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Label Letter

Union Label & Service Trades Department, AFL-CIO

Las Vegas Hospitality Workers Avoid Strike After Marathon Negotiations

With less than three hours until their strike deadline, the Culinary Workers Union Local 226 and Bartenders Local 165 in Las Vegas announced a tentative agreement with Wynn Resorts on November 10. The announcement followed the unions' previous announcements of tentative agreements with Caesars Entertainment and MGM Resorts International earlier in the week.

According to reports, the negotiations with each of the three Las Vegas resort companies were marathon sessions lasting some 20 hours each. The union said the agreements are "the best contract and economic package we have ever won in our 88-year history."

The five-year agreement with Wynn secures significant raises every year of the contract. It preserves the current health insurance, union pension, and other comprehensive benefits, while reducing housekeeping workloads. The union says there are "substantial improvements for workers regarding safety at work, the ability to have a say in how technology impacts our work, and ensuring the union and members can support non-union hospitality workers who seek to join our union."

The three contracts cover some 40,000 hospitality workers. Ted Pappageorge, secretary-treasurer of Culinary Union Local 226 says the contracts represent about

a 250 percent increase over the last five-year contract.

Pappageorge says on average members of Local 226 currently make about \$26 per hour. Under the tentative agreement, those workers will see their hourly wage increase to about \$35 per hour over the life of the new contract.

Workers will also receive backpay for the last seven months of negotiations since the last agreement expired.

The union is still in negotiations with 24 other local casino resort companies. They want a five-year contract at all resorts.

Detroit Casino Workers On Strike

The Detroit Casino Council (DCC), a coalition of five labor unions representing casino workers in Detroit made the difficult decision to go on strike in October. The unions—UNITE HERE Local 24, United Auto Workers, Teamsters Local 1038, Operating Engineers Local 324, and the Michigan Regional Council of Carpenters—represent some 3,700 workers employed in food and beverage, dealing, housekeeping, valet and other fields at the city's three casinos.

The unions say the three casinos: Hollywood Casino at Greektown, MGM Grand Detroit, and MotorCity Casino, generated \$2.27 billion gaming revenue in 2022 and are on track to break revenue records this year.

The coalition is fighting to protect healthcare benefits, win job security and technology language that already exists in other casino markets, and to improve the value of retirement benefits. The also want to reduce the workload of employees, and

secure the wage increases to keep up with inflation.

Since the strike began on October 17, union negotiators report the companies have come down from \$60 to \$40 for healthcare premium costs, but the committee is aiming for costs to remain at zero.

Negotiators say the companies have offered a \$1.95 per hour wage increase in the first year of a proposed new contract. The union is holding firm at \$3.25 per hour.

The DCC says that during the pandemic, it agreed to a three-year contract extension with three percent annual raises but inflation in Detroit has

risen 20 percent since then.

"They are not budging on a fair wage," said Gwen Mills, secretary-treasurer of Unite Here. "We took almost flat wages through the pandemic and now expect to share in the prosperity they're experiencing."



UNION-MADE

GAME

night

THE EMPLOYEES AT CARTAMUNDI EAST LONGMEADOW, A SUBSIDIARY OF CARTAMUNDI NORTH AMERICA, ARE REPRESENTED BY RETAIL, WHOLESALE, AND DEPARTMENT STORE UNION (RWDSU) LOCAL 224. THEY MAKE SOME OF THE MOST WELL-KNOWN GAMES SURE TO INSPIRE A GREAT, UNION-MADE, FAMILY GAME NIGHT!



