

Presented at  
The NewsGuild-CWA Sector Conference  
Jan. 25, 2019

## Resource Report

January 2019

The NewsGuild-CWA has made effective use of available funds to advance the interests of current members and to extend representation to hundreds of new members. This report summarizes recent activity in the various funds the Guild has available to support our collective efforts.

### General Fund

Bracing for revenue losses expected from the Supreme Court decision in *Janus vs AFSCME*, the CWA instituted a union-wide reduction of 25% in the General Fund budget allocations for all costs other than those related to personnel and rent. That was implemented in June 2018, effective with the start of the fiscal year.

The overall effect is that our General Fund allocation is \$275,868 lower this fiscal year than it was last year, representing a 9.26% decrease in the allocation of the previous fiscal year. As a result, TNG implemented economies in several areas:

**Staff:** As we are all painfully aware, TNG has lost its Director of Collective Bargaining, Guild Reporter editor and financial secretary over the past year. As difficult as those losses are, the resulting savings do not help to defray the 25% budget cut, because personnel expenses - and revenue allocations - were segregated from other General Fund expenses before the imposition of the 25% cut. TNG has worked hard to find a balance between controlling the expenses of the field staff and still ensuring they are available to assist locals as needed. This has meant an increased use of videoconferencing between staff and locals on appropriate issues, but staff continues to work with locals in-person for contract negotiations, mobilization planning and most contract administration issues. In an effort to conserve, no staff attended the November multi-council meeting and the annual staff meeting was reduced to one day, conducted immediately prior to this conference.

**Executive Council:** The EC voted to conduct its October meeting using videoconferencing technologies and also agreed to modify the policy that allows EC members to attend one meeting per year at TNG's expense. For this fiscal year, the EC agreed to designate the sector conference as that one meeting.

**Sector conference:** We reduced the length of the sector conference by one day, increased the delegate registration fee by \$25 and assigned no support staff to conduct the clerical work.

**Legal work:** We have not rejected any cases on the basis of the budget cut, but we are actively reconsidering how we fund them. Most of the work that is performed under the legal services policy is done on retainer by Barr & Camens. However, the Executive Council authorized its Finance Committee to consider funding meritorious new legal assistance

requests that can't be handled by Barr & Camens through the Guild Mobilization and Defense Fund (GM&DF) while we are grappling with the reductions in the General Fund budget. It is our hope that this is a temporary adjustment to the budget reductions and that we will be able to manage future legal services requests without tapping the GM&DF.

So far, these economies are yielding results. TNG ended the first half of the current fiscal year \$30,302 under allocation, with expenses of \$1,320,787 against an allocation of \$1,352,089.

While we will continue to identify ways to reduce General Fund spending throughout this fiscal year, we remain hopeful that some of the reductions will be restored as CWA learns the full extent of the losses experienced in the wake of the *Janus* decision.

The Executive Council takes this moment to note the increasing importance of the Strategic Industry Fund on the Guild's ability to continue to organize new shops, innovate in bargaining strategies and assist locals with the costs of contract campaigns in difficult bargaining situations.

### **Strategic Industry Fund & Growth Fund Projects**

The Strategic Industry Fund and Growth Fund were created by action of CWA Convention delegates who believed that the union should dedicate a portion of the Member Relief Fund to innovative, strategic initiatives that build the strength, effectiveness and future of the CWA. Until that point, the Member Relief Fund was used exclusively to pay strike benefits and medical costs for members and their families during strikes and lockouts. Fortunately, those Convention delegates had the wisdom to understand that we could maintain the ability to support strikes, while also using some portion of that fund to help grow and strengthen our union. That was the start of the Strategic Industry Fund, and it has made a tremendous difference in TNG's ability to support organizing and strategic contract campaigns.

Using SIF money, we have hired full time organizers to work on national projects and have helped pay wages for local leaders who participate in organizing campaigns. Since the 2017 sector conference, 29 shops have been organized with the support of the SIF, providing union representation to 1,776 workers. (In the period between the commencement of the first organizing SIF in July 2015 and the 2017 sector conference, 24 shops were organized, adding 941 employees. Most of those campaigns tapped some measure of SIF support.)

