

Briefings Held for Affected Employees on the IRS-NTEU Agreement

Two hour meetings describing the agreement signed between NTEU and IRS have been held at the Service Center. IRS spoke during the first hour, with the union following up with an hour of its own. The schedule has been vigorous, with as many as four meetings per day.

Almost all of the meetings have been conducted by Submission Processing Director Jim Fish and NTEU73 President Rick Riley.

“I wanted to be at as many of these meetings as I can,” commented Mr. Riley. “I want to be able to look the employees in the eye, tell them what we are doing and get their feedback. Nothing is more important to me.”

There was some confusion with night shift meetings as the Site Coordinator’s Office had apparently developed multiple schedules and everyone did not get the same one. Managers were told their meetings would be at a certain time, but neither the Director or the union president were notified.

“While it was not our fault, I still apologize to the employees who were inconvenienced by the mix-up,” said Mr.



NTEU Attorney Mike McAuley talks to employees at one of the consolidation meetings at the Flat Top.

Riley. Employees are able to ask questions of both management and NTEU. Even now, some answers are not available.

“This is not a sprint, but a marathon,” NTEU Attorney Mike McAuley said at

one of the meetings. “This can be an opportunity to move into a better job. But if you want to stay comfortable in what you are currently doing, this could be very difficult for you.”

The purpose for the meetings was to roll out the IRS/NTEU agreement that was signed in May and explain its various provisions.

The next round of meetings will be in early fall when experts on VERA/VSIP will come to the Service Center to address employees and explain in detail buy-outs and early outs.



Non-Submission Processing Employees Can Get a Buy-Out if They Job Swap

Buy-Outs of up to \$25,000 are scheduled be offered to affected employees in Submission Processing beginning in October of this year. They will not be offered to non-affected employees, but that does not mean the door is closed to non-Submission employees.

Job swaps are available, which means if you do not work in Submission Processing, you can trade with someone who does, get their buy-out and they can keep your job.

The catch is that the Submission Processing employee cannot get a

promotion through the process, which means they have to be matched with someone of the same grade. Most of the employees in Submission Processing are grades 3-5, but there are some higher.

If you are interested in swapping to get a buy-out, and save someone’s job in the process, please contact the union office at 5370 and we will put you on the list to be matched with someone. This will not happen until October, but it is important that you can find someone with which to trade.

More information about job swapping

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NTEU Chapter 73

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6 a.m. —1 a.m.
(859) 669-5370

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The Force

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From the Desk of the President

“As always, At Your Service”
— Rick Riley

We all have those memories of childhood of those carefree days of summer, no school, no homework and playing all day with our friends. Those were the good old days as they say. But today, as adults, summer isn't near as fun. Sure we can get outside more and enjoy so many things we can't in the winter, but summer also brings yard work, washing the car more and worrying where the kids are and what are they doing?

Being an adult means planning for the future and working towards those goals, while balancing all the daily responsibilities. Are you planning on retirement? Are you within the so called “Red Zone?” Or are you still several years away and need to start planning for that time? Can you increase your Thrift Savings contributions now and still pay all the bills with a little extra? If you can, you

need to do that as soon as possible. That time will be here before you know it.

Are you impacted by the Submission

Processing Ramp Down? If so, what are you doing to prepare for you future? Do you need to keep working? If so, what are you doing to make yourself more marketable? Are you looking for a job swap? If so, have you contacted our office?

Are you sure you qualify for the position that you would be swapping into? We have a lot of work to do, planning for retirement, working to better your career or just working in the yard.

Don't forget to have fun though. There are ballgames to go, pools and lakes and the oceans to visit. Whatever you like to do this summer, make sure you do it. Life is short, enjoy it while you can. Remember though, Prior Preparation Prevents Poor Performance.



NTEU Fighting Bad Legislation

NTEU has defeated several Congressional proposals last year, but many of these proposals may be reintroduced in the coming year.

First, there was the proposal to increase employee's retirement contributions, thereby reducing pay by 6%. They then tried to prohibit employees at certain agencies the right to union representation. They wanted to extend employee's probationary periods. And finally, they wanted to base retirement annuities on an employee's high five years, rather than a high three, thus, lowering their retirement payments.

NTEU defeated all of these proposals.

Now, in addition to those proposals, there are a couple new ones.

Congress wants to limit due process rights for federal employees (HR 559). They also want to fire federal employees who owe back taxes (HR 396).

The White House has implemented a

hiring freeze that could make workloads untenable. In addition, they submitted questions inappropriately seeking information on individual employees who worked on certain specific issues, but after strong NTEU objections, these questions were disavowed.

