SUPPORT STAFF ASSOCIATION

SVSUSSA@GMAIL.COM ✳ SVSU-SSA.ORG ✳ @SVSUSUPPORTSTAFF

MEET JEREMIAH

Part of our hardworking maintenance team, Jeremiah has been with SVSU for 14 years.

Read more on page 2

IN THIS ISSUE:

2 Rickert Report
Member Corner

3 Community Resources
Upcoming Events
Weingarten Rights
Work Anniversaries

4 Health Insurance
Scholarship Recipients
Picnic Pics

EVENT SPOTLIGHT

A GREAT DAY FOR A PICNIC

June 17 was the annual SSA picnic. Food was catered by Pat's Food Center in Freeland, boards were set out so people could show off their cornhole skills, and the '5 O'clock Somewhere' PAC basket piqued a lot of people's interest, ultimately being won by Beth Nordstrom in Facilities. The gas card was won by Kathleen Chantaca-Kubczak in a blind drawing at the end of the picnic.

All told, we fed over 70 union members, watched John Altergott show off his hula hooping skills (on page 4), and won a lot of prizes from the MEA table's Plinko game. If you missed it this year, we'll see you at the 2027 picnic!

2026 SSA Executive Board Retreat

Grievance Reports
July 2026
Grievances

- In Process: 1
- Arbitration: 0
- Withdrawn: 2

STAY UP TO DATE

SCAN ME

RICKERT REPORT

What We Do, Why We Do It

Every once in a while, I hear a question that deserves an honest answer.

"Why does the union seem to protect employees who aren't doing their job?"

I understand why it can look that way. In reality, the union's job isn't to defend poor performance. Our job is to make sure the contract is followed fairly and consistently for every employee.
I'll admit, I've wrestled with that question myself. Recently, Brent and I were talking about an issue, and I found myself wondering whether it was worth pursuing when performance concerns were also part of the situation. Brent reminded me of something important: we weren't just talking about one employee. We were talking about protecting every member—and future members—who may one day face the same situation. We were protecting the contract that every employee depends on. That simple reminder changed the way I looked at it. He's right. We aren't just protecting today's employee—we're protecting the rights of every employee who comes after them. members, who may one day face the same situation. We were protecting the contract that every employee depends on. That simple reminder changed the way I looked at it.

The University has every right to address performance issues, and employees are expected to do their jobs. The union's responsibility is different. We make sure the process outlined in our contract is followed because today's exception can become tomorrow's past practice. If contract language is ignored once, it becomes easier to ignore it again, even when the employee involved has done nothing wrong.

The contract isn't there just for the easy cases. It's there for the difficult ones. Every protection we have exists because someone before us insisted that the language mattered. If we only enforce the contract when it's popular, we slowly lose the protections that generations of members worked to negotiate.

At the end of the day, protecting the contract means protecting every member. Those with years of outstanding service, those just starting their careers, and those who may one day need the fairness our agreement promises.

Because someday, any one of us could be the employee depending on those protections.

In Solidarity,

deb Rickert
SSA President

MEMBER CORNER

Meet Jeremiah Franks

Q: What's something people might not know about the work you do?
A: There is always a variety of different work to do around campus. One day, I could be working on something like batteries for a sink or a light being out, and the next I could be helping hang art for an exhibition.

Q: What do you enjoy most about being part of the SVSU community or the union?
A: I've come to appreciate the fact that the Cardinal Community will step up to help one of their own when the situation arises. This is something that I learned firsthand from an event a little over 4 years ago, where my family was displaced just after the new year. The support helped us to quickly find a footing while other things were ongoing.

Q: Do you have any fun facts or interests you'd like to share about yourself?
A: I enjoy travelling. I've travelled cross country twice and even tried my hand at a you-tuber style vehicle revival, where I got a truck back on the road and within a week took it on a 900-mile trip by myself. I've also enjoyed being able to see my son's reactions to seeing new places as we travel.

Eventually all things fall into place. Until then, laugh at the confusion, live for the moments, and know everything happens for a reason.
—Albert Schweitzer

UNION REMINDER

Know Your Rights - Weingarten Rights

The US Supreme Court has ruled that the National Labor Relations Act gives workers the right to request union representation during investigatory interviews by supervisors, security personnel, and other managerial staff.

