

Royal Kona Resort Workers Dig In

Workers at the Royal Kona Resort are digging in for a fight. The owners of the resort have money to spend installing security cameras all around the property; money to spend on new gulfstream jets for Maui; money to spend on luxury condo developments on Maui, but say they can't afford the standard contract settlement.

Workers have rallied, sent letters, spoken with elected representatives, and turned out in big numbers to negotiations, but still the employer hasn't moved.

While everyone recognizes that business is down in the Big Island right now, we also know that we have already lost hours as a result. We believe management is still making money, and their refusal to open

the books convinces us we're right. Much like Turtle Bay Resort five years ago, Royal Kona Resort has



Royal Kona Resort workers show management that Big Island workers are not second class.

attempted to have organizers arrested for being on property, attempted to intimidate workers by saying they may need a property pass to attend negotiations, and recently proposed to withdraw from the union's health and welfare fund.

Owners at the Royal Kona Resort have demonstrated over the last several years that they can no longer be trusted. Now they are saying that workers should trust them with our current and retiree medical.

We know who we can trust at Royal Kona. We can trust each other – workers at Royal Kona and members of Local 5. Just like the Turtle Bay members before them, it's Royal Kona workers' turn to be heroes defending our standards.

Local 5 Bulletin

UNITE HERE Local 5, Hawaii

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Henry Aquino for Waipahu State Representative

On Thursday, August 7, 2008, UNITE HERE Local 5 officially announced its early primary endorsement of Mr. Henry J.C. Aquino for State House of Representatives, District 35. More than 60 Local 5 members from Waipahu joined Aquino, his family and more than 300 supporters for the announcement.

During our Town Hall Forum and interview process, Aquino was the only candidate to speak to why we must support workers' rights to organize: "Hotel Workers Rising is not just a slogan. It is an idea. It is the idea that I will stand behind you because I think about my family, my friends and my neighbors like yourselves who come home everyday very tired and I will make sure that I will stand up with you publicly. I am not afraid to stand with you for the different needs you and your family will have in the future."

The Waipahu seat, which includes much of lower Waipahu and Crestview, is being left vacant by incumbent State Representative Alex Sonson, who will challenge Senator Clarence Nishihara for his seat. Five Democrats, including

Aquino, and one Republican are vying for the seat making this one of the most crowded electoral fields on Oahu.

"It wasn't an easy decision, but we've gone through our process and our membership has spoken. We have an endorsement, and a candidate that we know will back Local 5 all the way," said Joli Tokusato, Ilikai worker and Chair of Local 5's Community & Political Action Committee.

The recent slow-down in our local tourism industry, and the fact that thousands of hotel and health care workers belonging to Local 5 live in Waipahu make this an important race. We must elect leaders, like Aquino, who possess the right kind of experiences and who can relate to and stand up for Hawaii's working people.

"Henry gives us all hope and I think that's what we need right now. With all of his experience in our community,

Henry's already a well tested and capable leader...you know, that could be my son and I like that," said Local 5 member Gloria Allen.

Henry Aquino is the son of Rebecca Aquino, a former Local 5 member and housekeeper at the Sheraton Waikiki



Local 5 members join Henry Aquino in sign-waving in Waipahu.

Hotel. He has a broad range of experience, from working as Program Coordinator with the Waipahu Community Association to coordinating the Waipahu Community Coalition, to Site Representative for the Weed and Seed Legislative Committee.

Oh YES! ... Obama

We are the change we have been waiting for.

At a national level, our local and the many other locals that make up UNITE HERE International Union are organizing to support Barack Obama. We are putting about 400 volunteer organizers on the streets to help elect Obama president, including some Local 5 members who are working in Wisconsin and Virginia for two months to help elect our next president.

We are doing this not just because Barack Obama is from Hawaii. We

are doing this not just because Barack Obama started as a community organizer working in Chicago neighborhoods with union members devastated by the closure of steel mills. We are doing this not just because Obama has walked the picket line with us at the more than five year old strike of the Congress Hotel in Chicago, first as a State Senator, and then as a US Senator.

We are supporting Obama because just like we are organizing in Waipahu to back a candidate who backs us, we

must work on a national level to demonstrate that organized labor backs the candidates who back us.

Obama is a wonderful candidate, perhaps the most inspiring candidate in a generation. But he is one man. One man is not what has ever made the difference in this country. What makes the difference is when we overcome our differences, unite, and pull together toward one goal.

Organizing for Barack Obama for President is organizing for our own best future.

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Our Union Hero: Adela Malvar

Adela Malvar works in the House-keeping department at Kaanapali Beach Club (KBC). She has been an active member since helping to organize the union in 1999.

Members at KBC are just now negotiating their second union contract. It took 6 years to get the first one. At the first negotiating session, over 70 people showed up – even though management had set the room for only 10 people.

After those negotiations, Adela and her co-workers began studying the housekeeping workload issue. They started doing surveys

showing how much work they were doing each day and whether or not they were in pain. Adela collected these surveys on non-working time and in non-working areas.



Adela Malvar

On Saturday, July 12, management suspended Adela for doing those surveys! Her co-workers responded and 30 of them delegated management demanding that she be put back to work.

Management responded and Adela was returned to work with full back pay!

KBC is our newest union hotel. We must stand behind KBC workers until they win real respect on the job.

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A new owner for Turtle Bay?

As many of us remember, for five years the workers at Turtle Bay Resort fought their owner, Oaktree, and their management company, Benchmark. We fought off their attack on our union medical and on workers rights to see union organizers on property – finally winning the best contract ever in 2006.

Now we face a new round of uncertainty at Turtle Bay.

