

CWA District 6

Legislative, Political, & Organizing Newsletter



New AT&T Mobility Member Signing a Union Membership Card

WELCOME TO OUR FIRST NEWSLETTER!

We're excited to release our new CWA District 6 Legislative, Political, and Organizing Newsletter! In this quarterly newsletter, we will feature CWAers as we highlight our organizing campaigns, political programs, leadership development work, and more!

Our union is successful because of the hard work and engagement of CWA members throughout the South and Southwest. We want to uplift this work and share it with members all across our district. Our work includes everything from members lobbying elected officials to organizing new CWA members into the union to members attending trainings.

Through this newsletter, we want to keep you informed about what CWAers are up to and provide you opportunities to get more involved!

Newsletter Highlights

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Immigrant Rights Workers Organize with CWA

Bootcamps to Build Independent Political Power

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PAL-CWA: From Organizing to Bargaining

Unity@Mobility

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Austin Integral Care Workers Unionize

CWA

TEXAS PRIMARY ELECTIONS

The 2022 Texas Primary Elections were a win for the labor movement and a reminder that our voices must be heard if we want to change the political landscape in Texas. Texans from all over the state came together to make their voices heard to fight for representation in the halls of Congress and here in Austin, TX. We fought back against greedy corporations, their super PACs, and dark money to elect worker-friendly candidates and won!

CWA stood behind our priority candidates and they came out on top! Candidate for Governor, Beto O'Rourke, and candidate for Congressional District 35, Greg Casar, overwhelmingly won their respective races. And candidate for Congressional District 28, Jessica Cisneros, will go to a runoff with incumbent, anti-worker Rep. Cuellar in May 2022.

These victories were made possible by the work of our CWA members and independent expenditure (IE) programs. CWA members knocked it out of the park! Members volunteered for 163 shifts to phone bank and block walk to talk with fellow CWAers and the general public about our candidates. Members continued these conversations at worksites and also talked about our overall Political Action Fund (PAF) program and how to join! If you're interested in joining PAF, go to cwa-union.org/cwa-political-action-fund.



CWA Local 6222 members phone banking in Houston, TX

IMMIGRANT RIGHTS WORKERS ORGANIZE WITH CWA

Recently, workers at Las Americas Immigrant Advocacy Center (LAIAC) in El Paso, TX organized with CWA and were successful in getting management to voluntarily recognize CWA as their union. LAIAC is a non-profit that provides legal advocacy for detained immigrants.

The voluntary recognition agreement includes 16 lawyers, paralegals, DHS accredited reps, and administrative staff. Management initially fought the inclusion of administrative staff and legal fellows in the unit but the 8-person Organizing Committee held strong and pushed back.



Members of LAIAC's Organizing Committee

They were visibly pro-union, built support in the community, and collected authorization cards from 15 out of the 16 employees in the unit. In the end the union won a unit that includes all the disputed positions making their workplace that much more CWA strong!

Now that the union is recognized, they're busy negotiating a contract. We're all in for a fair contract and are excited they chose CWA to build worker power with.

Congratulations to the workers at LAIAC!

BOOTCAMPS TO BUILD INDEPENDENT POLITICAL POWER

The CWA District 6 Tier 1 Political Bootcamp program started in 2014. Since then, we have trained hundreds of CWA members across the district with a focus on building independent political power. The Political Bootcamp is a political activist training and leadership development program that teaches organizing skills to discuss the current state of politics and build political power for the working class.

To prepare for the Texas Primary Elections, we hosted 2 political bootcamps, one CWA Local 6215 in Dallas, TX and one with CWA Local 6143 in San Antonio, TX for a total of 19 members. Participants learned about the 50-year class war that corporations are behind to weaken the power of the working class, and how CWA is fighting back by organizing together. They put their skills to use by visiting worksites with organizers, talking with members about the upcoming election and how to join our political action program by contributing to PAF. If you're interested in joining PAF, go to cwa-union.org/cwa-political-action-fund.