TNG currently has six staff people whose work is financed by the Strategic Industry Fund. Stephanie Basile is the coordinator of new shop organizing. She works with organizer Malcolm Emerich and Sally Davidow, who is concentrating on communications regarding the Guild's organizing and first contract efforts. Nadia Taha is working with TNG staff to negotiate a first contract with the Los Angeles Times and to establish a new local with those members. The SIF also helps pay for many local members who are involved in organizing on a lost time basis, or through working additional hours.

Under the auspices of the CWA Strong program, organizer Melinda Fiedler has worked with several locals and dozens of workplaces to build membership in shops that have union certification but low

rates of membership. Organizer James Santos is working in the New York local, concentrating on building the membership at (the former) Time, Inc. properties. In addition to increasing membership, these projects also aim to build the sense of connectedness between workers and their unions and to provide members a deeper understanding the role of organized labor in a healthy democracy and a thriving economy.

The Strategic Industry Fund also underwrites TNG's efforts to organize interpreters and other language workers. A project was authorized in May 2018 that consolidates all the language worker initiatives and provides funding for continued organizing, lobbying and networking initiatives. It will help interpreters in the Minnesota local assess the viability of developing a worker owned co-op for interpretation services and will continue to support efforts of independent contract interpreters in California, who seek to build a web-based hiring hall. It will also support a national planning conference to bring interpreters together to strategize on issues of importance to their profession, especially video relay interpreting.

Beyond organizing, we've also used SIF funding to conduct national campaigns to support collective bargaining with GateHouse Media and Digital First Media. Those projects helped us get first contracts for four new GateHouse units and supports ongoing bargaining for another 13 GateHouse shops. The SIF also funds the national campaign for contracts at 13 Digital First Media workplaces.

The Strategic Industry Fund has also helped with several local contract campaigns, including achieving two hard-won contracts in Hawaii with Black Press. It also supported the Chicago local's successful community campaign to find a buyer for the Sun-Times and then to get contracts at that paper, and also at the Chicago Reader. We have an ongoing project to help News Media Guild with membership recruitment during a challenging contract negotiation with the Associated Press.

A listing of the Strategic Industry Fund projects that were approved since the 2017 Sector Conference is attached, along with a report of ongoing projects.

### **TNG's Dedicated Accounts**

The Guild Mobilization and Defense Fund helps locals that are battling decertification campaigns or other potentially destabilizing assaults. It is also used to assist locals with smaller projects or those not covered by the Strategic Industry Fund.

During this reporting period, the GM&DF has been used to defend against decertification at Corus Media in Toronto and to help build the membership at El Vocero in Puerto Rico. It has helped the Pittsburgh local pay legal bills associated with getting the staff of Point Park University a first contract, and funds have been committed to ensure that interpreters in Cook County, IL get the full measure of the wage increase they negotiated. It also assisted with a public awareness campaign during the long and bitter lockout in Halifax, NS. Most recently, the Executive Council authorized funding to allow representatives from the newly certified units to attend this conference and tell us about their organizing campaigns.

These are the type of important initiatives that are not covered by the General Fund and require a designated funding source. The GM&DF is an outgrowth of a fund that TNG administered when it was an independent union, and which TNG Sector Conference delegates wisely voted to continue to fund following the Guild’s merger with CWA.

A listing of the projects supported by the Guild Mobilization and Defense Fund since the 2017 Sector Conference follows this report.

In its accounting to the 2017 Sector Conference, the Executive Council reported the GM&DF balance stood at \$3,209,410 at the end of May 2017. On November 31, 2018, the balance was \$3,211,581. The investment gains in this period were \$197,173, with a return on investment of 4.03%.

Three-year returns for the fund, effective November 30, 2018, was 5.17%, generating \$426,641 in investment gains. The five-year return was 4.4%, yielding \$584,294 in investment gains.

Separate from the General Fund budget and the Guild Mobilization and Defense Fund are several smaller accounts designated for specific purposes. The chart below shows the account balances reported at the last Sector Conference and the balances effective November 30, 2018.

	May 2017	November 2018
Segregated Fund	\$115,988	\$84,143
Freedom Fund	12,422	11,345
Leuchter Scholarship Fund	9,063	9,035
Anti-Discrimination Fund	8,386	8,386
TNG Staff Severance	61,414	61,111

The Segregated Fund. This is the Guild’s pre-merger general fund and it is used for expenses not covered in the allocated of the CWA General Fund budget, such as purchasing new computers and telephones.

