



WORKERS LEAD UNION HAWAI'I WORLD

November 2016



At our annual Delegate Convention, we discussed the challenges & opportunities facing the union. We rallied at Aston headquarters to demand that they respect their workers. Then we marched to the Trump Hotel Waikiki to support Trump Las Vegas workers who are calling on Donald Trump, co-owner of the hotel, to start contract negotiations after they won a unionization vote.

HCC worker Sherwin Badua was recently terminated for excessive attendance. His coworkers wore buttons in support of Sherwin and to stand up against HCC's unfair attendance policy that counts tardiness and absences as a no show. Sherwin also filed a grievance. Before even getting to step one of the grievance, HCC agreed to reinstate Sherwin with 5 weeks of back pay.



Management at the Airport Plaza Hotel refused to schedule guest services agents by seniority. This on-going violation caused the company to back pay three GSA workers up to \$1900.



Local 5 and AiKea marched in the Honolulu Pride Parade to stand with the LGBTQ community. Thanks to everyone who marched with us!



Pa'akai restaurant workers at Turtle Bay Resort stood up for proper staffing. They organized to get more servers scheduled and won back-pay for workers who were not called in for shifts.

Students from Waipahu High, Pearl City High, and UH attended our Fall 2016 AiKea Youth Retreat at Camp Palehua. They did team building exercises, learned how to organize, and came up with chants for the Pride Parade—all while having fun!





BUBBLE BUSTING

By Ed Schack, Hilton Hawaiian Village Breakfast Cook



Isn't it great to be union, getting complete medical, dental, vision plans, higher wages, job security, the works? Many of us take these things for granted and even complain about manini things like union dues (minimal for what you get!), and silly stuff like "they (union guys) no come around except when they want something." Blah blah. The truth is, we live and work in this protected "bubble" of a unionized workplace that lulls us into comfortable complacency and apathy, especially in "peacetime".

Well, the human struggle that goes on outside our properties, what I call the Battle For Financial Survival, is very real and raging all the time. It is both spouses who must work one, sometimes two jobs each. It is paying for your medical insurance, sometimes hundreds of dollars per month (how would you like that?) It is scrimping, denial of extras for your loved ones, real worries and headaches about paying the bills, rent, mortgage, or caregiving to kupuna. It is anxiety, uncertainty, and fear. That's a reality in most non-union hotels.

Local 5 has not grown proportionally with the amount of new hotels going up. That means 50% union today means 35% union tomorrow and getting less and less. If we do not grow with the industry, what happens? We grow weaker, bargaining power decreases, therefore wages and benefits decrease! In the long run, the overall economic health of Hawaii is negatively impacted (less wages=less taxes=fewer roads, schools, services, etc.)

A few months ago, I wrote about the brave workers of the Aston Waikiki Beach and Hotel Renew who have been struggling since February 2015 for a fair process to decide whether to unionize. They are on the path to achieve what every American worker wants and deserves. They continue to be denied, disrespected, and mistreated by Aston management.

Our employers (the big bosses) Blackstone, Marriott, Cerberus are carefully watching this struggle. If the workers do not win the Aston fight, it will be bad news for us as a union! The Aston fight is our fight. They deserve our support! We need the Aston workers and all the non-union workers to join us, for our future and Hawaii's future!

Our next rally in solidarity with the Aston workers is on Thursday, November 17 from 4:00p - 5:30p in front of the Aston Waikiki Beach.

WE ALL GO UP OR WE ALL GO DOWN



Would you like to be a contributing writer to our monthly Workers Lead bulletin? Contact Paola: prodelas@unitehere5.org.