



July 17, 2017

THE CAMPAIGN TO RAISE OUR PAY: We stand united



Representatives of 13 NewsGuild and CWA Mailers bargaining units at Digital First Media will convene this week to set in motion new plans to win a pay increase after management failed to make a promised wage proposal last Friday in Denver.

Anger, coupled with resolve, best characterize the initial reactions from union leaders across DFM: anger at the company for showing up empty-handed, and resolve to stay strong and united in our latest campaign to win a pay increase.

That feedback was communicated to management on Friday, but representatives know that the message will need to be clearly communicated as soon as possible at each DFM location. That's among the topics that will be discussed in this week's national conference call.

While DFM began its new fiscal year on July 1 and has approved its budget, management said it would need additional time before making its wage proposal.

Management's stated reason for the delay: Financial performance at some newspapers isn't as good as it would like, and internal discussions continue about whether – and how – to address that fact in a joint proposal to be made to all 13 bargaining units.

In response, your bargaining committee made these things clear to DFM management:

EMPLOYEES ARE ANGRY: The anger is fueled, in part, by management's delay in responding to a proposal that unions presented in March. But that anger is magnified by layoffs, buyouts, and attrition that have reduced our ranks by 300 nationwide since early in 2016. In some cases, layoffs were announced immediately after members have won state or national awards. The effect on morale has been devastating.

EMPLOYEES STAND UNITED: The resolve behind our proposal for an across-the-board increase at every DFM newspaper remains stronger than ever. All employees deserve a raise for their amazing, award-winning work despite the cost-cutting ordered by Alden Global Capital, the New York hedge fund that owns DFM. At a minimum, responsible employers budget for annual cost of living increases to preserve their employees' buying power as the cost of living rises. We expect no less.

Last Friday's meeting was the second between management and the 13 unions since negotiations opened in March. It's part of a joint wage re-opener included in all 13 contracts jointly negotiated last year.



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