voting member of your union](#)

The work we do every day keeps NIU strong. We are committed to the success of the university and the mission set forth by President Freeman and approved by the Board of Trustees.

When our members support each other, we strengthen our own bargaining power.

You can also help maintain our union's strength by completing [brief surveys about wage increases and changes to departments at NIU](#). As we prepare to bargain wage increases with NIU, the information you share will help us to formulate strong arguments in favor of fair compensation for our members. **Your opinion counts and helps us represent all members at the bargaining table.**

What is a fair amount for an annual wage increase?

**Think about your life experience as a working person and tell us what you think is fair.*

[Use this link to complete our Wage Increase Survey](#)

What has changed about how business is now done in your department, compared to a year ago?

**How is the work previously done by former coworkers now being accomplished?*

[Use this link to complete our Departmental Changes Survey](#)

We will share survey results along with bargaining reports in a future newsletter.

[April General Meeting Highlights](#)

Local 1890 executive board officers, committee chairs and our staff rep shared their reports at noon and 5pm on April 29. Meeting highlights include:

- President Angie Gasero shared some **April member workload survey results** along with several comments from members about how the pandemic has affected aspects of work and personal lives. Most employees have taken on additional duties in the past year and some have spent their own money to buy items necessary for working remotely for NIU.
- Angie pointed out to new members that **some of our dues pay for our Staff Rep and assistance from AFSCME Council 31**. Before we had union representation, it was up to NIU to determine the outcome of any employee grievance or reprimand from management which was very one-sided. Now, our members get assistance from a trained Steward and a fair grievance process with management guaranteed by our contract. Our union works to ensure you are treated fairly and with respect.
- **AFSCME Financial Standards training** has now been completed by Local 1890 Vice President Rave Meyer, Secretary/Treasurer Ellen Smith and Trustee Lesly Schoo.
- **In new business**, the two general membership meetings on April 29th failed to collectively produce a quorum to count the votes taken in regards to temporarily moving the executive board elections to November. However, a first reading of the amendment to Article VI of the constitution (which in effect moves the election permanently to November) was read. A second reading and subsequent vote to approve the amendment, if called, will be conducted at the May 25th general meeting.
- In old business, **Beatrice Kookan has been appointed to serve our union as MAT team leader**. Currently, Bea serves on our executive board as Member at Large and works as Office Manager in the department of Mechanical Engineering.

afscmelocal1890niu@outlook.com today!

Steward Spotlight - Sarah Lindell

This month we feature Local 1890 union steward Sarah Lindell. She works as an Administrative Assistant for the division of International Affairs on the fourth floor of Williston Hall in DeKalb. Sarah started at NIU 19 years ago. In her three years as a union steward she has helped several of our members successfully navigate employment issues and resolve grievances with NIU.

Q. Why did you decide to serve our union as a steward?

A. I decided to serve as a steward because some people are not able to use their voice for themselves. I am willing to be that voice. I love helping others and I want to see others treated equally and well. I want people to see their own value.

Q. What are two important things for a union steward at NIU to know?

A. The most important thing is to act fast. Time is of the essence! If an issue comes up, contact the union immediately. If filing a grievance becomes necessary, it must be done within 10 days of the incident. Second is to be a good listener. People need to be heard. Truly listen to their story and then figure out how you can help.

Q. As a steward, what do you think all members should know about our union?

A. We are here to help and support! We want our people to be compensated fairly for their work and we want them to have a good environment to complete this work.

Q. If you could tell our members anything about working at NIU, what would you want them to know?

A. There are so many wonderful people at NIU! Get involved and you'll meet even more! We have so many great faculty, staff, and students. I have found my work at NIU to be so fulfilling.

Q. Have you or do you currently serve on committees or in another way at NIU?

A. I am a member of the Administrative Professionals Advisory Council and I am the campus Chapter Coordinator for Phi Beta Delta Honor Society for International Scholars. I also served on the Program Prioritization Task Force a few years ago and learned so much about NIU and its offices and how it operated.

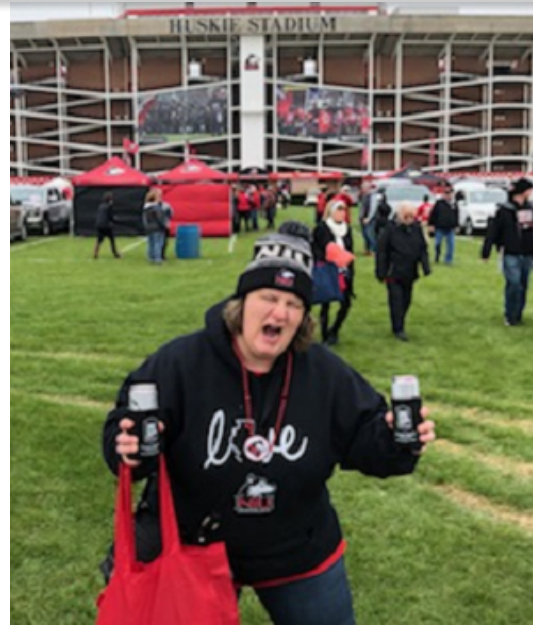
Q. Anything else to share?

A. If there is something in life, politics, or work, etc. that you do not like, get involved and work towards changing it or understanding it. Even if everything is perfect, get involved and make it even better! You might be surprised at how rewarding it can be.

Thank you to Sarah for sharing your experience with everyone!

Have a question for a steward?

Send an email to afscmelocal1890niu@outlook.com



[Results from April Member Survey Questions](#)

Last month we asked our members about changes to their workload during the past year. Here is some of what you told us.

Have you taken on additional job duties in the past year?

Yes 81%

No 19%

Is the volume of work assignments more or less in the past year?

More 62%

The Same 38%

Less 0%

Are there more people, fewer people or the same number of people doing the work in your area?

More people 0%

Fewer people 81%

The same number of people 19%

Have you received additional pay for doing additional work this year?

Yes 0%

No 100%

Thanks to everyone who completed the April surveys and please be sure to share info by completing surveys or sending an email to afscmelocal1890niu@outlook.com. When we communicate with each other we can address concerns and work together to improve things for everyone at NIU.

[Next General Meeting - Tue May 25 at noon on Zoom](#)

Please note: There will be no 5:00 pm meeting this month due to summer schedules.

Items to discuss will include:

Second Reading - Constitution Amendment, Article VI
Executive board officer, committee chair, and staff rep reports

[Click here to RSVP for ZOOM General Meeting Tuesday May 25 at noon](#)

Or send an email to afscmelocal1890niu@outlook.com



Hang in there - Summer's coming!

Your Local 1890 officers and stewards remain accessible to help you with information and support. Should you have questions or concerns, contact us at

afscmelocal1890niu@outlook.com

LOCAL 1890 OFFICERS

President

Angie Gasero*

Vice President

Rave Meyer*

Recording Secretary

Jennifer Gregory

Treasurer

Ellen Smith

Members at Large

Beatrice Kooken
Kristin Sherman*

Membership Chair

Debbie Williams*

Chief Steward

Tom Kapraun*

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Concerns about workplace issues

Tom Kapraun - tkapraun@niu.edu

General questions

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- rsurber@AFSCME31.org

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[Local 1890 Facebook Group](#)

You can easily add YOUR voice to OUR Local 1890 voice.

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WEINGARTEN RIGHTS

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*certified stewards

representative or steward be present at the meeting. Without representation, I choose not to answer any questions.”



