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for current and retired government workers and their families since 1933
American Federation of Government Employees, AFL-CIO

AFGE Wins \$20 Million in Back Pay for Immigration Workers

It took 11 years and countless staff hours, but employees of the legacy Immigration and Naturalization Service (INS) will finally get the overtime pay denied them by the agency more than a decade ago. After rejecting a paltry \$7 million settlement offer from the Department of Homeland Security, AFGE won the day with an initial payout of \$20 million to more than 8,900 employees (or their heirs) who were denied the pay they earned when they put in extra hours. The \$20 million, awarded by an arbitrator, does not settle the entire grievance; future payments have yet to be determined.

When Congress created the Department of Homeland Security (DHS), the new

agency absorbed the INS, which had previously been part of the Justice Department. Today the work once performed by the INS has been taken on by two new DHS bureaus: Customs and Border Protection (CBP), and Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE). As they did at INS, CBP and ICE officers put their lives on the line every day.

"Employees of the former INS will be ecstatic to learn that, after years of agency delay and obstruction, they will finally get paid what is due them," said AFGE Assistant General Counsel **Joe Goldberg**, who won the case for AFGE claimants.

Payments to former INS employees began on June 15 and, at press time, the majority of this first group of eligible claimants had received their back-pay. However, some 800 members of the group—retirees, mostly—have yet to receive a dime, due, said Goldberg, "at best, to agency incompetence."

"We tried to suggest ways to smooth the verification process for DHS, but the agency insisted that it had the data it needed all sewn up," Goldberg explained. "You would think that the government would be able to find its own retirees. But you can rest assured that we'll make sure that DHS will do more than find them. They'll pay those former civil servants what they're owed."

Mildred Williams worked at the INS for 30 years, and served as executive vice president of AFGE Council 117. The sum she received in back through AFGE's grievance means "will let me pay off a few bills," she told *The Standard*. While Williams, a retired INS deportation officer, was not owed a huge payout, others have collected tens of thousands in pay that they earned but the government denied them.

The case grew out of a back-pay case filed by Council 117 on behalf of special agents, which the council won in 1994 to the tune of \$80 million. "We then started to wonder, if they did this to the special agents, they probably did it to others," Williams explained. Today's \$20 million payout is the first phase of compensation awards stemming from the case. In the next phase of the



photo courtesy of ICE

As they did at INS, CBP and ICE officers put their lives on the line every day.

case, the arbitrator will determine the amount due a group of some 535 claimants.

Asked what kept him going, working tirelessly on this case when others might have grown weary, Goldberg said, "This is what I get paid to do—fight for our members. And it's because of those members that the attorneys of the AFGE General Counsel's Office have had the resources to earn a reputation, among federal workers and managers alike, as tenacious and skilled defenders of our members' interests—even in the face of great resistance."

Adds Williams: "I call Joe Goldberg our pit bull. Once he gets his teeth into something, he doesn't let go."

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John Gage

A Message from National President John Gage

AFGE: The Homeland Security Union

When terrorists struck America on September 11, 2001, AFGE members sprang into action. Members of our FEMA locals spent days at Ground Zero in New York, working endless shifts, tending to the families and merchants who suffered losses in the attacks. The emergency medical technicians of the District of Columbia sped to the site of the Pentagon attack. Immigration inspectors around the country were placed on high alert; Border Patrol officers were abruptly deployed to feared trouble spots. The U.S. Coast Guard stepped up its patrols of our coastlines. Federal firefighters and law enforcement officers stood at the ready.

Two years later, many of these different—and disparate—government entities would be folded into a new federal agency, the Department of Homeland Security (DHS). And when an entirely new organization, the Transportation Security Administration (TSA), was added to the mix, AFGE set out to organize the airport screeners it employs.

“When we see wrongdoing, we don’t let go until the situation is fixed.”

As DHS took shape, AFGE’s representation of a broad constituency in the new agency became clear, lending the federation a detailed understanding of the many facets of the homeland security mission. With AFGE present across the breadth and width of DHS, the federation has gained a comprehensive perspective on the struggle for respect felt by DHS employees across the board and, in our advocacy for those employees, we find ourselves engaged at every level and in every corner of the Homeland Security Department, meeting with top agency leaders and mid-level managers alike.