HASBRO GAMES

- » Ants in the Pants
- » Battleship
- » Battleship Grab & GO!
- » Bulls-Eye Ball
- » Candy Land
- » Candy Land Grab & GO!
- » Candy Land Ice Cream Party
- » Clue
- » Clue Bridgerton
- » Clue Conspiracy
- » Clue Diced
- » Clue Escape
- » Clue Ghostbusters
- » Clue Grab & GO!
- » Clue Junior
- » Clue Robbery at the Museum
- » Clue Sabotage on the High Seas
- » Clue Signature Collection
- » Connect4
- » Connect4 Grab & GO
- » Connect4 Spin
- » Cootie
- » Cranium
- » Crystal Caper
- » Don't Break the Ice
- » Don't Spill the Beans
- » Dungeons & Dragons
- » Dungeons & Dragons Bedlam in Neverwinter
- » Elefun Flyers
- » Galaxy Goldmine
- » Girl Talk
- » Grocery GoKarts
- » Guess Who Grab & GO!
- » Guess Who?
- » Guess Who? Junior
- » Guesstures
- » Hungry Hungry Hippos
- » Hungry Hungry Hippos Grab & GO!
- » Hungry Hungry Hippos Junior
- » Jenga
- » Jenga Maker
- » Ka-Blab
- » Life
- » Life Super Mario
- » Love is Dead
- » Magic The Gathering
- » Matching Game My Little Pony
- » Matching Game Peppa Pig
- » Matching Game PJ MASKS
- » Mayhem
- » Mix Matchies
- » Monopoly Junior Bluey
- » Monopoly
- » Monopoly Animal Crossing
- » Monopoly Avatar
- » Monopoly Barbie
- » Monopoly Bid
- » Monopoly Black Panther
- » Monopoly Builder
- » Monopoly Cheaters Edition
- » Monopoly Crooked Cash
- » Monopoly Deal
- » Monopoly Diced
- » Monopoly Discover
- » Monopoly Dungeons & Dragons
- » Monopoly Eternals
- » Monopoly Fall Guys
- » Monopoly Fortnite
- » Monopoly Game of Thrones
- » Monopoly Grab & GO!
- » Monopoly Junior
- » Monopoly Junior Super Mario
- » Monopoly Mandalorian
- » Monopoly Pizza Game
- » Monopoly Prizm
- » Monopoly Roblox
- » Monopoly Star Wars
- » Monopoly Super Electronic Banking
- » Monopoly The Falcon and the Winter Soldier
- » Monopoly Transformers Edition
- » Monopoly Travel World Tour
- » Mouse Trap
- » Not Your Ma's Jong
- » Operation
- » Operation Junior
- » Operation X-Ray Match Up
- » Pay Day Rivals Edition
- » Peppa Pig
- » Perfection
- » Pictionary
- » Pictureka
- » PJ MASKS HQ RESCUE
- » Pleasant Nonsense
- » Pokémon
- » Puzlit
- » Risk
- » Risk Junior
- » Scattergories
- » Scrabble
- » Scrabble Junior
- » Shuffle
- » Sorry Diced
- » Sorry Grab & GO!
- » Sorry Sliders
- » Speak Out
- » Sun Moon Rising
- » Taboo
- » Taboo Uncensored
- » The Game of Life Goals
- » Trivial Pursuit
- » Trivial Pursuit Mini Packs
- » Trouble
- » Trouble Grab & GO!
- » Trouble Spider-Man
- » Twister
- » Twister Air
- » Twister Junior
- » UNO
- » Wordle the Party Game
- » Yahtzee
- » Yahtzee TO GO
- » Yu-Gi-Oh!

Maximus Call Center Workers Hold Walkout to Demand a Better Wages, Union Recognition



Workers at Maximus Call Centers help Americans sign up for health care plans through federal programs like the Affordable Care Act's health care exchanges and Medicaid yet the workers themselves can't afford to see a doctor.

Maximus, a federal Health and Human Services Contractor with a \$6.6 billion nine-year contract, is exploiting its mostly women of color workforce, a direct violation of President Biden's mandate that federal contractors pay their employees a living wage.

On November 9, the employees held a one-day strike to highlight their struggles and bring attention to their fight to unionize.

According to a report compiled by the Communications Workers of America

(CWA), who is working with the employees to unionize, 91 percent of workers they surveyed earn less than \$19 per hour, and 32 percent earn less than \$17. Most—92 percent—of the workers said they are primary earners in their household.

The workers struck for minimum pay of \$25 per hour, recognition of the union, and against Maximus' continued labor law violations.

Maximus has been found guilty of breaking labor laws at least once by the regional office of the National Labor Relations Board and has additional complaints pending. They include retaliatory layoffs for speaking out about racial disparities and for union support, offering severance pay if workers shut up, and

threats of firing and call center closures.

The workers are calling on Health and Human Services Secretary Xavier Becerra to step in and hold Maximus accountable.

