



Solidarity Now!

Communication Workers of America

Local 4730, Bloomington and Northwest Campuses, Indiana University

Poplars Building, Room 832 (812) 855-8508

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

April, 2012

Volume 28 Number 1

CWA Local 4730, representing support staff at IU Bloomington and IU Northwest (Gary), stands by its request to IU Administration and the Board of Trustees that support staff receive a minimum wage increase of 3.5% for the coming fiscal year. We believe that with the many rising costs facing staff, this figure is necessary and reasonable. In addition, it has almost been two years since the IU Trustees froze equity increases; we ask for that process to be reinstated. Staff conditions continue to grow worse as costs continue to rise. Coupling this with layoffs throughout our campuses—a total of 19 for this fiscal year, including the 9 support staff from the Department of Continuing Studies recently announced, has resulted in constantly increasing workloads and a rampant anxiety over job security among staff.



Supporters of Day of Black and CWA Local 4730 showing they want 3.5% wage increases for IU staff.

IU Northwest	Salary Range	Number of Staff in that range
CL0D	\$9.57 - \$13.65	31
CL0E	\$10.60 - \$16.09	28
CL0F	\$12.90 - \$18.23	14
CL0G	\$16.94 - \$17.69	2
TE0E	\$13.03	1
TE0F	\$12.57 - \$19.24	7
TE0G	\$14.54 - \$19.82	6

IU Bloomington	Salary Range	Number of Support Staff in that range
A	\$9.64 - \$10.68	7
B	\$9.83 - \$13.40	9
C	\$11.50 - \$14.41	11
D	\$10.92 - \$15.50	319
E	\$12.02 - \$16.90	110
F	\$11.90 - \$18.51	663
G	\$13.82 - \$20.24	320
H	\$15.14 - \$22.33	88
I	\$16.62 - \$24.68	25
J	\$19.29 - \$27.33	33

The Future of OWA on the Indiana University Bloomington campus??

IU is threatening to eliminate the Office for Women Affairs (OWA) which has been not only a valuable resource for women on campus but for all staff as well. With all the problems of gender inequalities in existence here at IU and throughout the state of Indiana, the thought of closing this institution is a travesty. It is being threatened by the same pretext of austerity that will close down the School of Continuing Studies. It seems that when there are budget concerns and cuts from an ideologically driven State Legislature, staff suffer. The CWA will monitor this situation as it develops, and we will join in protests if necessary. It is hoped that IU Administration considers the well-being of IU instead of the bottom line. As mentioned in a previous post, "Local 4730 believes it will be a sad day should IU decide to close down this office whose mission is to strive for justice for all."

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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.

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University ID # _____

Department _____

Work phone _____

Work address _____

Room # _____

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Home address _____

City/State/Zip _____

Home phone _____

Signature _____

Date _____

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Please return this form to CWA Local 4730,
400 East 7th Street, Poplars Bldg., Room 832
Bloomington, IN 47405

***Discrimination, Union-Busting and the
Behavior of a World Class Institution***
by *Mary Hackett and Naomi Palagi,*
IUN campus

Chancellor Lowe convened a Town Hall Meeting last week on the Northwest campus. He talked about three items in relation to wages: a recent Salary Study of the Northwest campus, a recent NW campus survey on Equity, Diversity and Inclusion, and wage increases for the 2013 Fiscal Year. The summary on all three is

- wages on the Northwest campus are far below wages in the area and even more strikingly below livable wages for people at the bottom of the salary schedules;
- the people making the lowest wages on campus are overwhelmingly people of color and women;
- wage increases for the already-lowest paid, the bi-weekly staff, will be 1.5%-- but an additional 0.7% is available for professional staff and faculty.

Lowe stated that data from the Equity, Diversity, and Inclusion Study on the prevalence of women and people of color as the lowest paid employees was added to the Salary Study Report as strong justification for significant raises, particularly for the lowest paid on IUN's campus, and that the report has been sent to Bloomington. This may be acted on at some point in the future, but will not have an effect on the limited wage increase for this year. Thank you, Chancellor Lowe, for pursuing the data on this subject and making your recommendations.

Chancellor Lowe said that he was told that the reason the bi-weekly staff would only get the 1.5% base increase was "because of the way the unions on the various campuses negotiate." He said he then requested permission to pay for the additional 0.7% for bi-weekly staff out of IUN's own budget, and was explicitly told he could not. He explained how difficult it was to come to the decision to distribute that additional 0.7% to professional staff, (and faculty) knowing that bi-weekly staff would only be getting an increase of 1.5%, not 2.2%. Again, thank you, Chancellor for giving careful thought to this inequity.