AFGE took the lead in challenging the administration’s design of a new personnel system for DHS, and the federation continues to fight, both in court and in the media, for the restoration of due process and full collective bargaining rights for homeland security workers. We continue to decry the agency’s so-called “pay-for-performance” scheme as what it is: a plan to drive down your pay and reward management’s favorites at the expense of workers dedicated to doing the best possible job for the American people.

Because of the depth of AFGE’s presence in DHS, the federation spots trends early, before they spread throughout the work

force. When TSA issued a directive forbidding screeners to bargain collectively, we saw the seeds of a trend sown, and moved quickly to call the administration on its union-busting agenda. Still, we stuck with those TSA screeners, challenging the directive in court while learning new ways to “be union”—representing our newest unit in the courts of law and public opinion on a range of issues.

AFGE’s aggressive organizing and advocacy in this area earned the federation news coverage on the nation’s biggest TV news shows—including NBC’s “Today” show, Fox News’ morning show, C-SPAN’s event coverage, and the NewsHour with Jim Lehrer (PBS)—and in its best-known newspapers, such as the *New York Times* and the *Washington Post*, among others. (The activism of AFGE members led to reporting in the *Seattle Times* that led to the firing of an entire management slate at the Seattle-Tacoma International Airport.)

Legal victories on behalf of TSA screeners have included the reinstatement of workers after wrongful terminations, and pro-worker decisions in discrimination cases against management.

Likewise, when we learn of officers in the Bureau of Immigration and Customs Enforcement still waiting for uniforms appropriate for their jobs, we see implications for all of the uniformed members of DHS. When our members alert us to new training regimens apparently designed for no other reason than to put some veteran part-time officers of the Bureau of Customs and Border Protection (CBP) out of work, we respond forcefully, not only to protect the workers most immediately affected, but to ward off any future application of such an underhanded tactic in other parts of the agency.

When we hear from our folks in FEMA of an internal survey showing a plummeting morale, we take the hint, surveying our Border Patrol, CPB and ICE members to get

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their views on conditions in the workplace. We did just that last year, and the release of the results to the media pushed the administration and lawmakers to at least begin addressing the problems of short-staffing and resource shortages.

On Capitol Hill, we relentlessly knock on the doors of senators and congressional representatives, and through our electronic Action Alert system, facilitate the delivery of our members' views to their elected representatives. Last year alone, AFGE members and officers testified at a number of hearings before committees in the Senate and House of Representatives on issues ranging from the contracting out of federal work to the destructive new DHS and DoD personnel systems; from the short-changing of veterans' health care to Social Security.

The Apple of His Eye

Fleetwood Wins iPod Player

The Membership and Organization Department (M&O) is pleased to announce that **Mark Fleetwood**, Secretary of AFGE Local 903, has won the drawing, advertised in the last issue of *The Government Standard* for an Apple iPod, courtesy of the Member Benefits program and Apple Computer.



"AFGE is a wonderful family of government employee brothers and sisters," Fleetwood said. "I'm proud of my membership and my participation in Local 903. While I would argue with anyone that the membership benefits are reason enough to join, it's the feeling of belonging to an organization that truly cares about those of us who spend our work lives in service to Uncle Sam that keeps me going. Thanks to everyone at AFGE headquarters for all you do. And thanks for the iPod, too!"

Most importantly, when we see wrongdoing—especially of the type that harms our members—we don't let go until the situation is fixed. It took us 11 years, but this month, AFGE won a \$20 million award in back pay for its members in the legacy INS—members who had been robbed of overtime due them under the law.

With members in so many different areas of the Department of Homeland Security, AFGE is the voice of experience when it comes to securing the homeland—and the well-being of DHS employees. Our collective, agency-wide clout is hard to miss. AFGE is, after all, the homeland security union.

6 Ways AFGE Membership Works For You



Only AFGE members have access to over 40 money-saving benefits. Many members have found that by using just one or two of these benefits, they save more than the cost of their annual dues!



Education Services

College scholarships and education loans, help with the college selection process, discounts on an online college degree program, and online training and more!



Home Computers

Get discounts on computers from Apple and Dell, buy your computer through a convenient payroll allotment with no credit check or finance charges, get discounted high-speed dial up Internet service and more!



Auto Advantages

New and used car buying service that can save time and money, savings on auto insurance and on oil changes, tires and service at Goodyear and more!

Financial Savings

A mortgage program to help you or your children buy a home, savings on credit cards, free credit counseling, accident insurance at no cost and more!

