



Union Voice

District of Columbia

State of Maryland

Commonwealth of Virginia

Local 25 members' political involvement pays off.

“OUR LOCAL MADE MAJOR STRIDES IN GAINING POLITICAL CLOUT IN 2014.”

Candidates are eager to gain our Union's support.

If more members volunteer, we will do even better in the future.

Being active in the political process is vital to building the power of our Union and to ensuring that our Union grows and becomes ever stronger in its ability to win better contracts. When candidates see how much effort Local 25 members put into political campaigns, they are encouraged to do what it takes to make sure Local 25 endorses them.

For example, during the most recent primary and general election campaigns, Local 25 members vigorously canvassed and worked the phones for Union-endorsed candidates:

- Members knocked on close to 6,500 doors.
- Members made close to 35,000 phone calls in support of Union-endorsed candidates.
- Members distributed more

than 15,000 pieces of literature.

- Local 25 members and staffers accomplished a grand total of almost 41,500 voter contact attempts.
- Members and staffers completed 113 volunteer shifts. (A “shift” equals one hour of phone banking or canvassing.)
- On the day of the elections, Local 25 members and staffers were stationed at seven key, highly visible, polling places.

What's more, through political involvement in the last elections, Local 25 members helped educate the media, the public and the candidates themselves about what is needed to ensure that the rights of hotel workers are protected and that they receive the wages, benefits and respect that they deserve. For instance, to help candidates for public office understand the work lives of Local 25 members, the Union launched the “Day in the Life” program so that candidates can work in a hotel with a member. Muriel Bowser, Local 25's endorsed candidate for DC Mayor, “shadowed” Room Attendant Juanita King at the Marriott Marquis.

Because of our Union's high level of political involvement, it's no wonder that whether Local 25 endorsed candidates win or lose, many candidates are eager to gain the support of the Local.

Of course, our Union works hard to make sure our endorsed candidates win because we endorse candidates who are committed to supporting the rights and interests of working families. We urge that if they win public office they will support the adoption of policies that will help working people and that protect the rights of workers to organize and to have a voice on the job.



RENE SAINZ, DOUBLETREE BELLMAN AND LEADER, CANVASSING

Furthermore, we urge the candidates we endorse to support measures that require hotel developers who receive public subsidies to ensure that the local community benefits from their projects.

During the recent elections, Local 25 partnered with several other unions to help our endorsed candidates win by employing cutting-edge techniques to maximize our impact while conserving our resources. Our partners included the UNITE HERE International Union, the Laborers union, Local 36 of the Fire Fighters union, Council 20 of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees, and the DC-area district of the Service Employees International Union Local 32BJ, which represents property service workers.

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At Colonial Williamsburg, the fight for a good contract continues.

Negotiations for a good contract are still going on at Colonial Williamsburg. Management is demanding take-backs in healthcare, but Local 25 is fighting back.

Local 25 Executive Secretary-Treasurer John Boardman and General Counsel Stephanie Steer-Jones are going to Williamsburg every week as talks continue.

Bartenders and Servers: Check IDs!

Be sure it's legal to serve alcoholic beverages to your customer. Remember, the customer could be a minor, a secret shopper or an undercover agent. A citation for serving to minors could result in the loss of the liquor license, the closing of the bar and the loss of your job.

Where I stand

John Boardman, Executive Secretary-Treasurer

Ferguson and the need for the POWER UP program

CHANGE HAPPENS WHEN PEOPLE UNITE.

The most important thing is to get involved.

The Tuesday night before Thanksgiving, along with other Local 25 members and staff, I represented our Union in a march through downtown Washington, DC, to protest the outrageous Ferguson grand jury decision. While I had hoped for justice, I think I knew in advance that none



JOHN BOARDMAN

for unity. One speaker said, "There are many groups and organizations here tonight; join one. If you don't find one you like, start your own. The most important thing is that you are here and involved. This is how change happens."

I agree with the speaker. This is, indeed, how change happens. Those in power will never make changes on their own. It takes persistent and continuous pressure from people uniting together to expose an injustice and to force those in power to act.

The march on Tuesday wound its way through downtown. The marchers chanted "Hands up, don't shoot," "black lives matter," and "no justice, no peace."

