

CWA: AT&T Already Has Blue Print for Keeping Quality Workforce in United States

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Following is a statement from the Communications Workers of America in response to recent comments by AT&T chief executive officer Randall Stephenson:

Washington, D.C. -- We're glad to hear that AT&T and its chief executive officer Randall Stephenson are concerned about hiring quality employees and maintaining quality jobs. We also know that AT&T already has a model to produce that quality workforce – the union-negotiated quality wages, benefits and retirement security that have created one of the most productive workforces in the world, along with real skills training to meet the challenges of constantly changing technology.

Working men and women know that a quality job means a decent standard of living, thriving communities and the opportunities that families hope to provide their children. That's good not only for families and communities, but for employers too. And AT&T knows that.

At AT&T and companies like it, CWA contracts have resulted in high productivity and customer value. They have created professional customer service, a real competitive edge in today's global economy. Instead of pursuing a "race to the bottom" strategy, AT&T, working with CWA, has made a real investment in a quality workforce. And by bringing jobs back to the U.S., AT&T has acknowledged the value of that workforce and that investment.

We are confident that by taking the "high road" approach to a quality workforce, AT&T will attract more than enough qualified employees to bring back jobs from around the world.

We hope that AT&T will work with us to raise employee wages and benefits as we negotiate future contracts. That, along with union-negotiated education and training programs, whether for Cisco certifications or technical training, are what ensures that employers like AT&T can hire the workers it needs.

Finally, it is critical that AT&T keep its important commitment to bring the remainder of the 5,000 jobs back to the United States. Our nation's current trade deficit of \$750 billion simply is unsustainable, and the fastest growing segment of that deficit is due to service jobs being moved offshore. We hope that more companies realize that it takes a quality workforce to provide quality service and we expect to see even more jobs returning to the U.S.