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LOCAL 4250

Workers of America

(AFFILIATED WITH AFL-CIO)

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CWA: Legacy T AT&T Bargaining Report #1

February 24, 2009

Today was our opening meeting with AT&T for 2009 Bargaining. Despite the below-freezing temperatures, the Bargainers were welcomed by a large picket line of members and retirees from Local 2252 and a huge inflated rat. The message to AT&T was loud and clear. AT&T's employees deserve a fair contract and CWA members are united behind their bargaining team.

AT&T management's opening statement was as expected. They hammered their point that they want "fundamental changes" in what AT&T pays for medical benefits for our active members and retirees, in what they pay for pensions, and in more "flexible work rules."

Communications and Technologies Vice President Ralph Maly was crystal clear on our position: AT&T is a healthy company in a growing industry, and CWA's goal this bargaining is to "continue to enrich the lives of our members at AT&T, protect retiree healthcare, and gain respect and dignity for our members." The full text of Ralph's opening statement is copied below.

These reports will be posted on this site every day we bargain. Make sure you also check it for Mobilization information. There will also be information posted on www.cwa-att.com. As always, your Locals should be your first source of information about bargaining and mobilization. We know that the only way we will achieve a fair agreement is if every member in every worksite is involved in fighting for a good Contract.

CWA Legacy "T" 2009 Opening remarks

Ralph Maly, Vice President Communications and Technologies

February 24, 2009

These are historic times. Not just for our country but for us, together, as leaders in the Telecommunications Industry. AT&T is a world class leader in communications and the high tech industry and CWA is a progressive Labor Union dedicated to improving the lives of working men and women. Both CWA and AT&T have an enormous responsibility; a responsibility that is not simply limited to this round of bargaining.

Together we have a responsibility, a duty and an obligation to work together to find creative solutions

to difficult problems. This is not new to CWA. We have proven time and again that we have the intelligence, strength and fortitude to deal with problems, issues and concerns. And we will deal with them. But we will deal with them in the best interest of our members.

AT&T is financially sound and well-positioned for 2009 and beyond. Now is not the time, in this economic downturn, for AT&T to use this as an excuse to jump on the corporate bandwagon and cut jobs and reduce benefits. It is time for AT&T to prove they are committed to their employees, customers and the communities they serve by maintaining middle class jobs and providing quality jobs for the future.

It is time for AT&T to recognize that its employees are the key to AT&T's success and they should be rewarded much like AT&T has rewarded its executives. The over 33 million dollars AT&T paid its five top executives last year would go a long way in providing a fair wage and decent benefits for our members.

It is time AT&T recognizes that our members are prepared to do whatever is necessary to ensure that all AT&T members, including Mobility, get a fair and equitable contract. We are united.

It is time for AT&T to keep its commitment to its retirees. Those individuals that came before us and worked long and hard to build this company should not be forgotten. They should not and will not have their standard of living reduced while heaping healthcare costs upon them.

It is time for us, together, to forge a partnership that will embrace our common goals – the expansion of telecommunications services and high speed internet that is such a key part of the administration's plan to repair our economy. Together we can alter the future such that we will create something that has not yet been created but will endure far into the future, utilizing our professional dedicated members who are ready, willing and able to meet the challenge. CWA's goal in this round of bargaining is to do just that. But part of that goal, and crucial to that partnership, is that we continue to enrich the lives of our members at AT&T, protect retiree healthcare and gain respect and dignity for our members. We will settle for nothing less.

Legacy T Bargaining Updates at: <http://www.cwa-comtech.org/>