

3RD QUARTER 2009

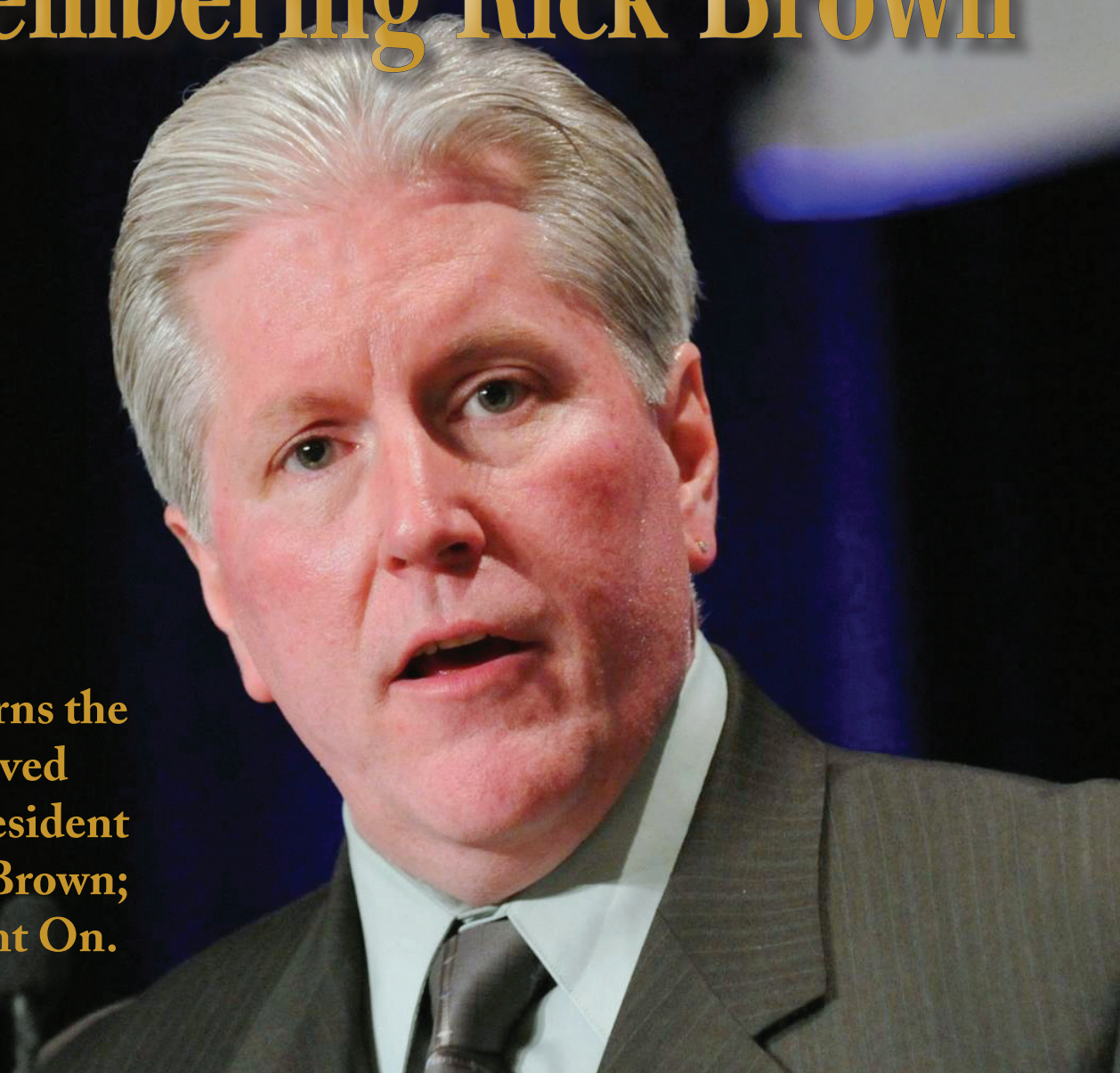
# THE FEDERAL EMPLOYEE

FOR MEMBERS OF THE NATIONAL FEDERATION OF FEDERAL EMPLOYEES

Affiliated with the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers, AFL-CIO

## Remembering Rick Brown

**NFFE Mourns the Loss of Beloved National President Richard N. Brown; Vows to Fight On. See Pages 7-9**



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William R. Dougan

Over the past three months, we have seen unprecedented change occur within our union. With the passing of National President Richard N. Brown, NFFE and organized labor lost a tireless champion and friend of working men and women. This unforeseen occurrence set into motion a number of changes among NFFE's national officers and staff. In accordance with our national bylaws, I have succeeded Rick as national president; William D. Fenaughty, previously assistant directing business representative (ADBR), was selected to fill the national secretary-treasurer position; James Davis, formerly a national business representative, was selected to succeed Fenaughty as ADBR; and David Stamey, formerly a regional vice president for the NFFE Forest Service Council, has been selected to fill the business representative vacancy.

I'd like to thank each of them for their willingness to step up into these leadership positions. I'm excited about working with them and with the rest of our staff and National Executive Council (NEC). I believe the mixture of youth and experience among our current national officers and staff will serve us well as NFFE moves forward.

With the new Organizing Strategic Plan recently approved by the NEC, NFFE is in a position to make significant strides in building our membership. I believe that organizing new Locals and recruiting new members to our existing Locals must be our top priority; nothing else we do matters if we don't have sufficient members to sustain our union. Each of us has a duty to help grow our Local if we truly believe in one of the fundamental principles of belonging to a union – our strength is in our numbers. There is a role for each of you in NFFE's organizing strategy no matter what your experience or skill is. I ask that each of you do your part to grow our union.