Along the way, the marchers entered the Walmart on H Street and demanded justice for low paid Walmart workers. That action highlighted the direct connection between racial and economic injustices. If black lives don't matter in the street, then abusing workers in a Walmart doesn't seem to matter, either. Corporate powers feel free to exploit workers because they are smugly confident that across our country, people without power will never try to gain some power.

would come because the prosecutor who had presented the case to the grand jury was biased.

More than 1,000 people took to the streets of DC that Tuesday. The marchers were a diverse group of people, mostly young. They joined thousands across the country in more than 120 cities who were rallying to demand justice.

Before the DC march began, we held a rally in Mount Vernon Square. Speaker after speaker talked of the need for change and called



IN WASHINGTON, DC, LOCAL 25 REPRESENTATIVES JOINED MORE THAN ONE THOUSAND PEOPLE, LIKE THOSE SHOWN ABOVE, MARCHING TO DEMAND JUSTICE IN FERGUSON.

Injustice and oppression happen when power goes unchecked - whether it is the police or corporations. Each of us has a responsibility to commit ourselves to confronting injustice. We have to make that commitment as individuals and by joining together. That is why we are building the Local 25 POWER UP program. Whether it's Ferguson, Walmart or the Trump hotel, we must always understand that when there is no justice there can be no peace.

As Fredrick Douglass, a great anti-slavery leader said, "Power concedes nothing without a demand. It never did and it never will. Find out just what any people will quietly submit to and you have found out the exact measure of injustice and wrong which will be imposed upon them, and these will continue till they are resisted with either words or blows, or both. The limits of tyrants are prescribed by the endurance of those whom they oppress."



LOCAL 25 JOINS MARCH FOR WORKERS RIGHTS. By building coalitions with community groups and other unions, our Union is increasing the power of members. The fight for justice on the job includes all workers. That's why Local 25 staff members joined a recent rally in Washington, DC, in support of the rights of workers employed by Walmart. The rally was sponsored by the United Food and Commercial Workers Local 400, Jobs with Justice, Our Walmart, Making Change at Walmart, and other groups.

People who participated in the rally demanded that Walmart workers be paid at least \$15 an hour and are given consistent, full time work hours. After the rally,



participants marched to the headquarters of the Walton Family Foundation. The Walton family, which owns the majority of Walmart, is growing its \$149 billion in wealth while on the average a Walmart associate earns only \$16,000 a year.

A rally leaflet said, "Walmart exemplifies the problems created by income inequality in this country."

PHOTO ABOVE AT RIGHT, LEFT TO RIGHT: Local 25 Business Agent Doris Hooks, Member Volunteer Organizer LouMisher Roberts and Business Agents Maxwell Korvah, Emebet Samuel-Kassa and Jayson Harrison.

Union members protest tax breaks for developer.

CORPORATION HAS EVIDENTIALLY RENEGED ON PLEDGE TO THE COMMUNITY.

“We want the developers to keep their promise.”

Campaign is launched.



REGINA WELCH ADDRESSES MEETING OF ADVISORY NEIGHBORHOOD COUNCIL 1C.

Local 25 members packed the room at a meeting of Advisory Neighborhood Council (ANC) 1C to report that the Sydell Corporation, a hotel developer, seems to have reneged on its promise to the community. ANC 1C represents residents of Adams Morgan. A Sydell spokesperson had pledged at a community meeting that the corporation would sign a Labor Peace Agreement (LPA) that, among other things, would guarantee workers the right to be represented by Local 25. Such

representation would, in turn, guarantee that workers receive wages and benefits that would allow them to live secure lives and to contribute to maintaining a healthy tax base in DC.

Local 25 and Sydell have been engaged with each other since 2010 and the understanding has been that the corporation would sign a LPA. During this time, the DC Council gave Sydell a tax break to build its hotel.

However, to date, Sydell has not signed a LPA.

Many community members also attended the ANC meeting to support Local 25 members. At the meeting, Local 25 Leader Regina Welch, a Bartender at the Embassy Suites Convention Center Hotel, said: “We want the developers to keep their promise. ... We want to make decent rates. We want to have health benefits. We want to live with dignity and pride.”

She added: “The developers don’t need that tax abatement ... it’s benefiting them, but it’s not benefiting us.

What about our rent? The rent is no joke in Adams Morgan. If I wasn’t a union member, I would never be able to afford to live here. ... We would like for citizens to be able to make enough money to live here.”