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Local 1890
AFSCME[®]
June 2021 Newsletter



Lagoon-a-palooza Local 1890
Save the Date - July 28, 2021

Celebrate Summer with food, music,
giveaways, watercraft and more!

See live co-workers in person!

Look for your invitation and
info in the July newsletter!

In Local 1890 News This Month

- [Wage Negotiations - Bargaining Update](#)
- [Meet Beatrice Kookan, Local 1890 MAT Leader](#)
- [May Survey Results: Wage Increase and Departmental Changes](#)
- [Steward Spotlight - Jenna Villani](#)
- [June Member Survey - When to Resume Onsite Meetings?](#)
- [Next General Meeting - Tue June 29 at noon on Zoom](#)

[Wage Negotiations - Bargaining Update](#)

- AFSCME staff rep Rick Surber and five members of our bargaining team met at the bargaining table with NIU management representatives Jesse Perez and Darek Williams on June 4 at the human resources building on campus.
- Our team made a fair and necessary proposal for FY22 wage increases for all members of AFSCME Local 1890 at NIU, representing a first step towards correcting a long-standing and well-documented wage disparity.

- Our team will return to the bargaining table for a scheduled meeting later in June.
- Once a tentative agreement with upper management is reached, our signed members who have voting rights will have the opportunity to cast their vote.

Reminder:

These negotiations will affect our #1 employment concern

---- WAGE INCREASES ----

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The work we do every day keeps NIU strong. We are committed to the success of the university and the mission set forth by President Freeman and approved by the Board of Trustees.

When our members support each other, we strengthen our own bargaining power. Once again, we need to stand together for fairness as proud Huskies and strong union members to make our voice heard.



[Meet Beatrice Kookan, Local 1890 MAT Leader](#)

Local 1890's president has appointed Beatrice Kookan to lead our union's **Member Action Team**. She is a founding member of Local 1890 and has served on the executive board as Member at Large for several years. Bea is one of the many people we work with who went door to door to convince enough people to join and certify our union!

Bea moved to the US from Germany in 1987. Attracted to NIU by the diverse student body and faculty from all over the world, she started in the College of Education as an Office Support Specialist in 2008 and now works as an Office Manager in the department of Mechanical Engineering. Lack of wage increases for many years convinced Bea that forming a union for NIU workers was a good idea.

Bea's message is for all who want fair wages and a better standard of living at NIU: "Only through this union can we implement changes in salary for those of us that are not fortunate enough to have administrators willing to give merit increases, as is the case in many colleges and departments. My hope is that you decide to become involved as a

Ready to get involved now? Email afscmelocal1890niu@outlook.com today!

Learn more at our June general meeting - Bea and Local 1890 officers will be discussing plans for our **Member Action Team** to take action, keeping members in your department and your building informed about wage negotiations and other work-related issues of concern.

[May Survey Results: Wage Increase and Departmental Changes](#)

Members completed surveys in May to share their opinions about wage increases and describe current working conditions in their departments at NIU.

Members' responses helped our bargaining team to craft a strong wage increase proposal.

Thanks to all who completed the May surveys.

Here's a summary of what we learned.

Q. In your opinion, what is a fair amount for an annual wage increase?

3% increase: 27% of respondents

5% increase: 38% of respondents

10% increase: 25% of respondents

Other: 10% of respondents

Q. I am a voting member of Local 1890 at NIU

Yes: 91% of respondents

No: 9% of respondents

Q. Would you like to share anything else about wages?

A. Of the comments received, some common observations and concerns include:

++ 3% annual increases will never make up lost ground for any employee hired during the time since annual wage increases stopped.

++ New employees with job experience and measurable job skills are hired at the bottom of the pay range.

++ Years of experience in your job should influence wages.

++ Employees who were required to continue working on campus during the pandemic should receive extra compensation. Not all employees had the option to stay safe by working from home, and those working on campus were required to be tested regularly for COVID as well as putting themselves at risk of infection.

++ In some cases, grad assistants earn a higher wage than NIU employees.

Q. What has changed about how business is now being done in your department compared to a year ago?

A. Some member observations include:

- Fewer or no student workers now
- Doing more with less staff and less support
- Less or no backup for essential tasks such as timekeeping
- Employees using personal cell phones to conduct NIU business

- Lost coworkers not being replaced, so work is done by remaining staff

[Steward Spotlight - Jenna Villani](#)



This month we feature Local 1890 union steward Jenna Villani. She completed AFSCME steward training and began serving our union one year ago. Jenna works as an Office Administrator for the department of English at NIU and has been at NIU for more than seven years. Prior to that, as a single mom, she raised four kids. Jenna recently went skydiving for the first time (see photo) and she will earn her B.G.S. this December with an emphasis in Psychology.

Q. Why did you decide to serve our union as a steward?

A. Our union helped me immensely when I needed a steward's assistance. My steward was knowledgeable, thoroughly researched my issue and helped me file a grievance with management for violating our contract. This encouraged me to want to become a steward to help others in similar situations.

Q. Briefly, what is the best thing, the worst thing, or the weirdest thing about your job lately?

A. My new position as Office Administrator for the Department of English is great. There is still so much to learn, but I am loving the mental challenges of handling all of the department finances. The weirdest thing--- realizing that many people need some assistance with simple office tasks (eg: using a copying machine, how NOT to 'reply all' on every e-mail chain, etc.). I find this both odd and amusing at the same time!

Q. What are two important things for a union steward at NIU to know?

A. Be patient, thoughtful, and listen thoroughly when a member reaches out to you for any reason. Adhere to ALL timelines set forth in our contract - this is imperative!

Q. As a steward, what are two things you think all members should know about our union?

A. First, we have YOUR backs....we are giving our time freely to ensure that we ALL have a voice regarding our employment here at NIU.
Second, we are growing stronger everyday--but we need YOUR help. Becoming a full, dues paying member gives Local 1890 more strength to fight the necessary battles that arise (such as wage negotiations), and gives you voting rights on topics that directly impact all of us.

A. Don't limit your contact to people just within your own department. Reach out, and you will soon realize there are people willing to help guide and mentor you from many departments. Don't be afraid to reach out to your union reps with a question, be it about our contract, a potential grievance, or NIU questions in general. Our stewards hold years of experience and a wealth of knowledge they are willing to share with you!

Thank you to Jenna for sharing your experience this month!

Have a question for a steward? Want to learn about becoming a union steward?

Send an email to afscmelocal1890niu@outlook.com

[June Member Survey - When to Resume Onsite Meetings?](#)

With many COVID-19 restrictions now being changed in the state of Illinois and at NIU, we would like to consider holding meetings in person on campus once again. Our last in-person membership meeting was held in the Holmes Student Center February 2020.

When do you think we should resume having general membership meetings in person?

[Use this link to complete our In-Person Meetings Survey](#)

Thanks to everyone who completed the May surveys.

Your opinion is important!

Share it by completing surveys or sending an email to afscmelocal1890niu@outlook.com.

We will share survey results in a future newsletter.

[Next General Meeting - Tue June 29 at noon on Zoom](#)

Please note: There will be no 5:00 pm meeting this month due to summer schedules.

Some items to discuss include: Wage negotiation update,

Join our **M.A.T.** and help spread the word about our union,

plus reports from E-board officers, committee chair, and our staff rep,

Lagoon-a-palooza preview, and more!

[Click here to RSVP for ZOOM General Meeting Tuesday June 29 at noon](#)

Or send an email to afscmelocal1890niu@outlook.com

Your Local 1890 officers and stewards remain accessible to help you with information and support. Should you have questions or concerns, contact us at

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July 2021 Newsletter Lagoon-a-palooza Edition

WHERE'S MY RAISE??