The Freedom Fund. This is a separate, nonprofit account covering the Heywood Broun, David S. Barr and Herb Block Awards.

The Leuchter Scholarship Fund. Named for the Guild’s first legal counsel, this fund relies on local donations to offer a scholarship to the Trade Union Program at Harvard University. There has been no activity in this account since August 2015.

The Anti-Discrimination Fund. This account, part of the Guild Mobilization and Defense Fund, is used to fund human rights related matters not otherwise covered by the General Fund or SIF projects.

TNG’s Staff Severance Fund. Accrual of staff severance ceased with the CWA merger in 1997. Effective May 31, 2017, the account was fully funded, although the balance fluctuates in response to interest and fees.

## **Membership Development**

The NewsGuild-CWA has added 51 new shops to its ranks since the launch of the first organizing SIF in July 2015. With the potential addition of more than 2,700 members, the Guild is organizing at a rate not seen since the union's founding years.

Unfortunately, as we all know, that organizing is occurring at the same time many owners are hollowing out their newsrooms and leaving a bare bones staff to meet the demands of the ever-expanding universe of news platforms.

The Pew Research Center reported in July 2018 that newspaper newsroom employment dropped by 45% between 2008 and 2017, representing approximately 32,000 jobs.

Those cuts caused significant losses in Guild membership, but recent organizing wins have kept the overall membership losses smaller than those experienced industry-wide. TNG's membership declined 27% between December 2008 and December 2018.

Despite employers continuing to put downward pressure on staffing, TNG's membership number is beginning to rise again: CWA Membership records reported the Guild's total as 19,090 in May of 2017 and 19,674 in December 2018.

It is important to note that new members do not pay dues until they have ratified a first contract, so these numbers do not include more than 1,710 employees working in shops that are bargaining a first contract. There are 1,007 recently-organized employees who have achieved a first contract and have begun paying dues in the past 3 years.

The CWA Membership Department reports TNG-CWA Sector membership at 19,674 for the month of December 2018.

BY CWA DISTRICT		BY GUILD REGION	
District One	5,736	Region One	1,984
District Two	1,603	Region Two	2,142
District Three	539	Region Three	1,394
District Four	1,303	Region Four	2,273
District Six	205	Region Five	3,674
District Seven	1,044	Region Six	1,508
District Nine	2,050	News Media Guild	718*
District 13	1,213	Canada	<u>5,981</u>
Canada	<u>5,981</u>		
	19,674		19,674

*\*Members vote in the district in which they live.*

## Strategic Industry Fund and Growth Fund Projects

ongoing, and begun since July 2017

<b>PROJECT</b>	<b>BUDGET</b>	<b>START DATE</b>	<b>END DATE</b>
Media Growth Phase 2	\$228,676	prior to April 2015	ongoing
Digital Media Organizing, Phase 1	478,626	April 2016	August 2017
Chicago Sun-Times and Reader	39,111	December 2015	ongoing
GateHouse Organizing and First Contract Campaigns	134,002	December 2016	ongoing
Digital First Media, Phase Two	155,343	December 2016	September 2018
Digital Media Organizing, Phase 2	450,043	March 2017	October 2019
Honolulu Star-Advertiser	68,724	June 2017	September 2018
CWA Strong, Phase One	165,078	July 2017	November 2018
News Media Guild/Associated Press	86,031	October 2017	ongoing
Organizing Immigration Interpreters	249,800	November 2017	ongoing
GateHouse National Contract Campaign	110,205	December 2017	ongoing
Los Angeles Times	323,205	January 2018	ongoing
Digital First Media, Phase Three	159,973	May 2018	ongoing
Language Workers	255,425	May 2018	ongoing
New York/Time, Inc. Organizing	178,582	July 2018	ongoing
Media Organizing	585,536	July 2018	ongoing
CWA Strong, Phase Two	168,307	November 2018	ongoing

## Guild Mobilization & Defense Fund Projects

ongoing, and begun since July 2017

<b>PROJECT</b>	<b>BUDGET</b>	<b>START DATE</b>	<b>END DATE</b>
Corus Media decertification	80,000	April 2018	October 2018
El Vocero Membership Recruitment	30,000	July 2018	ongoing
Point Park University first contract campaign assistance	34,000	September 2018	January 2018
Cook County Courts wage litigation	2,500	September 2018	January 2018
Funding for organizers to attend sector conference	10,000	October 2018	ongoing