The presentation at the ANC 1C meeting was the kick-off of a vigorous campaign by Local 25.

All members interested in participating should contact Naomi Klein or Dida El-Sourady at the Local 25 office (202-737-2225).

Meet Regina Welch

“I FIGHT TO MAKE SURE OUR MEMBERS ARE TREATED FAIRLY.”

“The union inspires me.”

“Somebody has to stand up for what’s right,” says Regina Welch, a Bartender and Leader at the Embassy Suites Convention Center hotel. “Somebody has to fight to make sure our members are treated fairly, are paid fairly and are able to work in a healthy and productive environment.”

Regina, who has been a member of Local 25 for nine years, takes her job as a Leader very, very seriously. She’s volunteered personal time and money and has taken full days off to attend meetings.

“Being a Leader is sometimes a very difficult job,” she says, “but the Union inspires me; I’ve learned so much working for the Union. It has been really tremendous.”

Regina makes it a point to help represent people from the entire hotel where she works, not just workers in her department. Furthermore, she has volunteered a lot of her time to support political candidates endorsed by Local 25.

For example, when Muriel Bowser was endorsed for DC Mayor by Local 25, Regina spent many hours working in the phone bank for her. Also, before Bowser addressed a meeting of the Local, Regina was chosen to brief her on the needs of hotel workers. Bowser won the election.

Recently, Local 25 members met with the members of Advisory Neighborhood Council (ANC) 1C to protest the fact that although the Sydell hotel development corporation was given a tax break, it appears to have reneged on its promise to sign a Labor Peace Agreement which would have guaranteed that workers have union rights and receive the wages and benefits needed to be secure. Regina spent a full day posting announcements of the meeting and encouraging community members to attend.

At the meeting itself, Regina gave a reasoned and passionate speech explaining the position of Local 25. “I’ve grown so much working with the Union,” Regina says, “and am honored by the faith the Union has put in me.”



REGINA WELCH PHONE-BANKING

At the Doubletree:

Additional worker hired, thanks to Local 25 members.

“THIS WAS A BIG VICTORY FOR US.”

Hiring an additional Laundry Attendant has helped to alleviate extremely stressful working conditions at the Doubletree Hotel – but it took Local 25 members to convince management to do so.

Several Doubletree Laundry Attendants had retired or quit, leaving the Laundry Department severely understaffed. As a result, some Laundry Attendants had to work at more than one station. Room Attendants were falling behind schedule because the linens they needed to make up rooms arrived late at each floor. What’s worse, because of the understaffing, Attendants could not keep up with the volume of linens being dropped down laundry chutes, which was creating a fire hazard.

Local 25 Laundry Leader Ahmad Ahmad brought the matter to the attention of Business Agent José Rivera who then contacted Jayson Harrison, Local 25’s Health and Safety Consultant. Harrison investigated the situation and recommended that an additional Laundry Attendant be hired.

When Rivera showed the findings of Harrison’s study to managers, they agreed to hire an additional worker.



DOUBLETREE LAUNDRY ATTENDANTS; INSET: LEADER AHMAD AHMAD

“This was a big victory for us,” said Leader Ahmad. “The Union did a thorough investigation and forced management to resolve the issue. I have been a Leader since 2010 and can see first-hand that we are solving a lot of problems.”

Ahmad added, “Most important, we are communicating a lot of information to members.”

Political action builds clout.

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Together, we mailed literature supporting DC Mayoral Candidate Muriel Bowser and exposing one of her opponents who had a record of being against the interests of most working families. Then, working with the Analyst Institute – an organization that had helped President Obama – we conducted polls that measured the mailings’ effectiveness. With this data, we were able to better target the mailings, making sure that every piece we sent had the maximum effect.

Local 25’s record for backing winning candidates in the recent elections is pretty good: Muriel Bowser, the candidate we backed for DC Mayor, won, as did Phil Mendelson, who we endorsed for Council Chair. Further, three of our endorsed candidates won seats on the DC Council: Brianne Nadeau, Kenyan McDuffie and Elissa Silverman. In Maryland, Brian Frosh, our candidate for Attorney General won, as did Peter Franchot, who ran for re-election as Comptroller.

