

# We Are Family

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Stanley. This higher standard allowed them to thrive in Hawaii and provide for their children, one of whom is Janet.

Also a Local 5 member, Janet Segismundo works as a Medical Assistant at Kaiser Permanente's Waipio Clinic. On a couple of occasions she showed up at the hotel negotiations, usually with mom and dad in tow to show support. "I try to tell my co-workers at Kaiser how important the negotiations were for our thousands of union brothers and sisters in the hotels, but also about how it can impact us at Kaiser," says Janet. Kaiser benefits when hotel workers and their families choose the Kaiser plan, and proper hotel funding of their Health & Welfare fund makes it more likely that Kaiser can continue to be offered to them, even though it is has grown more expensive. "Of course my thoughts are also with my parents and how they will be able to care for themselves if the hotels don't properly fund their retiree medical."

Cathy Segismundo may be a familiar face to those who have attended functions at the Sheraton Waikiki, because she's one of the highest ranking waitress in seniority at 25 years of service. Cathy is also Janet's cousin. "We at the hotel were all concerned about our jobs, especially about our healthcare coverage. We are happy that Local 5 won a great contract that takes care of those still working and the retirees who came before us." Today, Cathy's kids are grown and one of them (Leeann) works as a waitress in her depart-

ment. "I am glad I was able to make a living here in Hawaii with a good Union job; I have not had to move to Vegas yet."

Marcelo Segismundo worked many years at the front desk at the Hilton Hawaiian Village before retiring a few years ago. He was not in town when the interviews for this article took place.



Community supporters came to the Marriott last Halloween dressed as the "Men in Black." They visited with workers in the cafeteria before delivering a petition to management calling on them to settle a fair contract.

# Local 5 Bulletin

UNITE HERE Local 5, Hawaii

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## Above and Beyond Heroes of the 2006 Contract Campaigns

*The 2006 contract campaigns have many heroes that were guided by strong principles. Dolores Epan, James Giffard, Rod Kane and Janal Kaina are just a few of those who served their co-workers courageously and tirelessly.*

**DOLORES EPAN** – 18 years as a Housekeeper at the Hilton Hawaiian Village – felt that the whole country should know what is going on with housekeeping workload, that it should be a nation-wide campaign. That's why she was one of 350 people who got arrested at a Hotel Workers Rising rally in Los Angeles. It was her first arrest.

"I was willing to do it to bring attention to the issue. I knew there would be a lot of media. We were in jail for more than 15 hours. Some of the people I work with thought I was crazy, but my closest friends understood, and they were proud of me. I'd do it again in a minute."

Recently-won workload language has reduced room assignments from 16 to 15, and Dolores and her co-workers are very happy - "this will lessen the stress on our bodies and minds and make it more likely that we can take our lunch. This will make Hilton a better place to work."

Also arrested was **JAMES GIFFARD**, a 22-year bartender from Hilton Hawaiian Village. Like several other members, James spent two weeks as a volun-

teer organizer for the union just before the strike vote. Even after putting in a 60 hour week, James wasn't satisfied. He would go back to the hotel for hours, making sure his co-workers understood the importance of this year's campaign. "Whatever happens in one town goes around to the others. It was important that we do it together this year," said James. "Plus, I had a great partner [Rita Ikeda, a waitress from Kahala Hotel & Resort]."

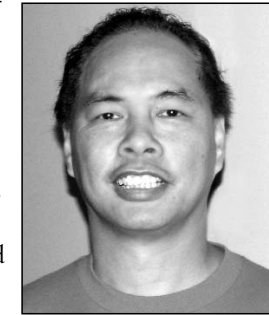


James had never been arrested before, and had some second thoughts on the long trip over, but in his words, "When we were there, I was so excited to see all the people. I could feel everyone's mana, their power – that put me in the right frame of mind." He came back to the final push of the campaign. "Organizing the union back here got easier for me after what I did in Los Angeles. I did it for us here, and for everyone in the U.S. The people over there may be over there, but they're helping us in some ways and we're helping them. It goes a long way."

**ROD KANE**, a 12-year Fry Cook from the Sheraton Princess Kaiulani Hotel, was one of the prominent voices of the campaign. Early on, Rod showed a lot of interest in negotiations. "I was protecting my job, trying to save my house. The company wanted the right to subcontract. That issue and the housekeeping workload problem meant a lot to me."