- Local 1890 has been negotiating our FY22 wage increase with NIU Management for over a month.
- Our Collective Bargaining Agreement guarantees if NIU gives a campus wide general percentage pay increase to other non-union employees, our members are entitled to that increase as well.
- We are bargaining 'above and beyond' that 3% increase.
- Your Local 1890 is advocating to compensate for seven (7) years of lost wage increases, wage compression, and cost of living.
- The negotiation process takes time and not all issues will be solved in one raise.
- Dues-paying members will get to vote to accept/decline the negotiated raise.
- The final negotiated, voted upon raise will be paid retroactive to July 1, 2021.



Lagoon-a-palooza Local 1890 Celebration Wed July 28 11:30 am - 1:30 pm East Lagoon, NIU DeKalb

Come celebrate Summer with union coworkers and friends.

Enjoy food, music, giveaways, free watercraft rentals, and more!

RSVP and more info below.

In Local 1890 News This Month

- [Wage Reopener Negotiations Continue](#)

- [June Survey Results: Onsite Membership Meetings](#)
- [New July Member Survey - Local 1890 Website Ideas](#)
- [Next General Meeting - Tue July 27 at noon on Zoom](#)

[Wage Reopener Negotiations Continue](#)

- AFSCME staff rep Rick Surber and five members of your Local 1890 bargaining team had presented a fair and necessary wage proposal to NIU management on June 4 for FY22 wage increases. Our proposal represented the first step towards correcting a long-standing and well-documented wage disparity at NIU and based on comparable pay rates at other state universities.
- After NIU's representatives brought our June 4 wage proposal to upper management, Jesse Perez and Darek Williams came to our meeting on June 22 with a counter-offer. The counter-offer failed in several ways to meet the needs of our members and did not address important problems caused by the documented wage disparity at NIU and was therefore not acceptable to the Local 1890 bargaining team.
- On July 2, your bargaining team tendered our compromise proposal, attempting to reach consensus with management. We expect to schedule the next bargaining session with NIU soon. We are hopeful that management is prepared to reach a negotiated tentative agreement at this meeting.
- Once a tentative agreement has been reached by your bargaining team and NIU management, we will announce a date to vote in person on this proposal. Although this decision affects everyone who is covered in our collective bargaining agreement, only those members who have signed union cards will have the right to cast their vote to accept or decline this tentative wage agreement.

The work we do every day keeps NIU strong and we are accomplishing the work in spite of losing 20% of our clerical workforce over the past two years and in spite of challenges caused by the pandemic.

Despite being denied any cost of living increases over an embarrassingly large number of years, our members remain committed to the success of the university and the mission set forth by President Freeman and approved by the Board of Trustees.

These negotiations affect our members' #1 employment concern

---- WAGE INCREASES ----

[Now is the time to become a voting member of your union](#)

When our members support each other, we strengthen our own bargaining power.

Once again, we need to stand together for fairness as proud Huskies and strong union members to make our voice heard.

The past 15+ months have been challenging for everyone. Many of us have a heavier workload now, and we watched as our coworkers and department sizes dwindled. Some had the ability to work from home while others were required to work on campus to keep NIU operating. Regardless of your office location, we can all agree life has been unequivocally altered.

Through it all, our AFSCME Local 1890 has worked tirelessly behind the scenes to ensure what remains in our work environment is acceptable to all our members. Our bargaining team is currently fighting for better wages, our stewards are working on cases involving additional pay, job descriptions or unfair disciplinary actions. As always, our entire executive board is out spreading the word of what your Local 1890 has done and continues to do for all of us.

Now that Illinois has moved into Phase 5 reopening and things are beginning to 'get back to normal' so to speak, we want to invite you to celebrate at the first ever:

LAGOON-A-PALOOZA!



Wednesday, July 28th, 2021

11:30 am - 1:30 pm

At the East Lagoon off Castle Drive.

rain date: 8/4/21

Lunch provided but you MUST RSVP. We will have free watercraft rentals from 12pm – 1pm. There will be giveaways, drawings, music, and plenty of space to spread out, be safe and reconnect with co-workers and friends. Bring a chair or blanket to sit on! Come out and join us. Eat great food. Get out on the water. Have fun, talk to new employees and connect with people you have not been able to see in a while.

In Solidarity,

Your Local 1890

[Click here to RSVP for Lagoon-a-palooza](#)

[Become a MAT Captain and Keep Our Members Informed](#)

Information needs to get out to our members, and the **MAT Captain** helps do that on an as-needed basis with minimal time involved.

Think of the old-fashioned phone tree, but in-person or email, and you have the modern day MAT. And Local 1890 could use your help.

members around issues they care about. The communication is a two-way process, allowing union and bargaining leadership to relay important information to the members, and allowing members to send feedback and suggestions back to the leadership.

Local 1890's MAT Coordinator is Bea Kooken.

MAT Coordinator: A designated individual who works directly with union leadership. **MAT** Coordinators relay member feedback to leadership, disseminate important information to members through **MAT** Captains, and plan and mobilize members for **Actions**.

Local 1890 needs volunteers at the MAT Captain level.

MAT Captains: leaders in the actual workplace who relay information to and from a specific group of coworkers. To avoid overwhelming any one **MAT Captain**, the goal is to have each captain be responsible for roughly ten of their fellow Local 1890 members. To achieve this goal we will need roughly 54 **MAT Captains** throughout campus.

Types of MAT Communication

MAT Captains are an essential part of the chain of communication between leadership and membership. This communication includes:

- Listening to co-workers issues, problems, and concerns and communicating them back to Executive board leadership.
- Distributing written communications such as Union newsletters, flyers, etc., to the members on their team.
- Educating and informing workers on issues that affect them.
- Relaying updates on contract negotiations from the Bargaining Team.
- Asking coworkers for ideas on Member Actions.
- Motivating and mobilizing members to participate in Member Actions, including relaying materials (balloons, fliers, signs, etc.) that may be necessary for the action.

Would you do us a favor and volunteer to be a MAT Captain and get information to those in your building and area?

Email afscmelocal1890niu@outlook.com today!

[June Survey Results: Onsite Membership Meetings](#)

Based on results of this survey, Local 1890 will continue to hold membership meetings on Zoom at noon. We will also explore options for converting noon membership meetings to a hybrid format - thanks to members for suggesting this idea!

Q. When do you think Local 1890 should resume holding membership meetings in person at the Holmes Student Center?

A. *Our members do not agree on when to resume onsite meetings, but a large majority (77%) expressed a preference for returning to in-person meetings.*

Q. What time do you prefer for an in person membership meeting on a work day at HSC?

A. *70% of respondents prefer noon meetings, 20% prefer meeting at 5:00 pm.*

Q. Are you more likely to attend Local 1890 membership meetings online or in person?

[New July Member Survey - Local 1890 Website Ideas](#)

Local 1890 will launch a new website for our members in Fall/Winter of 2021, to help us all stay informed. This month, we ask members for input and ideas to make our website useful for all.

What features would you like to see included in our new website?

[Use this link to complete our Website Ideas Survey](#)

Your opinion is important!

Share it by completing surveys or sending an email to afscmelocal1890niu@outlook.com.

We will share results in a future newsletter.

[Next General Meeting - Tue July 27 at noon on Zoom](#)

Please note: We will meet at noon only this month due to summer schedules.

Some items to discuss include: Wage negotiation update, Local 1890 constitution, AFSCME Council 31 convention announcement, plus reports from E-board officers, committee chair, and our staff rep, and more!

