

# PRIVATE SECTOR SHOPS

## HUMAN RIGHTS FIRST REACHES TENTATIVE AGREEMENT

After several months of negotiations, Human Rights First has reached an agreement with management after the previous contract was kept in place for two additional months in order to protect workers while negotiations on this contract continued.

The new agreement is a one-year contract, running from May 1, 2021, until April 30, 2022, and includes a 4% raise retroactive to May 1, 2021.

"It was a great responsibility to represent our shop in bargaining and we really feel we came back with the best solution to benefit our colleagues," said Kaitlin Locascio, one of the bargaining committee members.

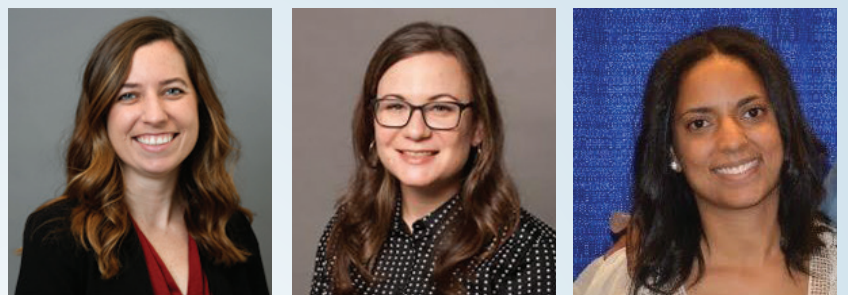
In addition to the monetary aspect, the contract establishes a "Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Working Group" that will be a contractual committee as opposed to the previous management-conceived and run committee. The working group includes provisions of self-determination, a "safe-place" for employees to speak about difficult topics, and the right of Local 1180 to seek redress at the Labor Management Committee if Human Rights First should decide to dissolve the group, which includes members of the unit as well as other employees.

John O'Malley, Local 1180 Legislative Coordinator and Bargaining Chair worked with the HRF bargaining committee to resolve the contract. He said the new agreement also establishes a protocol for negotiating a policy on promotions.

"We did not have enough time in the negotiation process to completely tackle this complicated topic as we did not want to hold up resolving the contract," O'Malley said. "In addition, management is working on a comprehensive promotions policy that includes both unit members and those outside the unit. For these reasons, we gave them some time to complete their internal workshopping, and establish this protocol."

This provision requires HRF to make a proposal to Local 1180 by Sept. 15, 2021, and establishes a process for negotiations on the HRF proposal, including the number and period of bargaining meetings, and the intent of the parties to negotiate this policy independently of the next round of negotiations.

Human Rights First is an independent advocacy and action organization that challenges America to live up to its ideals. They believe American leadership is essential in the global struggle for human rights, and they press the U.S. government and private companies to respect human rights and the rule of law. When they fail, HRF steps in to demand reform, accountability and justice. Around the world, HRF works where they can to best harness American influence to secure core freedoms.



Thanks to the bargaining team — Staff Attorneys Kaitlin Locascio, Katie Czapanskiy, and Rebecca Soroka — for the fantastic job liaising with the membership, and also dealing with management at the bargaining table.

"Our bargaining team had great insights, and now they have some experience as well," O'Malley said. "We also need to thank Emily Finkelstein of the Labor Management Committee for providing vital information for us to use during bargaining. Everyone working together helped bring us to a successful conclusion."

CWA Local 1180 has represented Human Rights First since at least 2016. The bargaining unit has 28 members located in New York City, California, and Washington D.C.

Czapanskiy said the negotiations were a long and strategic process. "We would not have been able to do it without John's expertise and the support of CWA. Our members are more than satisfied with the agreement we reached for our renewed contract," she said.

Soroka agreed. "It was really great to work with John who taught us a lot about the bargaining process. The most interesting part of bargaining was feeling like I was on equal footing with management. I don't often feel that in my everyday interactions at work, but John helped emphasize and make clear throughout the meetings that we are also leaders and have important seats at the table. It was refreshing to be able to negotiate and speak freely with management. I was so happy that we were able to come to an agreement with management and felt like we both walked away from negotiations with respect and understanding," Soroka said. ■

Pictured above from left: Bargaining Team members Kaitlin Locascio, Katie Czapanskiy, and Rebecca Soroka.

## HUMAN RIGHTS WATCH GETS CONTRACT EXTENSION

The more than 50 members working at Human Rights Watch who are represented by CWA Local 1180 have reached an agreement on a contract extension through June 22, 2022. The terms modify the parties' collective bargaining agreement (CBA) that was in effect June 1, 2016, through June 30, 2020.

The CBA includes a 2.5% increase to the base salary; a 4% annual increase to straight time to all employees in the bargaining unit; and wage increases due to pending promotions under Article 24 and the sidebar letter regarding promotions of June 30, 2016 — all retroactive to July 1, 2021.

Luis Benitez-Burgos from CWA District 1 who negotiated the contract on behalf of Local 1180 said the contract extension also included provisions for workload and work coverage, early promotions, emergency COVID-19 benefits, layoffs, and a payroll schedule.

"Luis did a great job with the negotiations and we are thankful for all the time and efforts he put in to making sure our members at Human Rights Watch got everything they are entitled to," said Local 1180 President Gloria Middleton.

Benitez-Burgos said the union and members are happy with the outcome of the bargaining, which include: new tasks or duties assigned to any employee by management must be outlined in a plan prior to the departure or exiting of any HRW employee, including performing additional work or management, a job title with a higher wage rate or grade, assigned coverage/acting roles, or additional work from another employee of the same or lower wage/grade; and HRW HR will develop an early promotion policy and process by Oct. 1, 2021, and allow time for Local 1180 to bargain over the process.