Rod joined a group of Local 5 lead-

ers who learned how to speak to the public. "A reporter said at the Danny Glover event (Hotel Workers Rising Kick-off at the Blaisdell Arena) that the campaign was viewed by some as having a national agenda. I disagreed." Rod continued, "I said that it was our decision as a local to unite with our



brothers and sisters in other cities. I told her that we may be running a national campaign, but we would be doing it 'local-style.'" Rod and other Local 5 members took the lead in the press – on Ololelo public access television, on KNNDI radio, and with the reporters who covered our story.

**JANAL KAINA**, Hostess for 20 years at Royal Hawaiian Hotel's Surf Room, started leading the 2006 campaign in 2004, when she educated her co-workers about their right to respect



Local 2's one-day picket line at the Sheraton and Royal Hawaiian Hotels. "I knew this would be a very important year for us. This was going to be make it or break it time. We were fighting a giant, unknown and more impersonal company in Cerberus. In the past we dealt with Kyo-ya, which had local ties, Cerberus had no connections or commitment to the people. We felt like a commodity."

Janal was everywhere. From TV to

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# The Future of union restaurants is in our hands

by Eric Gill

No one on Local 5's negotiating committee can remember the last time a major new union restaurant opened up in one of our hotels. All we've seen for decades has been the closing down of our hotel restaurants, one by one. The Hilton Hawaiian Village now plans to build a new restaurant at the old Tahitian Lanai location, and they have agreed as part of our new contract that the restaurant will be a union shop.

That's great news. More union food and beverage jobs. But let's make no mistake. The trend of the last 30-40 years has not reversed itself. We will have to work hard and make difficult decisions if we hope to prevent more and more of our restaurants closing down, gradually eliminating union f&b jobs.

Our hotels are now owned by huge corporate investors who buy hotels—and entire hotel companies—because they want to acquire valuable and profitable big city real estate. They see every square foot of hotel floor space as rentable real estate. Their business plan for hotel restaurants is simple and clear—they want to get out of the restaurant business and rent out our f&b space to celebrity chefs for big bucks.

So far, we have been holding the line and—for the most part—successfully defending the restaurants where our members work. We were exactly right to fight hard to stop the subcontracting of restaurants in our contract campaign in 2002. If we hadn't done so, we would certainly have lost some of our restaurants to non-union celebrity chefs or big chain restaurants by now.

But what we've done so far is not nearly enough to safeguard the future of

it appears our hotels have no long-term commitment to keeping our restaurants open, so support and imagination may be in short supply on the management side.

The fact is that if we want to protect our restaurant jobs in the long run, union workers will have to take the lead. We are the ones who care about union restaurant jobs, and we are the only ones who care enough to drive a program to save our restaurant jobs.

Simply speaking, we must take on the task of figuring out how to make our restaurants profitable, and we will have to strongly insist that management work with us to make that happen.

This is no small job, and there are plenty of obstacles and things that can go wrong. But if we don't do it, there will be no good union restaurant jobs for our children and grandchildren to have.

Local 5 will be organizing a conference of rank and file leaders from our union restaurants, to explore ways to make our union restaurants profitable again, and to convince management to do its part.

The future of our restaurant jobs is up to us. If you care about the future, plan to get involved.

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**Restaurants that lose money are at risk. And the large majority of our restaurants lose money every month.**

our food and beverage jobs. Nothing in our contract prevents the hotel from closing down a restaurant. Many have already closed. Restaurants that lose money are at risk. And many of our restaurants lose money every month.

Our members know many ways that our union restaurants can be improved. For years, our suggestions have been passed over or ignored, and for years our restaurants have suffered from neglect, lack of support and lack of imagination from management. Even worse,

## We Are Family

The promising trend of great hotel contract settlements will have a tremendous impact on the state of Hawaii. As workers benefit from improved conditions on the job and fair economic packages and protected benefits, countless families can breathe a little easier. The Segismundos are one such family. With 6 of them in Local 5, few families faced a greater impact.

Like many Filipinos who have made their way to Hawaii, Stanley Segismundo, 89, and Rosa Segismundo, 74, wanted a better life. "We saw Hawaii as paradise and came to make money to help relatives back home in the Phillipines," says Rosa. Eventually, they both found themselves working in the state's number one industry, tourism. Stanley found work at the Sheraton Moana Surfrider, working there 19 years, before retiring at the age of 62. Rosa,

after working 25 years at the Hawaiian Regent-turned Marriott Waikiki, retired in 1996. Both worked in housekeeping, Rosa cleaning rooms and Stanley running supplies to the floors. "I loved my work even though it was hard, because I like interacting with different types of people from all over the world and be-

cause I made a lot of friends," said Rosa. Nowadays, as Local 5 retirees they also stay on top of issues that affect their Union.

