

BARBARA VEREEN

Position: Organizing Director and Chief Steward



My Local 34 Story

I grew up watching workers in my neighborhood go to good union jobs at the Olin factory, but as I graduated from high school, the factory was closing down. I have spent my life organizing for my community to have more opportunities and for our members to have a good union standard. I know the power of organizing and have seen how it empowers people to change their own lives.

In 2000, I started working at Yale, and our members were not making a lot of money. During the 2003 strike, we came together like we never had before and won historic raises. This helped families pay their bills, buy homes, and send kids to college. This victory inspired me to become more involved in the union and start organizing.

As I took on more leadership in the union, I realized that Black and Brown leaders were underrepresented on our Executive Board, and so I made it a priority to have better representation. I am proud to see the changes in our E-Board with Black and Brown leaders coming forward. These leaders have different perspectives and experiences that strengthen Local 34. I believe our E-Board must be a group that has healthy conflict and real conversations. When we reach decisions by valuing everyone's perspective we have a stronger union with members who are willing to stand up and fight for the standard we are all building together.

Position Description:

Barbara Vereen is the Organizing Director and Chief Steward of Local 34.