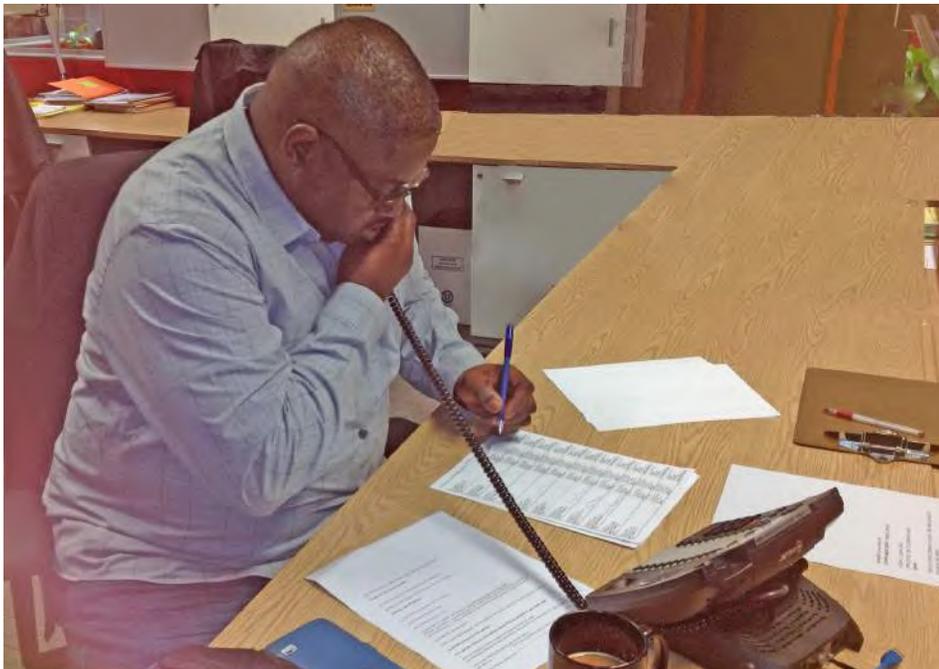
One measure of the influence Loc-

cal 25 had on the DC Mayoral election is this: Local 25 Executive Secretary-Treasurer John Boardman has been appointed as co-chair of Mayor-Elect Muriel Bowser’s Transition Team, which will help define the issues addressed by the Bowser Administration and the goals it will attempt to fulfill.

Most important, Local 25 will continuously monitor the candidates who won election to make sure they live up to their promises.

Boardman said: “Of course, we were disappointed that our endorsed candidates did not win in every race, especially the race for the governor of Maryland. But in that election, voters followed the nationwide trend of being angry with Democrats who they believed were not aggressively fighting for the interests of working people.”

He added: “All in all, though, our Local made major strides in gaining political clout in 2014. Nevertheless, I am convinced that if more Local 25 members volunteer for work in future elections, we will do even better. That’s a goal of the POWER UP program.”



WYMAN JONES, GAYLORD COOK AND LEADER, PHONE-BANKING

Joslyn Williams, president of the DC Metro Area Council, AFL-CIO, wrote the following in support of the of Local 25 members:

The Washington Post

OCTOBER 10, 2014

Inequality must be part of the election conversation.

In her Sept. 28 Local Opinions column, “Burying the race card,” Jonetta Rose Barras surmised that political campaign pieces created by a local labor union and featuring photographs of two African American hotel workers amounted to playing the “race card” in the District’s mayoral race. D.C. Council member David A. Catania (I-At Large), who is white and running for the job, quickly jumped on Ms. Barras’s bandwagon, labeling the photos “incendiary and racially coded.”

Aside from the distasteful demagoguery, it is a baseless charge, intended to smear the union. It’s not surprising, however, that both the candidate and columnist share this distorted point of view; neither really respects the right of workers to have a strong voice on the job.

The membership of this particular union, Unite Here Local 25, is overwhelmingly black and brown people. Perhaps, if Mr. Catania and Ms. Barras paid closer attention to the folks cleaning hotel rooms or vacuuming the carpet and scrubbing bathrooms in offices throughout the city, they might not be so quick to disparage the images of hard-working people who are proud to be the face of the service industry.

Their visibility is a reminder that the battle against inequality must be part of the conversations in this election. Too often, that is not the case. In a city where new restaurants and bars pop up every week, schools and recreation centers shut down in parts of the District without fanfare.

This, in a city where the income of the top 20 percent is more than \$250,000, the bottom 20 percent makes less than \$10,000 — a year!