CWA Local 6215 Political Bootcamp Attendees

MISSOURI STATE WORKERS WIN RAISES

Missouri workers are about to receive a long-overdue pay increase. For too long, Missouri state workers have been the lowest paid state workers in the country. This year, the legislature passed and the Governor signed a bill for a 5.5% cost of living adjustment for state workers. We were close to an across the board \$15 minimum wage, but that fight will now go to the individual departments who will be responsible for setting pay rates.

PAL-CWA: FROM ORGANIZING TO BARGAINING



PAL-CWA Bargaining Committee

PAL-CWA is the recently organized unit of classified school employees in Lawrence, KS. Since the beginning of the year, they've organized dozens of members into the union to build a stronger, united front for the start of contract negotiations. Challenging political environment in Kansas.

They entered into bargaining for their 2022 contract on February 21, 2022 and their mobilization committee is continuing to organize new members each day. Over 30

members attended the opening bargaining session and we can't wait to see more come out to support the bargaining team and win a strong contract over the next few months!

UNITY@MOBILITY

CWA District 6 Unity@Mobility is a program specifically focused on educating, organizing, and mobilizing AT&T Mobility members under the Purple Contract. The program is led by and for AT&T Mobility members. The Unity Coordinators for CWA District 6, Kendra, Michelle and Belinda, work with fellow members, activists, Local leaders, and CWA staff to make sure Mobility members stay in the know and are actively engaged in the union. In 2020 we won a lot of gains in our most recent contract negotiations, including a compounded 9.84% wage increase, new parental leave program, and increased job security. In 2021, we signed up 2,001 new members and continue to engage them in the union. And this year we're continuing to organize new members, especially the work from home titles, and work with members to address workplace issues.

Over the years, Mobility members have fought together to pass strong contracts and win power at the workplace. We host trainings, lead mobilizations, and have a strong network of leaders, stewards, and activists who support each other. We know first hand that when members are actively engaged and taking collective action, we can flex our worker power to take challenges head-on! Join our Unity@Mobility email list for all the latest updates.

HIGH-SPEED BROADBAND INTERNET FOR ALL

CWA successfully lobbied Congress to include funding for internet for all in the Infrastructure Investment & Jobs Act (IIJA). This bill gives \$65 billion to states to expand broadband internet access. It's a huge step toward addressing the digital divide - those who have internet access & those who don't. CWA is working with state and local elected officials to commit to labor standards to the money they're receiving for broadband internet expansion. We want our members, not shoddy contractors, who have the experience and training necessary to install the infrastructure and maintain its systems.

Missouri – Missouri is in the process of appropriating \$400 million in federal funds through the state budget to expand broadband access. Broadband Brigade leader Mike Songer from Local 6300 in St. Louis has been meeting with Missouri elected officials and candidates to build support for CWA labor standards for broadband expansion to create more union jobs.

Texas -- There is a Texas broadband listening tour to get Texans' insights about internet access and collect input to develop the state's first broadband plan. CWA members will be participating in the listening tour events to provide public statements emphasizing the urgency to attach labor standards to state broadband funding that will help create more good union jobs.

Dallas -- The City of Dallas will soon release a Request for Proposal (RFP) for the city's broadband expansion project, the Dallas Broadband and Digital Equity Strategic plan, this Spring. Broadband Brigade leader Robin Johnson from Local 6215 in Dallas has been coordinating meetings with city council members and officials to advocate for the inclusion of CWA labor standards in the RFP.

San Antonio -- San Antonio and Greater Bexar County are working on a Community Digital Equity Plan to provide high-speed internet to local unserved communities. Broadband Brigade leader Charles Fuentes from Local 6143 in San Antonio has been participating in city stakeholder groups and meeting with city elected officials to get CWA's labor standards adopted in the plan. Charles has also been visiting technician garages and mobility stores to talk to members and AT&T workers about CWA's Broadband Brigade to expand broadband with union labor.

