

CHICAGO TEAMSTERS JOINT COUNCIL 25



NEWS»

INCREASED WAGES HIGHLIGHT OVERDUE TEAMSTER CONTRACT After Year of Rallies, Local 743 Ratifies Contract With Edgewater Systems

Wage increases for the next three years have nearly doubled for Teamsters at Edgewater Systems for Balanced Living following the ratification of a new contract.

Teamsters Local 743 has secured the contract for 140 members at the social service agency after almost a year of negotiations. In addition to the significant wage increases, Teamsters at Edgewater Systems will have a seat at the bargaining table for all future changes to employee health insurance and receive renewed protection for grievances involving supervisors.

“What began last year as an unacceptable contract offer from management has resulted in a real win for protection in the workplace for our members,” said Richard Berg, President of Local 743. “Teamsters throughout Illinois and Indiana stood up for our brothers and sisters with the kind of public support that makes a difference at the bargaining table.”

Several rallies were held outside of Edgewater Systems in Gary, Ind. throughout the year to support the Teamsters’ ongoing negotiations. In April, members of the Service Employees International Union joined Teamsters from around Chicago to strengthen the fight for better wages and working conditions.

As a social service agency, Edgewater Systems has traditionally assigned employees as many as 120 regular caseloads. With women constituting the majority of its workers, improved security was a major factor throughout negotiations. Some clients with psychological and mental health issues have in the past injured union members.

“Edgewater Systems is constantly creating new standards for its clients, but many employees have had to pay out-of-pocket for the supplies needed to maintain a proper, safe working environment,” said Berg. “Under our new contract, equality is the new world order as workers will receive much more protection on the job.”

Last month, as contract negotiations entered their third month of mediation, another rally was held in Gary. Union members and supporters came out in droves to remind management and the public about the necessity of a fair contract.

Teamsters Local 743 represents approximately 11,000 hardworking men and women in the health care, clerical and manufacturing industries.