

THE SPRING 2016



CULINARY WORKER

THIS ISSUE: FORWARD / ADELANTE

VICTORIES!



**COSMOPOLITAN
TRUMP**

STOPPED THE 40% TAX

ON OUR HEALTHCARE

\$1.7 M GRIEVANCE

BACKPAY FOR MEMBERS

WHAT'S NEXT...

**CONTRACT
REOPENER**

From your SECRETARY-TREASURER & PRESIDENT



No. 1 Priority in 2016: Our Economic Reopener!

Brothers and Sisters,

2015 was full of incredible victories:

- **The Cosmopolitan is now union!** After a four-year struggle the Cosmopolitan of Las Vegas workers won a good union contract that provides fair wages, job security, and the best health benefits in Las Vegas.
- In December, a majority of workers at the Trump Hotel Las Vegas voted yes in an NLRB election to be represented by the Culinary and Bartenders Unions. Nine days later, the hotel filed objections to their workers' vote. It seems like Mr. Trump will only respect an election for himself and not for his workers. However, the Trump workers are united and will fight until we win a fair contract!



- **We defeated the 40% tax on our health benefits!** Through the hard work of UNITE HERE and the Culinary Union, we were able to delay the 40% excise tax on our health benefits, the so-called Cadillac tax. This is a tremendous victory in our fight to protect our healthcare.
- Through the hard work of our Grievance department and many shop stewards, led by JT Thomas and Norbert Kubiak, **we won \$1.7 million in back pay for our members!** No union wins more grievances than 226 and 165!
- In fact, 2015 was **the 80th anniversary for Culinary 226** and we plan to spend the next 80 years fighting for workers' rights.





However, in 2016 we have big challenges ahead.

Our No. 1 priority in 2016 are contract negotiations for our economic reopener. We need to be ready and united to negotiate our **economic reopener for over 48,000 workers** this year. We must fight hard to protect our health insurance, pension, and achieve fair wage increases that we deserve.

Have you seen the power presentation? Last year 5,000 members participated and this year our goal is to reach 75% of our members, one by one, to really explain how we will win in 2016. If you have not, ask your shop steward or your union organizer.

This is the year to win Stations. Stations workers have done their part and now we need to do ours. Over 5,000 members have signed a Facebook pledge to stay out of stations for six months. See your organizer to join the fight!

Healthcare costs are still skyrocketing because of greedy hospitals and giant pharmaceutical companies that are out of control. Yes, we won the delay on the 40% tax but we need to eliminate this tax for good. In the end, we must take control of our own healthcare. This year we will break ground on our very own health center to make sure we get the very best care available and make sure we will not be extorted by giant greedy corporations.

And finally, 2016 is an election year and we have an incredible opportunity to affect change on the national and local level. If political candidates do not support our issues we will not support them. We will however register 10,000 additional members to vote and move thousands of our members to become citizens so they can vote. We will oppose any politician that attacks our members with racist rhetoric and scare tactics.

We hope you enjoyed your holidays and quality time with your family. Now it's time for us to get to work.

**When we fight together,
We Win.**

In Solidarity,



Geoconda Argüello-Kline
Secretary-Treasurer



Ted Pappageorge
President





What is the Economic Reopener?

In our 2013 contract negotiations, it was agreed that we would have a five-year contract, however, due to uncertain economic times and Las Vegas still reeling from the effects of the recession, it was negotiated that the economic package of the final two years of the contract would be reopened and renegotiated in 2016. These contract negotiations will determine the economic package for the years 2016 and 2017 and our five-year contract will expire May 31, 2018. However, we negotiated very specific terms for the reopener. The negotiations occur in a defined period of time, February 1 to April 30, where only the economic package, and distressed language can be discussed. If there's no agreement by April 30, we will go to binding arbitration for a decision.

The economic package includes healthcare, pension, wages and money needed for other funds such as our training fund, housing fund and tip earner defense fund. The distressed language was a pilot program that was negotiated in order to preserve our casual dining jobs that have been eliminated by the thousands since 2008.

But what really is the economic package? Secretary-Treasurer Geoconda Argüello-Kline says, "It is what allows you to bring food home to your family and put it on the table, to take your children to the doctor when they are sick, and to retire with respect and security."