How much longer can these glaring inequities in the nation’s capital be tolerated by city leaders? Who has the vision to make the District a great city that does not accept this growing gap between the haves and the have-nots? Which candidate can voters trust to make sure working people still have a voice and a place in the “New D.C.” that is emerging before our eyes?

Sadly, Mr. Catania has accused workers in unions who stood up for better pay and working conditions of using bullying tactics. But as the great labor leader A. Philip Randolph once said, “At the banquet table of nature there are no reserved seats.” Justice is never a handout.

Putting pictures of real, hard-working people of color in campaign literature ought to happen more often than it does.

Perhaps then everyone would know more about who’s doing the tough work in this city.

Members elect new Leaders.

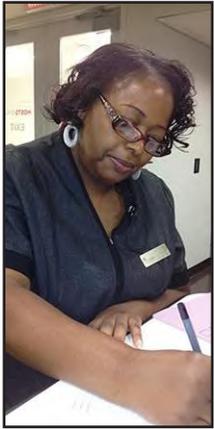
THEY WORK EVERY DAY TO MAKE OUR UNION STRONGER.

Members can help by volunteering through the POWER UP program.

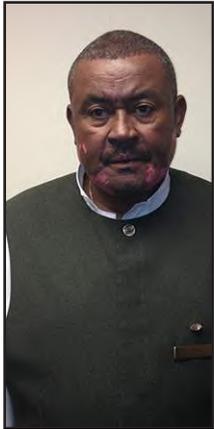
Local 25 members have elected eleven of their co-workers to the Leadership Committee since this past July. Leaders represent members in the workplace day to day. They help to enforce our contracts and keep Union members informed. Along with other

members, Leaders often represent our Union at important rallies and meetings. They work tirelessly to grow our Union, which means growing our strength. This, in turn, means winning better, more secure futures for all members. Recently, under the POWER

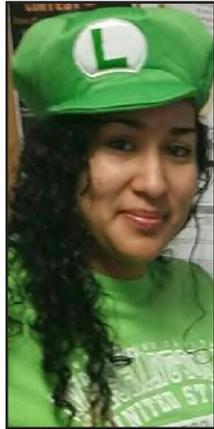
UP program, they have been encouraging all members to volunteer as much time as possible to helping our Union. Our benefits and wages are under attack and we can retain them only if members POWER UP. The newly elected Leaders are:



VERONICA WILLIAMS
Marriott Marquis
Public Area Attendant



BEYENE WELDMIKAEL
Mandarin Oriental
Houseman



BLANCA PARADA
Phoenix Park
Room Attendant



JAMES RUFFIN
Marriott Marquis
Houseman



LOUMISHER ROBERTS
W Hotel Cook



GREGORY GLASCO
Gaylord Cook



MARCO MENACHO
Gaylord Banquet Server



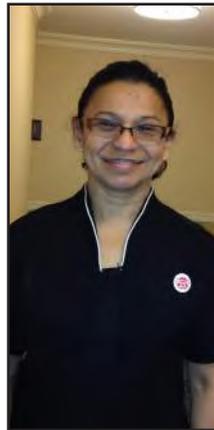
RICHARD GRAHAM
Marriott Marquis
Banquet Houseman



PAUL RUTEAU
Capital Hilton Cook



HIWOT ZEWELDERMARIAM
Capital Hilton
Bartender



MARITZA HERNANDEZ
Capital Hilton
Room Attendant

NEWLY ELECTED, BUT NOT SHOWN: Andres Henriquez, Fairfax Embassy Row Cook; Elaine Robertson, Marriott Marquis Room Attendant; Yanira Espinal, Marriott Marquis Room Attendant; Yvonne Andrews, Marriott Marquis Room Attendant; Elvis Amoako, Marriott Marquis Houseman.

INTERESTED IN BECOMING A LEADER? Contact your Business Agent prior to February, when new Leader training will begin. Call 202-737-2225.

IMPORTANT NOTICES:

Not working for at least a month? Get a Withdrawal Card.

