



Solidarity Now!

Communication Workers of America

Local 4730, Bloomington and Northwest Campuses, Indiana University

Poplars Building, Room 331, (812) 855-8508

<http://www.indiana.edu/~cwa/>

December, 2011
Volume 27 Number 4

An Open Letter from CWA Local 4730 President, Bryce Smedley

Dear Support Staff,

I am honored and proud to be a part of CWA 4730 Local Union at Indiana University. It has been a pleasure serving on the CWA Executive Board in the capacity as President. We have a lot to be proud of as a local union, and we have accomplished so much for our fellow support staff here on the Bloomington campus and IUN in Gary. I am privileged to get a vote of confidence in continuing to serve as President and take this responsibility very seriously. The right to organize and remain engaged on issues that directly impact support staff at Indiana University is at risk if we don't stand together and fight back.

Having an organized union on campus allows us to engage in critical discourse and freedom to stand up, speak up and challenge the status quo. Let's be extremely honest about what challenges face support staff workers at Indiana University. Many of us are underpaid and earn less than a livable wage in our respective communities. IU Northwest support staff earn some of the lowest wages in the entire statewide Indiana University education system. This is unacceptable! Support staff at Indiana University face increased health care costs, are hit with higher fees for employee benefits, and are forced to purchase expensive parking permits which increase each year. If this wasn't bad enough, our top administrators receive huge pay increases, while support staff are stuck with only a 1.5% increase—not even enough to offset the increasing costs placed on the lowest income earners on campus.

Enough is enough. It is time we as a community of support staff stand together and fight for livable wages, fair and transparent policy in the workplace, and push back against the ongoing increasing costs associated with working at Indiana University. This union believes in the American worker and the respect the working class deserves. Respect is given in how we treat each other, how we compensate our employees, and how we recognize the sacrifices employees make each and every day for our faculty, students and our higher education system in Indiana. Will you join this fight on campus and fight for what is right and deserved, or will you merely accept the reality of expensive health care, lower wages, and a silenced voice? Your job, your rights, your future is truly in your hands! Stand up for the 99% on campus, because enough is enough!

In Solidarity,

Bryce Smedley
CWA 4730 President

20% of Ballots Disqualified

by
Jane Goldsmith

When an election is held for our local union, any member can watch the ballots being counted. At the last local election, I decided to observe the Election Committee count the ballots. There are strict rules to be followed every step of the way. Some of the rules are set by federal law and some are procedural, set by the national union. It was an interesting process. The only people who could touch the ballots were members of the Election Committee. I went with them to the post office and watched them remove the ballots from the post office box. I observed them removing all the ballots from the tote and ensuring it was empty. I watched the Election Committee read the name of the member off the front of the envelope, verify that a member sent it, open the envelope and remove the envelope containing the ballot. They put the ballot envelopes aside and mixed up their order. Only after all member names had been verified and envelopes opened did the committee open the inner envelopes containing the ballots. There was no way they knew which outer envelope had held which ballot.

I think what surprised me the most was that 20% of the ballots had to be disqualified. Yes – 20%! And for the silliest of reasons. The members who sent them in did not put their name and address in the upper left hand corner on the front of the envelope. In other words, they didn't put their return address on them. Since the Election Committee had no way of knowing who had sent in the ballot, they could not verify that it was a member who had sent it in. So the envelope – unopened – was set to one side and the contents were never removed.

This was a very close election. I wonder – and the candidates do too – whether the election would have come out differently if some of our members had only followed directions. But we'll never know.



LOCAL 4730
Communication Workers
of America, AFL-CIO

I hereby request full membership, and all the benefits that go with it, in Communications Workers of America (C.W.A) Local 4730. I authorize with this form my membership and the deduction of dues from my pay as established by C.W.A.

Name (print) _____

University ID # _____

Department _____

Work phone _____

Work address _____

Room # _____

E-mail address _____

Home address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Home phone _____

Signature _____

Date _____

Received by _____

Please return this form to CWA Local 4730,
400 East 7th Street, Poplars Bldg., Room 331,
Bloomington, IN 47405

IUN Mutual Gains Discusses Reclassification

by Mary Hackett and Naomi Palagi

The Mutual Gains Committee at IU Northwest met on October 28. The main item discussed was reclassification. Feedback from staff indicates there is a lot of confusion from both the staff and their supervisors about the procedure for requesting a reclassification of a position. A phrase commonly heard from supervisors is, "I can't do anything about that; your pay is determined by the union." The following two scenarios to request pay increases were discussed:

1) Annual wage increases (if any) are determined by the IU Trustees. The union and university representatives meet in the spring to negotiate how to distribute Trustee approved wage increases.