But, we have to ask, knowing that the lowest paid employees (at least on the NW campus) are people of color and women, and that those are the very people who are represented by the union, doesn't it seem discriminatory to give them a lower raise than faculty and professional staff who are already at higher salary ranges? Because this isn't about budget. This is not an efficient use of IU's money. For many bi-weekly staff on the NW campus, 0.7% is the equivalent of around \$150 a year. If IU can afford 0.7% for top administrators and faculty, whose 0.7% could be 10-20 times that amount of money, then this decision is not about the budget, but about something else.

If it isn't discrimination against women and people of color, then is it designed by IU Administration to create pressure against the union? Why was the decision explicitly made to offer professional staff and faculty a "merit" increase, and then perpetuate the myth that the union is contractually unable to distribute merit raises? While CWA has historically avoided the distribution of merit increases on the basis of inherent unfairness, the topic has not been brought to the union by IU Administration. According to CWA representatives, they have yet to begin negotiations with IU Administration for the 2013 contract. The effect of setting two different wage-increase categories is to push the lowest paid employees even further down in relation to all employees. So the question remains, what is behind IU Administration's decisions? We hear and read speeches and media reports in which IU is presented as a World Class Institution. Is it World Class behavior to treat the highest paid employees preferentially? Is it morally and ethically honorable to allow employees at the bottom of the pay scale to slip ever closer to the poverty level, while top administrators get more in raises than some bi-weekly staff earn in a year? Is it legal to provide higher raises to all employees *except* those who are in a category already recognized to be largely women and people of color? Simply put, is it World Class behavior to claim these actions are financially responsible decisions due to tight budgets, when the result is to impoverish the lowest sector of employees, smear unions, and pay higher salaries and benefits only to those already earning more (sometimes vastly more) than a subsistence wage?

The math behind this budget decision is not too complicated, but reconciling the decision with IU's self-portrait gets a little more tangled.

Follow-up questions for Patty Hollingsworth:

Patty, you've been Director of the Healthy IU Program since July, 2011. Could you tell us what you feel are some of the challenges and successes of the program, and in which directions you see it going?

One of the main challenges has been letting employees know about the new direction of Healthy IU. The University is a large and complex system and makes communication a bit harder than we originally anticipated. The good news is we are learning the best ways to get the word out to all IU employees system-wide.

Concerning the development of Healthy IU, we've been testing the waters in several areas and are pleased with the success we've seen so far.

The survey results from the November self-care pilot group program look very promising. 57% of the participants indicated the workshop helped them better understand their health. 71% indicated the workshop relieved stress or anxiety about the health of themselves or someone in their family. The self-care program and associated HealthyWise or Mayo Clinic self care books addressed the following issues: managing your lifestyle and preventive care, knowing when to treat common illness or minor injuries at home and when to get medical attention, knowing how to communicate effectively with doctors, knowing how to achieve higher quality of life even when you have a serious illness or on-going medical condition and **seeing yourself as the most important member of your health care team**. We hope to offer the one hour self-care program to departments through healthy change initiative that will begin in the 2012-2013 fiscal year.

The March nutrition month initiatives have been great. Bloomington is fortunate to have extremely caring and energetic dietitians in RPS, Athletics, Student Health Center, Applied Health Science and Healthy IU. Collaborating with numerous departments in this initiative has helped us cast the net wider in our efforts to raise awareness and knowledge. More information can be found on the Healthy IUB page <http://www.iu.edu/~welliu/campus/bloomington.shtml>

The fall physical activity and nutrition challenge moved about 800 IU employees to action. IU Kokomo was thrilled about winning the first inter-campus employee challenge. With a new basketball team and a drive to fund a fitness center, the synergy in Kokomo is building.

As director you have promoted several initiatives based on employees' suggestions about how IU could support healthier lifestyles for employees. Have you been pleased with the response from the faculty and staff from the IU campuses?

I've been very pleased. The greatest attribute, in my mind, is the willingness of employees to share their knowledge for the common good. IU has phenomenal employees and it's an honor to work with them.

Last October there was a Faculty and Staff Wellness Initiative Walk. One of the newer initiatives is the "Get Your Plate in Shape" contest. Another food-centered involves gardening workshops in collaboration with Hilltop Gardens. What successes have you had in getting healthier food available on the IU campuses?