AUSTIN INTEGRAL CARE WORKERS UNIONIZE

Spurred on by low wages, skyrocketing turnover, unsafe working conditions, and a concern that their clients weren't receiving the best possible services, social workers with the United Workers of Integral Care (UWIC) began organizing with CWA in the Spring of 2021. Together with CWA District 6 organizers, they built a strong internal campaign and a strong coalition of community supporters among local elected officials and advocacy groups around Austin.

In December 2021, 50 social workers held a press conference and marched to their CEO's office to deliver their new union's mission statement signed by over 90 of their coworkers. They publicly announced the formation of their new union at the public mental health authority in Austin, Texas called Integral Care. With over 800 employees, Integral Care is a government-funded, public agency that provides mental and behavioral health and housing assistance to Austin residents.

Shortly after going public with their campaign, the UWIC Committee released a public letter of support signed by 17 elected officials including the mayor, city council members, county commissioners, the District Attorney, state legislators, and a congressperson. The political pressure has been a major key to the campaign's success since Integral Care is reliant on taxpayer dollars for their funding.



Integral Care Workers Rally in Austin, TX

After initially resisting the union effort, Integral Care Executive Management caved to the union and community pressure and offered a massive pay raise across the agency by raising the minimum salary to \$20/hour and adjusting most pay scales upwards. It was a huge win for the UWIC Committee and shows the power of organizing!

UWIC is now pressuring the Integral Care Board to adopt a Consultation Policy which would create a platform for the union to have monthly meetings with the CEO to discuss wages and working conditions and create proposals to take to the Board of Trustees. This would give UWIC a formal seat at the table to continue winning big improvements!

CONNECT WITH US!

Sign Up for Legislative & Political Updates

Sign up to receive updates on what's going on across the district and in your state. We'll keep you in the loop and ask you to join us in taking action on legislative & political issues impacting working families.



- Join our email list: action.cwa.org/forms/sign-up-for-legislative-political-updates
- Join the Political Action Fund (PAF): cwa-union.org/cwa-political-action-fund
- Follow us on Facebook: facebook.com/cwad6forpower
- Text "d6 political" to 49484 to join our text list

Meet our Legislative-Political State Coordinators:

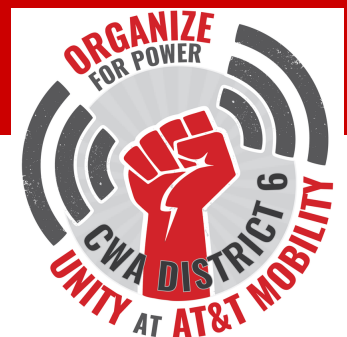
- Shawanda Rankin, CWA Local 6016
- Gerald Murray, CWA Local 6057
- Charles Fuentes, CWA Local 6143
- John Richie, CWA Local 6200
- Robin Johnson, CWA Local 6215
- Herb Keener, CWA Local 6215
- Mike Lavoie, CWA Local 6300
- Matthew Goings, CWA Local 6312
- Crystal Parks, CWA Local 6316

Meet our PAF Captains:

- Robin Johnson, CWA Local 6215
- Mike Songer, CWA Local 6300

Sign Up for Unity@Mobility Updates

Sign up to receive updates on what's going on across the district and in your state. We'll keep you in the loop with the latest information on trainings, organizing efforts, mobilizations and more!



- Join our email list: action.cwa.org/forms/d6mobilityupdates
- Follow us on Facebook: facebook.com/PurpleMobility
- Text "Purple" to 49484 to join our text list

Meet our Unity@Mobility Coordinators:

- Kendra Williams, CWA Local 6215
- Belinda Aguilar, CWA Local 6222
- Michelle Doty, CWA Local 6300

DO YOU HAVE A LOCAL UNION
STORY YOU'D LIKE FEATURED
IN OUR NEXT NEWSLETTER?

SEND AN EMAIL TO:
SWALLING@CWA-UNION.ORG