St. Louis Mailers Join CWA’s Fight for $15

The fight for $15 started in 2013 with a few hundred fast food workers in New York City, striking for $15 an hour and union rights.

Today, it’s an international movement in over 300 cities on six continents of fast food workers, home health aides, child care teachers, airport workers, adjunct professors, retail employees, and now mailers extras at the St. Louis Post Dispatch.

St. Louis Mailers 3/CWA Local 14620 joined CWA and other allied organizations in the ‘Fight for $15’ movement. The members fought for and won a new wage of $15 per hour for part-time mailers extras at the St. Louis Post Dispatch.

The new contract will ensure that 65 mailers extras will see a $2.50 per hour raise with the new max hourly rate of $15.00 per hour. As well, mailers extras will reach $12.50 per hour after four years of service with a .50 per hour increase annually, until they reach the new maximum.

Smith, who is the first African American to hold the office of President at M-3, knows a little bit about what these mailers extras were fighting for. He has worked for the Post Dispatch for 22 years and was a part-time mailer for a good portion of his tenure.

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CWA on STRIKE at Verizon

Nearly 40,000 Communications Workers of America (CWA) members and International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) employed by Verizon and Verizon Wireless are on strike against corporate greed.

Verizon workers from Massachusetts to Virginia are on strike because management refuses to back off its demands that would destroy good jobs.

Union representatives say that Verizon executives have been pushing to offshore jobs to the Philippines, Mexico, and other locations as well as to outsource work to low-wage contractors and transfer workers away from their families for months at a time.

Wherever and whenever possible, I expect all of our Sector members to join with them on picket lines and visit them on Facebook and other social media platforms and send them words of solidarity. Going on strike is never an easy decision, and staying strong against corporate greed is imperative. Knowing that we are all in this together and we have each other’s back always has a positive effect.”

—Dan Wasser, PPMWS President

Despite making record profits over the last three years—$39 billion—Verizon is looking to gut job security protections, contract out more work, shutter call centers and offshore the jobs, and freeze pensions at 30 years of service. The company has said that if the Unions don’t agree to all of their givebacks, they insist on the right to transfer any employee anywhere in the footprint for two months at a time.

As well, the company has refused to bargain any improvements in wages, benefits or working conditions for Verizon Wireless retail workers who organized into CWA in 2014.

CWA and IBEW had been in contract negotiations for 10-months leading up to the decision to strike. During the last
CWA and the Fight for $15

The Fight for $15 movement is centered around the idea that every American deserves to make a livable wage and have union representation should they choose. At the heart of the movement is the desire to empower workers to raise their voices and unite together for better wages and decent working conditions.

Since the campaign began more than three-years ago, CWA has supported the Fight for $15 movement. In April, CWA activists joined thousands of workers for the biggest Fight for $15 day of action to date. In 300 U.S. cities and 40 countries, workers flooded the streets in solidarity for what they rightly deserve—$15 an hour and a union.

On the eve of Tax Day, workers put a spotlight on the wealthy corporations that are ripping off working families.

"I'm very proud of what the negotiating committee and the workers at the Post Dispatch achieved with this contract," said Sidney Typographical President Matthew Theodore. "But this year, everyone was done with recent negotiations, so instead we discussed company issues facing the workforce, our successes and failures at past negotiations and how upcoming technologies is going to impact our workforce."

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The meetings began years ago, when the manufacturing plants were part of the WestTab brands and then as part of the MeadWestvaco company. What originally began with 16 represented locals has now dwindled to four local unions participating in the meeting, according to Dan Strauss, executive vice president at Sidney. Leaders this year came from the Sidney local, a Blair, Penn., facility represented by the Steelworkers, a Convo facility in Williamsburg, Penn., also represented by the Steelworkers, and from a Hilroy facility in Canada.

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"I think the meetings are great," said Strauss. "The company doesn’t like them. We exchange information prior to negotiations that ensure that we know what kind of financial packages are being offered at the various locations. It definitely helps."

Together, the four locals represent over 1,000 workers at the various locations.

The unions representing workers at ACCO Brands’ plants in the U.S. met this year at the CWA Typo 81 Sidney Local 14164 facility. The annual meeting is a chance for the union leaders to tour facilities, view and discuss up-and-coming technologies and to discuss issues facing their membership.

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Annual WestTab Council Regional Meeting Gives Union Locals Chance to Exchange Ideas, Prep for Future

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Representative Reports

**Chicago Typographical Union**

CWA Local 4250/CTU16 composing room and editorial units are in negotiations with Alliance Printing in Chicago. The union and management have exchanged proposals and have reached several tentative agreements. However, we do have some major issues with the composing room contract. The company has proposed to delete the supplemental agreement containing job guarantees and proposed changes in layoff language. The Union’s position is the supplemental agreement is ongoing. We are scheduling additional bargaining dates. Also at Local 4250/CTU16, the Union has filed a grievance with Cook County due to changes to the paid lunch and break periods allowed to employees in the Bureau of Administration. The Union is taking the grievance to the next step.

(L-R) Michelle Tovo, VP PPMW, and workers Mary Sheeran, and Martin Burciga.

