

Beneficial State Bank signs first union contract

Workers at Beneficial Bank have ratified their first-ever union contract, the two sides announced Sept. 29. The agreement with Local 7901 and Local 9412 of Communications Workers of America (CWA) covers about 150 workers at 13 branches in Oregon, California, and Washington.

The agreement sets a minimum hourly wage that starts at \$20.50 and reaches \$22.25 in 2023, with even higher minimums in high-cost areas like Oakland, where the wage will be \$28.60. Under the contract, workers will get a \$1,000 ratification bonus, at least two weeks paid vacation a year, and up to



Based in California, Beneficial State Bank has Portland branches on NE Sandy Blvd., NE MLK, Jr., Blvd., and on NW 10th Avenue.

12 days paid sick leave annually. The agreement also increases a 401(k) match to 5% of salary (up from 4%), and adds a "just cause" standard for discipline, and a grievance process workers can use to contest wrongful discipline.

"It's a really strong contract," said Local 7901 President A.J. Mendoza, who served on the

bargaining committee. Mendoza said the way the bank took part in the negotiations proved that its statements about support for workers were real, not just surface-level branding.

Unions are extremely rare among bank workers in the United States, representing barely over 1% of workers in the industry. Beneficial Bank voluntarily recognized the union in March 2020 after a majority of workers signed union cards.

Beneficial Bank was co-founded by billionaire Tom Steyer and his wife Kat Taylor in 2007 as a bank focused on community development. —DM

First ever IATSE strike would shut down Hollywood

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is booming in the industry, with studios racing to deliver new content to hungry audiences. But IATSE (International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees, Moving Picture Technicians, Artists and Allied Crafts) says productions are subjecting union crew members to incredibly long workdays without any break for a meal, and insufficient time between shifts.

The union is also pressing for better pay on productions des-

tined for streaming. "New media" modes like streaming aren't so new any more, and are arguably the dominant way people consume television and movies now. That erodes the justification in previous contracts that they pay crews less than crews on traditional TV and film productions.

If a strike happens, it would shut down three current Portland-area productions by Paramount+, HBO, and Amazon Prime. A work stoppage by the roughly 150 IATSE Local 488

REQUEST FOR SOLIDARITY

IATSE is asking supporters to sign an online petition asking the studios to reach a fair deal. Close to 50,000 had signed as of late September. Visit bit.ly/3zJjEFk to sign.

members on those projects would also idle about 150 members of SAG/AFTRA, the Directors Guild, and the Teamsters.

"Our goal is to get back to the negotiating table," cottrill told the Labor Press.



MANAGEMENT: "WE DO NOT AGREE WITH THE LAW." Negotiations aren't going well at 360 Sheet Metal in Vancouver. Workers there, who make close to minimum wage, voted 12 to 9 on June 21 to join Sheet Metal Local 16, but union leaders say the company is going through the motions in bargaining and refusing normal raises, both illegal. On Sept. 21, union organizers set up a giant inflatable "fat cat" outside the shop, along with a banner asking: "Does 360 Sheet Metal steal wages from their workers?" The question refers to an alleged violation of state prevailing wage law that is under investigation by the Washington Department of Labor and Industries. Local 16 is asking supporters to call 360 at 360-750-8558 and tell them their employees deserve a fair contract.

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