"While Maximus has nearly doubled its revenues in the past five years, some of the same workers who have made that growth possible report that they are unable to afford basic necessities. Most are paid wages that are not adequate to support their families and they are provided health insurance whose benefits are so poor that many must go into debt to afford health-care. Maximus falls far short of providing the kind of federal contractor jobs that the Biden administration aspires to create. HHS Secretary Becerra must investigate Maximus' labor practices to determine whether it is fulfilling its obligations as a federal contractor."

IBEW Local 3 Lights Up Times Square for Millions to Ring in the New Year



In the United States, one of the most iconic New Year's traditions is the dropping of the giant ball in New York City's Times Square at the stroke of midnight.

Millions of people around the world watch the event, which has taken place almost every year since 1907.

We can thank members of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local 3 for making it happen. The Local 3 members are employed at the union's signatory contractor, AMA Sign & Electric. They are responsible for illuminating 32,256 LEDs on New Year's Eve and installing the Waterford Crystal triangles on the 11,000-pound orb.

What's Your Story?

Help us walk in your shoes. We're open to all union members, active, retired, laid off. Send us your story accompanied by a photo.

"We want rank and file members to help us to illustrate the rich, diverse tapestry of hard working men and women who make up the American labor movement. They are proud of their work and proud of the contributions they make to their communities," explains Union Label Department President Richard Kline. "We want to demonstrate to American consumers and businesses that union labor gives added value in quality and reliability to products and services that are bought and sold."

The pictures and stories we get will be published in the Label Letter and posted on the Department's website—and perhaps in posters and other promotional materials. E-mail a Walk in Your Shoes to: unionlabel@unionlabel.org

NLRB Issues Long-Awaited Joint Employer Rule



In October 2023, the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) unveiled its long-awaited finalized joint employer rule, marking a significant step towards protecting the rights of American workers. This rule, which has been the subject of extensive debate and legal challenges for years, clarifies and strengthens the standards for determining when two or more employers can be considered joint employers, and how they share responsibility for labor law violations. The NLRB's move is a commendable effort to provide workers with more security and ensure that their rights are upheld.

UNDERSTANDING JOINT EMPLOYERS

Joint employment occurs when two or more employers share control over a worker's terms and conditions of employment. This concept is pivotal in labor law because it determines the legal responsibilities of employers regarding labor standards, workers' rights, and collective bargaining. For years, the definition of joint employment has been a source of confusion and contention, making it challenging to hold employers accountable for labor law violations.

THE NLRB'S FINALIZED RULE

The NLRB's finalized joint employer rule is a response to this ambiguity and confusion. The new rule outlines a clear standard for determining when multiple entities should be considered joint employers. It focuses on whether each employer exercises "substantial direct and immediate control" over essential employment terms, such as hiring, firing, wages, hours, and supervision. This standard provides a more straightforward and comprehensive framework for determining joint employer status.

WHY IT'S NECESSARY

- **Protecting Workers' Rights:** The NLRB's rule is necessary to protect workers' rights in an era of evolving employment relationships, such as subcontracting, franchise operations, and the gig economy. By establishing a clear standard for joint employment, the rule ensures that workers are not left without protection due to complex, multi-layered employment arrangements. This clarification helps empower workers to assert their rights and seek redress for labor law violations.

- **Legal Accountability:** The rule fosters accountability among employers. With a clearer definition of joint employment, it becomes easier to hold multiple employers responsible for violations of labor laws, including wage theft, unfair labor practices, and violations of the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA). This holds employers accountable and discourages exploitative practices.

- **Promoting Fairness:** The NLRB's rule promotes fairness by preventing employers from evading their obligations under labor laws through intricate contractual structures. Workers should not be left in a legal limbo when seeking remedies

for mistreatment, and the rule ensures they have a clear path to justice.

- **Certainty for Employers:** The rule also benefits employers by providing clarity and reducing legal uncertainty. Employers can now better understand their responsibilities and potential liabilities when engaging in joint employment relationships. This allows for better compliance with labor laws and reduces the risk of costly legal disputes.
- **Encouraging Collective Bargaining:** The rule supports the ability of workers to engage in collective bargaining, which is a fundamental right. Clearer standards for joint employment encourage employers to negotiate with workers' representatives and maintain good-faith relationships.

The rule is a crucial development that bolsters the protection of workers' rights and fosters fairness and accountability in the labor market. Ultimately, the NLRB's rule is a victory for workers and a significant stride towards a more just and equitable labor landscape.

