
Solidarity Now!

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Communications Workers of America Local 4730



Indiana University

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Don't Outsource Our Jobs!

by Peter Kaczmarczyk

It is the strong belief of CWA Local 4730, representing all support staff at IUB and IUN, that Indiana University should slow down their rush to outsource jobs and consider in depth the ramifications of handing over jobs currently held by IU staff to outside contractors or service providers. While it is true that outsourcing of jobs may provide short term cash savings, there are many other aspects to the equation that must be considered. Most important among these is that any savings created by outsourcing are savings made on the backs of workers. In a time when the middle class is disappearing and Indiana residents are finding it more and more difficult to send their children to IU for an education, is it either wise or moral to push more Indiana workers out of decent paying jobs with good benefits, including fee remission? How can we talk about wanting to make IU more affordable when we are actively taking steps that will make it harder for families right here in our community to afford to send their children here? Is it ethical to try to trim nickels and dimes by forcing people out of jobs with good healthcare and replacing them with outside workers who likely have little or no health care?

Outsourcing of jobs is likely to lead to a reduction in the quality of the work. Most staff at Indiana University like IU and are loyal to IU. They work hard, because they take pride in their jobs. They believe that the students, who are paying a lot of money to attend here, deserve the best. They truly want IU to be the best it can be, and they want to provide the best service possible. Can this same commitment be expected of outside contractors, who have nothing invested

in IU? The loyalty which the staff demonstrate should be reciprocal. IU should take care of its staff in the same way that it tries to take care of its students, by providing them the best possible wages and benefits, not by cutting their jobs in order to show the legislature that they have done "everything they can" to save money.

When jobs are outsourced, there is a loss of oversight. Like the loss of quality, this can be hard to quantify in dollars and cents, but can have a catastrophic effect on the university. What guarantees do we get that outside contractors will treat their employees right, will closely oversee the work they do, will reward them for good work and discipline them fairly for poor work? What will IU do if it discovers that an outside contractor is cutting corners, cooking the books or even violating state and federal labor laws? Fire them? Perhaps, but by then the damage is likely already done. Only by keeping services in house can IU truly be guaranteed the oversight it deserves to have over work being done here.

Outsourcing might save some money in the short term, but at what cost? Fewer workers will have decent healthcare. Fewer families will be able to send their children here for an education. There will be no guarantees that the quality of the work will be done to IU standards,

OUTSOURCING

Continued on page 3

Attend the Next Meetings!
Thursday, Dec. 7, 2006
Thursday, Jan. 18, 2007

Steward Activity Report: Accomplishments

by Marilyn Saum, Terry Stigall
& Bernadette Robinson-Kinzer

One employee in a difficult job situation encountered health problems, which worried her more than her job. The steward did what she could to provide support and work with HR to alleviate the job-related problem. But when an employee is too intimidated by their supervisor to openly discuss the details with management, the steward cannot achieve much.

Another staff member had a change of supervisor and was much happier with the new one. Her health had improved with the change of supervisors. Stress-related health problems are increasingly being reported to stewards, and the local is referring employees to the IU Employee Assistance Program (EAP). A frustrating roadblock is that this program is referring employees to IU's health insurance with the initial phone call for a consultation with a counselor. If employees are deflected by the phone operators of EAP and never get to speak with a counselor, is IU getting its money's worth for the program?

One employee contacted a steward about fiberglass removal from the building. The steward will work with the IU/CWA Joint Safety Committee to see if all employees in a building can be notified of any type of substance removal – just in case they happen to have a health condition that might be affected.

A level three grievance has yet to be resolved.

A follow up on a Performance Improvement Plan resulted in a Final Warning for performance expectations. The steward is working with the Department HR Manager to get the employee back on track.

A steward checked on the validity of a supervisor's email to all departmental staff informing them that "with the coming web-based TIME

system for hourly and bi-weekly staff, (Note: bi-weekly staff will likely be migrated to the new TIME system this year) a supervisors' training session covered a federal labor law which requires hourly and bi-weekly staff to take a 30 minute break period (lunch) if an employee works 6 straight hours. The new TIME system will have that feature built into it and will send an Exception Report to the supervisor if an employee does not take at least a 30 minute break period (lunch). A break is defined as non-work related activity."

The union has discussed this subject with Human Resources both at and away from the bargaining table on several occasions. The Fair Labor Standards Act DOES NOT address meal breaks and there is NO Indiana State Law covering meal breaks. This supervisor is mistaken.

