

GET TO KNOW
YOUR UNION

SUFFOLK WORKS
BECAUSE WE DO!

THE

FACE OF

SUFFOLK AME

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What is Suffolk AME?

Day in and day out, the rank and file members of Suffolk AME provide the essential services that our County depends on.

Suffolk AME (Association of Municipal Employees) is the largest independent Union in Suffolk County. Representing more than 6,000 active and retired public employees, AME negotiates and enforces equitable contracts for its membership and helps ensure a skilled, dedicated, and educated workforce for Suffolk County.

Made up of 30 different Unit Boards ranging from Consumer Affairs and Civil Service, Crossing Guards, DPW, and Fire, Rescue and Emergency Services, to Vector Control, Suffolk County Community College, the Department of Social Services, and more, our members perform the literally hundreds of jobs needed to keep Suffolk County operational on a day-to-day basis, and our Union works to advocate on their behalf every single day.

**WE ARE
#UNIONSTRONG**

The History of Suffolk AME

Prior to 1984, the workers of Suffolk County were represented not as an independent Union, but as a small part of a larger public sector labor Union. As such, the voices of our workers were barely heard, and even more rarely were they acknowledged. Our members know that they are essential, not expendable, and the services they provide our community members are critical to our shared success. They know that their voices need to be heard to ensure they can perform their jobs safely and efficiently.

The History of Suffolk AME Continued...

In 1983, this parent organization attempted to take control of our (then) \$4 million Benefit Fund, a move that led to the leadership being suspended from Union activities, and finally to a successful decertification effort. AME was certified as the official bargaining agent of Suffolk County's workers and retirees, new Constitution and Bylaws were created and adopted by the members, the Benefit Fund was protected, and their dream of an *independent Union* was realized.



Why Join a Union?

As both workers and members of the community, Suffolk AME members have a vested interest in safeguarding the high quality of life we enjoy in Suffolk County.

Labor Unions give their members the power to negotiate for improved working conditions, better benefits, and higher wages than their non-Union counterparts through collective bargaining.

Although the concept of a Union may seem like a relic of the past or straight out of the pages of a history book, that could not be further from the truth. Today, Unions are more important than ever.

As technology continues to progress and new public challenges are realized, workers need united strength to assure advancement. Going head-to-head with a large corporate entity or a massive Government agency may be an impossible task for just one person, but through solidarity, workers' voices can be fortified and given a proper share of participation in the policies which directly affect them.

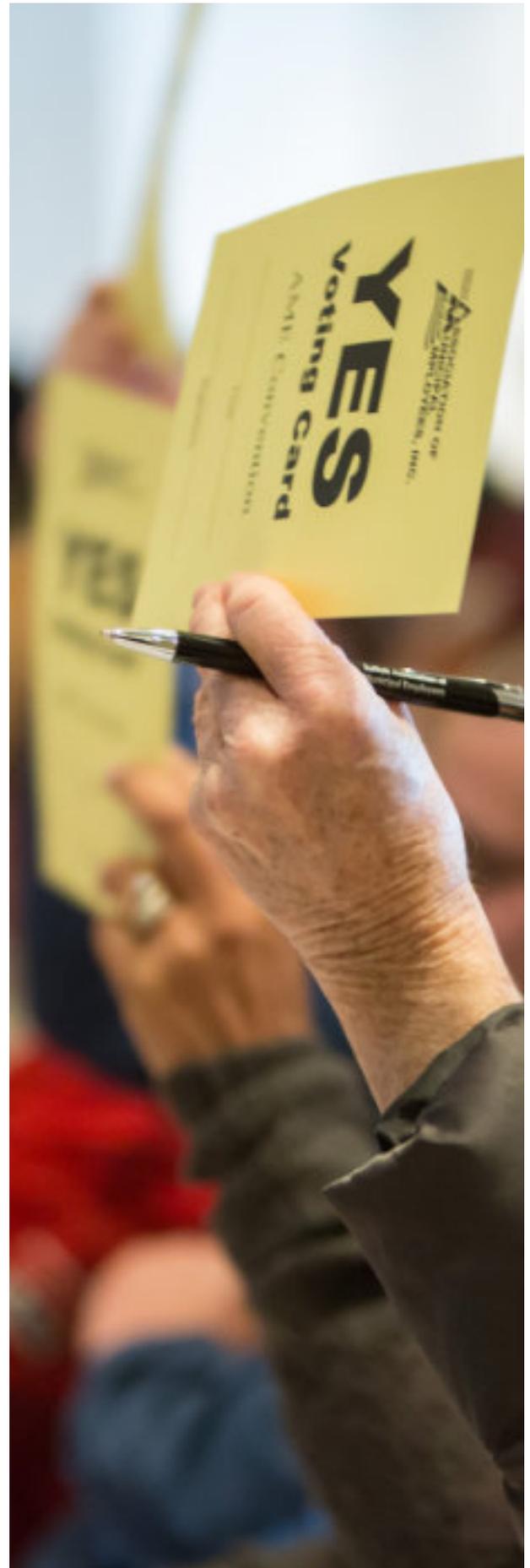
Understanding the Administration and Operation of Suffolk AME

