

# Unions: Their Purpose and Importance

By April Richie and Melvin Stokes

Unions today are important because of the protection and rights they provide to workers. Many employees nationwide are facing adversities in the workplace that are beyond comprehension and contrast to others that are fortunate enough to be protected by a Collective Bargaining Agreement and the benefits that comes with it (**wages, benefits pensions and secure and safe working conditions**). These employees have no voice to speak on their behalf and that would directly affect the futures of themselves and the families they provide a living for.

For this reason we as members must stay educated and active in our Union by attending meetings when possible, being attentive to what's happening in our communities and staying engaged politically to make sure that decisions made will not adversely affect our jobs and lives.

As an active member of the Union it is incumbent of us to not only ensure that the security of our futures are protected but to also assist sisters and brothers in other labor Unions by partnering with them in fighting against unfair labor and workplace practices. So the challenge to the members of AFSCME Local 3634 is to get and stay involved.

Unions are more important today than ever before. The nature of work is changing so we must continue to stand in solidarity and as history has proven: **There is Power in a Union.**