The first step in getting more healthy food on campus is building awareness. There are already several places on campus that offer healthy options, such as the Dunn Meadow Café in the IMU and RPS's, but we need to do more to make people aware of these options and provide nutritional information. We've been working with Sodexo and RPS to work on the healthier food and in getting the word out to everyone.

We had quite a bit of press about the MyPlate promotion and 1:1 nutritional counseling participation is good. Hopefully employees as consumers shift purchasing decisions. Early on we had conversations with Canteen and purchasing and now it's time to go back to the table and work out a plan. Healthy IU now has the expertise of Elin Grimes, RD on staff – which will help. In addition sustainability's edible campus garden has grown, so the amount of food from the garden going to IU will increase this year.

Besides wanting healthier food choices available, union members have mentioned a fee waiver for SRSC/HPER. Is there any possibility of a fee waiver or discount for using the SRSC or HPER or attending classes there? The benefits could be indicated by questionnaires.

We took to heart what employees expressed during the community conversation last spring - "one shoe does not fit all." To address the needs of eight campuses and a variety of wellness desires, we are developing an incentive program so employees have choices. The incentive program will be for completing a voluntary health screening and feedback during your birth month either through your doctor or on-site clinics. The intent of the screening is to give you information so you can make wise health decisions. The intent of the screening incentive is to help offset the cost of positive lifestyle choices. This has been proposed, but budgets have not been passed yet so more information will be available in July.

If a physician prescribes exercise, not physical therapy, could the cost of a membership be paid by IU?

This requires the expertise of benefits, which I am not- so best to send this question to them.

That being said, the American College of Sports Medicine is leading an initiative called "Exercise is Medicine." I've offered a couple of links that can offer information on starting an exercise program as well as information for exercising for people with specific conditions like arthritis, hypertension and depression.

<http://exerciseismedicine.org/documents/StartingExProgram.pdf>

<http://exerciseismedicine.org/YourPrescription.htm>

Stress at the workplace: Do you have any initiatives on how to reduce stress in the workplace? Support staff find that with the early retirements, many of us have additional responsibilities, and may even be doing what two support staff have done in the past.

I see two issues here, one addresses organizational development i.e. how do we become more efficient, re-organize our priorities, ask ourselves are we doing this because we always have or is there really a purpose for this action?

The other question is how do we cope with the stress of change? Coping strategies are like tools in a tool belt; the more tools you have the better prepared you are to cope with a variety of stresses. Each department will have an opportunity to create a "local" wellness plan in which limited funds will be available through Healthy IU. We will encourage employee interest surveys, I recommend you voice your desire regarding stress management on the survey. For more on how Healthy IU is working at the grassroots level <http://www.iu.edu/~welliu/at-work/how.shtml>

In the meantime the following article from the University of San Francisco may be helpful. http://www.sfsu.edu/~psyservs/Wellness_Tips/Budget.html Information on how to access Employee Assistance may be found at <http://www.indiana.edu/~uhrs/benefits/eap.html>

Employees were led to believe that the IU Clinic would be on campus to cut down on time taken off by employees. The clinics in the program are, however, far from campus. It seems the only saving is for employees whose primary care providers are not in either the IU Health System or Premier, as they can get Urgent Care for the normal office call co-pay.

This is a program coordinated through the Human Resource Benefit Office. They will have the information available to respond to your question.

Last summer in an interview with *Solidarity Now!*, you mentioned building a website to provide information about the Wellness Programs. How is this initiative progressing?

The website has been launched and can be found at <http://www.iu.edu/~welliu/>. There are a number of resources available for employees on the site. We encourage people to check it out for health and lifestyle information and other resources. In the long run we want to provide "one stop shopping" for finding programs, services and information that will help you stay healthy and well.

It's Over in a Flash by Jane Goldsmith

Approximately ten years ago, my brother (who's a chemical engineer) was burned in an industrial accident. He was filling in for another position that was vacant and, because he was trying to do two jobs, he was in a hurry. Rather than taking the five to ten minutes to don the company provided safety equipment, he chose instead to proceed without the protective gear. When a steam valve malfunctioned, he was burned with live steam from his knees to his stomach. Even though he quickly used the cold water shower that was in the area, he still sustained second and third degree burns. He was in the hospital for ten days and had several surgeries for skin grafts. He was off work for three months. He freely admits that it was his own negligence that caused the accident. The company provided the training and equipment and he chose not to comply.

It was with interest that I read in the "CWA News" newspaper about the case of Sheri Sangji. On December 29, 2008, Ms. Sangji, a staff research assistant at UCLA, was burned when a chemical she was working with ignited on contact with air and set fire to her clothes. She died 18 days later from the burns.

