



Union baker becomes U.S. citizen

Mario Aldaco, a member of Portland-based Bakers Local 114, was sworn in as a U.S. citizen Aug. 28. Following the ceremony, the 24-year-old native of Mexico went with Local 114 Financial Secretary Terry Lansing to the Elections Division to register to vote. Aldaco is employed at Richmond Baking in McMinnville, where he is a lead sanitation worker responsible for the cleaning of all the baking equipment and machines. He was instrumental in helping the union win an organizing campaign there in 2006. Aldaco is now a shop steward and an elected member of Local 114's Executive Board. Aldaco came to the U.S. as a legal permanent resident in 1999 to be with his family. He graduated from McMinnville High School in 2004 while working full-time at Richmond Baking. To be naturalized, a person must be at least 18 years old, have lived in the United States for at least five years, be able to read, write, speak and understand basic English, and have basic knowledge and understanding of U.S. history, government structure and the Constitution. "Mario has worked hard for this union and to become a U.S. citizen. We're very proud of him," Lansing said. For his part, Aldaco said it made him happy that Lansing could be with him when he took the oath. "It meant a lot," Aldaco told the NW Labor Press.

...Machinists brace for long strike

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sions of the popular Boeing 737. Boeing plants will remain open during the strike, but nothing will be manufactured. Under the terms of its collective bargaining agreement with Boeing, members of the Society of Professional Engineering Employees in Aerospace (SPEEA) are prohibited from honoring another union's picket line. But the union is distributing "I Support IAM" signs for employees to display in vehicles and at work. The union also is telling members to decline management requests to perform Machinists work and to notify the union if it does. SPEEA represents 21,515 Boeing employees in Washington, Oregon, Utah, Kansas and California. Its labor contracts expire Dec. 1, 2008.

In Oregon, Teamsters Joint Council No. 37 has sanctioned the strike and will not deliver to the Gresham plant, which manufactures landing gear beams, flight control columns, and gear boxes, among other parts. The Northwest Oregon Labor Council also has sanctioned the strike and called for a boycott.

At the Machinists convention in Florida earlier this month, American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME) President Gerald McEntee said his union would send \$100,000 to help strikers. Strike benefits are \$150 a week.

Machinists struck for 24 days in 2005 before getting a contract. A labor dispute in 1995 lasted for 69 days and affected 32,000 employees.

In 2002, workers took major concessions because of 9-11 and the economic impact it had on the United States. The Machinists actually voted down the contract, but then failed to muster a two-thirds majority that the union's constitution requires in order to strike. When the strike vote failed, the rejected contract automatically

Machinists District Lodge 24 has scheduled a rally for striking Boeing workers in Gresham on Saturday, Sept. 20, starting at noon. Hamburgers and hot dogs will be on the barbecue. Several politicians, including Jeff Merkley, a candidate for U.S. Senate, have been invited to speak.

was implemented. It was that contract that opened the door for more contracting out of work.

This year, workers voted by an 80 percent margin to reject the contract — and by an 87 percent margin to strike.

Some members were upset when the union — at the request of federal mediators and Washington State Gov. Chris Gregoire — agreed to extend the contract for 48 hours to try to reach a settlement. That failed and the strike began Sept. 6.

Pickets in Gresham told the Labor Press that the regressive contract language "has made us a whole lot stronger. We're ready to stay out three, four, five months. One day longer than Boeing."

"Corporate America is sticking it to the working man. We're taking a stand for all workers," Gentry said.

Tom Gobel, a 20-year employee, said elimination of the spousal survivor benefit and the reduction in retiree medical were the reasons he

voted to strike.

"I came back for one more contract. Now they want to take my retirement away," he said. "We watch them gut the contract year after year. We don't trust them. They don't walk their talk."

At the union's international convention in Florida held earlier this month, Machinists Western Territory Vice President Lee Pearson told delegates that Boeing came to the table with takeaways, "just like they did in 2005."

As an example, Boeing again tried cutting Wichita members out of the bargaining process, and the company introduced a "two-tiered" fringe benefits package for new hires. Both items were bargained out of the deal.

Pearson said the move this year "was both unnecessary and arrogant in lieu of their record profits and remarkable backlog" of orders for the 787 Dreamliner.

Pearson said the company "tried to circumvent our negotiators and bargained themselves into a strike instead of what could have been an industry-leading agreement that would have propelled both Boeing and our members forward for the next three years."

IAM President Tom Buffenbarger says the issue of job security is critical to workers. He told the Wall Street Journal: "It's time for Boeing to listen to us on this. The union just wants to be able to have a shot at making the case that our workers can do those jobs competitively before Boeing ships them out."

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Local Motion

August 2008
 Union activity in Oregon and Southwest Washington, according to the National Labor Relations Board and the Oregon Employment Relations Board

Election results

Employer	Date	Union	Location	Results:		Results: Union
				Union	No Union	
Providence Medford Medical Center	8/7	Oregon Nurses Assoc.	Medford	121	79	👍
Lay's Construction	8/21	Carpenters	Portland	3	2	👍
Rainbow Adult Living	8/29	Oregon AFSCME	Portland	15	11	👍

Representation petitions

Employer	Location
Union	# of employees
Kaiser Foundation Health Plan NW	Portland
Service Employees International Union Local 49	9