



2023 First Calendar Quarter Newsletter

Hello Brothers & Sisters,

There is a quite a bit going on since the last newsletter. Typically, I try to wait until after things are complete before I share with you what we have been working on and I was hoping to have a lot of great news to share in this newsletter. Unfortunately, many of the things we are working on are ongoing, so I would like to share updates with you instead.

For starters, I would like to congratulate Balester Optical for winning small lab of the year for the third consecutive year with Essilor. Winning one year is already an accomplishment, but winning 3 years in a row is simply amazing. These members truly do deserve a round of applause for all their hard work.

Negotiations have begun for our new Visionworks retail location in Plymouth Meeting PA. Negotiations are going very slow and we have a tough road in front of us to secure a contract for this group. The next round of negotiations will be the end of April.

I am pleased to share that we have a tentative agreement in place at Versant Health NTS for a new three-year CBA. Ratification voting will take place on 04/05/23. This contract negotiations were extremely tough, where the membership had to take a pre-strike authorization vote and turned down the companies last, best and final offer at 94.5%.

However, on 3/30/23 the negotiation team met with the company virtually and we were able to secure terms that we believe is fair and came to a tentative agreement, endorsing the CBA which includes perhaps the largest raises over 3 years that this bargaining unit has ever seen.

During the final week on March, I have begun the journey to once again visit all the Visionworks retail locations. I have completed the Eastern Region tour and will begin the Central Region in mid-April, with plans to visit every location by September.

One of the big items that I have been secretly working on for over a year and waiting to share with you all, is we have been trying to secure a discount plan with Visionworks for the CWA retirees. I have been closely working with the CWA and Visionworks and we are very close to getting a trial phase of this plan out to the CWA retirees in LI/NYC and Westchester area soon.

If successful, there are plans to roll this discount plan out to other regions including the rest of NY and MA, RI, PA, NH, and NJ. I can't say enough what this does for our local at the CWA level, as over 60 thousand retirees may be eligible for this discount.

Finally, the union was recently able to bargain for additional wage increase for roughly 70 members in Visionworks over the changes to the new incentive plan. After carefully monitoring the incentive for the last year, we were able to see where it worked and where it did not, and for those that it had a negative impact on, we were able to secure additional wages adjustments that equvalate to over \$50k in wage increases. For those that it did work for, we are seeing as much as a 12% increase to the incentive earned.

Over the next quarter, there is quite a bit planned. In April, myself and some of your Visionworks Stewards, have plans to meet with senior management at Visionworks to discuss the ongoing issues with staffing and OTX. I will also be going back to NTS for a Ratification vote on 4/5/23 and visiting the Balester Optical Lab as well. I am also hopeful we are able to secure a contract for the Plymouth Meeting Visionworks later in the month. I will be continuing Visionworks store visits with the Central Region in April, LI/NYC/Westchester in May and MA/NH/RI in June. We will be conducting an Executive Board meeting on 4/21/23. Finally, there are plans to have zoom meetings with the Latham Call Center very soon.

As you can see, we have a lot going on and my schedule is completely filled. In fact, I have barely been home over the last 60 days. So, if you are in need of assistance, please make sure you are reaching out to your stewards as they are best equipped to help you, especially with my schedule so hectic.

I look forward to seeing everyone as I continue my journey visiting all the locations the rest of this fiscal year and remember if you ever want to see what is going on at any time you can view our calendar on our website at www.opticalworkers.org.

In Unity
Jason

In Memorial

David Solomonoff, Versant Health Latham