2) Reclassification – the process begins with either the employee or the supervisor requesting a review of the employee's job duties. A revised description of the job responsibilities is written and submitted to Human Resources where a determination is made as to whether the revised description warrants a reclassification. If the position is reclassified to a higher pay grade, an approved description is returned to the supervisor. Then the supervisor may request a salary increase on a designated Salary Approval form. This salary increase request must be approved by the director or dean and then submitted to the Human Resources Department, who will forward the request to the CFO and Chancellor for approval. It was also noted that not every position description revision warrants a reclassification.

The question was raised if supervisors could simply add duties to a position without revising the job description; or whether they could actually change existing job descriptions without following the procedures outlined above. The IUN Human Resources Director, Carolyn Hartley, stated that the position description should accurately reflect the assigned job duties of the position. Vice-Chancellor Pellicciotti and Hartley offered to bring up the topic of the correct process for reclassification at the November meeting of the IU Northwest Council. CWA Local 4730 VP Audrea Davis has already reported positive feedback from the discussion that occurred at the meeting, in which Pellicciotti and Hartley provided information to the council, and Chancellor Lowe reportedly expressed support for reclassification as an important vehicle for deserved compensation. It was emphasized that either employee or supervisor may initiate this process.

Finally on this topic, within the Mutual Gains meeting, the question was raised about the possibility of equity increases. The response was that these cannot be requested, as we are under a salary increase freeze and have been since 2008. Despite requests from Human Resources and the Chancellor for this every year, it has not been granted for the past three years.

Other items on the Mutual Gains agenda were the promised fall 2011 upgrade to synchronous time, which has apparently been pushed back by developers to spring 2012. Also a short discussion on the new Events Policy took place, and how best to notify staff about particular events that either are or are not eligible for approval for attendance without clocking out of TIME. (find policy here: http://www.iun.edu/~nwadmin/adminnw/campus_policies/Campus%20Events%20TI...) The originator of an event should include a statement on any email notification of upcoming events.

We encourage CWA members and CWA-covered employees to consider a request for reclassification if they feel they have been given additional duties which may merit it. It is exciting to have a positive administrative response to this issue, which can potentially provide a better source of equity and compensation to staff members, as it has been the source of much confusion and bad feeling in the past. Additionally, as many supervisors are not fully aware of the process, employees may direct them to the Human Resources Office, or to the CWA Policies Manual, section 9 at <http://www.indiana.edu/~uhrs/policies/ss/contents.html>

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	Get Your Social Network On!	
	Look for us on Facebook and join!!	
	<http://www.facebook.com/group.php?gid=47515380185>	
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Eight Questions for the CWA Local 4730 President For the Future of the Local

Given the difficulties we've had as a local to elect a president, what changes and measures would you like to see in place before the next election to avoid similar problems?

There is never any election that does not have its problems. This was actually the first time that our local has had an election for the position of president. (And we had an excellent voter turnout—the highest voter participation yet!)

As a local we should strive to have more elections in the future. In order to do this, I would encourage us to establish a permanent Election Committee that looks at previous mistakes and makes recommendations for future elections. Democratic elections should be a key characteristic of our organization. We should think about ways to make voting easier and more accessible as our local grows.

What measures should we take to increase the number of dues paying members? What priority do you advocate?

We must grow our membership numbers. Right now the E-board is developing a strategy. More mailings, recruitment events and the hiring of an intern with a focus on recruitment are ways that I think we can tackle this. During the past year we have held multiple events to recruit new staff members into our local. I think we should continue this—it creates time for us to visit and get to know one another, and can be a welcoming way to grow membership.

When someone asks you what relevance our local has for the members it represents, how do you respond?

We have a lot of relevance. Our members serve on university committees appointed by the IU President and Provost. We represent staff in wage bargaining—in regard to its distribution. Our union also represents, develops and defends good employee policies which impact support staff working environments every single day. Our interests are our staff, our rights, and the ability to help those in need through our union stewards.

