

## Support Striking Pittsburgh Post-Gazette Workers

CWA Locals 14827 and 14842, Typographers and Mailers union members, walked out on strike at the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette on Oct. 5, 2022.

The striking workers are responsible for designing, printing, distributing, advertising sales, accounts receivable, and content creation for the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette are on strike. They have not had a pay raise in over 15 years and went on strike over the illegal, unilateral cuts to their healthcare made by the Block family -- the Toledo-based, millionaire owners of the paper.

"Block Communications, the owners of the Post-Gazette, refused to pay an additional \$19 per employee per week to maintain the existing health care coverage. The workers currently pay over 8% of their wages toward insurance premiums, amounting to approximately \$7,300 per year. Out-of-pocket costs for the high-deductible plan proposed by the Company can cost a family as much as \$14,400 or more per year."

Last month, An administrative law judge from the National Labor Relations Board, who heard the case last fall ruled yesterday that the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette newspaper did not negotiate in good faith, illegally imposed working conditions and unlawfully surveilled workers engaged in union activities. He ordered the newspaper to resume bargaining with the Newspaper Guild of Pittsburgh within 15 days of the union requesting it. He also ordered the company to rescind the unilateral working conditions it had imposed in 2020, and restore the union's previous contract, which expired in 2017. The decision further ordered the company to make its employees whole for any loss of earnings and other benefits that resulted from its unlawful unilateral changes.

Here's how you can support the striking workers and their families.

### **Boycott the Post-Gazette**

If you subscribe to the Post-Gazette, cancel your subscription.

### **Subscribe to the Pittsburgh Union Progress**

Pittsburgh Union Progress is the publication of the striking workers at the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette. It covers the labor dispute and other news and serves as a voice for the people of Pittsburgh.

There's no cost to subscribe, however, they would greatly appreciate a donation to their striker fund to support strikers in need. To subscribe, go to:

<https://www.unionprogress.com/subscribe>

### **Donate to the Strike Fund**

Donations to the Pittsburgh Striker Fund will be used exclusively to assist striking Pittsburgh Post-Gazette families with special needs who are facing very difficult financial circumstances. To donate to the striking workers' fund, go to:

<https://actionnetwork.org/fundraising/donate-to-support-striking-pittsburgh-post-gazette-workers>

### **Join a Picket Line**

**Location:** Post-Gazette Production and Distribution Center, 2201 Sweeney Dr., Clinton, PA 15026

**Times:** 24 hours, every day

**Location:** Post-Gazette Headquarters, 358 North Shore Dr., Pittsburgh, PA 15212

**Times:** 9am-5pm, M-F



## Union Membership Grows by 273,000 Despite Illegal Corporate Union-Busting

The Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) annual report shows that union membership grew by 273,000 in 2022 even as giant corporations such as Amazon and Starbucks ratcheted up illegal efforts to intimidate, harass and fire workers who are forming unions. The growth in union members was spurred in large part by workers of color.

While the report indicates a slight drop in union density from 2021 to 2022, the data doesn't capture the surge in worker organizing across every sector, from teaching assistants to baristas to museum workers, construction workers, video game developers and many more. With the resurgence of union organizing and unprecedented federal investment in job creation, the labor movement is poised to grow significantly in the coming years.

"In 2022, we saw working people rising up despite often illegal opposition from companies that would rather pay union-busting firms millions than give workers a seat at the table," said AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler. "The momentum of the moment we are in is clear. Organizing victories are happening in every industry, public and private, and every sector of our economy all across the country. The wave of organizing will continue to gather steam in 2023 and beyond despite broken labor laws that rig the system against workers."

These statistics highlight the need for the Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO) Act and the Public Service Freedom to Negotiate Act, which will hold union-busting companies and organizations accountable and give workers the negotiating power they deserve. The AFL-CIO calls on Congress to urgently enact legislation that will ensure that anyone who wants to join a union on the job can do so.

A report released by the National Labor Relations Board in October of last year found that in fiscal year 2022, union election petitions increased by 53% from the previous year. According to a 2022 Gallup poll, union approval is at its highest level in nearly 60 years, with 71% of Americans supporting labor unions, and studies show that 70% of hourly workers say they would join a union if given the opportunity.

## Your VZ CPS Award is Tax Deferrable

On March 03, 2023, eligible Verizon employees will be awarded the annual Corporate Profit Sharing Award as a result of collective bargaining. Verizon fought long and hard to do away with the CPS award during 2015-16 bargaining and as a result of your actions on the picket line, we continue to benefit from the fruits of our labor.