Going on extended vacation, layoff or leave of absence? If for any reason you will not be working for at least one full calendar month, you may obtain a Withdrawal Card from the Union. A Withdrawal Card means you will not be charged for dues during the time you are not working. You may take out a Withdrawal Card in one of three ways:

- Visiting the Union office between the hours of 9am and 5pm Monday through Friday.
- Calling the Union office at 202-737-2225 and speaking with a Dues Officer (leaving a voicemail is not enough).
- Sending a letter or fax (202-393-3741) to the Union office with your full name, last 4 digits of your Social Security number and the reason you are requesting a Withdrawal Card. A letter or fax must include a current phone number where a Dues Officer can reach you to confirm your eligibility.

When you return to work, you will pay a Withdrawal Card reinstatement fee of \$19 plus the dues for the month in which you return.

You must be current on your dues through the month of request in order to take out a Withdrawal Card.
For details, call Francisco Gutierrez at 202-737-2225.

Vacation bid calendars must be posted by January 15.

If management does not post a vacation calendar for bids by January 15, please report this to a Union Intake Officer. Call 202-737-2225.

Article 6.3 of our contract states: "The Employer shall post a vacation calendar with available vacation slots on an annual basis on or before January 15. Vacations shall be bid in full week increments by classification seniority between January 15 and February 15 for the period March 1 of the current year to February 28 of the next year...."

Flu season is here: get your flu shots.

Protect yourselves and your co-workers. Get a flu shot. Under the Local 25 plan, Kaiser Permanente offers these shots at no cost to members at walk-in flu shot clinics.

For more information, visit kaiserpermanente.org or call the Kaiser 24-hour flu hotline at 1-800-482-4738.

**Don't miss vital
Union
information.**

WEBSITE:

[HTTP://WWW.DCHOTELWORKERS.ORG](http://www.dchotelworkers.org)

Features, news, information and past issues of the Union Voice.

FACEBOOK:

[HTTPS://WWW.FACEBOOK.COM/DCHOTELWORKERS](https://www.facebook.com/dchotelworkers)

Share posts and invite others to do the same.

TWITTER:

[#DCHOTELWORKERS](https://twitter.com/dchotelworkers)
Follow what's hot.

New Marriott Marquis members make Local 25 stronger.

PROUD, DUES-PAYING MEMBERS

It's official! More than 500 workers at the newly opened Marriott Marquis Hotel are now full-fledged, dues-paying members of Local 25.

They started working at the hotel in April and have now completed their 90 day probationary period. By swelling the ranks of Local 25, they are helping to make our Union stronger, because the larger we are, the more power we have. What's more, several Marriott Marquis members have volunteered for the POWER UP campaign to help protect the wages and benefits we have won over the years.

The vast majority of the Marquis workers have never belonged to a union before. When they worked at non-union hotels, they had no say in their workplaces and were afraid to even try to speak up about anything because they could be fired at the whim of management. Now, as Local 25 members, they have a say on the job and protection against being unfairly disciplined or fired.

Maurice Snipe, a Houseman at the



MARRIOTT MARQUIS WORKERS CELEBRATE THE SIGNING OF THEIR UNION CONTRACT.

Marquis, said: "I feel so confident coming to work. When I was at a non-union hotel, I didn't feel that empowerment. When you speak out at a non-union hotel, there could be repercussions at any

time. Now I have a voice. My opinion is important. I feel heard because now I have a union. It's empowering to be part of a union, to have people listen to you, and to have their respect."



MAURICE SNIPE

Why pay Union dues?

DUES YIELD GREAT DIVIDENDS: OUR CONTRACTS GUARANTEE WAGES, BENEFITS, PROTECTIONS.

Our Union is not a vending machine. To get something from a vending machine, all you have to do is put money in. This is not true of Local 25. For our Union to be effective, we all must participate actively. One way we all participate is by chipping in to pay for the costs of running our Local. We pay union dues established democratically, by a vote of the members.

It's sometimes hard for unionized hotel workers to understand that management is not paying us good wages and solid benefits because management cares about us. No. Bottom line: management cares first and foremost about making a profit, and would, if it could,

pay us as little as possible. As unionized workers, we receive good wages, benefits and job protection because workers like us in past years risked everything to unite, form a union, and force management to treat them with dignity. These workers knew that as individuals, they were powerless against the hotel owners and managements.

It takes money to run any organization such as a church, a club or a union. The only source of our Union's funding comes from each member's fair share of dues – not from the government or from anywhere else. Union dues pay for contract negotiation expenses and for the lawyers, arbitrators

and mediators it often takes to protect our rights. Further, dues pay for the Union's office space and for expenses such as computers, mailings, and the services of staff members. (In Local 25, most staff members themselves pay dues.)