The union is certain if the law is changing the CWA National Office and IU's Human Resources will most assuredly bring it to the local's attention and notify us of the needed change in policy. To our knowledge the information covered in item 5 of the 1998-99 and 1999-2000 IU-CWA agreement (below) is still accurate.

5. Reference Policy 2.8 WORK SCHEDULES, HOURS, UNIFORMS - A memo will be prepared by Human Resources Management and distributed by August 1 to Deans, Directors, and Department Heads advising them that allowing employees to work through lunch to shorten the work day is legal in Indiana and permissible as part of an alternative/flex time schedule or as requested on an occasional basis with the mutual agreement of the supervisor and the employee.

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Holiday Food Drive

by Jane Goldsmith

CWA is sponsoring a Holiday Food Drive, with the food collected going to the Hoosier Hills Food Bank. The collection dates are December 1 to 15. The following locations are currently set up as collection points for the food drive:

Business/SPEA – Terry Stigall (tstigall)
 Chemistry – Judi Roberts (judirobe)
 Geology – Terry Stigall (tstigall)
 Informatics – Terry Stigall (tstigall)
 Indiana Memorial Union – Lobby Floor – Jean Collier (jcollier)
 Neal-Marshall Black Culture Center – Sachiko G. Higgins-Kante (sghiggin)
 Physical Plant – Terry Stigall (tstigall)
 Poplars – Bernadette Robinson-Kinzer (berobins)
 Psychology – Terry Stigall (tstigall)
 Wells Library – Jane Goldsmith (goldsmi) and Edward Vasquez (esvasque)

Look for signs in the buildings indicating where the donation box is located or contact the name next to the location to ask. If you have additional questions, please contact Charla Lancaster (cwestbro), who is coordinating this event.

Outsourcing, Continued from page 1

and that the outside providers of the work will be moral and ethical in the way they treat their employees. Only by keeping as much work in-house as possible, and continuing to provide good, stable jobs with good pay and benefits, can IU hope to continue to build itself into the world class research institution it aspires to be.

I hope that the Trustees of Indiana University will take these issues into account and look long and hard at all the ramifications of outsourcing, before rushing blindly down a path that seems to be marked only with a sign that says “Outsource Now At All Costs.” The costs will be much higher—for the staff and the university—than the Trustees seem to realize.

Members’ Survey

by Peter Kaczmarczyk

Bargaining time is just around the corner, and very soon we will be sending out our member’s survey to find out what you want us to try to do at the bargaining table in 2007. This is a “wages only” year, so policy issues will not be on the table, but we should again be discussing wage distribution. We send out the survey because we welcome your input; we are, after all, a democratic organization. However, there is one catch—the member survey only goes to members. As the saying goes, all staff get to ride the bus, but only the members get to drive. So, do you want to have a say? Join now, fill out the survey, and let your voice be heard.

Last year we were able to negotiate a wage distribution that took longevity into account. It was not perfect, and there was some disagreement among staff about whether it was a good thing or not. But we were very pleased to get longevity worked into the raises, and hope to accomplish that again this year. This is where you, the members, come in. We want all your input when forming a bargaining strategy. Should we fight for true longevity or nothing at all? Should we look at different cut-off points to define longevity? Should we focus more on low-end wages, regardless of longevity? Should merit be a greater concern? There are all kinds of priorities and approaches we can take. To help us decide on one, we need to know what you think.

So fill out that survey when you get it. There are no guarantees we can get you what you want, but if you take the time to tell us, I guarantee we will listen.

CWA Holiday Pot Luck!
Thursday, Dec. 7–5:30 pm
University School Gym
Doster Classroom
10th & the Bypass
See map on Page 7

TO FIND HELP FOR THE HOLIDAYS 2006

Area 10 Agency on Aging, 876-3383

If you are homebound and elderly (60+), there is a food bank that can assist you. Also, they will be delivering meals to senior citizens in their homes on Thanksgiving and Christmas. Call for more details.

Backstreet Missions, 333-1905

Thanksgiving: A Thanksgiving meal will be served for anyone in the community who wants to share a holiday meal with others on November 23. The free meal will be served between 12:00-2:00 p.m. at Geno's cafeteria, 215 Westplex Ave.

Christmas: To apply for the Adopt-A-Child program (ages 17 and under), call 961-3900 Mon.-Fri., 9:00 a.m.-5:00 p.m. between November 29-December 16.

Boys and Girls Club, 332-5311

The Boys and Girls Club holds a Holiday Camp while the kids are out of school, December 27-29 and January 3-5 from 8:00 a.m.-5:30 p.m. They accept children between the ages of 6-18. There is a small cost, about \$15/day, but there are a limited number of scholarships available. Call the club for more information.