An investigatory interview occurs if: 1) management questions you to obtain information; and 2) you have a reasonable apprehension that your answers could be used as a basis for discipline or other adverse action.

You must ask for union representation either at the beginning of or during the course of the interview. Management does not have to remind you of this right.

If your request is refused and management continues asking questions, you may refuse an answer. Your employer is guilty of an unfair labor practice and charges may be filed.

"If my responses to your questions could lead to my being disciplined or terminated, or adversely affect my personal working conditions, I respectfully request that you summon my union representative. Until my representative arrives, I choose not to answer any questions."

UPCOMING EVENTS

SVSU Day at the Detroit Tigers
Sunday, July 26 @ 1:40p

Spend a day at the ballpark with the campus community. The special ticket package includes a Tigers branded SVSU hoodie. Scan the QR code to see available tickets.

Baseball Game Night
Friday, August 14 @ 7:05p

Join other MEA members for the Great Lakes Loons against the South Bend Cubs. Tickets are $12 per person. Scan the QR code to register.
Sponsored by MESSA, MEA, and MEA Financial Services

SVSU Night at the Detroit City FC
Saturday, August 15 @ 7:00p

Cheer on the Detroit City FC as they play against Loudoun United FC at Keyworth. Each ticket purchased through SVSU's link comes with a Cardinals x Detroit City shirt. Scan the QR code to see available tickets.

WORK ANNIVERSARIES!

38	Keith Preuter	4	Kimmie Bromberg
27	Michael Liss	4	Lynne O'Laughlin
21	Benjamin Moe	4	Anna St. Clair
15	Kelly Albin	2	David Nadolny

COMMUNITY RESOURCES

2-1-1

mi211.org provides access to a database of over 27,000 programs for Michiganders.
Search online, dial 2-1-1 (844-875-9211), or text your ZIP code to 898211 to get started.

HEALTH INSURANCE

2027 MESSA ABC, Balance+ Increase

The IRS announced that the minimum deductibles for HSA-eligible health plans will increase in 2027 to $1,750 for individuals and $3,500 for families. As a result, in-network deductibles for MESSA ABC 1 and Balance+ plans will increase to the same amounts next year. ABC 2.5 will increase to $2,550 for individuals and $5,100 for families. There are no deductible changes for ABC 2 or ABC 3.

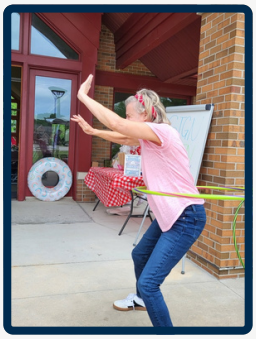
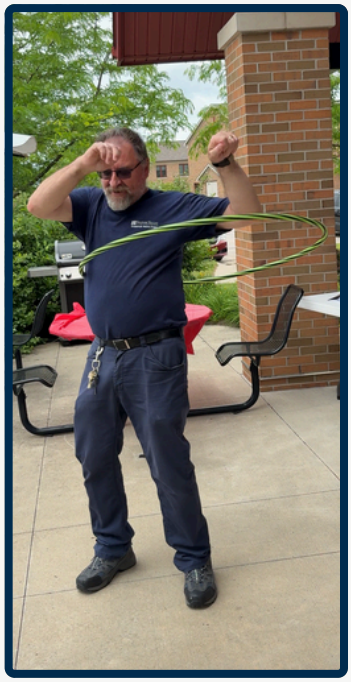
The IRS also raised the maximum amount individuals can contribute to a health savings account for the 2027 calendar year. A person with individual coverage may contribute up to $4,500 to their HSA, while a person with family coverage will be able to contribute up to $9,000.

Those 55 and older can still contribute $1,000 a year to their own HSA as a catch-up contribution.

Scan the QR code to read the full update from the IRS.

CONGRATULATIONS!

Danielle Savage
Vincent Karpovich
Jessica Klein
Kaylee Weiss
McKenzie Storch
Brandon Manke
Beverly Culpepper
Anna St. Clair
Sophia Ried
Haleigh Mattson
Cody Ruiz
Doni Spencer
Kyle Weiss
Cole Yaros

2026-2027 Gloria J. and Douglas E. Wagener Scholarship Recipients

Summer Picnic 2026