The economic reopener will involve approximately 48,000 workers that are represented by Local 226 and Local 165 that work on the Strip and downtown. **It will be the number one priority for Local 226 in 2016.**



The Official Publication of the Culinary Workers Union, Local 226

THE CULINARYWORKER 

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Geoconda Argüello-Kline Secretary-Treasurer
Ted Pappageorge President
Leain Vashon Vice-President

Published Quarterly Issue #1

Victory!!!

The Cosmopolitan is UNION!!!



"I'm so happy that we are now union members!" said Claudia Zarate, a room stylist at the resort. "After four years and a change in the resort's ownership and leadership, this contract has been something I have been looking forward to and am comforted in knowing that the Union and The Cosmopolitan both believe in fair wages, good health benefits and safe workloads."



"This contract means that my family and I can have a quality middle-class life here in Las Vegas," said Pascale Rida, a banquet server at the resort. "I have the opportunity to provide for my family - and that's an amazing feeling."



"I'm so incredibly proud to have been a part of this," said Philip Reynolds, a mixologist at the resort. "Having job security, a guaranteed work-week, and a pension makes me feel so proud to be member of the Union."



We beat the 40% tax on our healthcare!



After years of meetings, campaigning, and research, our representatives in Congress who gave us the Affordable Care Act have woken up to the fact that fixes need to be made to the law. Our union led the fight for workers across the country to have their healthcare protected and not get a 40% tax. Senators Heinrich (New Mexico) and Heller (Nevada) along with Congresswoman Titus (Nevada), Congressmen Guinta (New Hampshire) and Courtney (Connecticut) led the fight in Washington by sponsoring legislation to repeal the tax. We won a huge victory when the 40% tax was delayed for two years.

The fight is not over! We won't stop pushing until the tax is repealed. Our union has always supported the need for fundamental health reform to improve the healthcare of all Americans. We supported the ACA when we were promised we could keep the healthcare we have. We won't stop fighting until we make sure politicians understand they need to keep their promise.



Hospital VICTORY

We beat Dignity (St. Rose, San Martin, Siena Campus) last year, now we won our contract with Sunrise! With your support and the support from other local unions at our rally on February 18, we sent a strong message to HCA, the for-profit owner of Sunrise, MountainView and Southern Hills hospitals, that they cannot be gouging us for too much money and sucking \$64 million out of Vegas. Our Fund has a new 3-year contract with HCA. Our families' healthcare is very important to us and the Fund and the Union will continue to fight for your health benefits. Together we will win!

Picket at Sunrise, February 18, 2016



Culinary Health Center *Exclusively Ours!*

Your Culinary Health Center will be breaking ground this year. Here's a sneak-peek at what your 59,000 square foot health center will look like.

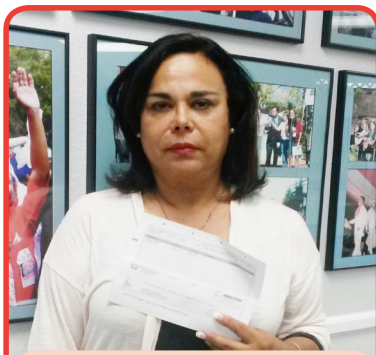


Coming Soon!

DID YOU KNOW . . .

Culinary Union's Grievance Department settlements for members from January to December 2015

