



COMMUNICATIONS WORKERS OF AMERICA

LOCAL 1168, AFL-CIO



DATE: June 17, 2011

TO: All Kaleida Health CWA Local 1168 Members

FROM: Mary Brogcinski, Communication/Education Director
CWA Local 1168

RE: **CWA Local 1168 Kaleida Membership Update**

YOU, the Union Membership continue to show your support for the Bargaining Committee. There were 3,500 confirmed participants at the June 6, 2011 Informational Picket at the Kaleida Health BGH Campus. Anyone who was in attendance can attest to the fact, that Union Members (not bused in hired help from down state), were walking the picket line (all ages, all sites and all job titles) telling Kaleida to give the care-givers a fair contract. Thank you to all who attended and showed your support. If you could not make it... take the time to thank someone who could. We are all in this together – *Unionism!*

Union Members came to the June 7th Membership Meeting to get information about bargaining and have their questions answered. The well attended meetings were scheduled for 7:30 am, 9:00 am, 1:00 pm, 4:00 pm and 6:30 pm. President Klein covered the informational picket and discussed the progression of negotiations.

The following information is a summary of some of the questions that have been asked since the informational picket. Please call the Union Office with your question at 816-1168.

1. Kaleida claims they were surprised by the informational picket since the Unions have not countered their proposals. Has the Union countered?

The Unions could not counter the employer's proposals on economics, because the employer did not present the entire package until the day the picket notice was given. The Unions received some economic proposals early in bargaining, but could not counter until the whole proposal was presented. In addition to the other give-backs in the economic proposals, the wages were so concessionary that the Bargaining Committee gave the informational picket notice after receiving them.

2. Why can't the Union put out the specifics of what Kaleida is proposing?

The specifics of the proposals cannot be put in an update because the proposals remain open and are subject to change until tentatively agreed (TA'd) upon. The details can change from hour to hour, and/or bargaining session to bargaining session. The information would not necessarily be accurate by the time the Membership received it. The best way to get the information is by coming to a meeting or talking to an authorized Union Rep (Chief Steward, Steward, Officer or Director). The economic articles have NOT been TA'd as of today! The specifics will be discussed at the meetings at the strike vote on June 28th. This allows the Membership to receive the most up to date information from the people bargaining the contract prior to voting. Bargaining is still scheduled to continue through June 27th.

3. There are rumors going around, what should we believe?

The Bargaining Committee has the most up to date information about bargaining. Managers are not bargaining the contract and do not have accurate information. Some managers are giving absolutely **WRONG** information. Examples:

- ***The concessions will only affect BGH*** – This is **not true**; ALL the articles affect every bargaining unit; the concessions are not specific to one site, department or job title. All health insurance, pensions, PTO and wages for all employees will be affected.
- ***If you don't show up to vote for the strike it is counted as a YES vote.*** – This is **not true**; only the casted votes are counted. We need every union Member to show up and cast their vote. Do not leave this life changing decision to other people. We all need to vote. There are **NO ABSENTEE BALLOTS** for this election, every Member must come and vote.
- ***The Union Representatives, Officers and Directors will be paid when you are on strike.*** – This is **not true**; ALL of the CWA Union reps and Bargaining Committee Members are covered by the union contract. **President John Klein will NOT be paid by the National Union.** If we go out on strike, we all go out on strike. The defense fund payments start on day 15 at \$200 per week for each Member. On day 29, the payment is \$300 per week for the duration of the strike. To receive money from the defense fund, the Member must participate in picket duties of a minimum of 16 hours per week. After 7 weeks on strike the Members are eligible for unemployment benefits. If the employer hires permanent replacements during the strike, unemployment benefits will start immediately.
- ***You will be without health insurance.*** – This is **partially true**; Kaleida will cancel our health insurance if we go out on strike. But, **the Union defense fund will cover medical expenses** as needed. The Member need only submit the receipt or the bill to the Defense Fund Committee for reimbursement or payment. The committee will be put in place if a 10 day notice is given. The defense fund will pick up **COBRA costs** for those who have medical expenses exceeding monthly COBRA costs (~ \$507.82 for single coverage and \$1,335.50 for family – quoted from *Kaleida KYI Newsletter*). Loss of health insurance during a labor dispute is a “qualifying event” for Members who may have other available health insurance options (ie. a spouse has available health insurance coverage or you have other concurrent employment). Please contact the HR departments of those companies if this option is available to you. The Defense Fund Committee will help with other financial hardships as well.
- ***Calling a STRIKE VOTE is a union tactic.*** – This is **not true**; the Unions take this decision very seriously. The Bargaining Committee is taking the next step necessary to ensure we all get a fair contract. The committee has determined that Kaleida Health's economic proposals, as well as the attack on work-rules, would be detrimental for the 7,700 Members of all three Unions. In order for all the Members to get a fair contract, we the Members, must show Kaleida:
 - The Bargaining Committee is **OUR VOICE**
 - We (the Union - all 7,700 of us) will do whatever it takes to get one, including strikeThe committee believes they have done all they can to get a fair contract, and the decision is now up to the rest of us.

The next few weeks are going to be very difficult. We must stand together united – WE ARE ALL THE UNION! If you hear rumors, call the office for clarification. Correct managers if they are giving Union Members, doctors or visitors erroneous information. Report any badgering, threatening or inappropriate comments from Kaleida Management. Document the event, write statements and get witness statements, and then call the Union office to report the event. Violations in labor law during negotiations will be reported to the National Labor Relations Board with charges filed. Know your rights as a Union Member. YOU have a VOICE! Together we can get through this.