While we are pleased to see the efforts the Obama Administration has made to reach out to federal employee unions following the hostility employee groups experienced under the previous administration, we are becoming restless that some of our highest policy concerns have not yet been acted upon by the new administration. We are eager to see an executive order issued to reestablish labor-management partnership so that we can begin working with agencies to solve the numerous problems that federal departments face. We would also like to see the Administration take a strong stand against the failed National Security Personnel System (NSPS). Despite the acknowledgement that NSPS is a failure, the Administration has yet to walk away from the flawed personnel system. NFFE will support nothing short of a total repeal of NSPS.

In my recent visits with federal agency leadership, the message I continue to bring forth is that NFFE stands ready to work with them to carry out the missions of their departments. Working together to address workplace issues results in better decisions and a commitment by all parties to support those decisions. The fact of the matter is that federal agencies operate better when employees have a meaningful voice in how their agencies conduct business.

Your continued efforts to exact positive change for federal employees at the Local level will be crucial as we work toward building a better federal workplace. Noted anthropologist Margaret Mead said it best: "Never doubt that a small group of thoughtful committed citizens can change the world. Indeed, it's the only thing that ever has." As we prepare to write the next chapter of NFFE's long and proud history together, please accept my thanks for all that you do.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "William R. Dougan". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.



## FROM THE DESK OF THE SECRETARY-TREASURER

Let me begin by saying that I am deeply humbled and proud to serve you as national secretary-treasurer. Your support and encouragement have been invaluable during this transitional period for both NFFE and myself.

In the nearly two months since my appointment, National President Dougan and I have been getting down to business, working side-by-side with NFFE-IAM members and staff to bring this great union to ever greater heights.

With the development of the new Organizing Strategic Plan, we are building the foundation for a larger and stronger union. As NFFE grows in numbers, so does our voice both here in Washington and in our hundreds of Locals nationwide. This renewed commitment to growth will also provide greater revenues, enabling us to better service our members across the country. Organizing is the lifeblood of our union, and we all need to do our part to recruit new members to sustain and expand our representational resources.

The strength of our numbers will play a crucial role as we push forward in our fight for more favorable working conditions for federal employees. Whether it be the repeal of NSPS, securing a fair pay adjustment, gaining credit for unused sick leave, improving working conditions for Title 38 employees, or building strong labor-management partnerships, our voice is only as strong as the members behind it.

Going forward, I ask that every member of the NFFE family, from our members in the field to our elected officers at the Local and national level, put forward their best effort to implement the new Organizing Strategic Plan. President Dougan and I are already planning to participate in several organizing campaigns across the country. If we all work together, there is no limit to what we can achieve.

Please contact Omar Arnold or myself with any financial concerns regarding your Locals and Councils. Thanks to all of you for working so hard day in and day out to bring this union to the next level.



**William D. Fenaughty**

## FROM THE DESK OF THE GENERAL COUNSEL

In recent months, there have been a number of positive developments impacting your legal rights in the workplace.

For the first time in nearly two years, the Federal Labor Relations Authority (FLRA) will have its full complement of Authority members and a new general counsel. On August 7, 2009, the Senate confirmed Ernest DuBester, the third and final member of the Authority. He now joins Chairman Carol Waller Pope and Member Thomas Beck to complete the three-member panel. That same day, the Senate also confirmed Julia Adkins Clarke as general counsel to the FLRA. Along with the current members, DuBester and Clarke will work to eliminate the backlog of cases and unfair labor practice charges that have accumulated.

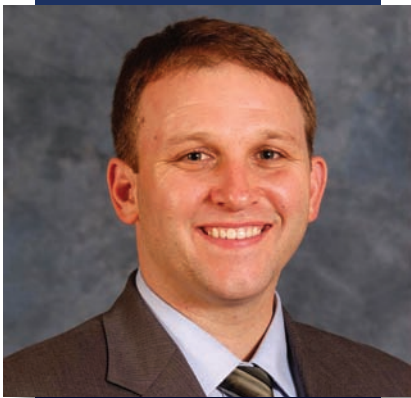
Another promising development is the Administration's renewed interest in labor-management partnerships. While

formal partnerships were abolished in February of 2001, some form of cooperative decision-making continued, which will now be assessed as we seek to rebuild and renew labor-management collaboration. Presently, NFFE is reviewing the strengths and weaknesses of past partnerships with an eye toward improving the next generation of labor-management relations. On the same wavelength, the Office of Personnel Management has published its strategic plan, which prominently states improving federal labor-management relations across government as a goal.

We look forward to renewed faith that this year promises to be productive on a scale not seen in the past eight years. And through this transition, as always, we remain vigilant to your issues and seek more opportunities to serve and protect your legal rights.



**Susan Tsui Grundmann**



Randy Erwin

As someone who spends a great deal of time seeing how our nation's laws are formed, I want to touch on the extreme importance of personal advocacy around the issues that each of us cares about.

At times, Washington can seem very detached from the places we all come from. From 1,000-page bills to complicated procedures, it often seems like the entire system is designed to discourage involvement from American citizens. This leads some to reach the conclusion that they can't really make a difference.

Well let me tell you that nothing could be farther from the truth. Every single one of us can make a difference—a big difference.

When regular American citizens start calling up their Congressional offices, writing letters, and asking for meetings to talk about the issues that concern them, elected officials take notice. In fact, it scares them, because they know that they are going to be held accountable for their actions. Congressmen are not used to answering for their votes, but we have a

## LEGISLATIVE

# Defense Business Board Recommends NSPS Repeal NFFE Vows Fight for Full Repeal

In August, the Defense Business Board (DBB) released their review of the controversial National Security Personnel System (NSPS) in a report to the Secretary of Defense. The report recommends a “reconstruction” of NSPS, but fell short of calling for abolishment of the plan, an outcome for which NFFE and other employee groups have been lobbying Congress and the administration for over six years.