SAG-AFTRA: ‘We worked hard... didn’t cave... got the deal we needed’



After 118 days of being on the picket lines, SAG-AFTRA leaders announced on November 8, that they had approved a tentative agreement with the major studios. The months-long strike affected thousands of workers and crippled much of the Los Angeles entertainment industry.

The SAG-AFTRA negotiating committee, in a message to members said, “we have arrived at a contract that will enable SAG-AFTRA members from every category to

“we have arrived at a contract that will enable SAG-AFTRA members from every category to build sustainable careers. Many thousands of performers now and into the future will benefit from this work.”

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While the terms of the agreement have not yet been made public, the committee said the three-year deal was “valued at over \$1 billion.”

SAG-AFTRA members walked out on July 14, joining members of the Writers Guild of America (WGA) and launching the twin strikes, the first in the industry since 1960. WGA members spent more than four months on the picket lines before reaching a new contract agreement in early September.

Both the WGA and SAG-AFTRA strikes exposed industry fears regarding the use of Artificial Intelligence (AI). The two unions worried AI could be used to create digital replicas of performers, augment script writing, or replace actual actors in the background of projects. The shift to streaming was also at the forefront of both strikes. WGA writers and SAG-AFTRA members said they have been losing income and residuals as the popularity of streaming services have grown.

In its statement announcing the end of the strike, SAG-AFTRA said that the agreement would protect members from the threat of AI, and for the first time establish a streaming participation bonus.

WGA’s deal also included provisions placing guardrails around the use of generative AI.

Biden Executive Order Addresses AI



AI has garnered a lot of attention lately. So much so that in late October, President Biden signed a groundbreaking executive order that directly addresses AI technologies and mandates a comprehensive assessment of AI’s impact on the labor market.

The order directs federal agencies to identify areas where AI may lead to job displacement and requires them to propose strategies to reskill workers, foster job mobility, and protect labor rights.

Other key provisions of the order call for the development of AI systems that are transparent, accountable, and free from bias. It requires the establishment of an AI Ethics Committee to develop ethical guidelines for AI development, deployment, and usage. And it encourages international cooperation on AI standards and ethics with like-minded nations.

The directive acknowledges the transformative potential of AI and the challenges it poses, emphasizing the need for ethical AI development, robust worker protections, and continued investment in research and development.

Proponents say the executive order sets a significant precedent for responsible AI governance, ensuring that the United States remains a global leader in AI innovation while prioritizing the well-being and job security of its workforce.

Shawn Fain: A Fierce Leader for Today's UAW



Shawn Fain, the current President of the United Automobile Workers (UAW), has emerged as a prominent voice in advocating for the rights and well-being of his members and all workers across the United States. He is a surprise leader – ascending to office in a run-off election after the Department of Labor stepped in and ordered the UAW to hold a direct representation election. When in the first round of voting, no candidate won a clean majority, a run-off election was held, and Fain won by just a few hundred votes.

Sworn in this past March, Fain had to get to work quickly bargaining with the big three automakers. Fain had been in bargaining before, but only as a team member, not as a lead negotiator. He had little time to put a team in place.

“I was sworn in on the Sunday, end of March, and that Monday through Wednesday, we were running our bargaining convention. I had no press, no agenda, no nothing when I showed up on Monday for the convention. I had no idea of what was even on anything,” Fain said in an interview with the Intercept.

Because of the nature of his rise to the presidency at UAW, Fain looked to outside sources to help him gain a fresh perspective on the union’s approach to bargaining.

“I just felt like we were so entrenched in a way of doing things in the UAW. And I saw that, even me coming up with 29 years. I mean, it’s ingrained in you, in how we do things. So, I thought it was

imperative to bring in an outside set of eyes for people to look at things with a fresh perspective and give us insight. And then utilize the people we have, the UAW people at that level, and then come up with a holistic plan for how we want to approach this.”

Just seven months later, after running one of the most infamous strikes in recent history, the UAW secured all three of their tentative agreements with the Big Three. While the agreements didn’t get the 40% raise UAW’s members were demanding or the 32-hour workweek they had been seeking at the start of negotiations, the agreements did include a 25% raise over four-and-a-half years, billions of dollars in new product commitments at Detroit Three plants, progress on ending the two-tier wage system that has dogged the union and major inroads into its demand for what Fain calls “a just transition” to electric vehicles.