In addition, our dues pay for training, so that staff, Leaders and members will be effective in representing members and in organizing new workers. As we grow bigger, we can win better wages and benefits. Also, a portion of our dues goes into a fund to help members if there is a strike or other emergency.

A Local 25 member might ask,

"I've never been in trouble, I've never used the Union, so why should I have to pay dues?" The truth is, every Union member benefits from that membership every day, every hour and every minute because our wages, benefits and on-the-job protections are guaranteed in iron clad contracts won by our Union. The contracts also guarantee vacation rights, wage raises, sick leave, retirement benefits, and much more. They can cover everything from hours of work and room quotas to uniforms and supplies.

On all matters big and small, our

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Long term disability payments

One member's fight helped all members.

"IF WE DON'T PAY ATTENTION, HOTELS CAN GET AWAY WITH ANYTHING."

"I always report my tips."

It's a basic principle of unionism: when one union member suffers an injustice, all members do. This principle was vividly illustrated recently by Local 25 Member Andjelija Marcetic-Gaurilovic. By winning justice for herself, she helped all members.

Everybody calls Andjelija "Angel." She's been a Restaurant Server at the Marriott Wardman Park for 30 years and a Leader there for 20. She has been on long-term disability leave and noticed that she was being short-changed. The payments she was receiving did not include a percentage of the tips she had earned and reported.

Article 14.4 of the Local 25 contract states:

"The Employer will provide a long term disability insurance policy ... Benefits will be fifty percent of the employee's regular straight time wage rate (which rate will include reported tips)."

Angel reported the matter to the Union, and Business

Agent Stephanie Steer-Jones held a meeting with management to discuss it. An investigation revealed the fact that not only was Angel being short-changed, but so were many other hotel workers who were out on disability. The insurance policy held by the Marriott Wardman, and by all hotels belonging to the Hotel Association, did not call for disability payments that included compensation for tips.

As a result of Angel's complaint and the Union's action, the Hotel Association's long term disability insurance policy has been changed. From now on, all long-term disability payments for all workers in all downtown hotels will include all reported tips.

Angel said, "The hotels tried to get away with something but we caught them. That's exactly why it's important to stay involved. If we don't pay attention, they can get away with anything."

She added, "I always declare my tips. It's important for taxes, Social Security, disability, and everything else. Marriott was hoping no one declared their tips."

**Under Union contract
Hotels, not
workers, pay 100%
of health insurance
cost increase.**

Thanks to the power of Local 25's contract, members will not pay a penny more for health insurance, even though starting the first of the year the cost is going up by 4.3 percent per hour per member.

Under the Union contract, management will pay the entire increase.

Thirty five percent of the members of Local 25 have single person coverage and 65 percent have family coverage.

Need help or information?

Save these phone numbers:

- **General Benefits information:**
VILMA BUTLER: 202-737-2225
- **Pension benefit information and applying for retirement:**
CALL PRISCILLA CALDERON, PENSION OFFICE
410-683-6500 EXT. 7511
- **Work problem can't be resolved by Leader or Union Captain?**
CALL INTAKE OFFICER: 202-737-2225
- **For dentists near you:**
GROUP DENTAL SERVICE: 800-242-0450
- **For opticians near you:**
EYEMED VISION CARE 866-723-0513
- **To check eligibility for dental and optical benefits:**
BENEFITS OFFICE 301-459-3020
- **Lawyers handling non-work issues:**
REGAN & ASSOCIATES 202-393-6000
- **Worker's Compensation lawyers:**
ASHCRAFT & GEREL 202-783-6400

Local 25 member wins right to wear on-the-job uniform that meets her religious standards.

"I WANT EVERYONE TO KNOW WE HAVE A STRONG UNION."

For a long time, says Merima Fessaso, a Room Attendant at the Hay Adams hotel, "I had been wanting to fulfill an aspect of my religious faith by wearing garments at work that conform to my beliefs. But I was scared to do so." Finally, she found the courage to wear a head scarf on the job and discovered that her fears had been well-founded. A supervisor ordered her to remove the scarf. She refused and was sent home.