“We are very disappointed with the report’s recommendations,” said NFFE National President William R. Dougan after the DBB’s report was issued. “NSPS has been a complete and utter failure, and the report acknowledges this. The recommendation to keep NSPS going in light of the program’s failed history is baffling to us. NSPS should be discarded once and for all.”

Now that the DBB has made a final recommendation on NSPS, the Pentagon and the Office of Personnel Management will be collaborating on how to move for-

ward. Meanwhile, NFFE will continue to push for the permanent end to this flawed plan.

“We don’t want a ‘do over’ on NSPS, and that is what the report’s recommendation amounts to,” said Dougan. “The Pentagon has had six years to get NSPS right, and they have failed miserably to do



responsibility to make sure that they do just that.

The key is for each of us to look honestly at the issues we care about and then to stand up and do something about it. Our lawmakers are there to serve us. Never forget that.

Keep in mind that it makes no difference if we don't understand everything about the way Congress works. To be honest, very few people could honestly make that

claim. We aren't expected to know everything, and we can't let that fear keep us from making our voices heard.

As federal employees, the numbers in Congress are favorable for us at the moment. We have a lot more friends in office than we did a few years ago and we have a real opportunity to make progress for ourselves and the federal employees with whom we work. But we are not going to see the changes we want without each

of us standing up and demanding those changes.

So don't wait another day. Regardless of what issue it is you care about, whether it impacts the federal workforce or not, make a commitment to yourself to make your voice heard. You will have played a part in making this a better country if you do.

## Recommends Reconstruction of NSPS;

so. The Defense Business Board had the opportunity to recommend bold action that the failures of the personnel system necessitate, but the Board did not do that. They recommended a do over. That recommendation is unacceptable to us."

While the DBB's recommendation did not call for the full elimination of NSPS, it did advise keeping existing DoD bargaining unit employees in the GS system

until a retooled personnel system can be developed, a process that could take several years to complete.

"None of our Defense members are going to be moving under NSPS, so that is absolutely a good thing," said Dougan. "But we still don't want NSPS hanging out there in any form because it could hurt our people in the long run."

Legislatively, the fight continues to repeal NSPS. While Congress was reluctant to act decisively on NSPS until the Administration had conducted a review of the program, it will soon be up to Congress to decide whether or not to allow the continuation of the flawed personnel system now that the review is done. Congress' decision on how to proceed with NSPS may come very shortly.

Included in the House version of the Fiscal Year 2010 Defense Authorization Bill is language that was introduced by Rep. Carol Shea-Porter (D-NH) during committee markup that would further rein in the failing NSPS pay system. The Shea-Porter language would guarantee

that employees covered under NSPS receive the full, government-wide pay raise given to federal employees under the GS system annually. Currently, NSPS employees receive only 60 percent of that pay adjustment. It also would prohibit DoD from covering newly hired employees under NSPS. In addition, the department would be banned from classifying any jobs as being covered by NSPS. Finally, NSPS employees would be returned to the GS system within one year of the measure's passage unless the Secretary of Defense reports to Congress within six months that substantial improvements had been made to the pay-for-performance system.

NFFE is putting its full support behind the Shea-Porter language as the Defense Authorization Bill goes into House-Senate conference this fall.

"We fully support the Shea-Porter language," said NFFE Legislative Director Randy Erwin. "We need everyone to weigh in and let their lawmakers know that this language needs to be included in the final version of the FY10 Defense Authorization Bill."





# Obama Signs Executive Memo Extending Domestic Partnership Benefits to Federal Employees

In June, President Barack Obama signed an executive memorandum extending benefits to federal employees with same-sex domestic partners. NFFE, a strong supporter of the effort, praised the move and vowed to continue pushing for legislation that would make full domestic partner benefits for federal employees the law of the land.

Since benefits comprise a great deal of federal employees' compensation, this change will help make tremendous strides toward ensuring fairness and equality within the federal workplace. There are an estimated 30,000 federal employees who are in committed, same-sex relationships who will benefit substantially from this executive memorandum.

"These employees are deserving of the benefits for which they have worked hard to earn," said NFFE National President William R. Dougan. "They are also deserving of the dignity that comes with their relationships being duly recognized by their employer."

Though the benefits extended by the executive memorandum are a step in the right direction, it falls short of ensuring full benefit equality for federal employees in domestic partnerships.

"Although we are pleased to see the progress made with this executive memo, there remains much to be done to secure the full range of benefits that federal employees in domestic partnerships deserve," said Dougan.

Indeed, establishing full benefits for federal employees in domestic partnerships would require a change in law. The Domestic Partnership Benefits and Obligations Act of 2009 (H.R. 2517/S. 1102), a bipartisan piece of legislation in

both chambers of Congress, would exact the necessary change that federal employees deserve.

"[This legislation] would give federal employees in domestic partnerships the full benefits they deserve and would codify the policy into law so that it would not run the risk of being overturned with the stroke of a pen under a future administration," said Dougan.

## Congress Sending Mixed Messages on FY10 Pay Adjustment

In July, key committees in both houses of Congress approved figures for this year's federal pay adjustment. However, they arrived at very different results.

The Senate Appropriations Committee endorsed a 2.9 percent civilian federal employee pay adjustment for fiscal year 2010. This compares to a 2 percent pay adjustment passed by the same committee in the House, and later the full House of Representatives. Should the Senate pass the 2.9 percent figure through the full Senate, the differences will have to be hashed out before a House-Senate conference committee before a final spending bill can be passed.

"We will continue to fight for a fair and equal pay adjustment for all federal workers," said NFFE Legislative Director Randy Erwin. "A slow economy does not change the fact that there is still a significant pay gap between federal employees and those doing similar work in the private sector. We need to do all we can to close this pay gap in order for the federal government to recruit and retain the best and brightest over the long-term."

# FERS Sick Leave Benefit Still Possible After Being Stripped from Tobacco Bill

Federal workers enrolled in the Federal Employees Retirement System (FERS) may soon be eligible for a benefit for their unused sick leave similar to that which employees enrolled in the Civil Service Retirement System (CSRS) receive.