Also, if you have a child who is currently a club member, there is a program to help provide these children with presents for the holidays.

Community Kitchen, 332-0999

The Community Kitchen provides a free meal each day from 4:00-6:00 p.m. Also, on Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day they will be giving out bags of groceries.

Hoosier Hills Food Bank, 334-8374

Hoosier Hills Food Bank has a list of many

organizations and agencies to which they distribute food. They can help you find the one closest to you.

Martha's House, 332-1414

In November or December, Martha's House will have their subsidized housing program up and running. If you think you would like to participate in this program contact the shelter.

Salvation Army, 336-4310

Low-income families – To apply to receive a box of food and to participate in the toy shop (receive free toys and coats on December 22) go to Salvation Army to fill out an application, Mon.-Fri. 9:00-11:00 a.m. or Mon. 6:00-8:00 p.m. between November 27-December 15.

Working families (at least one parent must be working) – To apply for Salvation Army's Adopt-a-Family program, stop in at Salvation Army to fill out an application, Mon.-Fri. 9:00-11:00 a.m. or Mon. 6:00-8:00 p.m. between November 27-December 15.

Shut-in Elderly – If you or someone you know is elderly and cannot leave the home, call to apply to receive a free basket of food delivered to your home for the holidays.

Shalom Community Center, 334-5728

If you are in need of help this holiday season, call or stop by the shelter. They will do everything they can to assist you.

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District Meeting

by Peter Kaczmarczyk

I recently attended the CWA District 4 Annual Meeting in Madison, Wisconsin. It was a great opportunity to network with other locals, find out what's going on at the state and national level, and get some extra training on how to run an effective local.

Much of the week focused on politics, since the upcoming election was the primary focus of the CWA on all levels. While I found the partisan rhetoric to be a little heavy-handed and overdone, I do agree that without political and legislative change, the labor movement in the United States is in big trouble. Workers' rights have been eroded by changes in laws, overly pro-management rulings by the Labor Relations Board, and a general push to take away the right for workers to freely choose to form a union (or not) and have a voice in their work place and in their future. Much of the week was spent stressing that this has to be stopped, and that we need to work to get candidates elected who will fight for working families, not just for corporate interests.

Time during the week was also spent on how to run a local, effective grievance handling and a variety of other topics. As is always the case when attending these sessions, I learned things that will help me and our Local 4730 serve the staff better.

Beyond all the formal meetings and discussions, the district meeting was a great chance to talk to other people—other workers who are concerned about the same things we are. They all want to be treated fairly, with respect and dignity, and they worry about healthcare, wages, job security and having a pension they can count on. Sometimes one can feel powerless, with so many forces exercising control over our lives, but when

reminded that we are not alone, that we are part of a great family of workers, I always come away with a renewed sense of empowerment.

This last thing, I think, is the most important part of meetings such as this one. It doesn't come in forced 'motivational' sessions or contrived break-out sessions. It happens in random meetings in the lobby, group (cough, cough) cigarette breaks, or over a beer (or three). It happens wherever people come together, people who know what it is to work hard for a living and know what it is to struggle. The politics are important, the training sessions useful, but it is the strength to be found in people coming together for a common cause that makes it all worthwhile.



LOCAL 4730 Communications 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 # _____

Email Address _____

Home Address _____

City/ST/Zip _____

Home Phone _____

Signature _____

Date _____

Received by: _____

Influencing Impressionable Minds

by Peter Kaczmarczyk

This fall Local 4730 was invited to give a lecture to a SPEA class: Labor Relations in the Public Sector. The class was taught by Bill Hodson, SPEA Director of Human Resources, and we were extremely pleased to be given the opportunity to come into his class. Bernadette and I were given the entire class period to speak, and we covered the history of the Local at IU and some of the things we have accomplished in our 15 years on campus. We also talked about the renewed air of cooperation that exists between our local and HR and used this to illustrate that unions and management need not exist in a purely adversarial relationship.

The class was pleasantly engaged, and we answered several questions from the students, many of whom, as one of them admitted, were management fast-track and not favorably disposed to unions. We tried to both dispel misconceptions and illustrate our point of view. Specifically we made the point that much of what we do is to make sure that every staff member is treated fairly and has due process in any proceeding. We also spent some time discussing the importance of longevity raises instead of, or as well as, merit raises. We tried to stress the fact that we as a local, and unions in general, are looking for the same thing as management in the big picture. In this case, both sides want a strong university where everyone—students, staff and faculty—can thrive, succeed and better themselves through honest, dedicated, hard work.

