

December 2023

CWA's Worker Power Newsletter

CWA

Dear Fellow CWA Member,

Welcome to the first edition of CWA's Worker Power Newsletter! This brand-new monthly bulletin will provide you with news and information on issues workers care about—from how to save money during the holidays to the latest developments in the labor movement.

CWA represents a diverse membership, with workers in industries from telecom to healthcare, from education to municipal government, transportation, and beyond. But many issues impact us all as union members, no matter where we work. Without the right to organize and bargain collectively, we lose our voice on the job. Without a strong, worker-focused National Labor Relations Board to back us up, we cannot enforce our contracts. And that's not to mention bread-and-butter issues like supporting our families. **We'll give you updates on these issues and how CWA is building union power in the workplace.**

We hope you find this newsletter interesting and useful! We'd love to hear what you think about it. You can email us at cwad1@cwa-union.org to give your feedback and suggest issues you'd like to see covered in future editions.

Thank you for being a loyal and active CWA member!

Sincerely,



Dennis G. Trainor Vice President,
CWA District 1



MAKING YOUR MONEY GO FURTHER

Higher costs for everyday items are still impacting working people. Here are some tips from AARP to help maximize your monthly budget:

Reduce grocery costs by planning your weekly meals and creating your shopping list based on the plan. You can save even more by planning on Fridays when many stores post specials for the following week.

Reduce energy costs by installing motion detectors for lights and fans to manage energy usage automatically. In addition to lowering your energy bill, motion detectors enhance home security.

Reduce monthly subscription costs by rotating streaming services every few months. Binge your favorite shows on one service, cancel, and switch to a different service to cut costs and ensure a constant stream of fresh content.

Reduce credit card costs by asking your credit card company to lower or eliminate your fees. According to a LendingTree study, consumers who did so had a 9 in 10 chance of success.



Source: AARP, 7/12/2022



CWA

A HUGE YEAR FOR UNIONS!

Workers stepped up, fought hard, and won historic victories this year. Despite a deck stacked against us, hundreds of thousands of union members came together to build a movement with more momentum than we've seen in decades. **CWA members and other unions across the country are winning major fights that will directly impact our lives, our work, and our families.**



Striking and Winning

A wave of strikes rolled through the country this year as the United Auto Workers, the Screen Actors Guild, and the Writers Guild shut down the auto and entertainment industries. All of them won big—the UAW even reversed a plant closing in Belvidere, IL. **The Teamsters came within hours of striking at UPS before winning a historic deal, and in the week following, the online job site Indeed reported a 50% spike in searches for UPS jobs.** This proves yet again, despite what the bosses try to tell us, that people really *do* want to work—when they're compensated fairly.

Sources: Quartz, 8/9/2023; UAW, 11/20/2023

“We're a union family through and through. No one wants to have to go on strike, but as union members, we do what we must to win the contracts we deserve. You only get what you're willing to fight for—my kids learned that growing up by coming with me to the Verizon picket lines. This year, I was proud to walk on my daughter Sierra's picket line with her fellow SAG-AFTRA members. **Because as long as we stand together, there will always be a next generation of union members behind us.**”



—Joe Mayhew, Secretary/Treasurer of CWA Local 1103

Funding Healthcare Centers

Fresh off the heels of our historic 2021 Safe Staffing legislation to protect NYS healthcare workers, **we won a \$500 million increase in state funding for so-called “safety net and distressed hospitals,” and a 7.5% increase in Medicaid reimbursement rates for hospitals and long-term care facilities.** This represents a huge boost for hospitals that have been struggling since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic and should help bring some relief to our healthcare worker members. It's not enough, but it's a start.

Sources: NYSNA Press Release, 6/29/2023; CWA District 1, accessed 12/7/2023; CWA Local 1118, accessed 12/18/2023



Union Membership Rises

U.S. workers are organizing in droves. In CWA District 1 alone, we've welcomed new members from tech companies like Activision Blizzard and TCGPlayer, nonprofits like the National Audubon Society and the Trevor Project, universities like Fordham and the SUNY College of Environmental Science and Forestry, and more.

Expanding Broadband Access

CWA's “Broadband Brigade” fought to ensure that the **billions of dollars of state and federal funding for broadband buildout go to unionized workers.** In November, the NYS “ConnectALL” office issued guidelines that include our recommendations:

- Requirement for “fiber-to-the-home” projects with few exceptions
- High-road employers with a directly employed workforce (not subcontractors!) and strong “in-house” training are heavily preferred
- Bidders must publicly share their workforce plans

We also helped Verizon win a separate \$11.1 million grant to build out broadband in underserved areas around Syracuse, creating 35 full-time jobs.

Sources: CWA, 8/31/2023; CWA District 1, 11/7/2023; CWA District 1, 1/31/2023

“The fees used to be the entirety of our GSEU members' paychecks. Now we can put that money into savings and prepare for future emergencies. We are proud of winning the fee abolition, and we are also grateful for the other CWA workers who lobbied and fought with us to make history!”

—Shirley Jin, Organizer with Albany GSEU-CWA Local 1104



Sources: CWA District 1 Press Release, 5/4/2023; CWA District 1, 10/11/2023

CWA Local 1104 members in the State University of New York (SUNY) system have been fighting for years to eliminate the unbearable fees they've been required to pay to their employers—some amounting to as much as 15% of their salaries. In the past two years, members have successfully fought to eliminate fees at several individual universities, and **this year we persuaded the NYS legislature to begin a total phase-out of these fees.** That's millions of dollars going directly into our members' pockets.

Eliminating Fees for SUNY Workers