\$1,732,056



Lourdes Prieto
Cashier, Westgate,
\$8,630



Veronica Jayo
Usher, Aria, \$5,000



Desiree Noriega
Cocktail Server, 1 Oak
at Mirage, \$3,000



Emmanuel Viloso
Baggage Handler,
Caesars, \$6,250



Rekiia Belland
Hostess, Stratosphere,
\$6,500



Ronald Harris
Cook, Wynn, \$10,000



Rosanna De Guzman
Fast Food Attendant, The
Grove-Airport, \$5,441



Roxanna Mendoza
DRG Hostess, The D
Las Vegas, \$5,691



Wendy Duran
Caesars, \$4,000



Youssef Elbarrja
Stratosphere, \$50,000



Caesars Laundry, \$11,000



Buffet Servers, Riviera \$25,977



Plaza Showroom, \$45,000



Bellagio, \$71,687 Holiday Back Pay



Epigmenito Guzman
Harrah's, \$5,411



Eva Ruiz
Excalibur, \$10,000



Mariana Veronica
Wynn, \$25,000



Gloria Corea
The Service Companies
Returned to work



Martin Prado
HMS Host, \$5,680



Jazmin Jones
Hostess, Harrah's
Returned to work



Leda Billings
The Grove-Airport,
\$5,754



Ta Shawnti D Virgil
Wynn, \$40,000



Modestina Rivera
Stratosphere, \$17,500



Michael Gross
Utility Porter, The D
Las Vegas, \$4,221



Mary Viola
Cocktail Server, The D
Las Vegas, \$5,000



Miguel Garcia
Wynn, \$7,500



Jacqueline Grosso
Stratosphere, \$8,400



Felix Valadez
Harrah's Laughlin,
\$3,200



Justin Sterling
Harrah's Laughlin,
\$3,000



Elmer Portillio
Planet Hollywood, Food
Server, returned to work



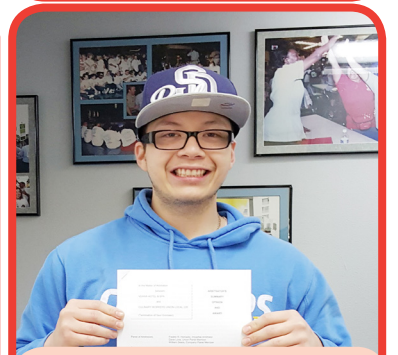
Jerry Monona
The Service Companies,
\$496



Nicki Dardon Hostess
Westgate, \$29,000



Justin Bonaficio
The Service Companies,
\$462



Saul Gonzales, Vdara
returned to work



Mirage, \$36,018 Holiday Back Pay



Cocktail Servers, Harrah's Las Vegas, \$90,000



Las Vegas Club, \$120,500

Union Squashes Stations Owners \$760 Million Cashout!

Back in 2007, Station Casinos insiders took \$660 million out of the company. That was followed by the firing of 20% of the company's workforce, who do not have the protection of a union contract, and Station Casinos filed for Chapter 11 bankruptcy in less than two years.

Station Casinos insiders are trying to take hundreds of millions of dollars out of the company again!

- **March, 2015:** Station Casinos sought investor approval to borrow money to pay the company's owners \$300 million. The Union urged investors to reject the proposal, and Station Casinos did not get what it wanted.
- **October, 2015:** Station Casinos announced it wanted to raise money from investors through an initial public offering ("IPO") and use the money to pay its biggest owners and executives \$460 million. The Union again reached out to investors to warn them that this is a bad deal. On January 28, we learned that the Station Casinos IPO had been postponed.


Investors are not giving Station Casinos more money. Are you still spending your hard-earned money at Station Casinos buffets and slot machines?

Let's continue to fight to protect our brothers and sisters at Station Casinos!

WE Stay Out of Station Casinos



"An unfettered pursuit of money rules. That is the dung of the devil."
- Pope Francis



For more information on the major labor dispute at Station Casinos, go to:
VegasTravelAlert.org/Stations



Picket at Palace Station, February 12, 2016

VICTORY AT THE TRUMP



Make America Great Again Mr. Trump, Start here!

In a tremendous victory, a majority workers at the Trump International Hotel in Las Vegas voted in an NLRB election on December 4 and 5 to join the Culinary Union!

The election outcome sent a message to Donald Trump and to the hotel management: Workers want to be treated the same as other union workers in Las Vegas - with fair wages, job security, a pension, and good health benefits.

The triumph followed a year of intense organizing with the help of UNITE HERE members from across the country (Locals 2262, 26, 75, & 57) and Trump Toronto workers who assisted during the election.

Throughout the campaign, thousands of union workers, clergy members and the community allies have participated actions in front of the luxury hotel near the world-famous Las Vegas Strip. Democratic candidates Hillary Clinton, Bernie Sanders, and Martin O'Malley have also publicly supported the Trump Las Vegas workers and their fight for justice.

Secretary-Treasurer, Geoconda Argüello-Kline said, "Mr. Trump's hotel workers won their election in Canada and he negotiated with them. We won our election in Las Vegas and he should negotiate with us - that's how to Make America Great Again."

Keep up with the campaign, by liking the Culinary Union on Facebook:

www.Facebook.com/Culinary226





Become a U.S. Citizen with your Union!

Did you know that the Culinary Union is the largest immigrant organization in Nevada? We are so proud to represent workers from over 167 countries who speak 40 different languages!

Becoming a U.S. citizen is an important step in securing your family's future.