As in the past, you have had the opportunity to defer your CPS award (minus appropriate taxes and deductions and any overtime adjustments you receive) into your Verizon Savings Plan account. This allows the award to grow over time like other contributions to the Verizon Savings Plan.

To defer the award you must go online to [www.netbenefits.com/verizon](http://www.netbenefits.com/verizon) or by calling the Verizon Savings Plan Service Center at 1-888-457-9333 from 8:30am to 12 midnight, Monday-Friday.

If you choose not to defer your award, you will receive your CPS award on March 3, 2023 in a separate check/deposit. The minimum amount of this year's distribution will be \$700, but the final determination will be made in February 2023 based on the company's financial results for 2022. Please note that the deferral period ends at 5:00 PM ET on Feb 3, 2023.

## What is it?

Caring for your aging parents is something you hope you can handle when the time comes, but something you probably hope you never have to do. Caring for your aging parents means helping them plan for the future, and this can be overwhelming, both physically and emotionally. When the time comes for you to take care of your parents, you may be certain of only two things: Your parents need you, and you need help.

## **Start planning**

### Talk to your parents about the future

Start caring for your aging parents by talking with them about their needs and wishes if they are able. In some cases, however, they may not be willing to talk to you about their future, either because they are afraid to face it or because they resent your interference. If this is the case, you may need to do as much planning as you can without them, or, if their safety or health is in danger, step in as caregiver anyway.

### Prepare a personal data record

The first step you should take is to ask your parents to help you prepare a personal data record (if they are unable to help you, you'll have to search for the information yourself). A personal data record is a document that lists information that you might need in case your parents become incapacitated or die. Information that should be included is financial information, legal information, medical information, insurance information, and information regarding professional advisors and the location of important records.

### Get advice

You can't know everything, and you probably don't have enough time to learn everything you need to know to care for your parents. That's why you should seek advice from professionals. Some advice will be free, and some you will have to pay for. If you live far from your parents or are too overwhelmed to handle all your parents' affairs, you can hire a geriatric care manager who will evaluate your parents' situation, suggest options, and coordinate professionals who can help. In addition, talk to your employer. Some employers have set up employee assistance programs that offer advice and assistance to people who are dealing with personal challenges, including caring for aging parents.

### Get support

Don't try to care for your parents alone. Many local and national caregiver support groups and community services are available to help you cope with caring for your aging parents. If you don't know where to start finding help, call the Eldercare Locator, an information and referral service sponsored by the federal government that can direct you to resources available nationally or in your area. Call the Eldercare Locator at (800) 677-1116.

## **What kind of advice will you need?**

### Housing and health care advice

If your parents are like many older individuals, where they live will depend upon how healthy they are. As your parents grow older, their health may deteriorate so much that they can no longer live on their own. At this point, you may need to find them in-home health care or health care within a retirement community or nursing home. On the other hand, you may want them to move in with you. In addition, you will need information on managing the cost of health care, long-term care insurance, major medical insurance, Medicare, and Medicaid.

#### **Contact:**

- Visiting Nurse Associations of America
- Centers for Medicare & Medicaid Services (formerly known as the Health Care Financing Administration)
- American Association of Homes and Services for the Aging
- American Association of Retired Persons (AARP)
- Health Insurance Association of America
- National Association for Home Care

### Financial advice

If your parents need help managing their finances, you may need to

contact professionals whose advice both you and your parents can trust, including one or more of the following individuals or organizations.

#### **Contact:**

- Your financial planner
- Your banker
- Your tax attorney
- The Social Security Administration

### Legal advice

Legal advisors can help you plan for your parents' incapacity (including preparing documents such as power of attorneys, medical directives, and living wills), contact nursing home ombudsmen, set up and monitor guardianship, prepare wills, give tax advice, and provide bill payment and representative payee assistance. Many states provide funds for the delivery of free legal services to the elderly and many attorneys specialize in elder law, so finding legal advice shouldn't be difficult.

#### **Contact:**

- Your attorney
- National Association of State Units on Aging
- American Bar Commission on the Legal Problems of the Elderly
- Legal Counsel for the Elderly

### What kinds of support and community services will you need?

Caring for your aging parents will be easier if you know what kinds of support and community services are available and where to locate them. The following is a list of the kinds of support and community services you can find locally and nationally, along with specific suggestions of who to contact for information.

### Adult day care

If you need to work or run errands and you can't leave your parents alone, consider using adult day care. These programs are located in hospitals, churches, temples, nursing homes, or community centers. Many are private nonprofit organizations. Adult day care can be expensive but is sometimes subsidized by the government, and fees may be based on a sliding scale. In addition, Medicare, Medicaid, long-term care insurance, or your health insurance may pay part of the cost.