Fessaso was upset at being ordered to violate her beliefs and angry at the way she had been treated by management. A Local 25 member for six years, she called the Union office and reported the matter to an Intake Officer. Business Agent Maxwell Korvah then met with Fessaso to learn the facts in detail. Soon afterward, Korvah and Fessaso met with a representative of the Hay Adams management.

They pointed out that wearing the scarf in no way hinders Fessaso from carrying out her duties on the job and that in such a case, management should accommodate the religious beliefs of workers.

Management relented and agreed to get Fessaso a uniform that conforms to her religious beliefs and covers her arms, legs and limbs, and includes a head scarf.

"It's a big deal for me to be able

to wear these garments at work," Fessaso said. "Now I know that because I belong to the Union I can exercise my rights. I want everyone to know we have a strong Union."



MERIMA FESSASO

Union dues

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Union fights for the highest possible benefits in contract negotiations with management, whose representatives always try to keep wages and benefits as low as possible and protections as weak as possible. Our right to have a Union to bargain for us as a group is protected by law, and our Union's goals in bargaining are set by members. Once a contract is agreed to, it has the weight of law.

Hotels are bought and sold, closed down and renovated. Without our Union, we would not be able to stop management from taking advantage of us. With our Union contract in place, we are protected.

Get along well with your supervisor? Good! But what happens if you get a new one who does not treat you with respect? Without a union, you would be powerless to do anything about it. However, with our Union contract in place, each and every supervisor is required to meet certain standards. If they don't, we have the right to complain or file a grievance. Of

course, paying dues does not guarantee we'll win every time, but our Union representatives will fight hard to make sure management always follows the contract.

What's more, through our contract, management agrees to contribute to funds that help pay for our health care insurance and for any dental, optical, and legal services we might need. Most important, because our Union has bargained for it, management contributes to a fund that provides us with retirement benefits that ensure we can live in security.

These payments do not come out of our dues, but without the dues we could have no Union. No Union would mean no contract, and no contract would lead to lower wages and fewer benefits.

Compare our wages and benefits to those received by non-union workers and you'll probably agree: Union dues yield great dividends.

Have a question about your dues? Call:

FRANCISCO GUTIERREZ AT THE UNION OFFICE (202-737-2225).

At Crystal City Hilton Workers win halt to dangerous job.

**"UNITED, WE ARE ABLE TO
FOCUS ON THE ISSUES AND
FIND SOLUTIONS."**

Balancing yourself on the rim of a bathtub is rather dangerous, but it's the only way that most Room Attendants at the Crystal City Hilton could fulfill management's demand that they hang shower curtains because the curtain rods are beyond the reach of the average person. The answer? Because the Room Attendants have a Union, they could act to get management to cease demanding that they do this dangerous task.

Crystal City Hilton Leader Rafael Cruz says, "It was difficult for me to find the best way to fight this, so I called the Union office."

The workers then met with Leaders and Local 25 Business Agent Emebet Samuel-Kassa. "Our Business Agent Emebet helped us think of ideas," says Cruz, "and together we won."

Management's demand was a violation of Article 13.8 of Local 25's contract, which states: "The Employer will provide a safe and healthy workplace for employees."

Almost immediately, Samuel-Kassa and Cruz took the issue to management. The next morning, management announced that Room Attendants would no longer be responsible for hanging shower curtains.

"This was a big victory for us," said Cruz. "We continue to fight for everyone's rights in all departments; united, we are able to focus on the issues and find solutions."

Room Attendant María Sánchez said, "I am so glad the Union stopped this practice. I was one of the ones that had to step on the bath tub to reach the curtain."



HILTON CRYSTAL CITY
ROOM ATTENDANT
SANTAFE GARCÍA SHOWS
THAT SHOWER RODS ARE
DANGEROUSLY HIGH.



RAFAEL CRUZ,
HILTON CRYSTAL CITY
LEADER

Winning candidates endorsed by Local 25:



MURIEL BOWSER,
DC MAYOR



PHIL MENDELSON,
DC COUNCIL CHAIR



BRIAN FROSH,
MD ATTORNEY GENERAL



PETER FRANCHOT,
MD COMPTROLLER



BRIANNE NADEAU,
DC COUNCIL, WARD 1



ELISSA SILVERMAN,
DC COUNCIL, AT-LARGE



KENYAN MCDUFFIE,
DC COUNCIL, WARD 5

UNION LOCAL 25



Unity. Pride. Strength. Button up for power!