Health Care Savings

Save 18% on prescription costs, save on dental and up to 50% on vision care and more

Law Enforcement

Earn a Bachelor of Science Degree in Criminal Justice completely online with accelerated programs in homeland security and computer science. Also available is professional liability insurance designed to protect federal employees.

To find out about all the benefits such as Entertainment Discounts, Pet Discounts, Free Legal Advice and more

Be sure to visit www.afge.org
Or call **1-888-844-2343**



Fighting for True National Security

AFGE, in Coalition, Battles for Prudent Personnel Rules

Working with fellow unions in the Department of Defense (DoD), AFGE continues to fight for safety and security as the Pentagon seeks to implement a draconian new personnel system that will impede the ability of civilian Defense workers to do the best possible job for U.S. troops and the citizens they serve.

"We hope that our elected officials will take a hard look at what the future might be like with no whistleblower protections."



AFGE DEFCON Chairman
Don Hale

As a result of the combined legal, legislative and media strategy mounted by the United Coalition of DoD Workers, the Defense Department delayed implementation of its so-called National Security Per-

sonnel System (NSPS) by two months as lawmakers and the General Accountability Office (GAO) raised questions about the Department's freeze-out of the unions in the system's design. The new system eliminates all meaningful collective bargaining, and will create a pay system designed to pit worker against worker.

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"One of our greatest concerns is that under NSPS employees will be less willing to speak out against wrongdoing and other abuses they observe at work," said **Don Hale**, chairman of AFGE's Defense Conference (DEFCON) in a recent online chat conducted by Gov-Exec.com. "We hope that our elected officials will take a hard look at what the future might be like with no whistleblower protections."

Hale also addressed the July 12 rally sponsored by the DoD union coalition on Capitol Hill, which drew several hundred union members and supporters, and speakers including AFGE National President **John Gage**; **Gregory Junemann**, president of the



Kurt Callagher for AFGE

NVP Andrea Brooks addresses July rally to stop NSPS.

International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers; **Ron Ault**, president of the AFL-CIO Metal Trades Department; **Gerald McEntee**, president of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees; and AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer **Rich Trumka**. Also gracing the podium were members of Congress, including Rep. **Steny Hoyer** (D-Md.), Rep. **Jay Inslee**, (D-Wash.); Rep. **Walter Jones** (R-N.C.); and D.C. Delegate **Eleanor Holmes Norton**. AFGE Women's & Fair Practices Director, NVP **Andrea Brooks**, also addressed the crowd.

In other developments, the GAO recently issued a report critical of the Pentagon's new personnel system, noting that DoD failed to identify unions as key players in the new system, "but instead, characterizes union leadership as 'NSPS' biggest detractor'."

At press time, AFGE was seeking information from the Pentagon on the projected cost of implementing the new system.

JOBS WITH JUSTICE

A campaign for workers' rights

**National Meeting
September 23-25, 2005
St. Louis, Missouri**



Jobs with Justice has joined AFGE in its quest to ensure a fair personnel system in the Department of Defense—one that serves our national security by safeguarding the rights that empower rank-and-file civilian workers to act as watchdogs for the American citizen. Recently, Jobs with Justice and AFGE organized a successful information picket at the gate to Fort Lewis and the Madigan military hospital in Washington State.

Join your brothers and sisters from across the labor movement for the Jobs with Justice National Meeting.

For more information, go to www.jwj.org, or call (202) 393-1044.

DEPARTMENT OF HOMELAND SECURITY RECENT DEVELOPMENTS

AFGE Suit Stops New Personnel Regs

In a major victory for Department of Homeland Security (DHS) employees across the nation, DHS has been ordered to cease implementation of its controversial new personnel system, MaxHR, which would have drastically scaled back collective bargaining and employee appeal rights. U.S. District Court Judge **Rosemary Collyer** upheld claims made in a suit filed by AFGE and four other unions that challenged the legality of the new DHS labor-management rules. In addition to the virtual elimination of collective bargaining in the new system, AFGE also pressed hard on the matter of appeal rights. If implemented, the new personnel rules would diminish rights by federal employees to appeal firings and demotions to the Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB), an independent agency.

"Rather than afford a right of appeal that is impartial or disinterested, the regulations

put the thumbs of the agencies down hard on the scales of justice in their favor," wrote Judge Collyer in her memorandum opinion. She also expressly ruled that the DHS regulations "fail to ensure collective bargaining."