Getting the chance to mold young minds was an honor, and I thank Bill Hodson for giving us this opportunity. People should always be informed of all possible sides on any issue. I enjoyed getting to be a voice in the educational process and helping to further that end. I listened to what the students had to say, and I hope they did the same for us. Perhaps we were able to, at the very least, broaden a few horizons.

Since You Asked

by Linda Harl

How did the big push for car pools turn out? How many are there and why is three the magic number for an official car pool?

Kent McDaniel, Assistant Director of Transportation Services, answers:

There are four recognized car pools and each has a reserved spot. A reduction in gas prices has probably made the program seem less attractive than we had hoped. But since the purpose of the program was to make more parking spaces available on campus, these eight spaces are a start.

We at Transportation Services thought there were probably already a number of couples riding together and only using one space. So calling them a car pool would not have resulted in any more open spaces. Four sounded like too many, so we settled on three, which is a fairly standard number at other places we studied.

CWA Calendar

December 2006

Thursday, Dec. 7, 2006

Members' Meeting
Univ. Gym—Doster Classroom
10th & the Bypass
5:30-6:30 pm

Wednesday, Dec. 27, 2005

WRCLC Meeting
840 West 17th Street, Suite 9
7:00 pm

January 2007

Thursday, Jan. 17 2006

Members' Meeting
Poplars 185
400 E. 7th. St.
5:30-6:30 pm

Wednesday, January 24, 2007

WRCLC Meeting
840 West 17th Street, Suite 9
7:00 pm

Election 2006

by Peter Kaczmarczyk

The 2006 elections are over, and on both a state and a national level Election Day was a good day for democrats. They met or exceeded their goals, and this should result in good things for American workers, their families and their communities. It won't happen, though, if we as American citizens do not realize that our work is not yet done.

On a national level we can look forward to, among other things, an increase in the minimum wage, improved prices for prescription drugs through direct price negotiation, passage of the Employee Free Choice Act and an end to Congressional rubber stamping of trade bills that are bad for American workers. On a state level the fact that the house is now in Democratic hands should prevent the passage of Right to Work, Paycheck Protection and other misleadingly named bills that would drive down wages and benefits in the state.

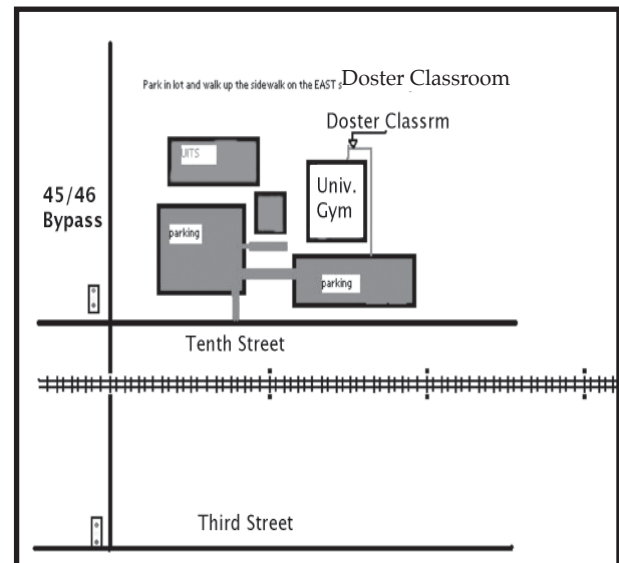
Sounds good. Things should be looking up for working families in Indiana and America, right? Yes, but only if we stay vigilant and don't let the politicians we have just elected forget what they promised. I have no illusions that the Democrats are a panacea that will cure all ills. They are often beholden to big money and corporate interests as anyone else. They must be reminded, loudly if necessary, that we expect them to follow through on the rhetoric and big promises that won them the American peoples' support.

In recent years, the balance of power has shifted far from the working class to the upper class. Capital is now valued over labor, with those who invest the money reaping almost all the rewards, while those who invest the blood, sweat and tears get almost nothing. This won't change overnight, and I don't expect miracles. However, we must all demand real effort and concrete actions by our elected officials to address

this inequity. Election 2006 could be the start of something big, but only if we make it so.

So where do we go from here? We keep fighting, keep raising our voices, and keep telling corporate America that we will not sit quietly by as profits soar and executives take home multi-million dollar salaries and pensions, while the folks doing the work—you—get their wages, pensions and benefits cut. The 2006 elections are over, but the fight continues on.

Doster Classroom Map





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