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COLLECTIVE BARGAINING

Legacy settles as strike nears

1,100 hospital workers were set to walk out July 15; instead they ratified a five-year contract.

By Don McIntosh

Just days before 1,100 support workers at four Portland locations were planning to go on strike, Legacy Health Systems reached agreement on two new union contracts with Service Employees International Union (SEIU) Local 49.

Ratified by the workers on July 14, the collective bargaining agreements will equalize wage rates across locations, bringing Legacy Emanuel up to the higher wage rates that Legacy has paid at Good Samaritan.

One of the agreements covers about 400 workers at Legacy Good Samaritan Medical Center in Northwest Portland. The other covers about 700 workers at Legacy Emanuel Medical Center in North Portland, plus the nearby Randall Children's Hospital and Unity Center for Behavioral Health. Each spells out wages, benefits and workplace rights for workers in over a dozen hospital support classifications, including housekeepers, cooks, certified



HELP WITH ADVANCEMENT: Under their new contract, SEIU Local 49 members at Legacy Good Samaritan, above, have access to joint union-employer funds to pay tuition for classes that can help them get ahead.

nursing assistants, and patient admission representatives.

The agreements run through June 30, 2026.

Raises in the first year range from 3% to 9% as lower paid workers are brought up to the new unified wage for each job. After that, all workers will get annual across-the-board raises of 3%, 3%, 2.5%, and 2.75% in July of 2022, 2023, 2024, and 2025, respectively. That's slightly above the previous three-year contract, which raised wages 2.5% a year.

Workers also get annual "step" increases that reward them for

sticking around for the first 10 years. And the contracts add a new top step to the pay scale, which kicks in at an employee's 15th year. That will help the roughly 40% of members who had already reached the top step. The union has been pushing for that 11th step since at least 2014.

The new contracts also raise starting pay for several jobs. Certified nursing assistants will now start at \$18.75 an hour, up from \$16.75. Customer service workers will start at \$16.53, up

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As nation reeled, CEO pay rose

Times were tough in 2020. Millions of American workers lost jobs as the pandemic hit. But one group did pretty well for themselves: the chief executive officers of America's biggest corporations.

CEO pay increased an incredible \$712,720 last year on average among S&P 500 companies, according to the latest annual Executive Paywatch report by the national AFL-CIO union federation. The S&P 500 is a stock market index that tracks the 500 biggest U.S. companies that are publicly

traded on stock markets.

Unlike privately-held companies, publicly traded companies have to disclose what they pay top executives. And boy are they doing well. In 2020, CEOs of S&P 500 companies received \$15.5 million in compensation, on average.

Since 2018, publicly traded companies have also had to disclose how much their CEOs make compared to their median employee. For 2020, that was 299 to 1 for S&P 500 CEOs. It's been going up: In 2019, it was 264 to 1. —DM

C-SUITE ARISTOCRATS

According to the AFL-CIO's Executive Paywatch report, here's some of the most extreme S&P 500 CEO pay for 2020:

HIGHEST-PAID CEO Robert Antokol, Playtika Holding Corp., \$372 million

MOST OUTRAGEOUS CEO-TO-WORKER PAY RATIO Abercrombie & Fitch (6,565 times the median worker pay of \$1,820)

MOST LAVISHLY PAID OREGON CEO Nike - \$53.5 million for John Donahoe II

MOST LAVISHLY PAID WASHINGTON CEO T-Mobile - \$54.9 million for G Sievert

TOP CEO PAY AMONG BIG UNION EMPLOYERS

- General Motors - \$23.7 million for Mary Barra
- Kroger Co. - \$22.4 million for W. McMullen
- Boeing Company - \$21.1 million for David Calhoun
- AT&T - \$21.0 million for John Stankey

Painters Local 10 presses for - and gets - large wage increases

The first contract since regaining the right to strike contains the biggest raises in a generation.

By Don McIntosh

For about 440 members of Painters Local 10 employed by members of the Signatory Painting Contractors Organization (SPCO), the current union contract is proving to be life-changing, raising wages by more than \$7 an hour over its three-year span. Last year, members ratified the overall contract—including first-year raises of \$2.62 to \$4.27 an hour—while leaving second- and third-year raises open to further negotiation. On

SIGNATORY PAINTING CONTRACTORS ORGANIZATION

Effective immediately, these are the hourly wage rates for journeyman painters in year two of the three-year contract (plus \$7.06/hr for health insurance and \$5.75/hr for pension)

COMMERCIAL/RESIDENTIAL \$28.76 wage, \$42.90 total package

INDUSTRIAL \$30.56 wage, \$44.70 total package

BRIDGE \$36.23 wage, \$50.37 total package

July 27, 2021, they voted to approve those second and third year raises: an immediate \$2.20 an hour (plus an extra 30 cents for health and pension benefits); and a \$2.30 increase on July 1, 2022 (members will decide later how to divide that increase among wages and benefits).

The vote to ratify raises that total about \$4.50 an hour came exactly three weeks after mem-

bers voted down SPCO's earlier offer of a pair of increases that totalled \$2.94.

Scott Oldham, field representative for Local 10, said the rapid progress all owes to painters regaining their ability to strike. Prior to 2018, Local 10's contracts with SPCO specified that if the two sides couldn't agree on the terms of a successor contract, an arbitrator would

decide the terms. That deprived the union of the potential leverage of a strike.

"The relationship changed almost overnight simply with the power of the strike," Oldham says.

When SPCO this year wouldn't go higher than 25 cents an hour for the contract's second year increase, Local 10 members began an escalating series of strikes on May 21.

"Those first painters who stood out on the line on those strikes ... without them participating and having the strength to do that, we would have never got anywhere," Oldham said. "Members taking that big step,

that's what did it."

On July 14, Local 10 members also ratified by 73% a separate agreement with the Associated Wall and Ceiling Contractors (AWCC) that raises wages \$2 an hour now and \$2.30 an hour July 1, 2022.

The higher wages may help union contractors attract more employees and increase market share vis-a-vis the non-union competition.

"We feel like these are wages that we can go out and recruit with," Oldham told the *Labor Press*. "We're excited to get out there in the field and lure the best workers out of the nonunion side."