[Click here to RSVP for ZOOM General Meeting Tuesday July 27 at noon](#)

Or send an email to afscmelocal1890niu@outlook.com

Your Local 1890 officers and stewards remain accessible to help you with information and support. Should you have questions or concerns, contact us at

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August 2021 Newsletter Back to Campus Edition

In Local 1890 News This Month

- [Lagoon-a-Palooza Highlights!](#)
- [Bargaining Update - Wage Negotiations Continue](#)
- [Return to Campus FAQs - Stay Informed](#)
- [More Work Than You Can Handle? Is it Time for a Desk Audit?](#)
- [July Survey Results: Website Ideas](#)
- [Remembering AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka](#)
- [Next General Meeting - Tue August 24 at noon or 5pm on Zoom](#)
- [Local 1890 Contacts](#)

[Lagoon-a-Palooza Highlights!](#)



L-R: Chief Steward Tom Kapraun, Recording Secretary Jennifer Gregory, President Angie Gasero and Member at Large Kristin Sherman.

Meeting up with AFSCME Local 1890 members was the highlight of a fun and memorable Lagoon-a-Palooza 2021 event! Members gathered near the brightly decorated 1890 tent on Wednesday July 28 to share food and conversation, paddle canoes, pick up AFSCME swag and enter to win prizes. The weather was hot and the bottled water was icy cold.

Local 1890 members enjoyed a picnic lunch and entered to win raffle prizes including a coffee-lovers basket, a bucket filled with car wash supplies, AFSCME laptop bags and other fun items. Prize winners included Karen Eaton, Ellen Smith, Joe Kauzlarich, Jennifer Gregory and Shirley Portegys. E-Board members and our staff rep Rick Surber were on hand to reconnect with members and catch up in person after nearly 18 months of Zoom meetings.

Many thanks to this year's party planners Rave Meyer, Jennifer Gregory and Angie Gasero and a special thank you to the donors who provided the raffle prizes. Thanks to all the members who voted to hold this summer celebration. It was great to see everyone.

Let's do it again next year!



Local 1890 members enjoyed free canoe rides!

Bargaining Update - Wage Negotiations Continue

- Wage negotiations began on June 4 and are ongoing.
- Proposals and counter-proposals have been exchanged with each side arguing for their priorities and exploring areas of agreement.
- Local 1890 priorities include addressing wage compression, collapsing promotional lines, and wage disparities caused and compounded by many years without raises. While Local 1890 understands all issues will not be solved in a single fiscal year, we are determined to make measurable progress to lessen the issues we face now and in the future.
- A new counter-proposal from NIU was received on July 28 and we expect to return to the bargaining table soon. Once again we are hopeful that management is prepared to reach a negotiated tentative agreement.
- Once a tentative agreement has been reached by your bargaining team and NIU management, we will announce a date to vote in person on this proposal. Although this decision affects everyone who is covered in our collective bargaining

These negotiations affect our members' #1 employment concern

---- WAGE INCREASES ----

[Now is the time to become a voting member of your union](#)

Reminders

- + Our Collective Bargaining Agreement guarantees if NIU gives a campus wide general percentage pay increase to other non-union employees, our members are entitled to that increase as well.
- + We are bargaining 'above and beyond' that 3% increase.
- + Your Local 1890 is advocating to compensate for seven (7) years of lost wage increases, wage compression, and cost of living.
- + The negotiation process takes time and not all issues will be solved in one raise.
- + Dues-paying members will get to vote to accept/decline the negotiated raise.
- + The final negotiated, voted upon raise will be paid retroactive to July 1, 2021.

The work we do every day keeps NIU strong.

We are accomplishing the work in spite of losing more than 20% of our clerical workforce over the past two years and in spite of challenges caused by the pandemic.

As we return to campus for the Fall semester amidst ongoing uncertainty, our members remain committed to the success of the university and the mission set forth by President Freeman and approved by the Board of Trustees.

[Return to Campus FAQs - Stay Informed](#)

More than 200 NIU stakeholders attended the **Updated Guidance for Phase 5 of Restore Illinois** meeting and Q&A on Teams for supervisors with several members of the NIU administration on July 19.

[For some FAQs derived from this meeting, find a downloadable PDF here.](#)

Refer to NIU's [Protecting the Pack webpage](#) for the most up-to-date campus safety information. Here is some information we found there that we'd like to bring to your attention:

*"The university expects supervisors to work with employees who are members of vulnerable populations or have close family who are members of vulnerable populations, and who express concerns or issues with the workplace environment in relation to "at-risk" factors. **If an employee is represented by a union, supervisors must consult with Employee/Labor Relations in Human Resource Services before implementing any resolutions to employee concerns/issues.**"*

accessed 9 Aug 2021, <https://www.niu.edu/protecting-the-pack/index.shtml>

[More Work Than You Can Handle? Is it Time for a Desk Audit?](#)

Please be aware! Many members have contacted us regarding the work load they have been asked to take on, due to factors such as staff retirements and no new hires to replace former coworkers and a 20% reduction of clerical staff at NIU.

If your supervisor is asking you to take on more work, requesting a desk audit is a right

To formally request a desk audit, send an email to the hiring manager in your department (usually your supervisor) and copy afscmelocal1890niu@outlook.com. The hiring manager makes the request through the PeopleSoft system. HR will need an updated, current job description signed by both the employee and their supervisor. Once HR has received all the necessary paperwork, there is a 30-day timer that begins for them to complete this task and provide an answer.

[Use this link to find information NIU provides about job position classification](#)

[Use this link to find Desk Audit \(aka classification review\) info at the NIU website](#)

Feel free to contact a union steward if you would like to discuss the pros and cons of the desk audit process at NIU. Send an email to afscmelocal1890niu@outlook.com.



[July Survey Results: Website Ideas](#)

Thanks to all who shared opinions and preferences for our Local 1890 website project!

Here's what you told us:

Q. What features would you like to see included in our new website? (Please check all that apply)

More than 75% want

Local 1890 meeting agendas and minutes

Local 1890 F.A.Q.s

Our current collective bargaining agreement with the employer

Contact information for stewards and executive board members

More than 50% want

Pictures of members at work and play

Illinois state legislative updates

Archived local 1890 newsletters

"Ask a union member" feature

More than 25% want

Information provided by AFSCME Council 31

Historical information about our local

Pictures of members pets

Links to labor history information

Opportunities to volunteer locally

Local art, music and culture opportunities

Some members also suggested adding sections explaining some of the history of our local, featuring our past presidents and other leaders, and exploring how our membership has

We'll make an announcement when our new website is available!

**[Remembering Richard Trumka,
AFL-CIO President 2009 - 2021](#)**

[Saunders: Rich Trumka was 'one of the fiercest advocates for working people ever'](#)

AFSCME President Lee Saunders released the following statement about the sudden passing of AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka:

“We’ve lost one of the nation’s fiercest, most effective advocates for working people ever. From his earliest days working in the coal mines of Pennsylvania, Rich has lived the values of the labor movement with the greatest passion and purpose. He has touched and improved so many lives.

“From workplace safety to racial justice to retirement security to labor law reform and so much more, Rich has never relented in the struggle to ensure that working people are able to have lives of dignity and security.

“On behalf of the 1.4 million members of AFSCME, I am grateful for his leadership and for his commitment to fighting for people who work in public service. We send our deepest condolences to Barbara, Rich Jr. and his entire family.

“Today, I say a prayer for my friend. Tomorrow, I fight in his memory. Rest in power, brother.”