Do you feel that the rights and obligations of the President and E-Board should be spelled out in more detail?

We need to do a better job letting our members know of all the hard work we do behind the scenes. We have some of the most committed, hard-working union members at Indiana University campuses. The hard work being done by our members is not always realized.

What do you advocate to enhance communication between the President and Board on the one hand and the membership we serve on the other (dues-paying or otherwise)?

Communication can always be improved. We need to send meeting minutes out to our general members within a few days after the members meeting.

What do you think are going to be our toughest challenges for the coming years and how should we plan to meet them?

Recruitment, recruitment and more recruitment. We will continue to organize events, reach out to our colleagues, and we will lead by example at Indiana University. But the E-Board cannot and should not do this alone. We need every member to step up and contribute ideas and time to important projects on campus. For us to grow we must continue to advocate for issues that matter.

What would you suggest to increase union visibility at IU Northwest?

We need to start having more events at IU Northwest to attract more people to our local.



Supporting and Advocating for Working Moms at Indiana University!

by Andi Gitelson

The Indiana University Working Moms (IUWM) group was established through the Office for Women's Affairs in May, 2010. This group provides programming, networking, and support for working mothers who are members of the IU faculty and staff, with an emphasis on fostering social connections and providing relevant educational and professional development opportunities.

We envision the Indiana University Bloomington community as one where working moms can perform to their fullest potential by exposure to both personal and professional development specifically relevant to their environment at work and at home. Our hope is by establishing a positive work life balance among IU faculty and staff, along with opportunities for service to peers and the community, a healthy and productive professional and personal lifestyle will develop and be maintained among working moms.

To achieve our mission IUWM will strive to achieve the following goals:

1. Establish and maintain a structural organization that will work towards addressing the needs of IU faculty and staff working moms, and for programming and resource distribution useful in doing so.
2. Disseminate resources and firsthand stories related to working moms, parenting and policy-related topics.
3. Foster relationships with other related individuals (student moms, single parents, etc.) and organizations and provide a presence on the Indiana University Bloomington campus and Bloomington community by collaborating with other women and organizations in need of relevant resources and support related to work-life balance and all stages of parenting.
4. Develop a campus-wide mentoring option for faculty and staff who are or plan to be working moms.
5. Advocate for parenting related concerns and policy issues brought to IUWM's attention by our participants and other campus or community organizations.
6. Research other possible organizations across the country, similar to IUWM, in order to continuously grow and develop our organization and meet the needs of participants.

Interested in getting involved?

Advocacy and Service Committee

Want to be on the front line advocating for working moms at IU and participating in service projects on campus and in the community? This is the group to join!

Laura Guthrie Eads, Chair – Advocacy Committee, Email: laguthri@indiana.edu

Event Planning Committee

Interested in helping plan our events like our monthly lunches, conference sessions, social gatherings, book club, and more? Then this is the group for you!

Amanda Peterson, Chair – Event Planning Committee, Email: amkhoff@indiana.edu

Marketing and Communications Committee

Do you like to help spread the word about great opportunities and resources like IUWM? Or perhaps you enjoy marketing design and communications?

Theresa Hitchcock, Chair - Marketing & Communications Comm., Email: thehitch@indiana.edu

Resources Committee

Do you enjoy researching and updating information, resources, events, and more? This is where you want to be!

Carly Friedman, Office: Department of Chemistry, Email: carfried@indiana.edu

To join our listserv: Email: iuwm@indiana.edu

CWA Local 4730 Calendar

January

Thursday, January 19, 2012

Members Meeting
Poplars Bldg., Room 185
5:30-6:30 P.M.

Executive Board Meeting
Poplars Bldg., Room 185
6:30-7:00 P.M.

February

Thursday, February 16, 2012

Members Meeting
Poplars Bldg., Room 185
5:30-6:30 P.M.

Executive Board Meeting
Poplars Bldg., Room 185
6:30-7:00 P.M.

March

Thursday, March 22, 2012

Members Meeting
Poplars Bldg., Room 185
5:30-6:30 P.M.

Executive Board Meeting
Poplars Bldg., Room 185
6:30-7:00 P.M.

For updates on union events as they happen, please check our online calendar at <http://www.indiana.edu/~cwa>.

Join Now!
Membership form on page two

Poplars 331
Indiana University
Bloomington, IN 47405
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