#### **Contact:**

- Your local senior center or community center
- National Institute on Adult Day Care
- The Alzheimer's Association

### Caregiver support groups (self-help)

Many self-help groups are available to provide information and emotional support on broad topics (such as aging) or specific topics (such as heart disease). You may find these support groups helpful if you know little about caring for your aging parents. Such groups might also provide an opportunity to help others by sharing your experiences.

#### **Contact:**

- The Alzheimer's Association
- Children of Aging Parents
- National Self-Help Clearinghouse

### Geriatric assessment

If you are uncertain of your parent's mental or physical capabilities, ask his or her doctor to recommend somewhere you can take your parent to undergo an assessment. These assessments can be done at hospitals or clinics. Your parent will be evaluated to determine his or her capabilities. The evaluation determines whether the individual can take care of himself or herself on a day-to-day basis, including such things as bathing, dressing, eating, using the telephone, doing housework, and managing money. Based on this evaluation, you and your parent will receive advice regarding care options.

#### **Contact:**

- Your doctor
- Your lawyer
- The National Association of Professional Geriatric Care Managers
- Aging Network Services

### Respite care

When you are caring for your aging parents, you may feel guilty or even resentful because you don't have limitless energy. Taking care of your parents is hard work, however, and everyone needs a break once in a while. If you are caring for your aging parents, look into respite care. Medicaid may pay for some respite-care services.

### **Contact:**

- Your doctor
- Your local hospital
- The Alzheimer's Association
- National Association for Home Care

### Financial and tax considerations for you

Caring for your aging parents is not only an emotional burden for you but may be a financial one as well, depending upon how well off your parents are and how much caring for them costs. Because many adults today are becoming first-time parents in their thirties, and others are remarrying and rearing second families, increasing numbers of adults are finding themselves in the "sandwich generation." They face having to pay expenses of growing children (including college expenses), plan for their own retirement, and support their aging parents financially. Thus, it's important to plan not only your parents finances, but your own as well.

### Financial planning for your parents

Making sure that your parents won't outlive their money is a critical step in ensuring that your own finances will remain sound. In particular, you'll need to make sure that your parent is receiving all the benefits to which he or she is entitled and that his or her money is invested wisely. You'll also need to create a financial profile for your parents, a statement that includes income, expenses, and net worth. If, after considering your parent's financial condition, it's clear that they won't have enough resources to pay for their own care, you'll need to find ways to supplement their income. You may need to look at Supplemental Security Income (SSI), for instance, or ask other relatives for help. You'll also have to determine how much financial support you can give your parents (see below).

### Financial planning for you

Besides caring for your parents, you have a lot of other financial obligations. Before you can determine the best way to help your parents financially, you'll have to look at your own financial picture. Not only will you need to consider your current expenses, but you'll have to look down the road a few years, considering how much you'll need to save for your own retirement and, perhaps, for your child's education.

### Tax benefits for children supporting aging parents

Federal income tax law provides several tax benefits to you if you are supporting your parents financially. If you have a dependent care account at work, you can put pretax dollars into the account that you can use to pay for some costs associated with caring for your dependent parents. You may be able to claim an exemption for your parents as dependents, and you may be entitled to claim a dependent care credit. In addition, you may be able to file your taxes as head of household and deduct medical expenses you paid for your parents. For more information consult your tax advisor.

### **Questions & Answers**

#### If you are financially supporting your parent, is he or she entitled to receive Social Security benefits based on your earnings?

If you are providing at least one-half of your parent's support at the time of your death, and he or she is age 62 or over and is not entitled to a retirement benefit that is equal to or larger than the amount he or she would receive based on your earnings record, then he or she may be entitled to receive a parent's Social Security benefit equal to 82.5 percent of your primary insurance amount (PIA).

## Personals

*We wish to extend sincere sympathy to the family and friends of:*

Retiree **Barbara Pervall** who passed away on September 7, 2022.

Retiree **Kenneth Byrd** who passed away December 19, 2022.

**James Talley**, step father of **Vice President Tamera Nelson**, who passed December 30, 2022.

Member **Maurice Moore** who passed away January 1, 2023.

Retiree **Bruce Crum** who passed away on January 4, 2023.

**Jenny Clark**, wife of retiree **Bob Clark** who passed away on January 7, 2023.

### **Congratulations to Recent Retiree:**



Robert Kidwell



## Thinking About Retirement?

You may want to check out these important workshops presented by **Nettworth Financial Group** to see if the reality of retirement is on your horizon!!