"This is just the first victory in what we expect to be an involved process," said **Charles Showalter**, president of AFGE's National Homeland Security Council (also known as Council 117). "Until a fair and secure personnel system is arrived at for the Homeland Security Department, we will continue to fight



Photo by James Tountellotte, courtesy CBP

Representing both CBP and Border Patrol officers makes AFGE a strong presence in DHS.

for a fair deal for the rank-and-file who defend the homeland at DHS, both in the courts and in the halls of Congress."

Treasury Union Reneges on Joint Representation

When the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) was formed two years ago, unions saw the mixing of bargaining units from legacy agencies as an attempt to break labor solidarity within the department by pitting unions against each other for the privilege of representing the new agency's employees. For this reason, AFGE engaged in lengthy discussions with officials from the National Treasury Employees Union (NTEU) in the hope of forming a partnership within DHS that would forestall a run-off between the two unions.

"Instead, NTEU chose to play right into management's hands," said **Charles Showalter**, president of AFGE's National Homeland Security Council (Council 117), "when it walked away from partnership talks without even informing AFGE."

District Caucus Results

Across the country, AFGE districts held their caucuses in May, determining the make-up of the AFGE National Executive Council (NEC), which is composed of the national vice presidents (NVPs) that head each district. The national secretary-treasurer and the NVP for Women and Fair Practices also sit on the NEC, which is led by the national president. In addition to electing an NVP, each district also chose a women's advisory coordinator (NWAC) and a national fair practices affirmative action coordinator (NFPAAAC). Here are the election results:

District 2

National Vice President – Derrick F. Thomas (re-elected)
Women's Advisory Coordinator – Kathy Cooper
National Fair Practices/AA Coordinator – John Ward (re-elected)

District 3

National Vice President – Jeffery R. Williams (re-elected)
Women's Advisory Coordinator – Adrienne Garrett
National Fair Practices/AA Coordinator – Catherine Stafford (re-elected)

District 4

National Vice President – Joseph P. Flynn (re-elected)
Women's Advisory Coordinator – Evelyn Holt (re-elected)
National Fair Practices/AA Coordinator – Essie Hogue (re-elected)

District 5

National Vice President – Charlotte Flowers (re-elected)
Women's Advisory Coordinator – Judy Hansford
National Fair Practices/AA Coordinator – Celestine Hood (re-elected)

District 6

National Vice President – Arnold R. Scott (re-elected)
Women's Advisory Coordinator – Vicki Pennington
National Fair Practices/AA Coordinator – Augusta Thomas (re-elected)

District 7

National Vice President – Dorothy James (re-elected)
Women's Advisory Coordinator – Pamela Martin (re-elected)
National Fair Practices/AA Coordinator – Earl Tucker (re-elected)

District 8

National Vice President – Jane Nygaard
Women's Advisory Coordinator – Debra Cederholm (re-elected)
National Fair Practices/AA Coordinator – Julie Springer

District 9

National Vice President – Michael C. Kelly (re-elected)
Women's Advisory Coordinator – Joan Flaherty (re-elected)
National Fair Practices/AA Coordinator – Matt Bush

District 10

National Vice President – Rogelio "Roy" Flores (re-elected)
Women's Advisory Coordinator – Fredna White (re-elected)
National Fair Practices/AA Coordinator – Gloria Ashford (re-elected)

District 11

National Vice President – Gerald D. Swanke (re-elected)
Women's Advisory Coordinator – Kathy Cooper
National Fair Practices/AA Coordinator – John Ward (re-elected)

District 12

National Vice President – Eugene Hudson (re-elected)
Women's Advisory Coordinator – Bennie Bridges (re-elected)
National Fair Practices/AA Coordinator – Jenny Salvez (re-elected)

District 14

National Vice President – Dwight R. Bowman
Women's Advisory Coordinator – Yvette Martin-Gross (re-elected)
National Fair Practices/AA Coordinator – Marilyn Wiley (re-elected)

Union Plus Awards Scholarships to AFGE Winners

Vester Howard III, Christopher M. Pesto and Alice M. Todd have been selected to receive 2005 Union Plus scholarship awards. Howard, child of AFGE Local 538 member Shirley Flynn, was awarded \$1,000. Pesto, child of AFGE Local 1923 member Catherine Pesto, was awarded \$4,000. Todd, a member of Local 2022, was awarded \$750.

