

PRIVATE SECTOR SHOPS

AUDUBON LAUNCHES MOBILIZATION CAMPAIGN



In October 2022, members of the Audubon Society mobilizing committee of the union at the Audubon Society, "The Bird Union", came to CWA 1180 to launch a mobilizing campaign in support of their ongoing, inaugural contract bargaining. The Audubon Society management continues to push back on the content and pace of contract negotiations, thus the mobilizing and bargaining committees continue to develop strategies to organize and engage their membership in preparation for action. Mobilizing Committee Members, along with the private sector team at CWA 1180, sent out 204 packages to Bird Union members with Bird Union-branded sweatbands, water bottles, pins, and Agree/Disagree signs for members to use during virtual bargaining. At the end of October, the Bird Union kicked off this mobilizing campaign by wearing their sweatbands to a virtual, all-staff meeting as a signal of their collective power and continued dedication to fighting for a fair contract. We look forward to seeing how the Bird Union will continue to leverage these materials as their negotiations continue.

In the nine months of bargaining, CWA has filed two unfair labor practices ("ULPs") against the Audubon Society. The first ULP was regarding Audubon's "Career and Salary" plan, an attempt to harmonize job descriptions, update salaries, and create a process of promotions that aren't seen as bias or subject to nepotism using recommendations from the organization Mercer. As these recommendations and information have a heavy impact on the bargaining unit, Local 1180 has requested that Audubon turn over all of the information and data of Mercer's work so it can be reviewed before the Union submits proposals.

"CWA believes our bargaining committee has a right to that information under the law and filed its first ULP so that bargaining can move forward," said Local 1180's **Private Sector Shop Steward Christopher Thomas**.

The second ULP was filed when the Audubon Society changed its staff's health care plan offerings during bargaining, which is a violation of the status quo, claiming they are willing to bargain with the Union about any interim

changes to health care while rejecting all of the Union's counter proposals. Audubon is not allowed to change the terms and conditions of work during bargaining, which includes health care plans, without the Union's approval as is legally required.

"They made these changes without even telling their managers and as such, CWA has made its second filing," Thomas said. "Despite Audubon's claims to respect its staff's decision to unionize, their senior leadership repeatedly acts in ways to make bargaining as contentious as possible, including withholding information and making unilateral decisions. Then they wonder why their staff is angry." ■



BARGAINING UPDATES



Members of **Edible Schoolyard** have ratified their second contract with the educational organization Edible Schoolyard in Brooklyn. The most recent contract includes significant increases to the minimum salaries for new staff and an average of 14.2% in salary increases for current staff retroactive to July 1, 2022. This increase helped bring staff who have been severely underpaid for years up to industry pay standards.

The contract also adds updated language to the discharge and discipline, non-discrimination, and layoff sections of this agreement. "Members are pleased with the wins that we were able to achieve for this two-year contract," said Local 1180's **Private Sector Shop Steward Christopher Thomas**. ■



Human Rights First members voted to ratify their next contract that includes significantly higher minimum salaries, annual salary increases of 3.5%, a 4.5% salary increase for this year retroactive to May 1, 2022, and longevity increase. The contract also includes language regarding acting/covering pay, and additional increases for promotions. Finally, the members also won some limitation on the businesses ability to use contractors to do the work that falls within the bargaining unit, a commitment by the organization to hire people from traditionally disadvantaged backgrounds, include Juneteenth and Indigenous People's day to their holidays, and expand their non-discrimination language. ■

Union staff and members continue to bargain contracts at the following shops:

- Human Rights Watch
- Open Society Foundations
- Audubon Society
- Physicians for Human Rights
- Books and Rattles
- Type Media
- StoryCorps

Beginning in 2023, CWA Local 1180 will be bargaining contracts at the Javits Center, Sunrise Movement, and Type Media. ■

Have an **UPDATE** or **NEWS** from your Private Sector Shop? Send information and photos to Staff Rep Chris Thomas at cthomas@cwa1180.org