



After tough fight, ‘The 900’ win new contract

IBEW 46 thanks labor community for solidarity that led to victory

KENT (Feb. 15, 2021) — Pushed to the brink of a strike last week, more than 900 members of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW) Local 46 employed in the union’s second largest unit — Limited Energy / Sound and Communication — won a major victory with a new contract with the National Electrical Contractors Association (NECA) that members ratified by an overwhelming majority on Saturday night.

These highly trained, Washington state licensed essential workers install critical systems, including voice/data, networking, fiber optics, fire alarm, security, digital antennas, building access controls, card readers, telephone, and other related systems in King County and the Kitsap and Olympic Peninsulas. They keep local and regional businesses and tech companies running every day.

On Jan. 30, “The 900” rejected NECA’s offer to replace a contract set to expire the following day, largely over wages, and the union served the 10-day notice to

terminate the contract. NECA stalled right up until late on the Feb. 10 deadline before presenting an improved offer on wages. It was sufficient for the bargaining team to accept a tentative agreement, pending ratification of the membership. On Saturday night, the members voted overwhelmingly to ratify.

“I couldn’t be more proud of the brave 900 for fighting and winning the contract they deserve,” said Sean Bagsby, Business Manager / Financial Secretary for IBEW 46. “The bargaining team of Megan, London, Leigh and Frank worked tirelessly for months with determination and strength of character to represent the 900. I’m so proud of their hard work! Over the years, this bargaining unit has fallen behind other trades and classifications on wages even though the work they perform is vital to local industries. They demanded dignity, respect and fair compensation. And in the end, they got it by standing together. This campaign of solidarity and membership inclusion by the 900 strong will stand the test of time.”

Bagsby thanked the local labor community for standing in solidarity with The 900 to help them win the new contract.

“I want to thank the Washington State Labor Council, the Seattle Building Trades, The Joint Council of Teamsters #28, MLK Labor, and all the many other unions that showed their support during this long contract fight,” he said. “NECA saw that the union movement has our backs, and they finally budged and gave The 900 a contract worthy of their support. I believe it wouldn’t have happened without that solidarity from the community of labor unions.”

IBEW Local 46 has a proud tradition of quality craftsmanship, leadership in the community, excellent wages and benefits for members, and innovation in organizing the unrepresented. Local 46 represents more than 6,200 members in 19 different craft units in King, Kitsap, Jefferson and Clallam counties. For more information, visit the union’s website at ibew46.com.

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