During the coming year, NTEU members will not be not alone. NTEU has your back! The union is already fighting for you and your issues and will continue to do so. Members and their dues make this possible. If you are not a member, be sure to join. If you join before September 30, you will receive an incentive check for \$50!

NTEU is the only organization that is protecting your job, salary and benefits. Join the fight! If you are not a member, you need to join! Stop by any union office or see any union steward to step up! You will be glad you did!

New Steward's Family Devastated by Shut Down

Jennifer Smith works in the Florence Files building, as a member of RAIVS-IVES. When she was recently added to the steward rolls of NTEU73, her story came to light. It is bad enough when an employee is at risk of losing their job due to IRS's decision to close the Submission Processing Center. But imagine if it affects your entire family.

"I have a large number of family members that work here and are losing their jobs," Jennifer said. "Some are not. I am one of the ones that is losing my job due to the shut down."

When news of the closure was announced, it hit Jennifer's family much harder than most. Both of her parents,

her sister and her brother all work for the IRS. Of the five immediate family members, four are at risk of losing their jobs.

When the announcement happened, Jennifer's brother simply left the IRS.

"He felt that he had no choice other than to find another job to support his young daughter," Jennifer said.

"My mother is not affected by this, however my father is," she said "He has been employed here for 16 and a half years."

"I graduated college last year and I have been taking the classes offered here because I developed a plan to have a career here and follow in my parents footsteps," Jennifer explained. "That plan has been put on hold until I see if I am able

to even save my job. This has been very frustrating. I have not yet looked for outside employment because I am determined to try to stay here."

Outside of her immediate family, Jennifer still has a total of 15 relatives working for IRS. Others have already found other jobs outside the IRS.



Jennifer Smith

"I am actively trying everything I can to try to save my job, I have a family at home myself. I am a single mother to 3 children who solely depend on me," she said.

The frustration and worry caused by the employment situation at IRS is very familiar to IRS workers. That is the result of high level IRS officials who

made the decision caring nothing about their employees.

Hopefully, in the end, Jennifer's family, and many like it, will find jobs in the IRS.

"I think in the final analysis, it may not end as badly as it looked like it would when the closing was announced," said NTEU73 President Rick Riley. "Many people are going to get buy-outs, will retire and hopefully everyone else will get other internal jobs. We are trying to bring in work. I am optimistic."

Too often, when IRS executives make decisions that affect employee's lives, they rarely truly consider the results of those decisions in human terms. They see them only as numbers on a chart. It would be nice if they would think about the people they so often profess to care about.

NTEU Chapter 73 Stewards

Day Shift:

4th Street - Tommie Braswell, Ron Cunningham, Leann Gosser, Nicole Guethlein, Bill Lawrence, Shannon Lovins, Laura Mitchell (Treasurer), Michelle Robinson-Cunningham, Jeff Seibert.

GWC—Ronnie Clemons, Sarah Corea, Tomeka Cottrell, Christiana Davis, Loretha Hudson, Bob Krekeler, Tanesha McCants, Quiana McCoy, Tonya Morris, Debbie Mullikin, Chris Pierce, Nakia Reeves, Rick Riley (President), Melissa Rowland, John Selmeier, Toby Shields, Debbie Steiner, Rebekah Taylor, Karen Walsh (Vice President-Chief Steward).

IRRC - Florence - Jan Colwell, Brandon Mikusa, Jennifer Smith.

Night & Swing Shift

4th Street— Jim Gregory, Deborah Stoffel.

GWC—Alison Bower, Michael Bradford, Phillip Cargile, Erin Cooper, John Gilliam, Shawana Oliver, Julie Orick, Dennis Stone, Michele Townsend.

NTEU73 keeps members informed with chapter news as well as national news.

Visit nteu73.org

**On Facebook:
Official NTEU Chapter
73**

**National Web Site
nteu.org**

Consolidation Committee Helping Employees

By Dean Curry
Consolidation Committee Chair

The Consolidation Committee has been hard at work over the last few months and we are seeing the fruits of our labors. The "CORE Room", Career Opportunity & Resource Engagement Room officially opened on June 12, 2017 and has seen a steady flow of visitors. Some are just looking around, but many others are taking advantage of the many materials available, access to the terminals, and have sought out assistance from the volunteers who work the room. We have also held the first of many job fairs, and had a session on USAJobs conducted by the Human Capital Office.