[Next General Meeting - Tue August 24 at noon or 5pm on Zoom](#)

election, annual budget and future events, plus reports from E-board officers, committee chairs, and our staff rep, and more!

[Click here to RSVP for ZOOM General Meeting Tuesday August 24 at noon](#)
[Click here to RSVP for ZOOM General Meeting Tuesday August 24 at 5:00 pm](#)

Or send an email to afscmelocal1890niu@outlook.com

[Your Local 1890 officers and stewards](#) remain accessible to help you with information and support. Should you have questions or concerns, contact us at

afscmelocal1890niu@outlook.com

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Vice President

Rave Meyer*

Recording Secretary

Jennifer Gregory

Treasurer

Ellen Smith

Members at Large

Beatrice Kooken
 Kristin Sherman*

Membership Chair

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Chief Steward

Tom Kapraun*

MAT Chair

Beatrice Kooken

*certified stewards

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Concerns about workplace issues

Tom Kapraun - tkapraun@niu.edu

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AFSCME Staff Representative - Rick Surber
 - rsurber@AFSCME31.org

Local 1890 email: afscmelocal1890niu@outlook.com

[Local 1890 Facebook Group](#)

You can easily add YOUR voice to OUR Local 1890 voice.

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Dear AFSCME Local 1890 Members,

During Local 1890's General Membership Meetings on August 24, 2021, eligible members voted to ratify a tentative wage increase agreement with NIU for FY22.

This fiscal year (FY22), our bargaining unit had to negotiate for any wage increment.

Thanks to our bargaining team's persistence in negotiations, all Local 1890 bargaining unit members employed by NIU as of August 24th will receive a 3% wage increase.

Our bargaining team then secured an additional pay increase for more than one-third of our lowest-paid members.

The exact payout dates for the retro pay and additional increments are pending. The 3% increment will be the first payout you should receive. We will keep you updated once we know the exact dates.

[Please click here to read the text of our negotiated wage agreement.](#)

In Solidarity,

Your Local 1890

Your Local 1890 officers and stewards remain accessible to help you with information and support. Should you have questions or concerns, or if you need assistance from a union steward, contact us at afscmelocal1890niu@outlook.com

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Chief Steward

Tom Kapraun*

*certified stewards



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September 2021 Newsletter FY22 Wage Increase Edition

In Local 1890 News This Month

- [22nd AFSCME Council 31 Biennial Convention in Springfield, IL October 14-16, 2021](#)
- [Wage Increase Agreement Ratified!](#)
- [Join the Nominating Committee for Executive Board Elections](#)
- [August General Meeting Highlights](#)
- [Steward Spotlight - Kristin Sherman](#)
- [Organized Labor in the News](#)
- [General Meeting Tue September 21 at noon or 5pm on Zoom](#)
- [Local 1890 Contacts](#)

[22nd AFSCME Council 31 Biennial Convention in Springfield, IL October 14-16, 2021](#)

Want to experience a union convention for yourself to see what it's all about?

**Nominate yourself or or another member to attend the Council 31 convention in
Springfield in October!**

URGENT – One more delegate and two alternates are needed to represent Local 1890 in Springfield. [Send an email](#) to nominate yourself or someone else to attend the AFSCME Council 31 convention by Monday, Sept. 20th. We will reply with more details about travel, lodging and dining that is included.

You will meet AFSCME members from every corner of Illinois and learn more about the fight for fairness in the workplace.

Executive Director Roberta Lynch and Deputy Director Mike Newman will both address the state of our union, and AFSCME International President Lee Saunders is slated to deliver a barnburner!

[Wage Increase Agreement Ratified!](#)

On August 25, 2021, all AFSCME Local 1890 members received this information from our union about negotiated wage increases for FY22.

Dear AFSCME Local 1890 Members,

During Local 1890's General Membership Meetings on August 24, 2021, eligible members voted to ratify a tentative wage increase agreement with NIU for FY22.

This fiscal year (FY22), our bargaining unit had to negotiate for any wage increment.

Thanks to our bargaining team's persistence in negotiations, all Local 1890 bargaining unit members employed by NIU as of August 24th will receive a 3% wage increase.

Our bargaining team then secured an additional pay increase for more than one-third of our lowest-paid members.

The exact payout dates for the retro pay and additional increments are pending. The 3% increment will be the first payout you should receive. We will keep you updated once we know the exact dates.

In Solidarity,

Your Local 1890

[Please click here to read the text of our negotiated wage agreement.](#)

Thanks again to AFSCME staff representative Rick Surber and **our FY22 wage reopener bargaining team** for their hard work!

Heidi Carlson
Beatrice Kooken
Elizabeth Mehren
Rave Meyer
Rebecca Rahe
Lesly Schoo
Kay Shelton
Kristin Sherman
Kadie Threloff
Jenna Villani
Tom West
Debbie Williams

[Join the Nominating Committee for Executive Board Elections](#)

Want to make a difference in our union?

Join the E-board Nominating Committee!

First, send an email to afscmelocal1890niu@outlook.com with your name, NIU job

when committee membership will be finalized and an organizational meeting date will be set.

Local 1890 members planning to run for an open E-board position in November are encouraged to join this committee!

Forming this committee will help our union prepare for Local 1890 Executive Board Elections in November, which will determine the future leadership and direction of our local. All members of the nominating committee are to identify potential candidates for current or upcoming vacancies of the Local 1890 Board of Directors and to work toward attracting and securing a good fit for the positions. [Committee member duties include identifying, recruiting, and pre-screening candidates for board leadership positions within AFSCME Local 1890.](#)

[August General Meeting Highlights](#)

Wage Increase Agreement Ratified

During Local 1890's General Membership Meetings on August 24, 2021, eligible members voted overwhelmingly to ratify a tentative wage increase agreement with NIU for FY22.

[Please click here to read the text of our negotiated wage agreement.](#)

New Leadership at NIU Human Resources

Local 1890 President Angie Gasero and Vice President Rave Meyer shared details of their collegial "get to know us" meeting with newly appointed NIU Senior Associate Vice President and Chief Human Resources Officer Bill Hodson. We welcome Bill to campus and we look forward to continuing and productive discussions with him.

Members vote to support the NIU Civil Service Emergency Fund

By a voice vote, members in attendance voted to approve a \$100 donation to support CSEF at NIU. [Find more information at the NIU website about this important resource for Civil Service employees.](#)

[Steward Spotlight - Kristin Sherman](#)



This month we feature Local 1890 union steward Kristin Sherman. She has been a steward for one year, serves as an executive board member-at-large, and is one of the 100 NIU employees who signed the Origins letter declaring intent to unionize with AFSCME. She serves on the NIU Campus Parking Committee, the CV&PA Marketing Task Force,

eight years.

Q. Why did you decide to serve our union as a steward?

A. Helping coworkers manage employment issues at NIU is important to me. I believe that enforcing provisions of our contract is the best way to achieve the shared goal of a safe, respectful, and rewarding workplace for our members, in service of NIU's mission.

Q. Briefly, what is the best thing, the worst thing, or the weirdest thing about your job lately?

A. Business and workload levels in my department have now returned to pre-pandemic levels, surely a good sign for NIU!

Q. What are two important things for a union steward at NIU to know?

A. It's important for a union steward to understand the provisions of our contract and to know how to locate employment information on the NIU website, through online resources maintained by SUCSS (State Universities Civil Service System), and other resources, including on-campus contacts.

Q. As a steward, what are two things you think all members should know about our union?

A. 1. Our Local 1890 union contract protects each member's right to be treated with dignity at work. 2. Before employees voted to form our union, civil service employees at NIU endured many years without annual raises/cost of living increases. After our union contract was ratified, all employees began receiving annual raises again.