Suffolk AME's mission is to negotiate and enforce an equitable contract for each of our members, but it doesn't stop there. Your Union disseminates memos and communicates important information to members in a timely manner, and AME steps up to protect your rights in the event there are unsafe activities or workspaces reported, or if there are grievances filed on behalf of or against members, in addition to a litany of other important day-to-day tasks.

8 Elected Executive Board members work full-time handling the day-to-day operations of the Union and serve as liaisons to one or more of the many individual Unit Boards and several standing committees, which all members have the opportunity to serve on.

Each of Suffolk AME's 30 individual Units is led by a Unit President. The Unit Presidents, along with the 8-member Executive Board, make up the Board of Directors. The Board of Directors is the governing body of AME and meets regularly. Its job is to establish policy for the Association, enforce the members' Bill of Rights, approve the fiscal budget, and vote on all matters presented to it.

AME holds an annual convention attended by elected officers and delegates, which is open to the membership at large. Issues about the Constitution and Bylaws are addressed at this open forum, which invites direct participation and allows for all of our members to have a voice. A variety of workshops and seminars are held during conventions to educate the membership and keep them informed on issues vital to the Union.



Politics At the Table: The Importance of the AME PAC

The AME Political Action Committee (PAC) is a political committee organized for the purpose of advocating on behalf of our members' interests with State and local officials and government bodies.

The legislation and policies put in place by our public officials affect each and every one of us on a daily basis, but for public employees, the effects can be even more impactful and may have a direct impact on our work. From establishing and enforcing budgets to passing new resolutions and policies which impact County projects and staff, the issues of relevance and importance to AME members are innumerable.