**Central Illinois Typographical Union**

Central Illinois Typographical Union #177/14406 met with the new owner of Apple Press in Peru, IL, and negotiated a new three-year bargaining agreement. Two new members signed on at this location as well.

**Waterville**

Waterville Typographical Union 643/CWA 14115 remains in negotiations with MTM Acquisition, Inc. /b/a Kennebec Journal (MaineToday Media, Inc.). The Union is continuing efforts to bargain an agreement that includes union security and dues check off language among some of the other proposals discussed by the committee.

**St Louis Mailers**

St. Louis Mailers #3/CWA Local 14620 reached a three-year agreement with Dow Jones in Highland. The contract calls for a two percent wage increase each year of the contract. It also calls for a shoe allowance, reimbursing employees for a one-time payment a maximum of $100 through the term of the agreement. We cleaned up some of the language adding regular part-time language and union time off language. Additional NPP language was included similar to what was bargained at the other Dow Jones papers.

**St. Louis/ Southern Illinois**

CWA 6300 Print and Media Sector and the St. Louis/Southern Illinois Labor Tribune reached a four-year tentative agreement with a two percent raise each year and a signing bonus. It was agreed to add dues check off and cope check off language. The employees will receive an additional birthday holiday.

**Pittsburgh Typographical**

Pittsburgh Typographical Union Local 14838 has finalized its merger with the Williamsport Typographical Union Local 14838. The merger became effective April 1, 2016. This merger will benefit the Sector as a whole and the membership from the former Williamsport Local by allowing for better representation with a larger local. The members at Plankenhorn Stationery, who were previously represented by Williamsport Local 14838, and are now represented by Pittsburgh Typographical Union Local 14827, came to an agreement with the company to extend the collective bargaining agreement for another three-year term, which included a three percent wage increase each year of the contract and adding a union security clause, dues check-off and a successorship clause.

**Buffalo Mailers**

Buffalo Mailers have continued their negotiations with the Buffalo News. Progress has been slow as the company continues to try and press for changes to the existing healthcare plan. The union has taken the approach of only discussing all non-economic items first before we get into any of the economics. New dates have been set for the end of the month.

**Journal of Commerce**

Phillipsburg Typographical Union 14176 came to a tentative agreement with the Journal of Commerce for a new contract. We are still working out some of the language with the company, and are incorporating all side letter agreements and previous memorandum of agreements into one document before it is sent to a ratification vote.

**Taggart Printing**

New York Typographical Union 14156 came to a new agreement with Taggart Printing for a four-year term, which added a union security clause, dues check-off, stronger language to protect the printing Label, and a wage reopener.

**Collins Images**

New York Typographical Union 14156 came to an agreement with Collins Images to extend their existing contract for another three-year term, which included a three percent wage increase each year of the contract along with adding a successorship clause.

**Lahey Printing**

New York Typographical Union 14156 came to an agreement with Lahey Printing to extend their existing contract for another three-year term, which included a two-and-a-half percent wage increase each year of the Contract along with adding a successorship clause, which better protects the contract in case of a sale.

**Waterville**

Waterville Typographical 14115 met again with the Kennebec Journal for negotiations. Both parties continue to be far apart on union security and dues check-off, but have continued to make progress on other outstanding items in the contract that have been stripped from the members after the terms and conditions were implemented after the sale. The union has offered a package proposal in an attempt to come to a final agreement. The company has not yet responded as we continue to fight for a fair contract.
39,000 Verizon & Verizon Wireless workers are on strike against corporate greed.

This is Everyone’s Fight, Not Just Verizon Workers

p. 4A ← round of contract negotiations in 2011, Verizon came to the bargaining table with a long list of demands that would have reversed decades of hard fought progress for its unionized workers. Refusing to give in to company demands the workers went on strike, and after two-weeks, and 16 months of escalating mobilization by union members and allied groups, they successfully negotiated a fair contract and beat back the worst of the company’s demands.

But, when negotiations opened this time around, the company presented a similar opening proposal. In August, when the contract expired, members of CWA and IBEW overwhelmingly voted to authorize a strike once again, should labor and management fail to reach an agreement.

“As our union brothers and sisters fight back against corporate greed at Verizon, it is important that we stand with them in solidarity and do everything we can to help them win this fight,” said Sector President Dan Wasser. “Pittsburgh Mailers Local M-22 officers and members have been on the strike line and assisting in Pittsburgh every chance they can. This is everyone’s fight, not just Verizon workers,” Wasser continued.

Your Union Brothers and Sisters Need Your Support

You can help these brave workers by visiting www.standuptoverizon.com and clicking on the link “join” to find a picket line or rally near you. In addition, on that website you can donate to the strike fund to help financially support the strikers, or sign their petition and pledge not to cross a picket line.

“We need to make sure that these workers know that we support them in their fight,” said Wasser. “Wherever and whenever possible, I expect all of our Sector members to join with them on picket lines and visit them on Facebook and other social media platforms and send them words of solidarity. Going on strike is never an easy decision, and staying strong against corporate greed is imperative. Knowing that we are all in this together and we have each other’s back always has a positive effect,” Wasser explained.

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PPMWS President

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