Originally introduced as standalone legislation called the FERS Sick Leave Equity Act, a bill that NFFE has lobbied heavily for, the legislation has made its way through the House of Representatives twice (as an attachment to separate pieces of legislation), but has repeatedly encountered trouble in the Senate.

The legislation was attached to the

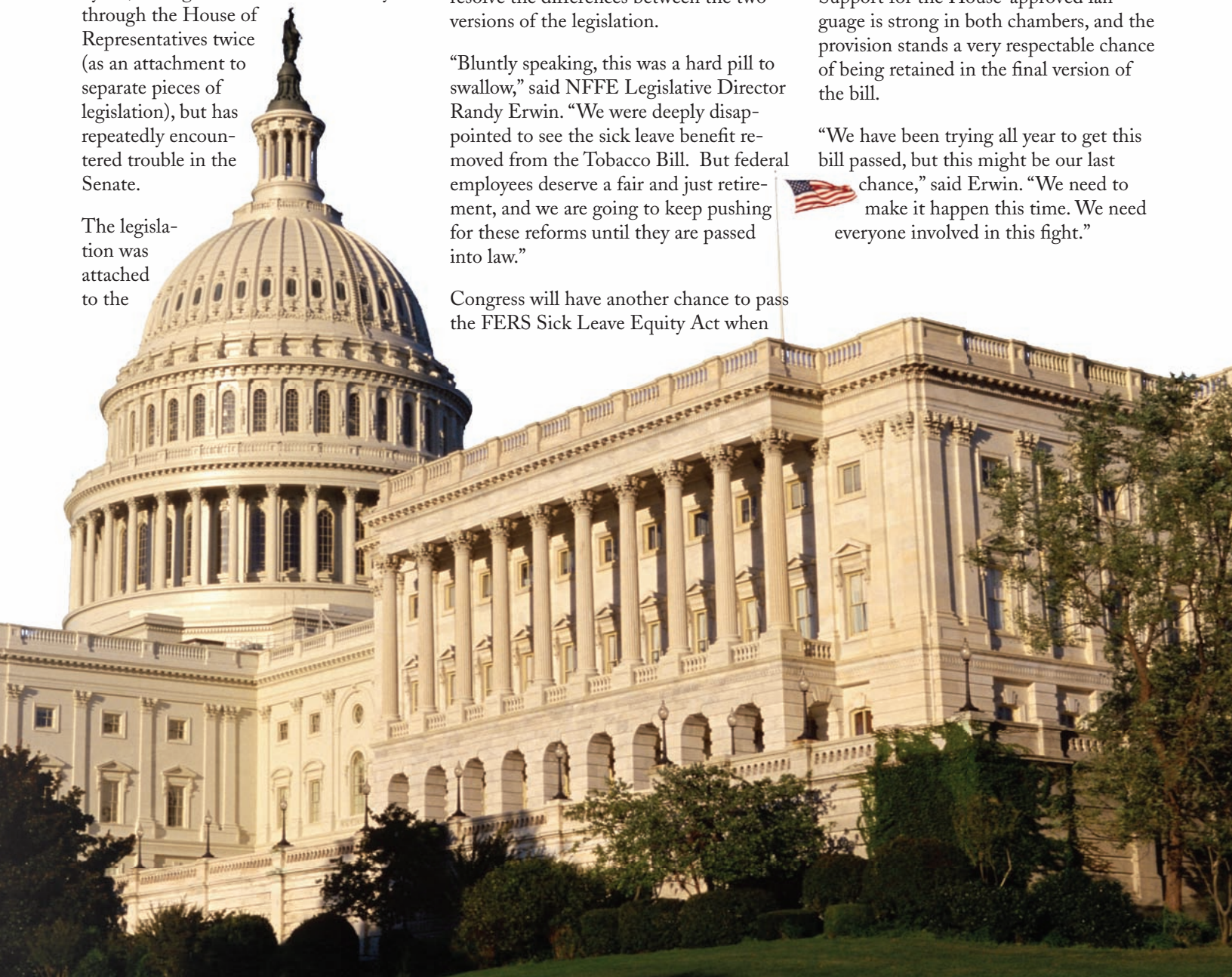
Family Smoking Prevention and Tobacco Control Act, which sailed through the House of Representatives by a 307-97 vote. However, the Senate stripped the language from the bill and passed the legislation without allowing the unused sick leave language to be offered as an amendment. The House then decided to pass the Senate version of the bill instead of forcing a House-Senate conference to resolve the differences between the two versions of the legislation.

“Bluntly speaking, this was a hard pill to swallow,” said NFFE Legislative Director Randy Erwin. “We were deeply disappointed to see the sick leave benefit removed from the Tobacco Bill. But federal employees deserve a fair and just retirement, and we are going to keep pushing for these reforms until they are passed into law.”