In 2001, the Culinary Union joined with a number of other organizations to establish the Citizenship Project, a place where union members and their families could get free help through the citizenship process. Since 2001, the Citizenship Project has helped over 14,000 people become U.S. citizens. And all services are FREE!

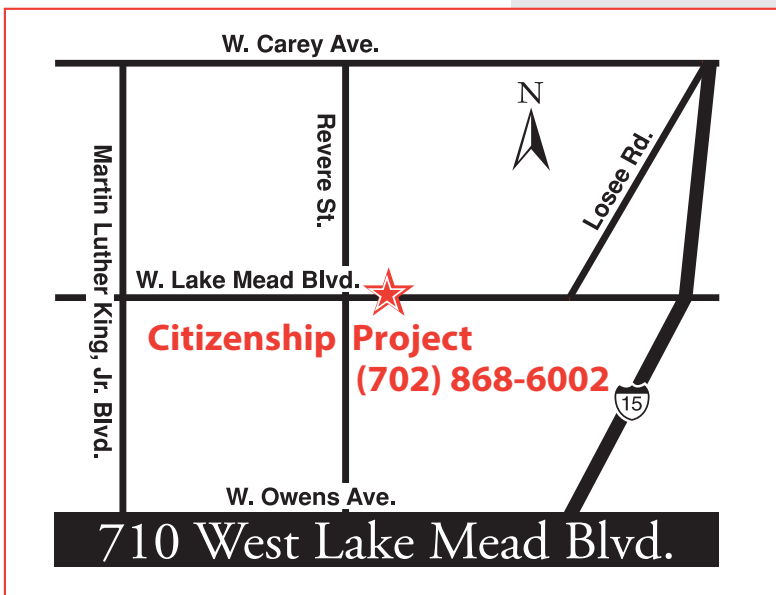
The Citizenship Project helps people through the entire process – the application and preparation for the exam.

The Culinary Union represent workers from over 167 countries who speak 40 different languages!



The Union will also be launching a union wide effort to train members on how to help people fill out applications. **Talk to your organizer about coming to a training.**

Each month, the Union will host a large scale citizenship fair to help hundreds of people fill out applications. Each fair will be open to all members of the community!



The Citizenship Project

710 W. Lake Mead Blvd.
North Las Vegas, NV 89030
(Located at Nevada Partners)
Monday – Thursday: 8am – 7pm
Fridays: 8am – 5pm

(702) 868-6002

Citizenship Classes

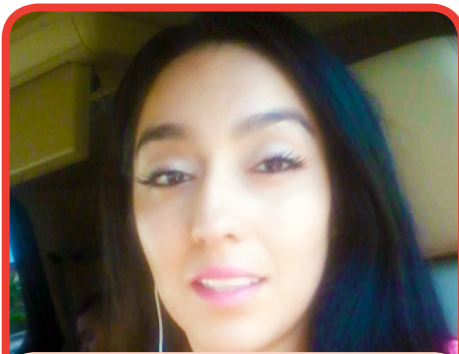
Prepare for the Citizenship Exam for FREE!
Monday – Thursday: 4:30pm – 7:30pm

Up to \$20,000 is available to use toward down payment, closing costs and principal reduction

The Culinary and Bartenders Housing Partnership Program offers down payment assistance to workers represented by Culinary Union Local 226 and the Bartenders Union Local 165. It covers employees of participating properties that contribute, per a collective bargaining agreement, to the Housing Trust Fund. The program provides homebuyer education, pre- and post-purchase counseling, and down payment assistance to first-time home buyers per HUD guidelines. Up to \$20,000 is available to use toward down payment, closing costs and principal reduction for the purpose of purchasing a primary residence. The housing partnership assistance is provided as a silent second mortgage with zero percent interest due on refinance, sale or when no longer owner occupied.