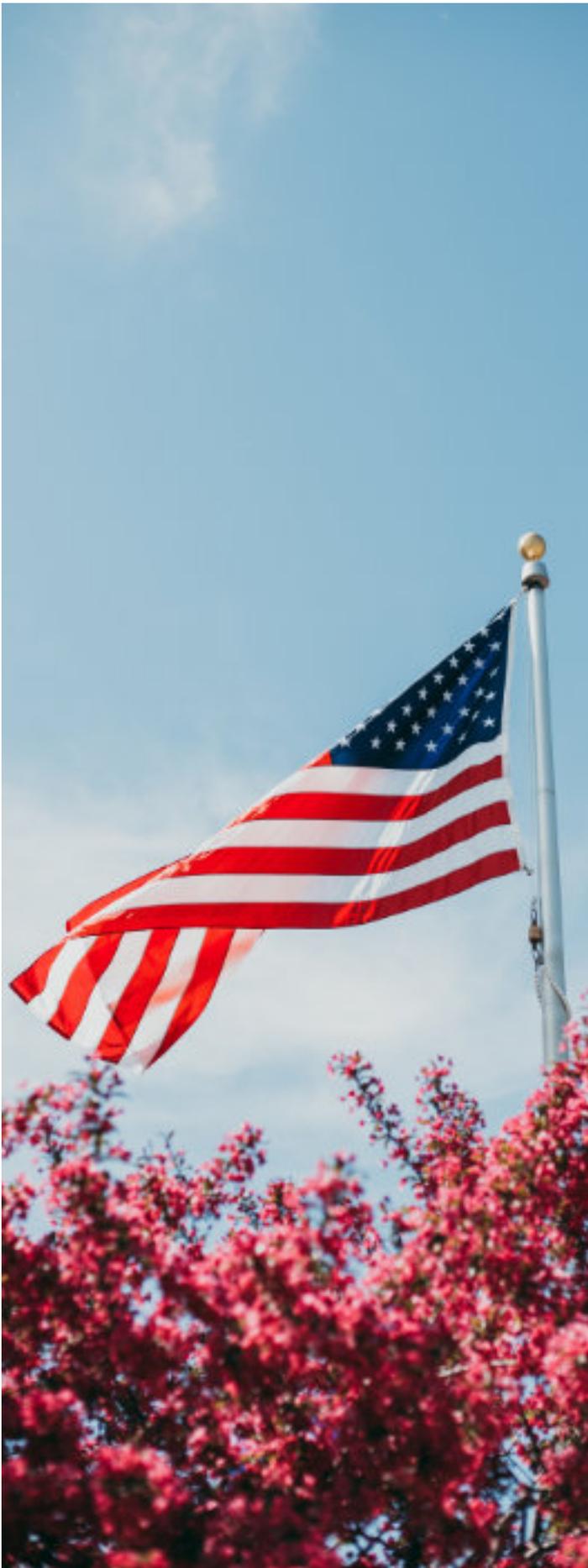
With this in mind, the Political Action Committee has taken an extremely active role in affairs outside of AME. The AME PAC pools contributions from member donations to direct funds into campaigns for candidates we support and ballot initiatives we support, while screening local political candidates and providing endorsements where appropriate. Simultaneously, our in-house Government Affairs staff keeps an active tab on legislation, tracking resolutions of interest to our members.

Over the years our PAC has grown to be one of the strongest political voices in the labor movement, with more than 85% of AME endorsed candidates winning election.



Legal Representation

When you encounter a problem on the job, legal counsel and Union representation are available to you. Suffolk AME knows that workplace safety isn't just a poster or a boring new-hire video; it's critical to your health and success. We are prepared to go to the worksite and challenge managers in order to safeguard workers' rights, and hiring attorneys and consultants with specialized labor expertise on behalf of our members is nothing new to our Executive leadership. Whether you are concerned about a grievance, or a workplace condition, your Union is here to support you.



Ready When You Need Them: The Benefit Fund

The Suffolk County Municipal Employees Benefit Fund (SCMEBF), established in 1974, is a legal entity whose duties are to provide ancillary health, welfare, and legal benefits to its members and their eligible dependents.

The Benefit Fund allows AME members to have exclusive access to benefits that employees of many other organizations, even public workers, may not have.

Through the Benefit Fund, members can obtain reimbursement vouchers for things like hearing aids and tax preparation services. They can utilize death benefits including a survivor's benefit and a bereavement benefit, and they have access to the Pre-Paid Legal Services Plan, which they can use to seek advice about Real Estate, Family Law, Personal Injury, Estates, Wills, and Traffic Matters.

The Benefit Fund is governed by a Labor Board of Trustees designated by the Union, who are responsible for the daily functioning and operation of the Fund. All decisions of the administrator and the staff are subject to appeal in writing to the Board of Trustees.

For more information on County employee benefits available through The Benefit Fund, please visit their [website directly](#).