"I wanted to work in a Local 5 hotel because non-union hotels in Waikiki were not offering retiree medical," says

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The Segismundo family. Left to right: Cathy, Rosa, Stanley and Janet

## A Tribute to Juliet

On January 24, 2007, our union lost an executive board member, a shop floor leader and a friend.

Juliet Spencer worked at the Princess Kaiulani for 41 years, 6 months, and 23 days. During that time, she organized herself and her co-workers into the union, became a shop steward, and paved the way for housekeeping workload campaigns.

One of Juliet's favorite stories is about how she organized her fellow housekeeping supervisors into the union. They were doing it in secret, but one day, management walked into the cafeteria when she and her partner were counting and organizing the cards. Juliet grabbed them off the table and sat on them. Management walked by, never suspecting a thing. Juliet used to say that the cards felt like they were burning a hole in her bottom. But management never found out they were organizing until it was too late – the working supervisors were in the union.

Long before Local 5 institutionalized "committees", Juliet had a committee. When a new housekeeping manager increased the room assignment to 16, she and her fellow committee members organized the housekeepers at Princess Kaiulani to give back 2 rooms a day. Every day. As Juliet told the story, everyone agreed in advance that they would



give back 2 rooms each. Then the day came, and some people didn't do it. She was so angry with the people who backed out! But she stayed focused on the ones who did, and they kept giving them back. Her manager threatened to write everyone up for giving back the rooms. The workers kept giving back the rooms. Finally, the management agreed to negotiate with them, and the room assignment was lowered to 15 – where it stands today.

Juliet was a single mother of five children who found the love of her life in Markham Spencer. She grew up on the Big Island on Hawaiian Homelands, what she used to call the "Reservation." Juliet never hesitated to tell you what she thought, no matter who you were and no matter what you might think about what she had to say. As the corporations changed, Juliet still ruled her roost. From her office at the PK, she not only worked hard for Kyo-ya, but she also worked hard for the union. She saw the future of hotel work and the hard times ahead and spent the last years of her life at the hotel trying to get the next generation involved.

We'll all miss Juliet. From our Executive Board, from our union, from our hotels, from our lives. But we know Markham is smiling, because Juliet's come home.

## What is "Donated Vacation Leave?"

Shortly after we ratified our contract with the new donated vacation leave provision, Local 5 got an unusual call. A member of Hilton's management staff had met a Local 5 housekeeper at a cancer treatment center in California.

**Workers stepped forward and have already donated more than 30 days of vacation.**

The manager had sat in on some bargaining and heard the union was proposing to allow workers to donate vacation time to co-workers with serious health conditions. She wanted to know if we won that provision, because if so, she knew someone who needed our help.

The Local 5 housekeeper turned out to be Judy Quach, an 18 year veteran of the Royal Hawaiian Hotel Housekeeping department. Judy is fighting leukemia and needs a bone marrow transplant. She'll need to stay at the City of Hope Cancer Research Center while she recovers. Hearing the news, workers stepped forward and have already donated more than 30 days of vacation.



At first, being the humble people that the Quachs are, they refused to accept these donations. They changed their mind after realizing this is a landmark case that could help other hotel workers in the future. Local 5 and Judy and Richard Quach would like to thank all those who have generously donated vacation hours to Judy. If you work at the Sheratons and would like to donate, contact your HR department. If you know of someone else who needs help, let us know. This is a great new contract provision that allows us to show our aloha for co-workers in need.

### Look at Your Address Label!

Right above the address is a number that begins with "TAD." That number is your **Total Annual Dues** paid last year – deductible from your taxes.

## Heroes of the Contract Campaigns

*Continued from Page 1*

radio to the negotiating committee to the streets for a rally, Janal was there when the Union needed her. She also served as a photographer at many events. She didn't mind though, because the victory made it all worth it. "My favorite memory was when we had a rally with presidential candidate, John Edwards, and were gathering in front of the Sheraton loading dock and saw our brothers and sisters from other

hotels marching towards us in a sea of red Hotel Workers Rising shirts. We could hear them before we saw them. They were chanting and it made me feel proud," says Janal.