Congress will have another chance to pass the FERS Sick Leave Equity Act when

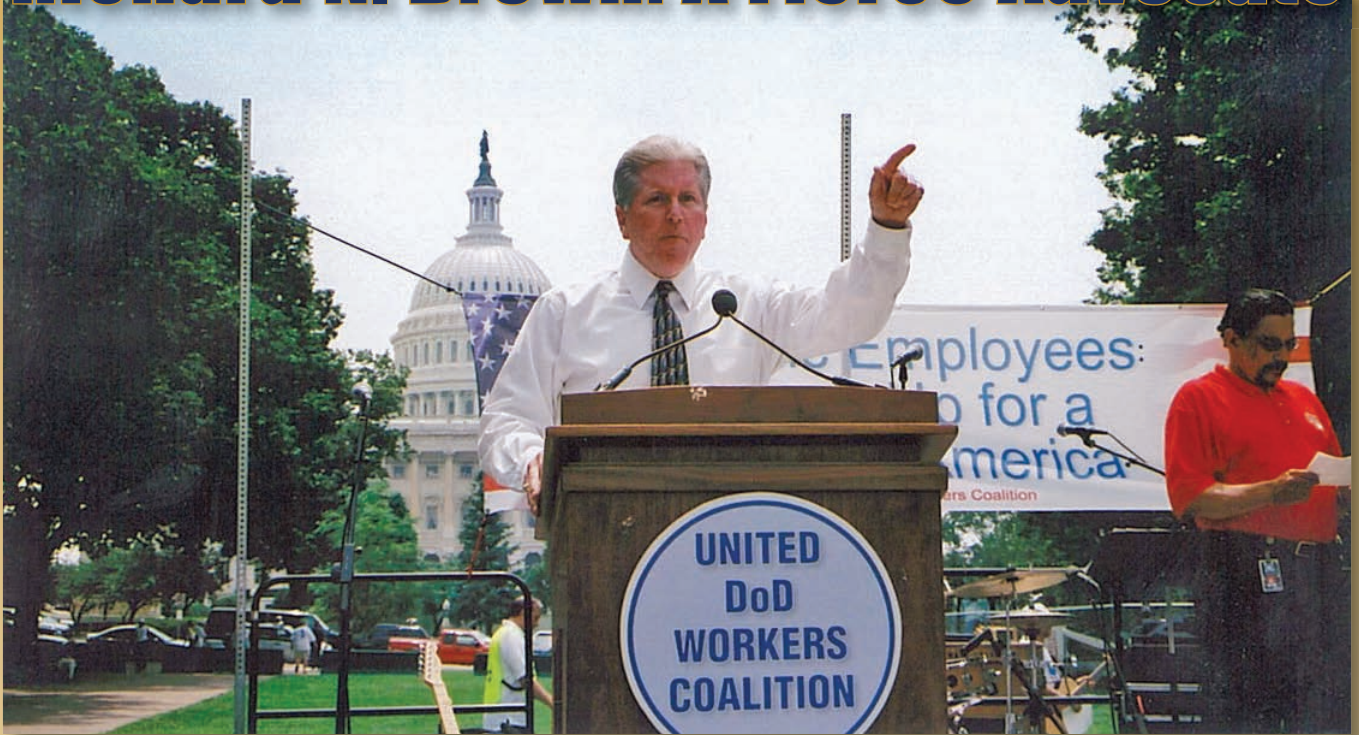
House and Senate conferees resolve the differences between their two versions of the FY10 Defense Authorization Bill this fall. The House included language to establish the FERS sick leave benefit, but once again, the Senate did not. The difference between the Defense Authorization Bill and the Tobacco Bill is that the Defense Authorization Bill will certainly undergo a House-Senate conference. Support for the House-approved language is strong in both chambers, and the provision stands a very respectable chance of being retained in the final version of the bill.

“We have been trying all year to get this bill passed, but this might be our last chance,” said Erwin. “We need to make it happen this time. We need everyone involved in this fight.”





# Richard N. Brown: A Fierce Advocate



***“This is not just a job – it’s a movement.”***

**-Richard N. Brown**

*With the untimely death of NFFE National President Richard N. Brown on June 30, 2009, the labor movement lost not just a leader, but a true visionary. Rick saw the federal workplace as an opportunity to serve; to serve not just his country but also his fellow workers. He envisioned a union whose membership would be proud to call it their own. He truly believed in what NFFE was, and dedicated his life to what it could become. He was a leader to some, and a friend to many more. Rick Brown will always be remembered as the man who inspired our emotions, tempered our spirits, and taught us all that there is nothing wrong with fighting for what we deserve.*

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**“...envisioned a workplace that all federal employees could be proud of.”**

-William R. Dougan  
National President, NFFE

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**R**ichard N. Brown was born on October 22, 1961 in the working class city of Schenectady, NY. The son of a construction worker and union leader, Rick was raised alongside his younger sister and brother to value hard work, and the pride that comes from it. A true believer in the labor movement, he was taught from a young age that being respected and treated fairly in exchange for an honest day’s work was a right, not a privilege.

Rick’s first experience with the federal workforce came in 1985 when he was hired on as a machinist building military ordnates at the Watervliet Arsenal in Watervliet, NY. One of his first acts as an employee was to sign an 1187 and become an active member of the union. Rising quickly through the Local ranks, he won the presidency in 1992, becoming one of the youngest ever to do so at the age of 30. As President of NFFE Local 2109, Rick was known for his outspoken and often brash nature, doing and saying whatever it took to get the job done.

“He took every issue very personally,” said NFFE National Vice President Timothy Ostrowski, who worked with him at the Watervliet Arsenal for over a decade. “If any one of our members were wronged, or cheated out of something they deserved,

Rick took care of it right away. He was the guy everyone could count on.”

This attitude would serve him well in the coming years as he was soon elected to NFFE’s National Executive Council (NEC) as Region 1 National Vice President. Serving six years on the NEC, Rick was witness to a union in turmoil; the budget had been running in the red for years, membership was dropping rapidly and poor leadership had brought the once proud union to the brink of closing its

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**“...a smart, tough, and passionate employee advocate.”**

-John Berry  
Director, OPM

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**“...a wise, tireless advocate who worked hard to ensure fairness and equality in the workplace.”**

-Carol Waller Pope  
Chairman, FLRA

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doors. Refusing to accept this fate for his union, Rick undertook what would soon become the cornerstone of his life’s work: running for national president of the National Federation of Federal Employees.