Community and Unity

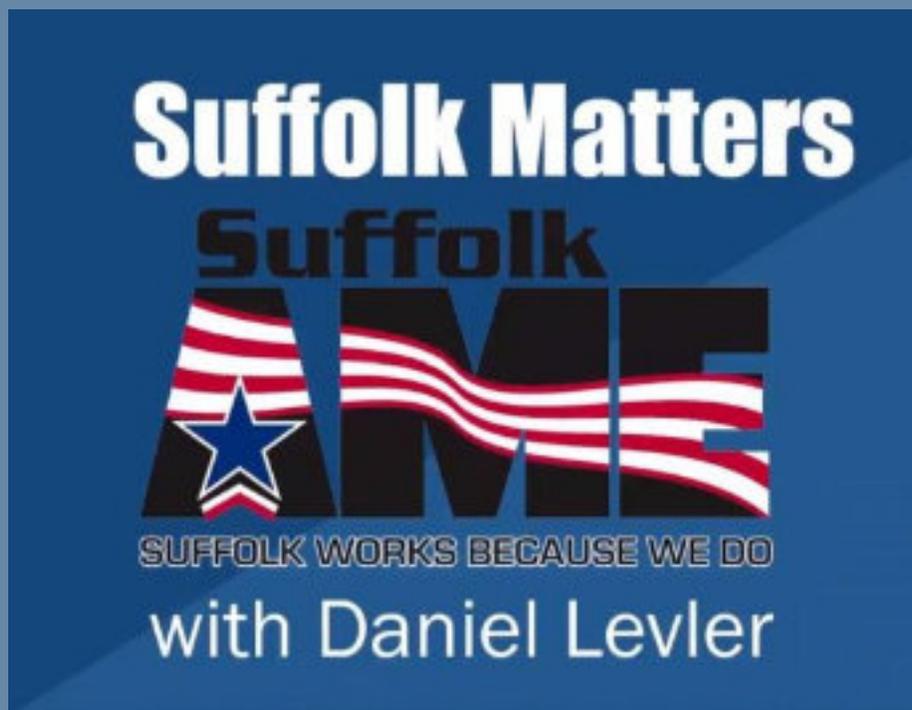
Our members never have to worry about losing touch with their Union. Through our update emails, mailings, website notices, and our social media pages, we regularly provide our members with the information that is most relevant to their needs and interests. Our annual events, including the Post-Holiday Party, the Annual Picnic, and the May Day Music Festival, all contribute to the deep sense of connection that our AME brothers and sisters feel toward one another, and help us introduce ourselves and our priorities to the greater community at large.

Please stay tuned to our member email updates for information on upcoming events as they are announced. If you are having trouble receiving your email updates, please reach out via email to info@scame.org with your concerns.

Tune Into Suffolk Matters....

Each week on Suffolk Matters, Suffolk County tunes in to meet the members of Suffolk AME, catch up on local happenings, and hear from State and County officials and organizations.

Listen to "Suffolk Matters" with our President Daniel C. Levler, Sundays at 9:00 am on WALK 97.5 and 94.3 The SHARK, or catch up on our YouTube channel! Episodes are also available in podcast format on most major platforms including Spotify and Apple Podcasts.



But Wait.... There's Even More!

Reducing the Cost of Childbirth

Through your healthcare benefits negotiated by the Union, AME members do not have to pay out of pocket for the cost of childbirth, an expense that on average costs between \$12,000 and \$15,000 nationally. This high cost causes a sometimes catastrophic financial strain on families who should be celebrating a life-changing milestone. We are proud of this Suffolk AME benefit, as it is extremely important to many of our members: past, present, and future.

Tuition Reimbursement

The Tuition Reimbursement program is designed to give financial assistance to County employees who wish to take courses that will either improve their ability to perform on the job or will enhance their career opportunities within the County by offering individuals 75% tuition reimbursement for satisfactory completion of an approved course.

In 2021 our Tuition Reimbursement program was updated to increase the number of credits that can be taken from 12 to 20 (or 4 non-credit courses), allow for study at any accredited school, and to expand eligibility to allow members to use the reimbursement program to open other civil service opportunities, rather than just courses relevant to their current career ladder.

To learn more about the Tuition Reimbursement Program, please reach out to AME headquarters at 631-589-8400.

AME Scholarships

Annual scholarships are offered to the children and grandchildren of AME members and to the members themselves. These scholarships are generated through Union events which act as fundraisers.

Information about available and upcoming AME Scholarships will be provided via email and our social pages as they are announced.

Health and Wellness

In an effort to help our members maintain their health and wellbeing, discounts are offered to our members for various wellness organizations and facilities including AME Corporate discounts through participating partners.

To learn more about available education and health and wellness discounts, please visit the Flyers page of our website as well as the Forms and Documents page for further information.