They are among 107 students from 37 AFL-CIO unions who have been awarded \$150,000 in scholarships from the Union Plus Scholarship program.

Tough competition

The students selected for this year's AFGE Union Plus awards come from diverse backgrounds and union affiliations, and have varied goals and accomplishments. Representatives from the American Association of Community Colleges, the American Association of State Colleges and Universities, the National Association of Independent Colleges and Universities and the United Negro College Fund judged the applications. According to the judges, the high caliber of this year's applications made for a very competitive selection process.

Christopher Pesto's dreams

"Ever since I was a small child, I have been fascinated by the way things work," says Christopher Pesto, who will pursue his interests in engineering and physics.

For Pesto, that curiosity extends even beyond machines and quantum mechanics; he's just as interested in the way in which unions and government work.

Pesto has served as a federal page, working on the floor of the U.S. House of Representatives, and provided assistance at a Maryland polling station during the 2004 presidential election.

Vester Howard's dreams

Described as a charismatic, courageous and engaging student, Vester Howard, who is disabled and uses a powered wheelchair, has overcome many obstacles posed by his physical challenges.

"Everything my classmates take for granted is a challenge for me," he says. Howard is planning to attend Rider University in the fall. Coming from a union family, he understands how unions speak for workers. "That's why I want to major in communications," he explains.

Alice Todd's dreams

Alice Todd is a medical assistant who works in the emergency room for the 101st Army at Fort Campbell, Ky., and a member of Local 2022.

"I am a mother, grandmother, wife of a retired Navy man—and now a student in college," she says. "I have always motivated my children, and taught them that they can accomplish anything with a good education. Now that my youngest child is in high school, and the oldest is in college, they motivate me in attaining my goal, my dream, of becoming a registered nurse."

\$2 million awarded

Since 1992, the Union Plus Scholarship program has awarded nearly \$2 million to union members or members of their families who want to begin or continue their secondary education. Members of more than 1,200 families have received Union Plus scholarships.

The Union Plus Scholarship awards are presented annually, offered through the Union Plus Education Foundation with funding provided by Household Credit Card Services, issuer of the Union Plus Credit Card. The program is open to members of unions that participate in any Union Plus program, their spouses and dependent children.

Individuals must be accepted into an accredited college or university, community college or recognized technical or trade school at the time the award is issued. Members do not have to purchase any Union Plus program product or participate in any Union Plus program to apply.

2006 applications

Applications for the 2006 awards will be available in September 2005. The application deadline is Jan. 31, 2006. To request an application, send a postcard with your name, return address, telephone number, and a sentence stating that you are an AFGE member to: Union Plus Education Foundation, c/o Union Privilege, P.O. Box 34800, Washington, D.C. 20043-4800.

Recipients' names for the 2006 program will be announced May 31, 2006. Due to the high volume of applications, only winners will receive notification.



AFGE Benefit Mailings

Offering Value, Protecting Privacy

The AFGE Union Plus benefits are designed to help union members and their families. With a wide range of some 40 benefits, including the AFGE Credit Card, Accidental Death Insurance and Mortgage programs, many members save as much as their annual dues by using just one or two of the programs.

The Union Plus programs are endorsed by AFGE because they offer superior value, unique benefits and solid service to members.

Union Privilege, founded by the AFL-CIO in 1986, creates these benefits using the combined negotiating power of 13 million members of AFL-CIO unions. Union Privilege is governed by a board of directors made up of union leaders, including AFGE National President John Gage.

The Union Plus programs are endorsed by AFGE because they offer superior value, unique benefits and solid service to members. However, AFGE members can't take advantage of these programs unless they know about them. That's

why some of the AFGE benefit programs are promoted by mailing offers directly to members' homes from time to time.

The union does not sell our membership list to any outside third party. AFGE does, however, provide Union Privilege, our benefits provider, with the membership list in order to make information about these AFGE-endorsed programs available to members.

To ensure these mailings happen in a way that protects members' privacy, AFGE works closely with Union Privilege. This

means, for example, that in those instances in which mailings to members are the best way to let them know of the service or product being offered, AFGE gets contractual assurances that the membership list will be handled with the utmost care and security—and is used only with the union's prior approval. And we make sure that member information is never used for any purpose other than offering the specific product or service the union intended to provide.