Campaigning under the banner of “Restore the Pride!,” he took his candidacy to the 44th NFFE National Convention in New Orleans, LA in September of 1998. Approaching the podium to offer his nomination for president, then-Region 7 National Vice President Steve Flory briefly, yet poignantly, laid out Rick’s vision for the beleaguered union:

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**“...a strong, dedicated, and well-respected advocate who fought hard to advance the cause.”**

-Tom Vilsack  
Secretary, USDA

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“Rick Brown wants to lead a union where every member is not ashamed to say they belong to NFFE,” said Flory before the crowd of hundreds. “He wants every member to be proud of what NFFE accomplishes and to be proud of their elected leaders. Rick Brown wants to *Restore the Pride* in NFFE.”



*Rick had two younger siblings – sister Kim and brother Douglas.*

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In what would later be remembered as one of the most important elections in the union’s history, Rick defeated incumbent President Albert Schmidt by a landslide, securing the office which he would hold for the next 11 years.

Upon assuming the presidency in September of 1998, Rick undertook the daunting task of turning the union’s misfortunes around. He personally engineered NFFE’s affiliation with the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAMAW), gaining membership in the AFL-CIO and securing the critical assistance necessary to keep the organization afloat. He streamlined the national staff and froze his own pay in order to get the books in the black. These bold and often painful measures brought NFFE back from the

edge of collapse and laid the foundation for the growth and prosperity NFFE is seeing today.

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**“A strong and tenacious voice for federal employees.”**

-John Sweeney  
President, AFL-CIO

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Having returned a measure of stability to the union, Rick turned his attention back to his true passion – representing federal employees. Throughout his 11-year presidency he was an outspoken critic of numerous Bush-era policies aimed at privatizing federal jobs and stifling workers’ pay. He spoke at dozens of rallies and conventions, met with innumerable politicians and agency heads, testified before a number of Congressional committees, held leadership roles on many boards and workgroups, and became a fixture in both print and digital media. In all of these venues, Rick’s passion for workers’ rights shone through.

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**“Our labor family has truly lost a great man.”**

-Tom Buffenbarger  
International President, IAMAW

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*Rick was elected at the 1998 NFFE National Convention in New Orleans, LA.*

*continued on page 9*



Rick delivered an impassioned speech against privatization at Washington, D.C.'s Freedom Plaza.

...a great spokesman who's going to be difficult, if not impossible to replace.

-Ron Ault  
President, Metal Trades, AFL-CIO

Washington media, he never forgot who he was, where he came from, or those who helped him along the way. As a member, a Local president, national vice president, and national president, his aspirations and his vision unflinchingly led the union he loved toward a brighter, more prosperous future.

On Wednesday, August 5, 2009, NFFE's executive council and staff dedicated the NFFE National Office as the *Richard N. Brown National Office* in recognition of his immense contribution to the union. Under his visionary and dynamic leadership, Rick Brown made all of us proud to call ourselves members of the National Federation of Federal Employees. He fought selflessly on our behalf until the very end.

Rick was taken from us far, far too early. He is truly irreplaceable.

His strength and tenacity truly will be missed.

-Richard Michalski  
General Vice President, IAMAW

*Richard N. Brown continued from page 8*

"Rick had a natural ability to draw people in," said NFFE Legislative Director Randy Erwin, recalling an impassioned speech he delivered to a rally at Freedom Plaza in downtown Washington, D.C., pictured above. "By the dozens, people were just stopping to listen to him rail against privatization, and applauded even though they had no part in the rally. He just had a way of connecting with people on a personal level that you don't see very often."

the government? I can tell you as a former defense worker, it wasn't a performance appraisal, and it wasn't money, it was because the ordines we were working on protected peoples' lives across the pond. That's why we did a good job. NSPS wouldn't make them do it any better - they perform for America every day!"

Leaning forward on the edge of his chair, applause ringing all around him, he kindly thanked the chairman for the opportunity to testify.

Episodes like this were the hallmark of Richard N. Brown's tenure with NFFE. Though he had reached the pinnacle of power in his union, became a household name on Capitol Hill and a fixture in the

...a true believer in the value of federal employees.

-Steve Bauer  
Director, FEAA

In his last public appearance, just days before his passing, Rick testified before the Defense Business Board's Task Force on NSPS in a public meeting attended by hundreds of federal employees. After finishing his prepared testimony, in which he assailed the structural and logistical shortcomings of the flawed personnel plan, he turned his head to the crowd, requesting that all DoD workers raise their hands. With hundreds of arms lifted behind him, he turned back to the three-member panel with a firm gaze and said:

"I was a DoD employee, and a proud one, too. They (NSPS supporters) are talking about performance, they are talking about lack of performance, and they're talking about pay. What makes them work for



On August 5, 2009 NFFE's NEC and staff dedicated the National Office in Rick's name.



# New Leadership Takes the Helm

New leadership among several of NFFE's highest ranking positions is in place. The tragic passing of NFFE National President Richard N. Brown set in motion a series of position changes that left some key positions in the union temporarily vacant, but all decisions on replacements have now been made, and those impacted have hit the ground running.



*National President Dougan (right) and National Secretary-Treasurer Fenaughty are ready to move forward with NFFE's ambitious agenda.*

In accordance with the NFFE Bylaws, William R. Dougan succeeded Brown as national president, and will serve in this new capacity for the remainder of the term, which runs into 2012.

“This has been a difficult period for us all,” said Dougan. “We lost a great leader and a great friend in Rick, and he will be impossible to replace. But our duty compels us to move forward in advocacy and representation of federal workers, and in spite of all that has occurred, I am overcome with a strong sense of optimism for the future of this union.”

Dougan's advancement to national president left vacant the national secretary-treasurer position that he previously filled. NFFE Bylaws state that the national president will appoint a replacement to serve out the rest of the term if an elected national position is vacated. In accord, Dougan selected William D. Fenaughty, formerly the assistant directing business representative (ADBR), to be national secretary-treasurer, a move that has been met with widespread approval from the National Executive Council, Councils, Locals, and NFFE staff.