The CORE Room is currently staffed full-time on Mondays and Tuesdays by Donna King of the Human Capital Office (HCO). Donna can be reached by phone at 859-669-2024 or by email at Donna.S.King@irs.gov to schedule an appointment. She is available to discuss many specific issues regarding job applications or retirement benefits. The CORE Room also has a list of volunteers (managers, NTEU stewards, and front-line employees) on stand-by to help

with USAJobs, resume writing, or to answer questions regarding the consolidation. If a volunteer is not in the room when you arrive, please sign up on the list and you will be contacted and set up with the appropriate volunteer.

The Consolidation Committee hosted our first job fair with DHL. They held multiple sessions with interested employees, and the feedback was very positive. One comment from an employee who attended read "the DHL Company sent great representatives who presented DHL in a positive light. They showed how cooperative the company would be in hiring former employees of the IRS because they know IRS employees would be an asset to their organization." Another comment stated, "This informational was very organized and very well put together. The CORE team did a good job!" DHL will be back on July 11, 9:00 PM to 11:00 PM for a second job fair for our swing and night shift employees.

The Consolidation Committee also hosted two USAJob Seminars with instructors from HCO. Over 80 employees took advantage of this opportunity. In fact, we had so many employees sign up to attend; we have scheduled six more seminars. Those dates are:

July 18 – Florence Files, 9:00 AM to 10:30 AM Training Rooms A&B

July 19 – Dayshift, 1:00 PM to 2:30 PM Rooms 49 and 50

July 20 – Swing/Nights, 9:00 PM to 10:30 PM Rooms 49, 50, and 51

July 25 – Swing/Nights, 9:00 PM to 10:30 PM Rooms 49, 50, and 51

August 2 – Dayshift, 9:00 AM to 10:30 AM Rooms 46 and 47

August 16 – Dayshift, 1:00 PM to 2:30 PM Rooms 49, 50, and 51

Please watch for sign-ups to come out soon for each of these sessions.

And lastly, the Consolidation Committee is working with the local AIM Chapter to schedule a Job Fair for early August with a potential of up to 20 outside companies looking to hire skilled employees. Stayed tuned and watch for announcements to come out soon regarding this wonderful

opportunity. This Job Fair is an awesome example of different functions coming together for a common goal. Members of the local AIM Chapter lead by Kendra Strickland, along with the members of the Consolidation Committee have worked together to provide interested employees with a resource for possible future employment.

The Consolidation Committee is always looking for assistance. If you are willing to share your expertise, time, and talents, please see your committee representative and put your name forward. Or you can email the entire committee at *CSPC Consolidation Committee.



July Chapter Meeting

Wednesday, July 19
Flat Top, Room 50
4:30 pm

Address Change?

If you have recently changed your address, please let the union know so you can continue to get information from NTEU.

IRS does not share changes you made with them, so you must also tell us!

Please send any address changes to
Jeff Seibert / NTEU73 Membership:
jeffrey.w.seibert@irs.gov.

NTEU73 keeps members informed with chapter news as well as national news.

Visit nteu73.org.

**On Facebook:
Official NTEU
Chapter 73**

President's Nephew Hopes for Shot at the Bigs

The nephew of NTEU73 President Rick Riley is pitching for Long Beach State and his team won the NCAA Western Regionals, before being eliminated in the "Super Regionals."

Connor Riley is a freshman relief pitcher with a 94 mile-an hour fastball.

Used sparingly this season as a freshman, Connor impressed. During the Western Regional, which aired on ESPN, the announcer claimed that Connor has the "first or second best stuff" on the pitching staff. Earlier in the season, the Long Beach radio announcer called him a "strikeout machine."

During the regular season at Long Beach State, Connor was 2-1 with a 3.00 ERA. He pitched 24 innings and struck out 25.

In addition, he had three appearances in the college post season. After the Dirtbags (that's the name of the Long Beach State baseball team) got behind by 7 runs to Cal State-Fullerton in the Super Regionals,

Connor was brought in and pitched the next three and a third innings, his longest appearance of the year. He gave up one



Connor Riley pitching in Game 2 of the Super Regionals against Cal State-Fullerton.

unearned run, but more importantly, ate up the innings so that the other relievers would be rested for the important game three. Ultimately, they lost to Cal-State Fullerton, coming up just one game short of the College World Series in Omaha.

During the Major League draft, eight players were selected by big league teams off the Long Beach roster. More players have recently gone to majors from Long Beach State than any other college or university. Alumni include Troy Tulowitzki, Evan Longoria and Jared Weaver.

Connor Riley will be playing in Martinsville, Virginia this summer in preparation for his sophomore season. MLB rules do not allow the drafting of players until they are a junior if they are enrolled in college.

