

Current Organizing Inroads

We have new members at Avista and Grant County PUD! At Avista Utilities, Brandon Arkle started conversations with a group of five Enterprise Asset Management Planners to discuss the benefits, camaraderie, and unity that comes with Union membership. After some conversations, we moved the EAM Planners through the process of organizing with a little help on the inside. Because of all of the planning and preparation that was done on the front end, Avista showed little opposition for the organizing campaign. I'm told that Avista's lawyer looked over some of our written analysis of the unit and advised Avista, that they could oppose the position of the Union, but they would lose. When we are deliberate and structured in our approach to organizing we win. I love stories like this and am proud of Brandon Arkle and the EAM Planners for the focused, committed work they put in to make this happen!

At Grant County PUD, with the help of Ben Reyes and Ted Harris, we now represent five Information Analysts at the PUD. Shortly after the 4 to 1 vote in favor of organizing, the PUD began recording the members phone calls, requiring that they sign in and out of work each time they leave and return, and took away some of their work. I filed a Cease and Desist letter on the PUD. The phone recordings stopped, the sign in and out requirement evaporated, and the work was returned to the Information Analysts. The Information Analysts immediately appreciated the strength that Local 77 provided. Currently, Brian Gray is helping the group negotiate a first contract and is making lots of progress!

A voluntary recognition agreement was submit to the City of Seattle to organize and represent the Apprenticeship Coordinators. The city denied the voluntary recognition agreement, so we submit the authorization cards to PERC to get these folks representation. After months of attempts to come to an agreement with the City and no response on their end, we are going to hearing to determine which bargaining unit the employees will fit into. This process would have been much easier if the City would have been timely in the interactions with IBEW regarding this matter, but we will get these people representation. We should have an answer by November as to the outcome.

This year, there have been five Internal Organizing Blitzes to date. We have conducted member outreach efforts in Mason County, Chelan County, Benton County, and Spokane County. We have been very successful in reaching out to our members through these Internal Organizing events and will continue to do so to strengthen our membership. If you want to strengthen this Local Union by engaging members, an Internal Organizing Blitz is a feel good way of doing that. I would love to have one of these events in your area! If you are interested in participating in any of these events, please state so on the form noted above or give me a call.

IBEW Local 77 has been reaching out to understand the interests of its members and to update contact information. If you have not already filled out a Personal Interests Survey, please do so on the IBEW Local 77 webpage (www.ibew77.com) and navigate to IBEW Local 77 Forms for the link. This information will help us make sure your information is up to date and will give us a better understanding of what our memberships interests are.

If not everyone in your workplace is a Union member, please reach out to me. We can get your co-workers representation rights and we can gain more strength when we are more united.

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