Members who prefer not to receive any mail offers for the AFGE Union Plus benefits should send their first, middle and last name, full address including zip code and telephone number to:

Attn: Marketing/DNM
Union Privilege

Suite 300, 1125 15th ST, NW, Washington, DC 20005

Union Privilege also reviews marketing materials to make sure they are understandable, monitors customer service calls to ensure members are treated well and features a dedicated union member advocate to handle member concerns.

To learn more about all of the money-saving benefits available only to AFGE members visit www.afge.org.

Pomp and Circumstance for AFGE

Helping to preside at the 2005 commencement exercises of the National Labor College in Silver Spring, Maryland, was AFGE National President John Gage, shown here with graduate and AFGE member Marion N. Taylor, National Labor College President Susan J. Schurman and John Sweeney, president of the AFL-CIO.



At Your Service:

Field Services Legal Rights Team

When AFGE members are the victims of unfair disciplinary or adverse actions, they'll find four dedicated new advocates on their side: the legal rights attorneys of the Field Services Department (FSD).

Andres Grajales, Angelia Wade, Stephen Goldsmith and Evelyn Shipske joined AFGE Field Services, the department headed by veteran AFGE attorney **Joseph Henderson**, in January 2005 to take on the cases of AFGE members who have been subject to unfair disciplinary or adverse actions such as a suspension, demotion or termination at the agency where they work.

Two of the attorneys work in the field—Goldsmith in the San Antonio, Texas, offices of the 10th District, and Shipske in the 12th District's offices in Escondido, California. Wade and Grajales, who we profile in this month's Headquarters Spotlight, work at AFGE national headquarters in Washington, D.C.

"Like the attorneys in the field, we represent members in a broad variety of cases," says Grajales.

There are several criteria for the type of cases that the Wade and Grajales will take on, the most important being a case's potential to result in back-pay awards for AFGE members.

"Once we have a complaint," says Wade, "we investigate it. When we validate the merit of a case, we arbitrate that case on the member's behalf." In some instances, the attorneys may represent an entire local.

Cases that Wade and Grajales handle are sometimes heard before the Merit Systems Protection Board (MSPB), an independent quasi-judicial agency established to protect members of the federal civil service against prohibited personnel practices and abuses by agency management. However, Wade and Grajales say that AFGE members often have a better chance of success with arbitration.

"Arbitrators have much greater



Kurt Gallagher for AFGE

authority to mitigate a penalty and to award an AFGE member greater relief," says Grajales.

"Arbitrators tend to be fairer, and the MSPB tends to apply whatever rule they have in place much more stringently than an arbitrator would apply it," says Wade.

The FSD attorneys can also provide some assistance with cases involving the Federal Labor Relations Authority (FLRA), an independent agency responsible for administering the labor-management relations program for Federal employees.

"We don't litigate anything directly to the FLRA," says Grajales. "Where we might encounter the FLRA is if there's an appeal to an arbitrator's award on a case that involves a suspension of less than 14 days or some other type of action."

Other cases that go before the FLRA are usually disciplinary actions and entitlements to overtime or night differential pay.

For Wade and Grajales, the seeds for pursuing this type of work were planted while they were students. AFGE gave them both the chance for those ambitions to blossom.

Angie Wade's interest in employment law was piqued when she worked for the D.C. Employment Justice Center while she was a student at the George Washington

School of Law in Washington, D.C.

"I enjoy helping someone fight for what they are entitled to—or to keep what they already have," she says.

Andy Grajales has never shied from legal combat. After graduating from Fordham University School of Law in New York, he served in Brooklyn as a criminal prosecutor. While studying for a LLM (Master of Law) degree at American University School of Law in Washington, D.C., he pursued his interest in employment law.

"I like a good fight and it's great when you get to do the right thing," says Grajales.

When they are not helping AFGE members fight unfair employment practices, Wade and Grajales try to squeeze in a little down time away from the office.

Wade is movie buff and loves to travel. In fact, before joining AFGE, Wade's work took her to a clerkship in St. Croix for the Chief Judge of the Territorial Court of the Virgin Islands. In Baltimore, she is active in her church's youth ministry and also serves as a Girl Scout leader. For Grajales, his favorite hobby is doting on his one-year-old daughter, Sophia, the pride and joy of the legal rights attorney and his wife, Michelle.

For more information on the FSD and their services, call (202) 639-6406.