Unfortunately, it failed to achieve its goal of restoring traditional pensions and retiree health care benefits for hourly workers hired after 2007.

Fain points out that the stand-up strike also affected members unlike he’d seen in years.

“Our membership and our leadership are unified like I’ve never seen in my 29 years. And that’s an awesome thing to look at in seven months.”

TRASH OFFERS TRASHED

Part of that unity can be attributed to ability to inspire members. Videos for members featured him throwing automaker contract offers into the garbage can calling them “trash” and “insulting.” In one member video, he wore an “Eat the Rich” t-shirt.

“This trashcan is overflowing with the bulls— that the Big Three continue to peddle,” he said. “We’re all fed up with living in a world that values profits over people. We’re all fed up with seeing the rich get richer while the rest of us just continue to scrape by. We’re all fed up with corporate greed and together we’re going to fight like hell to change it. The race to the bottom ends September 14.”

He also points out how this strike and the subsequent tentative agreement has inspired others.

“When the UAW was founded, my grandparents’ generation left poverty and destitution in the South, they moved North, they got jobs at UAW factories, and it changed their lives. It was a life-changing job. We haven’t been that in the last couple of decades. This contract gets us back to setting the standard again, and that’s why it’s so important. To get back to setting the standard, to lifting the standard for everybody else, and then just building on that.”

The UAW’s stunning wins at the bargaining table have been widely hailed as a possible turning point for struggling blue-collar workers across numerous industries to finally achieve a middle-class lifestyle.

President Joe Biden joined striking workers on one of the UAW’s picket lines in Michigan, the first time a sitting president had done so. President Biden also met Fain and other UAW members at a Stellantis Belvidere plant in Illinois that the automaker closed earlier this year. In their negotiations, the union won the reopening of the plant, saving 1,200 jobs.

Autoworkers, both union and non-union, have been hit particularly hard over the years in a struggling US manufacturing sector. Hourly wages in auto plants, adjusted for inflation, have fallen 10.2% since 2019, according to Labor Department figures cited by the Wall Street Journal.

The UAW has lost thousands of factory workers as automakers closed a staggering 65 plants over the past 20 years, according to the union. Those days are over, Fain said.

“In the new UAW, we’re not leaving anybody behind.”

Days after the tentative Detroit automaker agreements were reached, Toyota and Honda announced pay hikes for their U.S. hourly employees. It’s thought that other foreign automakers will raise wages as well to stave off UAW organizing attempts.

But its success at the Detroit Three at a time of widespread labor activism, puts the UAW in its strongest position in decades to organize other automakers.

The tentative contracts “taught companies not to underestimate us,” Fain said. “We win when others see what we achieved and stand up for themselves.”

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EndNotes



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By Rich Kline, *President, UL&STD*

The Tough Got Going



Renowned NFL coach Vince Lombardi, famously said, "When the going gets tough, the tough get going." Well, some tough unions and their tough members got going and confronted and won against their billionaire employers.

The victory of the UAW in its fight for a share of the rewards enjoyed by their employers, Ford, GM and Stellantis, is resonating through the American workplace. Workers at non-union auto industry plants are asking how they can do better. The answer is simple: join the union.

SAG-AFTRA's months-long strike against billion dollar entertainment giants illuminated issues like the impact of Artificial Intelligence on creative workers. The Writers Guild strike which settled earlier also had AI concerns. Getting a fair share of profits for the work they do were also at the heart of these action.

The Culinary Workers in Las Vegas reached an agreement with one casino without striking. The deal they reached might be a model for other casino resorts.

In all of these instances the solidarity shown by other unions, their leaders and members, aided striking and protesting workers. At a recent meeting of the AFL-CIO Executive Council, UAW President Shawn Fain thankfully acknowledged the widespread support that his union's members had enjoyed.

Graduate students, who do much of the basic work, at large universities have and are trying to organize their workplaces. They are underpaid or unpaid, suffer high rates of harassment and are threatened with the loss of their fellowships when they attempt to form a union. But they have been successful at Cornell, the California university system and elsewhere. Emory University in Atlanta may be nearing union representation.

Workers, both union members and those who are unorganized, have been inspired by the struggle for justice at such companies as Starbucks, Amazon and REI. Successes won by union members will encourage more action and more organizing. The fights for fairness require toughness and union workers and those who aspire to belong to unions have shown their resolve.