In March of this year, the district attorney of the Los Angeles County filed criminal charges against UCLA and the UCLA professor who was her supervisor. The charges are for willfully violating three counts of the occupational safety and health standards. The professor faces up to four-and-a-half years in prison and the university could be fined up to \$ 1.5 million for each violation.

Since I received CWA News a couple of days before our next scheduled IU/CWA Safety Committee meeting, I decided to ask the committee representative from the Office of Environmental Health and Safety Management (UOEHSM) what procedures IU follows for training safe laboratory procedures. Not surprisingly they offer extensive training in safe lab procedures to faculty, staff and students. The standards they use are the OSHA regulations. The weak point is in the enforcement of these procedures. It's up to the supervisor to make sure the people he/she is responsible for use the safety equipment and follow the procedures. Generally speaking they need to foster the attitude that "It's not open for debate. You do have to follow the procedures." Since many of the labs are open 24/7 and people work alone in those labs, the attitude of safety first has to be emphasized.

To add a further caveat to this, only paid employees are protected by OSHA regulations. Students aren't. This doesn't mean the university isn't responsible for their health and safety in the labs. It means the supervising PI (principal investigator) would be responsible for the students complying with the rules and regulations.

I don't know if there is anyone who works at IU who blatantly disregards safety regulations. I don't work in proximity to any labs. What can you do if you see someone who persistently doesn't enforce the safety regulations? First would be to report it to your supervisor and let him/her take it up through channels. If you aren't comfortable with that, you can report it to UOEHSM on their website http://www.ehs.indiana.edu/report_concern.cfm. This form allows you to report a concern and remain anonymous. The UOEHSM representative will contact the department. When you make a report, include any documentation you have – names, dates, times. That will help in their investigation. If that doesn't work, you can always report it to IOSHA. That is also anonymous. Give them all the information you have, including the additional information about incidents after the UOEHSM contact and, let them investigate.

A History Lesson

Linda Harl, retired member Local 4730, and one of its first members

Author's note:

SN editor June Wckboldt has asked questions about CWA's beginnings on campus and I'm going to answer them in interview format.

When did the union start and why?

The first meeting was held in July, 1989. A group of clerical workers had discussed trying to unionize their co-workers for some time, but realized it would be too big a project to do without help. Barb Lentz, who worked at the Conference Bureau had met CWA official Mike Joyce through her job, and he became the contact with CWA. He promised financial and organizational help and things grew from there. Soon we had two full time organizers and more help from the regional and national union offices.

Issues at the time were low pay, rising costs, a lack of a grievance system with any teeth, and inconsistencies in how policies were applied between offices.

What was the reaction of the administration, faculty and other staff?

Administrators were predictably officially neutral, although some did seem to be more than irritated with the way we kept bringing up things they didn't want to talk about. They treated the Articles of Cooperation as gospel. The reaction of members of the other groups ranged from very supportive to close to downright hostility. Staff participation was always strongest in the IMU and the library.

There were two hurdles we had to jump over before we were recognized. The first was to prove that what were then two distinct job classification systems were close enough in duties to be represented by the same union. This entailed appearing before professional arbitrators in the mock trial building of the Law School. We won that battle.

How long did it take to get recognized?

This leads to the second hurdle. We had to get the majority of people in both categories of employees to vote in favor of having the union represent them. They didn't have to join at this time, just vote yes.

One night after a meeting discussing an organizing strategy for the vote, I heard Elvis sing "It's Now or Never" on the radio. One thing led to another and Elvis begin making appearances on our behalf. Rodney Ward, a geology employee, rewrote some of the lyrics and we found an impersonator in town willing to work with us. (Side note here: one of the funniest experiences I ever had during this period was eating lunch with Elvis in the Commons and watching people stare.)

Finally, the ballots were cast and counted in April, 1993 – four long years after we started. The vote in both categories was overwhelmingly in our favor.

Then we were officially organized as Local 4730 and began to get people to sign cards – a fight that continues today I'm sure.

Did the union live up to expectations?

The expectations were probably as varied as the members, so it is hard to answer this question. But, I truly believe CWA has greatly improved the working environment for support staff.



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CWA Local 4730 Calendar

May

Thursday, May 17, 2012
Members Meeting
IMU
12:10—12:50pm

June

Thursday, June 21, 2012
Members Meeting
IMU
12:10—12:50pm

July

Thursday, July 19, 2012
Members Meeting
IMU
12:10—12:50pm