“There could not be a better man for the job as far as I'm concerned,” said Dougan. “His knowledge of the issues, opportunities and challenges our union faces brings much-needed expertise to the NFFE National Office during this period of transition.”

The reshuffling of the deck didn't end there, however. Fenaughty, upon accepting the national secretary-treasurer position, in turn vacated the ADBR position. National Business Representative James Davis was selected to fill that role. Subsequently, that move vacated a business representative position, which will be filled by David Stamey, formerly a regional vice president for the NFFE Forest Service Council.

“This transition has not been easy, but soon it will be complete,” said Dougan. “I feel very confident that we have assembled the best possible team to step up and continue to move this union forward. I am excited about what the future has in store for NFFE.”



**For the latest NFFE news and updates,  
visit our website [WWW.NFFE.ORG](http://WWW.NFFE.ORG)**

# NFFE National Office Hosts Steward Training for Civilian Conservation Corps Locals



*CCC stewards along with NFFE staff rallied for health reform on Capitol Hill.*

The week of June 15<sup>th</sup> proved to be a very productive one at the NFFE National Office, hosting members of the consolidated Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) Locals for basic steward training.

The new stewards, representing employees at Locals 1840, 1855, and 1697, were trained in basic complaint handling, negotiations, lobbying, and a number of other representational duties over the course of three days. Larry Dawson, director of the Job Corps, helped open the session and stated his commitment to productive labor-management relations.

“It was a very successful week,” said then National Secretary-Treasurer William R.

Dougan, who, along with NFFE National Vice President John Obst and Forest Service Council Vice President Larry King, led the week’s training. “Our new stewards were given the basic tools they need to represent our members and bargaining units. With these women and men ready to provide service to members of their Locals working at Civilian Conservation Centers across the country, I have full confidence our members are in good hands.”

One of the more engaging parts of the training, lasting all three days, was an exercise which simulated all aspects of the grievance process. It included information requests, filing allegations of unfair labor

practices, and writing settlement agreements.

The training also covered the importance of the Machinist’s Non-Partisan Political League (MNPL), the IAM’s voluntary contribution fund which raises money for political action supporting federal employee issues.

“I am very pleased at how engaged the students were and I am optimistic they will put the training to good use,” said Obst.

One of the week’s highlights was a visit to the AFL-CIO Headquarters for a briefing on the Workforce Investment Act reauthorization, a critical piece of legislation impacting CCC employees that is currently under consideration in Congress. Later in the week, the stewards accompanied members of the NFFE staff to a health care rally on Capitol Hill in a show of solidarity with our uninsured brothers and sisters in the private sector.

Overall, the training was a huge success.

“Everyone at this office made me feel really welcome and important,” said one of the participants in their post-training evaluation. “I’m impressed with NFFE and proud to be a member.”

In attendance were: Michelle Marnhout, Brooks Hayden, Shawn Patterson, Jerry Case, Sam Gallagher, Chris Bush, Beverly Tobin, Larry King, Lisa Lewis, Peggy Sue Graves, Alice Barnette, Dolores King, and Scot Johnson.



# NFFE Local, National Leadership, Talk Issues with USDA Heads

Since the outset of the new administration nearly a year ago, NFFE has focused extensively on repairing the many working relationships that became strained over the previous eight years. Both here in our nation's capital and in the hundreds of NFFE Locals throughout the country, members and officers are rebuilding burned bridges and fostering stronger, more functional relationships with agency leadership and management.

In July, NFFE National President William R. Dougan made the short trip over to the U.S. Department of Agriculture's (USDA) headquarters in downtown Washington, D.C. In a meeting with the Undersecretary for Natural Resources and Environment Jay Jensen and high-ranking officials from the office of the USDA Secretary, Dougan extended a hand of cooperation, urging the development of a labor-management partnership council that brings all Department stakeholders to the table.

"It is the federal employees out in the field and the offices that are the key to accomplishing the work of USDA and its agencies, and their interests should be the primary consideration in any agency decision-making," said Dougan. "I assured them that NFFE's members stand ready to work with USDA to make sure that the agency's mission is carried out."

NFFE's leadership in the field have been doing their part as well. Earlier this summer, NFFE National Vice President John Obst and Forest Service Council Vice President Mark Davis participated in the USDA's Rural Tour, an Administration



*NFFE National VP John Obst and Forest Service Council VP Mark Davis meet with USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack during the Rural Tour.*

initiative focused on reaching out to rural communities.

At the tour's stop in West Salem, WI, brothers Obst and Davis had the opportunity to meet with USDA Secretary Tom Vilsack after the forum had ended. Davis spoke to Secretary Vilsack about the union's commitment to collaborate in rebuilding the infrastructure and workforce of the Forest Service that have been seriously eroded by years of neglect. Obst pledged NFFE's support to make the Administration, the USDA and its em-

ployees successful by working together to meet our country's needs.

Secretary Vilsack indicated that he looked forward to partnering with the union.

In both of these exchanges between NFFE and the USDA, the resounding message is that members of NFFE and the Administration are ready and willing to work together to move our agencies' missions, and in doing so, our country, forward.



NFFE's National Executive Council gathered at the National Office to review the new Organizing Strategic Plan.

## NFFE's New Organizing Strategic Plan Ready for Implementation

After several months of research, discussion and development, NFFE's new Organizing Strategic Plan was unanimously approved by the National Executive Council (NEC) on August 17<sup>th</sup>. Passage of the plan was a major step forward in our mission to update and improve the efficiency of NFFE's organizing efforts.

The renewed focus on organizing began in earnest earlier this spring, with the appointment of Cassie Kerner (formerly assistant to the late NFFE National President Richard N. Brown) as national organizing director. Under Kerner's direction, a survey of NFFE's Locals was conducted to determine what organizing efforts were taking place at the Local level, and with what success. A conference call was also held for Local officers to share their organizing experiences and ideas. All of that feedback was compiled and shared with the NFFE officers, staff, and Council presidents for discussion at the organizing strategic planning session held in Washington, D.C. in May.

