

MARCH MEMBER OF THE MONTH: DORIS JONES

[Advisory: discussion of abuse]

1. Can you tell us your name and profession?

My name is Doris M. Jones, I work as a Good Manufacturing Practices (GMP) tech for SBM that is the same contractor at Eli Lilly and in the afternoon I am a teacher at an early childhood education center on the far southside of Indianapolis.

2. Can you tell us a little bit about yourself?

I'm a single mom with two kids. I also have been balancing going to school with having two jobs. I have gone through a lot of hardship. My kids and I have been evicted and are currently in a shelter. It has been difficult also with my car being repossessed.

I'm a survivor... of child abuse. I've written a book about my life - called "A Long Journey to Home"; my pen name is Samantha Crystal, that includes my experiences as well as poems I've written. I've also dealt with verbal, emotional, and mental abuse from my partner.

We ended up in Liberty, Indiana for a couple of years. In those two years I worked in a warehouse in Trenton, Ohio. We definitely needed a union, as I was unjustly fired. After I gave birth to my second child we were evicted again. It took me some time to find a job, but I started working as an assistant teacher at a school in Liberty. And now my second job is also working in a daycare.

3. So you have two jobs - what are your hours of work?

I work from 6:30-6pm every day. I work as a GMP tech from 6:30-2pm, and then from 2:30-6pm at the school.

4. What are your daily duties?

My job as a GMP tech is detailed work. We clean labs, and near production lines - top to bottom. We are seriously trained - we have to sign documentation that we cleaned these areas, so they can produce the medication, etc. We also have signed documents that we are certified to clean these areas. We go through a lot of training. The difference between GMP techs and Admin techs is that Admin techs primarily clean offices, restrooms, and break areas, while GMP techs clean laboratories, production lines, and highly secure areas where lots of testing is done.

These are areas where insulin or medication for depression is produced, for example.

My teaching job is not part of the union. In that job, I take over for the morning teacher. Once all kids are picked up we clean and sanitize everything. toys, cribs, everything, so it's ready for the next day of schooling. And close down everything.

5. How many years have you been a member of Local 1?

I have been a member for about 8 years, with breaks.

6. How has your experience been in your jobs without a union?

That's a really good question – with a union job you can sit across the table from management as equals and negotiate a contract for all workers. I also think being able to walk away from offers that are being offered is a huge statement at the moment. A beautiful moment for being a part of the union is having the support from the community too.

7. What has been your favorite moment as a member of SEIU Local 1?

During 2018/2019 when the contract fights kicked off it was against SBM, GSF, 4M, ABM which were cleaning companies targeted at the time. In Indianapolis, thanks to Paul Napier we held the largest civil disobedience that I would say in Indianapolis/SEIU history. There were about 96 people that got arrested that time and I was one of those people that got arrested. I went through a lot at SBM dealing with unfair wages. I give thanks to Paul Napier and those working for the union that put Indianapolis back on the map, which was one of the first cities for janitors to get paid time off. I would like to give props to that negotiating team in 2017/2018 because they were a powerhouse that really led the way for change for workers.

I had a lot of hardship, and that's why I had the go big or go home mentality. I took my anger and frustration out during the contract fight.

8. What was being a union steward like?

Being a union steward was definitely a learning experience as you have to be a neutral person and hear both sides. Also, you have to help workers hold the companies accountable but also hold workers accountable. I was also an Executive Board member for two years.

9. What would you tell someone who is skeptical about joining the union?

I would tell someone who is skeptical about joining the union to just join it because it is like car insurance and you need it to protect you on the job. If management messes up your paycheck, harrasses you if you need to file a grievance. If you are tired of something at work you have the opportunity to join the fight and to use your voice to

possibly spark change for everyone at the workplace. Many people are scared of paying dues but in reality they are used to help us fight when we are standing up against the big companies and corporate greed taking advantage of people.