Q. If you could tell our members anything about working at NIU, what would you want them to know?

A. NIU has a worthy mission and offers employees great benefits. There are currently twelve civil service unions and two academic unions on campus. NIU maintains an online Policy Library at their website. Lunch at Ellington's in the HSC is the best and most delicious option on campus - it has been on hiatus due to safety, and I hope it will return soon and better than ever!

Thank you to Kristin for sharing your experience this month!

Have a question for a steward? Want to learn about becoming a union steward?

Send an email to afscmelocal1890niu@outlook.com

[Organized Labor in the News](#)

We hope everyone enjoyed a relaxing and long Labor Day weekend!

Here are links to some recent news items about organized labor that our members might find interesting or inspiring!

[Approval of Labor Unions at Highest Point Since 1965](#)

Gallup has measured the public's rating of labor unions periodically beginning in 1936 and then annually since 2001. The current results are from Gallup's annual Work and Education poll conducted Aug. 2-17, 2021.

accessed 12-Sept- 2021 <https://news.gallup.com/poll/354455/>

[Liz Shuler On Her Vision As New AFL-CIO President](#)

The country's largest national labor union has a new leader. Liz Shuler will be the next

accessed 12-Sept-2021 <https://www.npr.org/2021/08/21/1030023047/>

[Pullman National Monument celebrates worker history at Labor Day weekend grand opening](#)

The story of the Pullman railcar factory is one of workers, and that was on full display at Saturday's Labor Day weekend grand opening of the Pullman National Monument's visitor center.

accessed 12-Sept-2021 <https://chicago.suntimes.com/2021/9/4/22657434/>

[Art Institute of Chicago staff push to form union](#)

Dozens of employees of the Art Institute of Chicago rallied this week in support of a move to start a union at one of the country's largest art museums.

accessed 12-Sept-2021 <https://apnews.com/article/>



Self care is important, especially during these busy Autumn days at NIU.
Take time to be good to yourself!

[General Meeting Tue September 21 at noon or 5pm on Zoom](#)

Items to discuss include: Steward report and update, Nominating Committee for November E-Board Election, plus reports from officers, committee chairs, and our AFSCME staff rep, and more!

[Click here to RSVP for ZOOM General Meeting Tuesday September 21 at noon](#)
[Click here to RSVP for ZOOM General Meeting Tuesday September 21 at 5:00 pm](#)

Or send an email to afscmelocal1890niu@outlook.com

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October 2021 Newsletter E-Board Nominations and Election Edition

In Local 1890 News This Month

- [Wage Increases on Oct 15 Payroll](#)
- [Important Meetings! E-Board Nominations on Nov 9 and Election on Nov 16](#)
- [New Feature - Local 1890 Blast from the Past](#)
- [September General Meeting Highlights](#)
- [RSVP for General Meeting and Save the Dates](#)

[Wage Increases on Oct 15 Payroll](#)

Greetings Local 1890 members,

If you have not heard this already, On October 1, we received word that the retro-pay and additional increments should be on the 10/15 payroll!

Thank you to everyone who sent words of encouragement to not only the executive board of Local 1890, but specifically to the bargaining team for making this happen.

If it were not for our bargaining team, Local 1890 would not have seen any raise this year at all.

Local 1890 would also like to thank everyone in HRS working hard to make all three payments simultaneously for our members. We do appreciate it.

In Solidarity,

Local 1890

Not sure how our negotiated wage agreement will affect your paycheck?

[Please click here to read the text of our negotiated wage agreement.](#)

Have questions about raises and pay at NIU?

Send questions by email - afscmelocal1890niu@outlook.com



[Important Local 1890 Meetings!](#) **[E-Board Floor Nominations Nov 9 and Election Nov 16](#)**

Local 1890 Executive Board elections for yearly elected open officer/leadership positions will take place on Tuesday, November 16, 2021.

There will be a half hour Floor Nomination meeting held at noon on November 9, 2021.

Click on each Executive Board position listed to read a brief job description:

[President](#)

[Vice President](#)

[Secretary-Treasurer](#)

[Recording Secretary](#)

[Membership Chair](#)

[Chief Steward](#)

[Trustees](#) (two trustees are needed)

Nominate yourself or a coworker - send an email to afscmelocal1890niu@outlook.com
OR

Attend the Floor Nomination meeting at noon on Tuesday, November 9, 2021.

**Local 1890 Executive Board Elections in November will determine the future
leadership and direction of our local.
Have your say - get involved today!**

[New Feature - Local 1890 Blast from the Past](#)

Successful organizations learn from past experience and apply that knowledge to future plans. In our new feature **Local 1890 Blast from the Past**, we will share stories about the history of our union and why we fought to unionize, with the hope that members (new and old) of our bargaining unit will be inspired to work together to protect our rights in the workplace.

[Local 1890 Origins Letter](#)

Open letter signed by 100 NIU employees declaring our intent to form a union, Spring 2015.

"As dedicated NIU employees, we work hard to provide quality services. We care about our jobs and we believe that it is time for our dedication, hard work and loyalty to be recognized. For too long, we have not been made a priority on campus. We have seen our standard of living fall as other groups on campus get increases. By working together, we can make NIU an even better place for our students, our co-workers, and ourselves. We can achieve this by participating as equals in the decisions that affect us at work."

[More NIU Employees Joining AFSCME](#)

AFSCME31.org/news, published July 23, 2015

life at work, to improve the services they provide to students, and to push for pay parity and respect. Many of the employees make \$12, \$11, or less than \$10 an hour, and haven't had a raise in more than five years.

'We love our jobs, we work hard, and we deserve fair wages, affordable health care and a secure pension,' said Jennifer Jeffries, an office administrator at the Holmes Student Center. 'Staff should be a priority for the administration, and we shouldn't be paid less than our counterparts who do the same work at other state universities'."

[NIU Board Approves 3-Percent Campus wide Pay Increase, Cuts Out-Of-State Tuition](#)

Northern Public Radio | By WNIJ News, published October 19, 2017

"Board Chairman Wheeler G. Coleman said that NIU can't make up seven years of no raises in one year, but the 3-percent increase is a start. Board Vice Chairman Dennis Barsema praised Freeman and the pay raise proposal as a good beginning."

[September General Meeting Highlights](#)

Local 1890 Delegates to represent at AFSCME Council 31 Biennial Convention

President Angie Gasero and members Tom Kapraun, Kay Shelton and Krystyna Kamka will represent Local 1890 as delegates and alternates in Springfield October 14 - 16, 2021. They will vote on important constitutional resolutions, attend workshops, and share the latest news and impressions of the state of our union at a future general meeting.

New Membership Chair and Chief Steward Appointed

Local 1890 welcomed newly appointed officers. The Executive Board appointed Sara Finnigan as Interim Membership Chair to succeed Debbie Williams, and Heidi Carlson was appointed as Interim Chief Steward to take the place of Tom Kapraun. Both interim positions will be open for member elections on November 16. We welcome Sara and Heidi with our complete support!

Both will work closely with outgoing officers Tom Kapraun and Debbie Williams to ensure a smooth transition and manage any outstanding issues. Debbie will continue to serve as a union steward and with the Executive Board as a Member at Large, and Tom will continue as a union steward for our local. We are so grateful for their many years of significant contributions to our union!

