

THE CHANGING TIDE

NEWSLETTER OF THE UNION FOR VIRGINIA CITY WORKERS, UE



Workers + Community Gather on Labor Day to Advance Fight for Collective Bargaining!

This Labor Day, workers across the country took action to challenge the billionaire corporate agenda that has been attacking workers jobs, wages, union rights, and many important social programs such as healthcare and food assistance.

In Portsmouth, UE brought together 75 people from unions and community groups across Hampton Roads to continue to uplift the struggle for public sector collective bargaining rights. The event was sponsored by the Hampton Roads Public Employee Collective Bargaining Coalition, with participation from IAFF Local 539 Portsmouth, Education Associations from Portsmouth, Newport News & Chesapeake, along with Black Workers for Justice & Tidewater Workers Assembly.



Norfolk & Portsmouth worker represent at UE National Convention!

From August 24-26, UE members from across the country gathered in Chicago for our 79th National Convention. In attendance was **Tangelia Randall** (Portsmouth) and **Angerio Curtis** (Norfolk).

STEWARDS CORNER – UE WINNING GRIEVANCES!

Fired Portsmouth Worker Reinstated with Union Help!

Workers in Portsmouth and Norfolk have successfully won grievances against management in the last month thanks to the support of their co-workers, reversing both unfair discipline and wrongful termination. Despite intimidation by both supervisors and management, a garage worker in Portsmouth and **Angerio Curtis** of Norfolk stood up for themselves and refused to accept unjust treatment. While they were able to get favorable rulings this time, both cities failed to follow their own procedures, which demonstrates the need for collective bargaining to hold them accountable.

The worker in the Portsmouth City Garage was wrongfully terminated (for a second time) in May after a vehicle was sent back out before repairs could be completed. Despite his documented objections and the vehicle being reassigned to another employee, he was blamed for the unsafe condition of the car. With the help of union organizers, Richard was able to navigate the complicated grievance process all the way to the Grievance Panel. Although management attempted to intimidate him and even prevented his witnesses from attending the panel hearing, the panel ruled in his favor and restored his position. He has been back on the job since early September and is still fighting for backpay for his missed time. **(continued on page 4)**



WHAT is a UNION Steward? We need YOU!

Stewards are the backbone of the union. They are the eyes and the ears of the union. The goal is to have a worker on every department/section trained up to be a steward. For every supervisor, and work crew the union needs a steward.

Stewards tasks include:

- Gather updates from workers to share at union meetings,
- Organize workers to join the union,
- Support workers in filing grievances around working conditions,
- Know city policy and laws better than the boss.

Sign up to be a union steward today!
We will be offering trainings soon!

LABOR DAY A BIG SUCCESS!

UE has built the **Hampton Roads Public Employee Collective Bargaining Coalition** which includes the local teachers and firefighter unions from across 757, along with Longshoreman, AFGE and other unions, plus community and faith organizations!



(Pictured Above, Left to Right) Lt. Kurt Detrick, President of Portsmouth Firefighters Union (IAFF L. 539); Tangela Randall, Portsmouth Behavioral Health Services, UE Committee ; & Pastor Joy Carrington, Great Awakening United Church of Christ in Portsmouth all spoke at our event.



(Pictured Above, Left to Right) Katelyn Ritenour, teacher and President of Chesapeake Education Association; Ashaki Binta, Black Workers for Justice and the Tidewater Workers Assembly; and troya wright, UE International Representative all spoke at our event.

UE Helps Overturn a Termination & a Suspension

UE has now helped Richard win his job back twice! (continued from page 2)

"As long as you don't give up. I am proof that the union can and will be there for us when things go awry. I am proof that when we stand and fight, we can get what we're supposed to have. We will and can be treated with respect. People can't be scared to join a union because we have the power. We can't just allow one or two people in management to put fear in everyone on the job. They can't discourage you from joining the union." – Portsmouth Garage Worker

UE Supports Norfolk Worker Overturning Unfair 3-Day Suspension

Over in Norfolk, **Angerio Curtis** has been in the Streets and Bridges department for eight years. In that time, he had seen maintenance neglected on their vehicles and equipment including on his truck. Even after he reported defective storage locks, nothing was done. Yet when an expensive piece of equipment fell out of the truck and was lost, he was accused of negligence. In addition to a three day suspension (without pay), his supervisor no longer allowed him to sign up for overtime. Rather than accepting the situation, Angerio organized with his coworkers, getting affidavits and statements from many of them, and after he filed a grievance, his suspension was overturned, and he was given backpay. However, he still wanted the suspension removed from his record and escalated the issue to a panel hearing in October. He has faced retaliation for refusing to drop his grievance, and was even offered a better assignment to let it go.



"[Management] keeps changing their story." Angerio said "They go back and change summaries after the fact because I keep showing that they're not telling the truth." Curtis is unfazed and is encouraging workers across Norfolk to stand up and get involved in the union after attending the UE National Convention in Chicago. "We don't have to wait for a big convention to get moving. The same power is possible here if we stick together."



JOIN AND BUILD THE UNION!

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