By stepping up to be the face of the union, by organizing their co-workers, by extreme acts of solidarity like getting arrested, Local 5 committee leaders showed the people of Hawaii the true meaning of "Iaulima."

## The new standard – The 2006 contract at Sheraton and Hilton

### GROW OUR UNION

- The new Timeshares that are going up at the Sheraton Princess Kaiulani and the Hilton Hawaiian Village will both be union.
- As Sheraton, Hilton, Hyatt, Anekona and Trinity Investments grow on Oahu, we won the right to a fair process that allows the union to grow with the companies. We also won a growth agreement with Marriott.

### MEDICAL

- Significant increases to our medical fund that will preserve and protect our benefits.

### PENSION

- The current level of funding (\$1/hour) remains and overall pension contributions increase during the term of the contract by 15¢/hour.

### WAGES

- Wage increases for all workers that are significantly better than the last contract - \$2.40 over 4 years. (Last contract was \$1.60 over 4 years.)
- Tipped workers will get \$1.20 over 4 years - the highest wage increase for tipped workers ever.
- Bell employees will receive an extra 45¢, for a total of \$1.65 over 4 years. This is because we recognize that the amount of portage is decreasing everywhere.

### HOUSEKEEPING WORKLOAD

- Significant gains in workload, including a cap at 15 rooms.
- A new standard for check-outs - 6 check-outs drop 1 room, 9 check-outs drop 2 rooms and 10 check-outs drop 3 rooms - over the course of the contract.
- Housemen assigned to assist housekeepers with the removal of dirty linen and trash.

- Increased premiums for rollaways or cribs: up to \$2.25 by Jan. 1, 2008.

### SUBCONTRACTING

- Penalties against employers for violating the subcontracting provisions of the contract.

### FOOD AND BEVERAGE

- A pilot project for a new food and beverage outlet at Hilton.
- Guarantees that innovation in food and beverage will not result in job loss for food and beverage workers.

### TIPPED WORKER IMPROVEMENTS

- Double time for sick leave for tipped workers - allowing our tipped workers to stay home if they're sick.
- Across-the-board improvements for every tipped worker – in Restaurants, Banquets, and Uniformed Services.

### LANGUAGE IMPROVEMENTS

- Domestic partner coverage for bereavement leave and a commitment to work towards domestic partner coverage at the Health and Welfare Fund.
- New rights for immigrant workers.
- Linen, Uniform, First Aid and Defibrillator – a joint committee to make all four of these issues work better.
- Diversity – language calling for joint outreach to the Native Hawaiian community to encourage employment at the Hotels.
- Vacation leave – first time ever program to allow workers to donate vacation leave to sick co-workers.
- Expanded numbers of workers out on union leave.

These are just some of the changes to the new union standard. Now we have to make sure that all Local 5 hotel workers win the standard we set in Waikiki.



## Hotel union contract is sign of prosperous future

(Excerpts from the Honolulu Star Bulletin Editorial, October 11, 2006)

A national strategy that was years in the making is producing worthwhile labor contracts in hotels from New York to Waikiki. Hotel companies have averted what was feared to be a nationwide strike, Hawaii's vital tourism industry appears secure and hotel workers should begin their rise to the middle class.

Unite Here, the hotel, restaurant and apparel employees union, timed its major hotel contracts to expire this year within a few months of each other. The strategy, called Hotel Workers Rising, included negotiations isolating Hilton Hotels, described by Peter Ward, president of the New York Hotel Trades Council, as "the most recalcitrant and belligerent employer in the industry."

The strategy was used in New York, Chicago, Boston, San Francisco, Los Angeles and Honolulu. Hoteliers were concerned that Honolulu would be unfairly dragged into a national strike, although, they said, pay and working conditions are better in Honolulu than in those mainland cities.

Instead, Unite Here reached contract settlements with Hilton, followed by other hotel companies, at New York, Chicago and San Francisco....

Eric Gill, financial secretary of Unite Here Local 5, praised Hilton for "stepping forward and coming up with a contract that was acceptable with the union." ...

"Our goal is to move service-sector workers into the middle class," Bruce Raynor, president of Unite Here, said in June, as contract talks with hotel companies began across the country. "The manufacturing unions did that for factory workers. It took them 20 years to do that, and we hope to do the same thing."

That is a worthy goal and a reasonable timetable. Hotels, restaurants and stores in Hawaii and across the nation should prepare for that challenge.