Caridad Suarez-Gonzalez, GRA, Luxor (with husband Eddy Fagundo-Perez)



Jessica Medina (single mother of three), housekeeper, Wynn



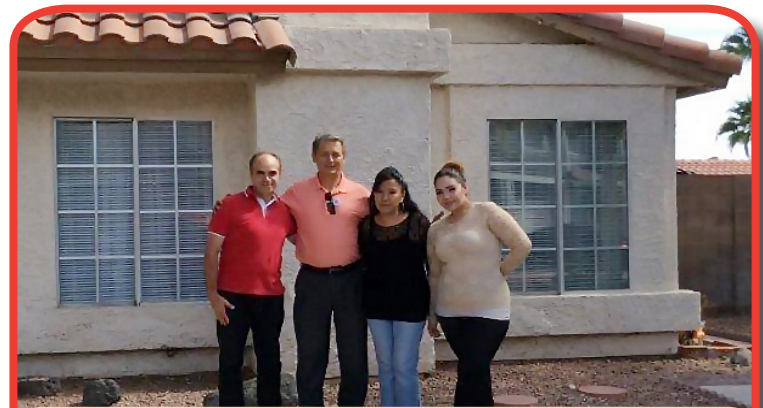
Tesafahun Takele, Porter, Mandalay Bay (with wife Elisabeth Zewde and their two sons)



Enrique Vicke, Member Services Specialist, Culinary Union



Jesus Flores, Housekeeping at Caesars Palace (with wife Augustina Martinez)



Lourdes Marinao (Cook Helper) and Juan Velasquez (Bus Runner) both work at Aria. Pictured here with Culinary Union President, Ted Pappageorge.



Belinda Boles, Hostess, Paris



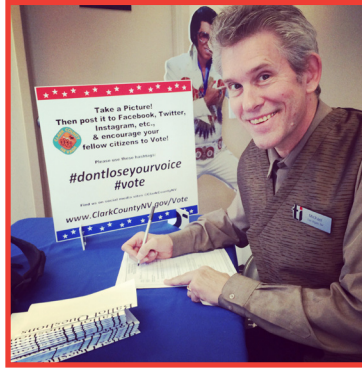
Martha Estifanos (single mother), housekeeper, Aria

Housing Partnership participants all moved into their newly purchased homes.

The Culinary and Bartenders Housing Partnership has assisted more than 900 Culinary and Bartenders workers with the purchase of their homes. Learn more about how your dream of homeownership can become a reality.
 (call or pick up a flyer in the lobby of the Union at 1630 S. Commerce St. Information in Spanish is available).

It's your turn now.
 Contact the Culinary and Bartenders Housing Partnership Program at:
info@nevadapartners.org
702-924-2100

Our Political Power



For the last five years, our union, which is UNITE HERE and the Culinary Union, has led the charge to make necessary changes to Obamacare.

One of the most important issues is a potential 40% tax on your benefits because of a so-called “Cadillac tax.” Thanks to our union, Senator Dean Heller, and other partners, the tax’s implementation was delayed two years to 2020. This is a huge victory! But the fight isn’t over, we will keep pushing until the tax is fully repealed and other necessary changes happen.

This is just one example of the importance of political power.

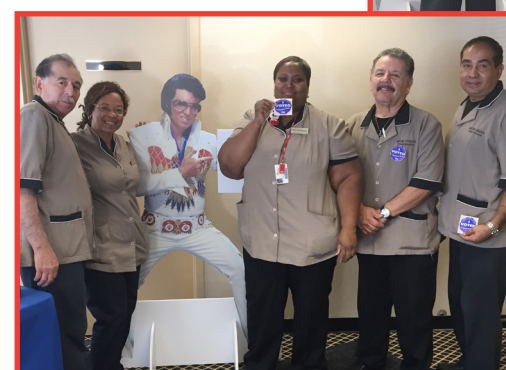
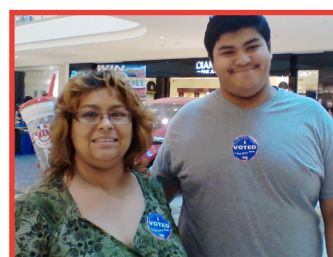
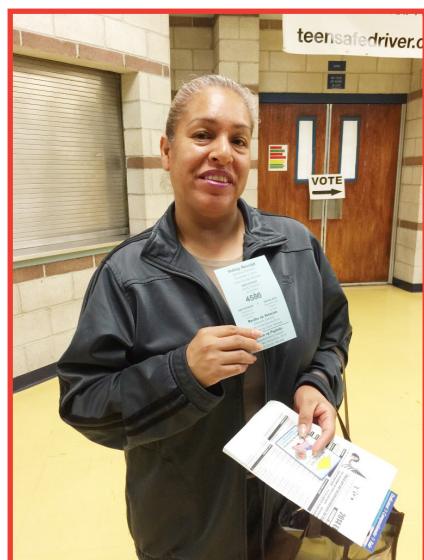
Issues like fixing Obamacare, passing comprehensive immigration reform, and enhancing worker protections, will be central to the 2016 elections. The Culinary Union plays a key role in determining not just who becomes President of the United States, but also which politicians win at all levels of government. In order to win on issues that matter to us, we must elect candidates that will represent us. There has not been a better opportunity in recent history to do just that. Organizers will be talking to you about how to become a citizen, registering to vote, meeting with candidates, and joining the political committee.