"Whether or not he makes the major leagues, we are all so proud of him," said Rick Riley. "But we all have high hopes! It was so much fun watching him play on ESPN. I think I may

have been more nervous than he was!" Next year will be spent learning and developing his talent. Who knows? Maybe we will all see him on the MLB network someday!

NTEU National President Tony Reardon to Conduct Telephonic Town Hall to Oppose Cuts to Retirement

On Monday, July 17 at 7:00 p.m., Eastern Time, NTEU National President Tony Reardon will be holding a telephone town hall meeting open to all NTEU members to discuss the administration's proposal to make severe cuts to federal employee retirement and the union's grassroots action plan to stop these devastating cuts.

Locally, NTEU73 will be involved. There is no call in number. In order to participate, members must ensure that their correct phone number is on file with NTEU. To do that, go to NTEU.org and click on the yellow box with your name and then manage my account. Employees must be on their own time to participate. Locally, NTEU is setting up a room at Molly Malone's so members can go to participate. The call will also be recorded so you can hear it at a later time.

There have been proposals in Congress to pass legislation that would, in effect,

reduce the amount of retirement for federal employees.

President Trump's budget outlines \$3.6 billion in cost reductions over the next ten years, including changes to the federal retirement system that could save the government \$4.1 billion in 2018 and at least \$149 billion over the next ten years.

Specifically, the proposal calls for a 1% increase in employee contributions in each of the next six years. It also calls for the elimination of cost of living increases (COLA) for current and future FERS participants. It is also proposed to change the base of which retirement is calculated to the high five years of service, rather than the high three, which would result in decreases in retirement benefits for employees.

There have been proposals such as these in the past from which federal employees have remained unscathed, largely from the

efforts of federal employee unions like NTEU.

Several Republicans are opposing these newest attempts at reducing federal employees retirement benefits, so it appears that there will be bi-partisan resistance. But NTEU is taking no chances with members retirement.

NTEU is going to conduct grass roots efforts to reach local Congressmen and Mr. Reardon will outline how the union will organize these efforts.

NTEU73 Legislative Coordinator Debbie Mullikin will spearhead local efforts. NTEU73 has already been meeting with Congress about federal employee issues. In February, union representatives met with area congressmen and senators in Washington during the annual NTEU Legislative Conference. Included in those discussion were employee retirement benefits.

Green for Signing Up for NTEU!

The Summer Membership Campaign is Back!

If you sign up for NTEU between May 1-September 30
You get \$50 and whoever recruits you gets \$25!!



With all that NTEU is doing for you,
this is a deal you cannot pass up! Sign Up Today!
Just stop by any union office to get your form and \$50!

NTEU73 Stewards Working for the Members

Your NTEU Stewards work for you, and are available if not in person, by phone or email. There are multiple stewards located in most Cincinnati IRS Center location. Here is a list of stewards manning the current NTEU73 offices:

Gateway:

- ◆ Chapter President **Rick Riley**
- ◆ Vice President/Chief Steward **Karen Walsh**
- ◆ National Vice President **Debbie Mullikin**
- ◆ Secretary **Tanesha McCants**
- ◆ Stewards **Sarah Corea** and **Debbie Mullikin**
- ◆ Night Shift Chief Steward **Julie Orick**

Fourth Street Center (Flat Top):

- ◆ Stewards **Tommie Braswell**, **Michelle Robinson**, and **Jim Gregory** (Night Shift).
- ◆ Treasurer **Laura Mitchell**
- ◆ Director of Communications, Office Manager **Jeff Seibert**
- ◆ Night Shift Steward **Jim Gregory**

If you have any issues or concerns, call an NTEU73 office at 859-669-5700 or 859-669-5370.

Tommie Braswell helped an employee with a credit hours issue and another with a detail opportunity.

LeAnn Gosser helped an employee with an overtime issue.

Nicole Guethlein helped an employee with a tax compliance issue and another with a counseling letter.

Bill Lawrence is helping an employee with workload assignments.

Shannon Lovins got documentation removed from an employee's folder.

Laura Mitchell helped an employee with higher grade duties.

Tonya Morris helped employees in a couple TIGTA interviews and has been working night differential issues. She also got an employee's discipline issue reduced from removal to an admonishment letter.

Michelle Robinson-Cunningham helped several employees with FMLA and family sick leave issues.

New CORE Room Opens to Help Employees

As a part of the Consolidation of Submission Processing, the Consolidation Team officially opened a new resource for employees. It is being dubbed the Consolidation Room.