## Local 5's Volunteer Organizers Help Build the Movement

Of all the courageous decisions and sacrifices made in the past year, a special group of members deserves particular recognition. Those members served as Volunteer Organizers in 2006 and early 2007. Their names are: **Joli Tokusato** (Ilikai Front Services Clerk), **Pat Ongjoco** (Sheraton Waikiki Food Prep), **Cora Quinesares** (Hilton Housekeeping), **Lolita Rodriguez** (Royal Hawaiian Stewarding), **Arnolfo Echanes** (Gate Gourmet Truck Driver), **Gemma Weinstein** (Ala Moana Housekeeping), **Deanna Fulgoni** (Kaiser Business Services), **Rod Kane** (PK Food Prep), **Dolores Reyes** (Hilton Housekeeping), **Dolores Epan**



Gemma Weinstein (Ala Moana Condotel) and Evelyn Barnatia (Sheraton Waikiki) lead the drumming at the marathon picket at the Hilton Hawaiian Village.

(Hilton Housekeeping) and **Bill Kearley** (Hale Koa Lifeguard).

Each of the members listed above took a long-term leave from their job and came to work for the union in its hour of need. They worked many hours more than 40 per week – up early in the morning, working late into the evening. They worked Saturdays and Sundays. They ran picket lines. They led chants. They beat drums. They house visited other union members. They recruited other workers to get involved. They led the housekeeping take-your-break and clean-to-standard actions. In short, they helped to find, recruit and train other union leaders.

Some of these members have already returned to their normal work life. Others will be going back soon. When they go back, they all will have been trained in organizing their co-workers. Those who completed the Internal Organizing Module will have been trained on how to file grievances and conduct issue-based shop floor campaigns. What they've learned and the time they sacrificed not only helped everyone get the best contract in the Waikiki hotels in

the history of Local 5, but also will help their co-workers when they go back and lead the everyday fights for respect and dignity on the job.

A great organizer of our union once



Lolita Rodriguez (Royal Hawaiian Hotel) is backed up by Therese Franklin (Royal Hawaiian Hotel) on drums at the Sheraton Waikiki marathon picket on September 20, 2006.

said, "Never underestimate the ability of ordinary people to be heroes." The 11 people listed above are not alone in their efforts, but as Volunteer Organizers for extended periods of time, each of them stands out as a hero among us. If you are interested in learning more about being a volunteer organizer, contact your staff organizer.

## Pattern Bargaining – Leave No One Behind Hundreds of Hotel Workers Still Need a New Contract

We had remarkable success in the 2006 bargaining. In addition to the workers at the Sheratons in Waikiki, Hilton Hawaiian Village, Hyatt Regency Waikiki, Waikiki Beach Marriot and the Ilikai Hotel, Kahala Hotel and Resort and Queen Kapiolani workers recently joined the ranks of about 6000 Local 5 members who have won a new contract. Kahala workers showed the best turn-out of any hotel to their ratification vote, with a vote of 304 to 1 – about 75% of their total workforce came out to vote.

In addition, Queen Kapiolani workers won a significant contract in their own right. You may know that Queen Kapiolani was the last new union hotel organized in Waikiki. They won their election in 1989. In part because of delays at the National Labor Relations Board, they didn't get a first contract until 1996. That contract was little more than a 25¢ raise and a signature line on the employee handbook. After several years of building a better standard for Queen Kapiolani workers, including winning retiree medical last year, this year's contract will begin to truly close the wage gap. At

the end of the 2010 contract, Housekeeping workers will be only 83¢ per hour behind the rest of Waikiki – the result of four years of \$1 per hour wage increases agreed upon in this historic agreement.

But we're not done yet.

Ala Moana Condotel – whose contract expired first on May 31, 2006 – still doesn't have a new contract. Outrigger just took over the Ala Moana this year, and still has not sent a representative from Outrigger to bargain with us.

In addition, workers at the Holiday Inn Waikiki, Waikiki Resort Hotel and the Airport Plaza (managed by Outrigger) don't yet have a new agreement.

Then we start looking to our neighbor islands. Sheraton Maui and Royal Kona (on the Big Island) expire on June 30, 2007, Sheraton Kauai expires on August 31, 2007 and Kaanapali Beach Club on December 31, 2007.

In 2006 we did the most important thing – we set a standard for all hotel workers. In 2007, we need to make sure no one is left behind.



Local 5 members listen to John Edwards on June 14, 2006 as he expresses his support for the Hotel Workers Rising Campaign.