Nominating Committee Appointed

Members discussed the need to form a nominating committee to help identify candidates to fill open executive board positions in November. These members agreed to serve on the committee and made plans to meet: Krystyna Kamka, Sara Finnigan, Kristin Sherman and Liz Mehren. Potential candidates wishing to nominate themselves to serve on our Executive Board may send an email message to afscmelocal1890niu@outlook.com.



Enjoy the bounty of Autumn in October!

[RSVP for General Meeting October 19](#)

Members will decide the future leadership for Local 1890 at meetings in October and November.

Be in the room where it happens and make your voice heard - plan to attend these meetings with fellow members!

[Click here to RSVP for ZOOM General Meeting Tuesday October 19 at noon](#)

Or send an email to afscmelocal1890niu@outlook.com

Save The Dates:

Tuesday, November 9 – Floor Nomination Meeting

Tuesday, November 16 – Executive Board Election

(Only Dues Paying Members Can Vote)

Tuesday, November 30 – General Membership Meeting

Your Local 1890 officers and stewards remain accessible to help you with information and support. Should you have questions or concerns, contact us at

afscmelocal1890niu@outlook.com

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Vice President

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Jennifer Gregory

Treasurer

Ellen Smith

Members at Large

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In Local 1890 News This Month

- [Illinois HB 2778—School Districts and State Universities—Action Needed Now!](#)
- [E-Board Officers Election Update](#)
- [Council 31 Convention: Fairness for State University Employees](#)
- [AFSCME Huskies Give Back](#)
- [Blast from the Past - Local 1890 Gift Supports Student Emergency Fund](#)
- [RSVP for General Membership Meeting November 30](#)

[Illinois HB 2778—School Districts and State Universities—Action Needed Now!](#)

If we all pitch in, we can make this important legislation a law that will benefit school district and university employees all across the state.

This legislation will provide paid time off for all school district and state university employees when they or their children are sick with or quarantined because of COVID.

[Use this link to find out how you can easily help.](#)

[E-Board Officers Election Update](#)

- Postcard was sent to all members announcing Nomination meeting and Election meeting (if necessary).
- Nomination Committee prepared nominations for Executive Board and nomination letters were sent.
- Members attended Nomination Meeting at noon on November 9th:

++ Nominees were present and accepted,

++Election announced for Nov 16 is **canceled** due to uncontested positions.

These members of our local will serve as Local 1890 Executive Board Officers beginning January 1, 2022.

President: Rave Meyer
Vice President: Sarah Lindell
Secretary-Treasurer: Kristin Sherman
Recording Secretary: Lesly Schoo
Member-at-Large: Bea Kooken
Member-at-Large: Gary Weishaar
Member-at-Large: Debbie Williams
Membership Chair: Sara Finnigan
Chief Steward: Heidi Carlson
Trustee: Rebecca Rahe, 3 year term
Trustee: Liz Mehren, 2 year term
Trustee: Evelyn Comber, 1 year term

- Be sure to come support our new leadership team at the next General Membership meeting on November 30, after enjoying a relaxing Thanksgiving weekend.
- The best way to improve wages and staffing levels is to unify.
- When we work together we represent a positive force for change.

When you join Local 1890 as a dues paying member, you strengthen our influence on management for improving wages and enacting fair policies.

You can easily add YOUR voice to OUR Local 1890 voice.

[Use this link to join our union.](#)

[Council 31 Convention: Fairness for State University Employees](#)

President Angie Gasero and members Tom Kapraun and Kay Shelton represented Local 1890 as delegates at the AFSCME Illinois Council 31 Biennial Convention in Springfield, October 14 - 16. Together with delegates from AFSCME locals throughout the state, they learned about legislative priorities in Illinois and voted to approve thirteen important resolutions, including this one that affects all our employee members at NIU:

FAIRNESS FOR STATE UNIVERSITY EMPLOYEES RESOLUTION #8

WHEREAS:

Public higher education has historically been of vital importance to the social mobility and economic improvement of working people; and

WHEREAS:

For that very same reason, the forces seeking to further enrich the wealthy corporate class at the expense of middle-class Americans have targeted public higher education across the country, seeking to undermine public support for state universities and make it more difficult for middle and low-income students to pursue post-secondary education; and

Washington, as well as the Rauner administration in Illinois, with their efforts to reduce federal and state support for colleges and college students, eliminate college loan forgiveness programs for public service, and promote for-profit and unaccredited private institutions at the expense of public universities; and

WHEREAS:

As a result of historic drastic cutbacks, support staff at state universities, many represented by AFSCME, have been subjected to a repeated series of furloughs, layoffs, position eliminations, program cuts and increased workloads; and

WHEREAS:

Lawmakers have finally begun to address the long-term damage caused by this disinvestment in public higher education, including loss of technological innovation and reduced economic growth, by approving state budgets in the last three years that began to reverse the decline in state support for public universities as well as providing new funding for campus capital improvements; and

WHEREAS:

Despite the additional state funds that universities are now receiving, university management has resisted efforts by AFSCME local unions representing university employees to repair the damage done and improve the wages and working conditions of support staff.

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED:

That AFSCME Council 31 recommits to supporting a robust system of public higher education in Illinois that is affordable to all students seeking post-secondary education, that provides the wide and diverse educational resources necessary for success in the increasingly complex world economy, and that is adequately funded to

provide all staff with fair pay and decent benefits; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That AFSCME will continue efforts to call attention to the crucial role played by support and non-instructional staff in university operations and the failure of state universities to provide fair wages and a path for advancement for these employees; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That AFSCME Council 31 will assist local unions at state universities in waging contract campaigns that will put the issue of substandard wages for university personnel front and center; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That AFSCME Council 31 will work to educate legislators and the broader public about the unfair wage structures of state universities; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED:

That AFSCME Council 31 will recommit to efforts to bring pay equity to university workers doing similar work to state workers; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED:

That AFSCME Council 31 will continue to press for increased public support for the state university systems in our budget advocacy.

Submitted by:

Julie LaTempt-Brazier, AFSCME Local 2887, SIU Edwardsville

[Use this link to read all thirteen resolutions adopted by 2021 convention delegates.](#)

to help the Huskie Food Pantry help NIU students succeed.

Local 1890 members may drop off donations at Campus Life room 150 during business hours. Imagine if every single one of our 500+ members donated one or two items - that would add up very quickly!

Some current in-demand items include:

- Six-packs of Gatorade, juices, bottled water
- Individually wrapped "grab and go" snack and lunch items
- "Heat and eat" microwavable entrees
- Rolls of paper towels and toilet paper
- Plastic grocery bags

[Find more information at the Huskie Pantry webpage.](#)

Feel motivated to help more?

Select a day to work a shift as a volunteer - [sign up here](#)



[Blast from the Past - Local 1890 Gift Supports Student Emergency Fund](#)

Successful organizations learn from past experience and apply that knowledge to future plans. In our new feature **Local 1890 Blast from the Past**, we will share stories about the history of our union, why we fought to unionize, and successful work we have done. We hope that members of our bargaining unit will be inspired to work together to protect our rights in the workplace.

This month, we remember the first large gift we made in July, 2020, on behalf of our represented members.

AFSCME Local 1890 gift supports Student Emergency Fund

"Members of AFSCME Local 1890 recently made a gift of \$750 to the Student Emergency Fund. The gift was made in honor of the university's 125th anniversary and represents roughly \$1.25 for each of the union's more than 600 members of clerical and paraprofessional staff at NIU.

Originally, the leadership of the union had planned to conduct a fundraising campaign over several months, with members spreading out across campus and collecting donations to benefit the Huskie Food Pantry. Then came COVID-19 and, like many things related to the university's anniversary, those plans had to be altered a bit.

