At Piedmont “Mobilizing Is Our Glue!”

Bargaining begins later this year for Piedmont agents. As we draw closer to bargaining, mobilizing could not be more important. We need every Piedmont agent to get involved. Here are a few easy ways you can help the bargaining team and make your voices heard:

- **Mobilization Cards:** Earlier this year CWA distributed Mobilization Cards to identify effective ways to show the company that we stand together and support our union.
- **Bargaining Surveys:** Recently, the union sent out a Bargaining Survey to help the bargaining committee understand members’ priorities and be fully prepared to fight for those priorities at the bargaining table.

If you haven’t completed a Mobilization Card or Bargaining Survey yet, you have time. Mobilization Cards are here: [http://sgiz.mobi/s3/Piedmont-Mobilization-Card](http://sgiz.mobi/s3/Piedmont-Mobilization-Card)
The Bargaining Survey is here: [http://sgiz.mobi/s3/piedmontsurvey](http://sgiz.mobi/s3/piedmontsurvey)

Donielle Prophete of Local 3645 says, “Mobilizing is our glue! It’s so important because we need to make sure the company knows that we are standing together as one.”

If you’re interested in jumpstarting your activism by joining the mobilization team or becoming a steward, we would love to hear from you:
- Anthony “A.B.” Barden, Local 3645: cwalocal3645@gmail.com
- Keith Richardson, Local 13345: staff@cwa13345.org
- Rick Brower, Local 7040: rdbrower@gmail.com

The time is now to get involved in shaping our future at Piedmont!

Spotlight on Evansville Envoy Agents

Congratulations to the amazing team of Customer Service Agents in Evansville, Indiana (EVV). The agents won the Customer Cup Award for their outstanding performance in the second quarter of 2016, based on dependability, on-time departures, turn time, overall satisfaction, and customer feedback. What’s the secret?

John “Tucker” Mattingly says, “We all work well together, communicate, and have a strong sense of personal commitment and personal responsibility.” “We’re a finely tuned machine,” says Yvetta Berry. “We watch what others are doing and know what is needed; it’s like a dance!”
During the summer of 2016, new steward training was a primary focus for many of our American Airlines Locals. The Locals set out to train as many stewards as possible to uphold and enforce our contract, which was ratified last December. By mid-September more than 250 stewards had been trained and deployed in five Locals.

“Stewards are needed for many reasons on the LAA side of our house,” says CWA North Carolina Staff Representative Vonda Hardy. “A strong steward structure helps us build solidarity and also shows the company we stand strong together.”

Mahlon Robinson, Director of Area Representatives for Local 1171, says that the union just won’t work without good stewards, "The bottom line is that they’re our front line of defense representing our members. All our agents depend on dedicated stewards."

Many locals plan to hold additional training classes through the end of the year. Annette Rocco, BDL Customer Service Agent and member of Local 1171, encourages everyone who thinks they might be interested to contact a local officer as soon as possible. “It’s an honor to be a steward. It’s an honor to support our brothers and sisters. It’s important work that definitely has its own reward!”

Stewards help all agents connect with our union and understand what their rights are under the contract.

Reservations Agent and member of Local 3640 in Raleigh-Durham, Kim Capps, explains, “It’s important for us (LAA agents) to have well-trained stewards because this is all new to us. The best way for us to gain exposure to our union and experience is to get involved. I needed the training so I could learn what to do when going into a meeting with management.”

CWA held more than a dozen steward training classes this summer, which included two-day trainings led by staff representatives and local presidents. The training provided agents with details about the working relationship between the union and the company and introduced stewards to essential resources they need to identify and address any contract violations.
Since June, CWA members have collected more than 1,500 signatures on a petition demanding that Congress pass a national standard protecting airport customer service agents from what is commonly known as “airport rage.” Starting in September, agents from Florida, Illinois, Missouri, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Texas delivered petitions for their states to the district offices of their members of Congress.

Although it’s a felony to interfere with the duties of flight attendants and pilots, currently there are no such protections for passenger service agents, who are often on the front lines, serving angry passengers who can be both physically and verbally abusive. Efforts to add protections for agents to the FAA Reauthorization Bill failed in June, so CWA is now focusing on the next opportunity. We are calling on Congress to enact strong protections in the next legislative session.

Amanda Mitchell (Envoy-DFW) talked about why her face-to-face meeting with staff in the office of Senator Ted Cruz (R-TX) meant so much. “Our elected officials don’t know airport rage is such a serious issue. We gave the senator’s staff perspectives on how airport rage has affected our lives and careers, and we challenged them to be more observant when traveling because airport rage occurs daily. Contacting the senator in the state in which we work is the first step to making a more positive, safe work environment.”

Celia Cody (CWA, District 4), Marie Gage (Envoy-ORD), Carolyn Marsalek (AA-ORD), and Nicole Popis (CWA-LPAT) met with staff members of Congresswoman Tammy Duckworth (D-IL), who has a strong interest in transportation issues. Rep. Duckworth’s District Director, Marina Faz-Huppert, stressed that all members of Congress want to read real life stories that illustrate the need for these protections. Those stories, more than anything else, will focus attention on airport rage legislation. We are still collecting members’ stories to pass on to Congress, so if you have not already shared yours, please consider doing so: http://american-agents.org/communications/survey/.