At the recommendation of the group during this meeting, all of the attendees will serve on the National Organizing Steering Committee. The Steering Committee will serve as an advisory body and help evaluate and revise the Organizing

Strategic Plan as necessary. A subset of this group, appointed by the national president, will serve on the National Organizing Committee. The Organizing Committee members are National Organizing Director Cassie Kerner, National Vice Presidents Jozef Drozdowski, Patricia La Sala and Debbie Ransom, Business Representative Gary Johanson, and Forest Service Council President Ron Thatcher. Legislative Director Randy Erwin and Communications Director Cory Bythrow will also assist the committee. This group has been heavily involved in the development of the plan, and will be actively involved in its implementation.

After the initial draft of the plan was completed by Kerner, it was sent to the Steering Committee for editing. The Steering Committee made a number of recommendations, which were discussed by the Organizing Committee. The revised draft was sent back to the Steering Committee for a second round of editing, and the proposed changes were again discussed by the Organizing Committee. The updated plan was sent to the NEC for review and discussion, and was approved via conference call on August 17<sup>th</sup>.

Thanks to the input of the NFFE-IAM membership and the hard work of the

Steering Committee and Organizing Committee, the new Organizing Strategic Plan is ready for implementation. The plan does not take responsibility for organizing away from NFFE's Locals, but instead clarifies the expectations of everyone within the union in terms of organizing, including NFFE's nationally-elected officers, Councils, Locals, and members of NFFE's staff. It also explains what tools and assistance are available to Locals as they work to put together organizing drives.

Detailed information on the content of the plan will be shared with the membership soon. Copies of the plan are being mailed to every NFFE Local, and will also be available for viewing in the "Members Only" section of our website, [www.nffe.org](http://www.nffe.org).

Thanks again to everyone who has been involved in the plan development process. The feedback and input provided at every level has enabled us to develop what we expect to be an extremely effective plan.

Please be on the lookout for further information and copies of NFFE's new Organizing Strategic Plan.



# NFFE & FEEA Announce the Richard N. Brown Memorial Scholarship



The Federal Employee Education and Assistance Fund (FEEA), a non-profit organization that provides scholarships and emergency assistance to federal employees and their families, has dedicated a scholarship in the memory of their late board vice president, our beloved NFFE National President, Richard N. Brown.

Brown dedicated his life to enhancing the voice and well-being of America's federal employees. The *Richard N. Brown Scholarship* will bolster FEEA's already expansive efforts of helping not only federal employees, but their spouses and children as well. This amazing opportunity to reduce student debt and increase educational opportunities will ensure that Brown's vision of a vibrant federal workforce lives on for years to come.

In order to be eligible for the *Richard N. Brown Scholarship*, applicants must be a NFFE-IAM member in good standing or a spouse or child of a member in good standing. Applicants must have a GPA of 3.0 or higher and some form of community service. Letters of recommendation and essay must also be submitted by a date to be determined. Dependant applicants should be full-time students, while employee applicants may be part-time students. All applicants must be accepted into an accredited degree program.

The official scholarship application for the 2010-11 academic year will be available in January, and will be found on our website, [www.nffe.org](http://www.nffe.org). Applicants for the *Richard N. Brown Scholarship* will in addition gain automatic consideration for all other FEEA scholarships.

For more information or to donate online, go to [www.nffe.org](http://www.nffe.org) and click "Richard N. Brown Memorial Scholarship," under the Resources tab. To donate today, complete the form below and mail with self addressed and stamped envelope.



## Richard N. Brown Scholarship Fund

Making Donation by:

Check: \_\_\_ Visa: \_\_\_ MasterCard: \_\_\_ Amex: \_\_\_

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**Please Make Checks payable to: FEEA, Rick Brown Fund**

Organization, Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

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Phone number: \_\_\_\_\_

Email Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Amount Enclosed:\$ \_\_\_\_\_

FEEA  
3333 S. Wadsworth Blvd.  
Suite 300  
Lakewood, CO 80227

**Your contributions will ensure that  
Rick's legacy of selfless stewardship  
of federal employees will continue  
for years to come.**

# New Materials Now Available!

Throughout the research and development of NFFE's new Organizing Strategic Plan, one point was raised time and time again: the need for more Local visibility. To address this issue, NFFE's organizing and communications departments have been hard at work designing and producing a variety of organizing materials to make available to the membership. Ranging from fliers and signs to t-shirts and lanyards, NFFE is dedicating a great amount of time and resources toward growing and improving the NFFE brand.

One classic method for improving Local visibility is posting a sign or flier on the union bulletin board. However, the reality is that many of our Local officers are too busy servicing their membership to design and print fliers that speak to the issues impacting members at their facilities.

With the launch of the "NFFE Materials" page on the website, members and officers can now choose from a variety of NFFE signs and fliers ready to order or print straight from their desks. By request, fliers may also be customized simply by contacting NFFE Communications Director Cory Bythrow.

We are also working to update and expand the NFFE items that are available to our members, and make these more readily accessible. We are researching union vendors which will be able to produce our merchandise as needed and sell it directly to NFFE Locals. Doing this will allow us to increase the number of items available and make them more convenient for Locals to obtain. In addition, we are in the process of enhancing our new member kits.

These new materials will serve a number of functions crucial to our organizing success: increasing union visibility, promoting awareness, and educating non-members on how and why to join. The fact of the matter is, no one can join a union that they do not know exists. By making these materials readily available to Local officers and members, we take a great leap forward in our ability to reach potential members. However, we cannot do this alone. We encourage you to visit the "Members Only" area of our website, [www.nffe.org](http://www.nffe.org), and click on "NFFE Materials" to do your part in making our great union a household name.

For more information on how your Local can access these materials, contact us at (202) 216-4420.