The room opened on June 12 and has been available since. It is located in room 111a, near door 18 of the Flat Top.

Computers are available and employees can get help with resume writing, USA Jobs and retirement/GRB assistance. They can also get job swap and Vera/VSIP assistance. There is also a Human Capital Office representative available Mondays and Tuesdays from 8:00am to 4:30pm, accepting walk-ins and appointments.

There will be Subject Matter Experts (SME's) in the room when volunteers are available.; also sign up sheets will be in the room and employees are encouraged to sign up for assistance so that appointments can be scheduled with SME'S.

Employees are given time to use the facility and simply need to obtain release from manager. Per the contract, "Subject to workload, all directly impacted



Employees attend the opening ceremonies of the Consolidation Room near Door 18 in the Flat Top.

employees will receive, if requested, up to four(4) hours of administrative time for outplacement activities. Managers are

authorized to approve additional time subject to workload."

The Consolidation Team, which operates the CORE room, is a joint Management/NTEU committee. Its purpose is to help employees in any way possible with a variety of issues regarding the ramp down.

"I think it is a great thing for employees to take advantage of," said Tommie Braswell, the co-chair of the committee and a union representative. "A lot of work went into getting the room together, but in the end, it is up to the employees to help themselves. If they sign up, we can set up appointments and help them with almost anything they need."

Night/swing shift employees can also set up appointments and every effort will be made to accommodate them. Seasonal employees can also take advantage of the room during lay off status. Arrangements will be made to get them into the building.

60 Second Updates

NTEU to Congress: Federal Employee Voices Matter in Reorganization

National President Tony Reardon submitted testimony, to Congress calling for the inclusion of federal employees' perspectives during the ongoing reorganization efforts across agencies. "We fear that such reform efforts without employee involvement will fail, adversely impacting the morale of the federal workforce as well as the services we provide to the American people," Reardon wrote after the Office of Management and Budget's (OMB) earlier memorandum announced plans for a major overhaul across the federal government. NTEU is concerned these efforts are designed to ultimately replace federal employees with private sector contractors, despite the proven track record of this model failing the American people. Another issue is the number of managers.



For example, a recent submission of the Farm Service Agency includes a manager-to-employee ratio of 1 to 5, a far cry from the administration's recommendation of 1 to 11. NTEU, not consulted by the agency before the plan was submitted to Congress for approval,, alerted USDA and offered a solution to no avail.

President Reardon recently met with OMB on ways the union can be involved with the reorganization plans. OMB has yet to respond.

Nine GOP Reps Oppose Cuts to Federal Retirement System

Nine House Republicans have come out against cuts targeting federal employees and retirees in president's proposed 2018 budget. National President Tony Reardon said the letter, "puts House leadership on notice that any effort to slash federal salaries and pensions will be met with fierce, bipartisan resistance."

Alarming Threats: IRS and Financial Regulators Targeted

National President Tony Reardon sent a letter to members of the House Appropriations Subcommittee on

Financial Services and General Government, arguing against cutting an additional \$149 million out of the Internal Revenue Service (IRS) budget next year. Taxpayer services and other core functions of the IRS would only decline under such a funding bill.

"Funding reductions in recent years have prevented millions of taxpayers from getting timely answers from IRS call centers and taxpayer assistance centers, and have significantly delayed IRS responses to taxpayer letters and other correspondence," Mr. Reardon wrote.

The agency has lost nearly \$1 billion and 18,000 full-time employees since 2010. The National Taxpayer Advocate warned that the 20 percent cut in the IRS budget over the last six years is making it harder for taxpayers to get the free help they deserve, has eliminated walk-in services without an appointment and restricted the types of questions handled on the phone.

Reardon reminded the lawmakers that taxpayers and businesses both rely on the IRS for tax assistance and funding cuts hurt the IRS' ability to fight identity theft and other types of refund fraud.



UNITED
B E N E F I T S

NTEU

The National Treasury Employees Union

**In These Troubled Times, United Benefits
can be a BIG Benefit to YOU!**



United Benefits will be in the Service Center throughout the coming months to help employees get a firm understanding of what faces them as they prepare for retirement. Their staff professionals, fully endorsed by NTEU, are experts on VERA/VSIP, the Thrift Savings Plan, the GRB Platform, your Health Insurance and all the paperwork involved. They can also take care of all your insurance needs, including disability, cancer, accident and life insurance!

They are here to help YOU!

Call today to set up an appointment with a United Benefits Representative to get your future in order!

**Call Roxy to set up your time to chat:
423-309-2758**