Congressman John Garamendi (D-CA) is an ally in this cause, working to clarify the fact that the 2002 Aviation and Transportation Security Act included provisions intended to protect ramp personnel, gate agents, and others with security responsibilities. If successful in this effort, airlines and airports would be pressured to establish protocols to protect all employees who are vulnerable to airport rage.
Envoy Stewards Update:
More Stewards Trained and Bargaining Progresses

Over the past few months the Envoy bargaining team has seen some steady progress in working toward a first contract for agents. At the most recent meeting, September 14-15, CWA and the company agreed on the System Board of Adjustment to make sure cases unresolved through the Grievance Procedure are sent to a neutral party for resolution. Full details of the meeting are on the Envoy web site (envoy-agents.org). The bargaining team will be back at the table October 20-21.

The positive results at the bargaining table over the summer include an interim procedure that will allow non-probationary employees to file a grievance and have a union steward fight their case if they are suspended, terminated, or given a performance advisory or other discipline that affects their pay. Agents also should be sure to take a steward with them if they are called in to meet with management as part of an investigation and think the issue could lead to discipline. This procedure, which is now in place, makes it even more important that Envoy agents have plenty of stewards at each station to help guide them and answer questions along the way.

As of mid-September, CWA has trained 75 Envoy stewards, but more are needed. Two more trainings are scheduled for Fall 2016, with a special focus on making sure there are stewards at the smaller stations.

We asked a couple of agents who recently “graduated” from steward training about their experiences. They had some good advice for other agents who are thinking about trying out the role of steward.

Wayne Schwark (ORD) attended training in Chicago in July. He says he became a steward in order to be a voice for other agents at his station and in his district and to make sure there is a fair and level playing field for everyone.

“I think the most important thing I’ve learned about being a steward is that you must be fair and impartial because each employee deserves the same level of protection,” says Wayne. He advises other agents to consider steward training if they believe they can be knowledgeable, trustworthy, and set a good example in the workplace. “It’s important to have in-depth knowledge of company policy and the contract to serve as a steward,” says Wayne. And that’s what the training provides.

ORD Envoy agents train to serve as CWA Shop Stewards on September 24th.
Envoy Stewards Update, continued

Wayne adds that he likes to remind people that so much of what we take for granted—vacation time, sick leave, paid holidays, and FMLA—exists because of unions. Working people must join together and demand decent wages and benefits.

So what’s next in terms of progress at Envoy? Wayne thinks the disparity in pay between agents doing the same work in the airline industry is a “tough pill to swallow.” “Our airline boasted astronomical profits last year, but the executives are content to keep most workers earning less than a living wage. At Envoy, we’re way overdue for unionization and better pay and benefits, and that’s why I wanted to become a steward.”

Shana Shaw (DFW) agrees. Shana participated in steward training in early August. She sees her role as providing strong support for her fellow Envoy agents, and that means being available to talk about questions, grievances, and procedures whenever she’s needed. “I always want to get a dialogue going,” says Shana. “If I have any advice for people who are thinking about becoming stewards, it’s that you have to be a really good listener and to be trustworthy. Understand that you’re taking on a serious responsibility for someone’s life when they talk about their problems at work. You have to respect their confidentiality.”

For Shana, the role of steward is about service. “We need good stewards at Envoy, so I hope more people will join the training. We need people who want to advocate for others who may not be able to speak up for themselves and people who can build a positive relationship with management. We don’t want to create battles or lead with fear. We want consistency and fairness across the company, which is going to help us and help passengers. It’s good for everyone.”

If you want to learn more about steward training at Envoy, click on the link to the steward sign up form at envoyagents.org.
An unprecedented deluge of rainfall flooded southern Louisiana from August 12 to August 14. Envoy agents at the Baton Rouge airport serve the devastated area. Members of CWA Local 3640 wanted to help their CWA brothers and sisters, so they raised money and collected donations from the community to hand deliver to Baton Rouge.

“You gain extended family with CWA. Regardless of whether we work at the same station, do the same job, are from the same local, work for American Airlines, Envoy, or Piedmont, we’re all in this together. We’re always there for each other in a time of need,” says Jar’La Evans of Local 3640.

“The flooding was really unexpected, and this help from 3640 is great. We’re grateful for everything,” said LeRoyal Toney, an Envoy BTR Customer Service Agent.

Chris Kress Is On a Mission to Bring Workers Together

Chris Kress believes in getting to know other people and “walking around in their shoes” before making judgments about them. That’s what she’s been doing since January. A veteran agent at American Airlines, Chris is currently on assignment as a CWA organizer with Envoy. She would describe herself as a good listener who wants to help bridge the gap in wages and respect between AA and Envoy agents.

“What we do is the same, but the company wants to divide us. We can’t let that happen, so I want to make sure we walk in each other’s shoes a little,” says Chris. She says she’s seen the company pitting workers against each other for 20 years in order to increase profits. "If management builds up resentment and animosity in the workforce, it can weaken us and silence us,” she explains. “We need a voice, and to succeed we all have to go beyond our small differences and be a cohesive group. Building unity is the key to improving Envoy workers’ situation and getting the respect we all deserve.”

Chris’s work right now is focused on listening to Envoy workers’ concerns and encouraging them to participate in CWA in any way they can—becoming stewards, attending meetings, and talking with each other and their union representatives. “Without the union things just will not get better. When we understand that we have rights as workers and how to get the company to respect those rights, it helps. And it helps to ally with other workers—whether they’re doing different jobs, like flight attendants, or the same job, like agents in other parts of AA. We all share the same goals. That’s why we keep saying, “Bridge the Gap!” If we connect with other workers, we will win.”

Friends in Need:
Supporting Our Brothers & Sisters at BTR

Local 3640 delivers donations to aid members of the CWA family devastated by the flooding in Baton Rouge, LA. Left to right: Jar’La Evans of Local 3640 and Envoy agents Malachi Hays, LeRoyal Toney, Stacy Duhe and Maurice Walker.