### Timing Social Security Benefits Online Workshop

**Thursday, February 9, 2023 at 6:30 PM** - Please join this meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone.

### Retirement- What to Expect Online Workshop

**Thursday, February 23, 2023 at 6:30 PM** - Please join this meeting from your computer, tablet or smartphone.

**Reservations are required** and to RSVP you may call Nettworth at **(800)-859-2212**, or register online at [Nettworth.net](http://Nettworth.net).

## The NettWorth Financial Group Donna Castleberry Scholarship Fund

The NettWorth Financial Group Donna Castleberry Scholarship Fund awards college scholarships to children of union members across the country. Since 2001, more than \$250,000 has been given to fund the education of dozens of promising young men and women.



The Donna Castleberry Scholarship Fund was created in remembrance of a very special Nettworth employee who passed away.

Scholarship applications can be requested by calling their scholarship hotline at 888-224-5021 or by visiting their website [www.nettworth.net](http://www.nettworth.net).

Scholarship applications must be submitted by May 31, 2023.

**Are you "WEARING RED" on  
Thursdays?**

# Zenimax Workers Vote Overwhelmingly to Join CWA

A supermajority of quality assurance workers at Microsoft's ZeniMax Studios have indicated that they wish to join ZeniMax Workers United/CWA either by signing a union authorization card or voting via an online portal. In accordance with its stated labor principles, Microsoft has recognized the union.

ZeniMax is a video game production company with studios in Maryland and Texas known for its popular games such as Elder Scrolls, DOOM, Quake Champions, and Fallout. ZeniMax Workers United/CWA is the first studio at Microsoft to secure union representation, and the largest group of union-represented Quality Assurance testers at any U.S. game studio.

CWA Local 2108 will represent nearly 160 workers at the Rockville, MD location.

Quality assurance workers across ZeniMax have been organizing for months to positively transform ZeniMax for the benefit of workers, the company, and the players who enjoy the studios' games. Workers began signing union authorization cards in November 2022, and started the official voting process through a confidential online portal that opened on Friday, December 2 at 8am PST and closed on December 31 at 6pm PST. The unit includes all QA employees in the U.S. across ZeniMax's various studios.

Unlike other video game and tech corporations, Microsoft made a public commitment around its labor principles which included respecting its employees' right to form a union. When ZeniMax employees announced that they were organizing a union in December, Microsoft agreed to remain neutral and allow workers to make their own decision about whether or not to join the union. The company swiftly recognized ZeniMax Workers United/CWA after a neutral third party confirmed that a majority of workers favored joining the union.

"Microsoft has lived up to its commitment to its workers and let them decide for themselves whether they want a union," said Communications Workers of America President Chris Shelton. "Other video game and tech giants have made a conscious choice to attack, undermine, and demoralize their own employees when they join together to form a union. Microsoft is charting a different course which will strengthen its corporate culture and ability to serve its customers and should serve as a model for the industry and as a blueprint for regulators."

CWA will be assisting Zenimax workers to formulate bargaining priorities and will begin negotiating a common contract for all Zenimax locations in the near future.

# Local 2108 Calendar

## FEBRUARY 2023

- 8 **RMC 2108 Meeting - 11am**  
Local Office, Beltsville, MD
- 8 **Membership Meeting - 6:00pm**  
Local Office, Beltsville, MD
- 14 **Valentine's Day**  
*Happy Valentine's Day*  

- 20 **President's Day**  
Local Office Closed

## MARCH 2023

- 8 **RMC 2108 Meeting - 11:00am**  
Local Office, Beltsville, MD
- 8 **Membership Meeting - 6:00pm**  
Local Office, Beltsville, MD
- 12 **Daylight Savings Time Begins**  
Set clocks ahead 1 hour
- 17 **St. Patrick's Day**



### WEINGARTEN RIGHTS

*If this discussion could in any way lead to my being disciplined or terminated or have any effect on my personal working conditions, I respectfully request my union representative, officer or steward to be present at this meeting. Without union representation, I choose not to participate in this discussion.*

**MARK YOUR CALENDAR: Membership Meeting - Wednesday, February 8, 2023 - 6:00pm**  
**RMC 2108 Meeting - Wednesday, February 8, 2023 - 11:00am**



10782 Rhode Island Avenue, Beltsville, MD 20705

Web Address: [www.cwalocal2108.org](http://www.cwalocal2108.org)

Local Office: (301) 595-2108 :: Local Fax: (301) 595-2412

Tamera Nelson - Vice President

LaTasha Carpenter - Vice President

Johnny Brown - Secretary-Treasurer

Amory Proctor - Executive Vice President

Marilyn Irwin - President

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