Oaktree's lenders want to foreclose, and have given Oaktree only a limited amount of time to sell the property before taking the hotel. In the meantime, the Gov-

ernor announced in her state of the State address that she wanted to take over Turtle Bay.



What will happen now is still unclear, with foreclosure a real possibility and a number of interested buyers either speaking to Oaktree or to the Governor's subcommittee.

What is clear is that as a union we have always stood for two things at Turtle Bay. First, we seek to protect decent union jobs at the Turtle Bay Resort. Second, we want to keep the country country. We must stand together and figure out a way to do both.

Another Benchmark hotel joins our union!

For most of our 5 year struggle at Turtle Bay, we were the only union Benchmark hotel. But in July 2008, that finally changed. Workers at a 2nd Benchmark hotel joined UNITE HERE. We won card check recognition for workers at the Heldrich Center, a hotel/conference center in New Brunswick, NJ. In late February 2008, workers at the Sheratons in Maui and Kauai, with the backing of their brothers and sisters in Waikiki, settled excellent new contracts that will bring them up to the Waikiki standard on wages and contract duration.

For the first time since 1990, workers at both properties publicly fought for their contracts, staging many rallies and actively participating in negotiations. By joining us on June 30, 2010, we set the stage for the first statewide hotel contract fight in 20 years.

Vote the Union Way on Election Day

The following is an excerpt from a speech given by Eric Gill at Local 5's first ever community forum in Waipahu, held by and for Local 5 members to hear from several candidates for Waipahu's District 35 State Representative Election. Union members drafted questions prior to the forum and moderator Cade Watanabe, Local 5's community/political organizer presented those questions to the candidates. After the forum, Local 5's Political Action Committee recommended, and the Executive Board approved, that we endorse Henry Aquino for State Representative for Waipahu's District 35.

"Let's talk about power. What we're talking about is building political power. Power of working people comes from our numbers. We don't have the money. We're the little people. We have to fight all the time on the job. We have won good contracts, struck together, fought together, and together we have built a high standard for hotel workers in Hawaii and all across the country.

As a union, we've done well. We've built some power in the workplace so that even if we're not yet the bosses' equal on the job, we have a voice on the job.

But in politics it's not so. In politics, corporations dominate. Politicians listen far more to the corporations than they do to us.

We get a lot of lip service from politicians but when it comes right down to it, we need politicians who will stand up with courage. When Jeff Stone, the developer of Ko Olina, asks for \$75 million of our tax money so he can build hotels and timeshares in Ko Olina, we need politicians to step forward and say wait, those better be union jobs.

We need politicians to do this because at a minimum, if corporations are going to take our tax money to build new hotels, we have to make sure the jobs at those hotels won't undermine the standard we have fought so hard to build.

How are politicians going to get that courage? Are politicians chickens? I know a few politicians and there are a few that are chicken, but I can't blame politicians for this. It's our fault. Working people's fault. Because if we don't apply the same tactics and understanding we use to build power on the job by working together, by fighting together and standing together no matter our disagreements, if we don't do that in politics, how can we expect

politicians to be strong for us. If a politician stands up to the Jeff Stones of the world and tells him no way, and the next election, a developer puts up \$1 million to oppose them, what do we do? We stay home, we don't vote, or everyone votes for their cousin, or their friend's cousin, right? If 20% of this crowd votes for this guy, 20% for that guy, 20% for the next guy, it's like we might as well as all have stayed home. So we can't blame the politicians for being chicken unless we put our votes together and back those politicians that are backing us.

That's why we're here tonight. Because we look at this race in Waipahu, and we've got a good group of candidates here, a great group. They are all saying good things about how they are backing us. But we're here tonight to unite and pick one candidate that we will all support.

I ask you all to consider that we can only pick one. We all have to vote for one or we may as well not go through the process at all. And we don't want to sentence ourselves to a lifetime of watching politicians favor corporations over us.

So come primary day on Saturday, September 20, go vote, and go vote the union way. Thank you very much."

It's time ... to Organize!



Everyday we are reminded by our friends and family who work non-union about why workers need a union. When our employers get the chance to work without a union, they grab it. At the Santa Clara Hyatt, for example, workers must pay \$90 a month for the cheapest individual medical coverage, and housekeepers clean up to 25 rooms a day.

Here at home, Hawaii hotel workers struggle to make ends meet with the cost of housing, ever rising gas costs, and food prices higher than most places in the nation. At the same time,

our employers look for every chance to cut back, lay off, and combine jobs. As a result, many of us must make the terrible choice between 2 or 3 jobs to pay our bills or time with our kids and in our communities.

In recent years, UNITE HERE Local 5 has laid the building blocks for a very strong union. We fought together to win protection from subcontracting – and won. We fought to win successorship rights – and won. We opened the doors for more member involvement in Local 5, recruiting committee leaders from all areas, all shifts, and all depart-

ments to speak for their co-workers. When we fought in 2006 for Hotel Workers Rising, we fought to lift all hotel workers above the poverty line. We will never be strong enough to win the middle class standard of living we deserve unless we follow through on that promise to stand for more than just those of us who have the union now. By bringing all hotel workers together in one union, we will have the strength we need to lift all of us up.

If you have a friend or family member who works in a non-union property, please contact your organizer.



Hawaii workers, other unions, retirees and community leaders joined Local 5 to tell the Army's Hale Koa Hotel to treat workers with dignity and respect Hawaii's laws, which include temporary disability insurance and the Hawaii Family Leave Law.



For the third year, UNITE HERE Local 5 marched in the Honolulu Pride Parade. LGBTQ communities in many cities have joined with hotel workers for a better future. UNITE HERE supports equal rights for all of our members.

As of 7/31/2008
Strike Fund-\$3,546,369
Building Fund-\$188,288