While the pandemic made face-to-face fundraising impossible, it did nothing to change the union's determination to make a gift. In fact, it only reinforced it, said local chapter president Angie Gasero.

'As we watched the pandemic unfold, we wanted to do something to help our students,' she said. 'Most of our members work with students all of the time, and we wanted to help support them through this difficult



Whether or not you eat turkey, travel near or far, or just stay home and UNWIND, enjoy the upcoming four day Thanksgiving holiday break. We appreciate you and your union participation.

[RSVP for General Membership Meeting November 30](#)

- Meet your new Local 1890 Executive Board Officers at our General Membership Meeting on Tuesday November 30.
- Be on hand to thank those who have served as officers and support our new leadership.
- 2022 is going to be a very exciting year for all of us. Be in the room where it happens and make your voice heard - plan to attend with fellow members!

[Click here to RSVP for Local 1890 General Meeting Tuesday November 30 at noon on Zoom.](#)

Or send an email to afscmelocal1890niu@outlook.com

Your Local 1890 officers and stewards remain accessible to help you with information and support. Should you have questions or concerns, contact us at

afscmelocal1890niu@outlook.com

LOCAL 1890 OFFICERS

President

Angie Gasero*

Vice President

Rave Meyer*

Recording Secretary

Jennifer Gregory

Treasurer

CONTACT LIST

Questions about membership

Sara Finnigan - sfinnigan@niu.edu

Debbie Williams - dwilliams16@niu.edu

Concerns about workplace issues

Heidi Carlson - hcarlson@niu.edu

Tom Kapraun - tkapraun@niu.edu

General questions

Angie Gasero - afscmelocal1890niu@outlook.com

Members at Large

Beatrice Kooken
Kristin Sherman*
Debbie Williams*

Membership Chair

Sara Finnigan

Chief Steward

Heidi Carlson*

MAT Chair

Beatrice Kooken

*certified stewards

- rsurber@AFSCME31.org

Local 1890 email: afscmelocal1890niu@outlook.com

[Local 1890 Facebook Group](#)

**You can easily add YOUR voice to OUR Local 1890 voice.
[Use this link to join our union.](#)**

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“If this discussion could in any way lead to my being disciplined or terminated, or affect my personal working condition, I respectfully request that my union representative or steward be present at the meeting. Without representation, I choose not to answer any questions.”



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Local 1890 
AFSCME[®]
December 2021 Newsletter

- [Local 1890 Year-end Gift to the Huskie Food Pantry](#)
- [NEW Local 1890 Website Available NOW](#)
- [President's Farewell to an Eventful 2021](#)
- [New Year, New Union Leadership for Our Local](#)
- [General Membership Meeting January 25, 2022](#)

Best Wishes to all AFSCME Huskies for a Happy and Safe New Year

[Local 1890 Year-end Gift to the Huskie Food Pantry](#)

At our November membership meeting, Local 1890 members voted to approve a \$500 gift to the [Huskie Food Pantry](#).

We all agree that giving back is the right thing for our organization to do. AFSCME Huskies are proud and grateful that when we work together, we are able to help students continue to succeed at NIU.

NIU Program Coordinator, Jeanne Baxter, shared this note of gratitude with union leadership after President Angie Gasero presented our gift to the Pantry:

Hi, Rave and Angie.

*I would like to thank union leadership for presenting the idea to support the Huskie Food Pantry to the AFSCME Local 1890 members. Please forward a huge thank you to all the members. **The gift card of \$500 will be used to purchase nutritious items that we are unable to purchase through the Northern Illinois Food Bank as well as items to support the improvement of our pantry operations.** The generous support of people like you does more than help sustain the Huskie Food Pantry operations – that in itself is critical. But the generosity of the NIU community goes beyond that. Your gifts support our goals to improve the quality of food we offer and the quality of the volunteer experience. We will use every penny of your donation with extreme care and thoughtfulness. **On behalf of the 330 students who have used the pantry in nearly 1000 visits this past semester, thank you!***

*Sincerely,
Jeanne*



On behalf of AFSCME Local 1890 union members, President Angie Gasero (right) presents NIU Program Coordinator Jeanne Baxter with a \$500 Visa gift card year-end donation to benefit the Huskie Food Pantry.

Feel motivated to do even more?

Select a day to work a volunteer shift at Huskie Food Pantry in Chick Evans Fieldhouse
- [sign up here](#) and resolve to help in 2022!

NEW Local 1890 Website Available NOW

Members asked for it, and now it has been completed on time and under budget!

Check out our attractive and informative new [AFSCME Local 1890 NIU Website](#).

Featuring

[Steward contacts and grievance info](#)

[Our collective bargaining agreement](#)

[How to join](#)

[Meeting agendas](#)

[A fun photo page](#)

[Helpful NIU information for new employees](#)

[A newsletter archive](#)

Much more!

Make our website a favorite and visit frequently:

www.afscmelocal1890niu.com

President's Farewell to an Eventful 2021

Many of our Executive Board members are saying goodbye to their positions with Local 1890 and a new Executive Board will be ready to take over when we return in 2022.

represent Local 1890 as your President. I felt unprepared and ambivalent about stepping into this role when our former President, Ellen Cabrera, retired in July 2020. Despite the challenges and personal struggles we all faced at NIU during the past year and a half, I feel like I have grown tremendously from this experience.

As we look ahead to 2022, I would encourage you to add your voice to the clerical and para-professional staff we represent by becoming a signed member of AFSCME Local 1890. By having a goal of 100% signed members, we become stronger together. We can then affect the change we long for by bringing NIU back to the tight-knit “family” of co-workers many of us remember.

May you enjoy peace, good health, and prosperity in 2022.
In Solidarity,
Angie Gasero, President AFSCME Local 1890

[New Year, New Union Leadership for Our Local](#)

We welcome and support our new Local 1890 leaders!

President: Rave Meyer

Vice President: Sarah Lindell

Recording Secretary: Lesly Schoo

Secretary-Treasurer: Kristin Sherman

Member-at-Large: Bea Kooken

Member-at-Large: Gary Weishaar

Member-at-Large: Debbie Williams

Membership Chair: Sara Finnigan

Chief Steward: Heidi Carlson

Trustee: Rebecca Rahe, 3 year term

Trustee: Liz Mehren, 2 year term

Trustee: Evelyn Comber, 1 year term

We appreciate the dedication and hard work of outgoing executive board members Angie Gasero, Jennifer Gregory, Ellen Smith, and Tom Kapraun - Thank You!

Enjoy the Season!



[First General Membership Meeting of 2022!](#)**[Tuesday January 25 on Zoom at noon](#)**

You could win a \$50 Visa gift card! We will draw the name of one winner at the January meeting from all Local 1890 dues-paying members. You must be present at the meeting to win.

- Greet your new Local 1890 Executive Board Officers at our General Membership Meeting on Tuesday January 25, 2022.
- Make a New Year's resolution to help make our union as strong as it can be. We are always stronger together!
- 2022 is going to be a very exciting year for all of us and we have a lot of good work to do ahead of us. Be in the room where it happens and make sure that our voices are heard.

New for 2022: Membership meetings will be members only. The zoom link will be sent to all dues paying members.

Questions? Send an email to afscmelocal1890niu@outlook.com.

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General questions

Angie Gasero - afscmelocal1890niu@outlook.com

AFSCME Staff Representative - Rick Surber

- rsurber@AFSCME31.org

Local 1890 email: afscmelocal1890niu@outlook.com

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Past Issues

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