The Union will endorse in the Presidential race when the time is right. Until then, the Union has endorsed its first candidate of 2016, State Senator Ruben Kihuen. Ruben is the proud son of an MGM housekeeper, and has dedicated his political career to fighting for working families. He’s running for Congress, and we’ll do everything it takes to make sure he’s our voice in Washington, DC!

You can also **text the word “pol” to 877-877** to get text message updates about political events.



Luis Gutierrez meets with Culinary Citizenship LOAs, February 2016





Culinary Union's 80th Anniversary

Since November 1, 1935, the Culinary Union has fought hard for Nevada's middle class and has raised the standard of living for over 735,000 hospitality workers! With every fight and victory, we are reminded of the importance of organizing and building true worker power.



Highlights from the Culinary Union's 80 Years of Fights:

1967 Downtown Strike for 11 days:

Casinos didn't want to pay for healthcare, raise wages or continue to give workers job security. During the strike, casinos stayed open but struggled to service guests. Some casino owners brought coffee and doughnuts to striking workers on the picket line. Guests suffered inconveniences and greedy casino owners lost thousands and thousands of dollars. **Outcome: Union wins**

1971 Citywide Strike for 3 days:

Casinos didn't want to pay for healthcare, begin a retirement plan, raise wages or continue giving workers job security. Not all casinos went on strike, but those that did, locked out their union workers and closed. The strikers fought to make sure casino jobs remained good jobs. Guests were very angry and greedy casino owners lost millions of dollars. **Outcome: Union wins**

1976 Citywide Strike for 17 days:

Greedy casino owners had a strong desire to destroy the Union forever. Not all casinos went on strike but those that did, locked out their union workers and closed. Guests were outraged and the casinos lost millions and millions of dollars. Strikers planned to be out for a long time at the casinos that intended on destroying the Union. **Outcome: Union wins**

1984 Citywide Strike for 33 days at some striking casinos, 67 days at others and some forever:

Casinos refused to negotiate good health insurance coverage for union workers. The Union's health plan was in financial trouble in the early 1980s. From 1976 to 1980, the cost of healthcare soared and with no extra money coming in, health benefits had to be cut. Dependent coverage was eliminated and many local doctors refused to accept the Culinary insurance. **Outcome: With the help of the International Union, the Union was weakened, but survived.**

1990 Horseshoe Strike for 9 1/2 months:

Money, greed, power and a wealthy casino owner's ego, Jack Binion, mistakenly believed he could defeat striking workers, but union members voted to double their dues to support the Horseshoe strikers. The Union expanded the Horseshoe fight beyond Las Vegas by using its growing corporate research capabilities to hurt Binion's out of state business interests. The research effort and 24 hour picketing cost Binion a lot more money than he ever thought. **Outcome: Union emerges stronger than before the strike.**



1991 Frontier Strike for 6 years, 4 months, 10 days:

Culinary members were unwilling to agree to takeaways proposed by the greedy Elardi family, owners of the Frontier. Even after more than 6 years of picketing, not one of the 550 striking workers crossed the picket line until the strike settled in February 1998. The Elardi family was forced to pay millions of dollars in back pension contributions. **Outcome: One of the longest strikes in U.S. history ended in victory. The Frontier strikers serve as a testament to what a group of determined workers can accomplish by their commitment to do what is right.**

2002 Downtown Golden Gate Strike for 8 days:

Casinos claimed profits had yet to recover pre-September 11 and they wanted workers to pay a portion of the cost of their health plan. Over 25,000 Union members voted

to approve a strike with major employers on the Strip and Downtown. A naive casino owner believed he could defeat Golden Gate workers' goals of getting a fair contract. During the strike, the casino stayed open, but like the Horseshoe strike, 24 hour picketing killed the Golden Gate business. **Outcome: Union wins and the efforts of Union members paid off when they won the best contract ever in the Union's history where special language was added to many contracts giving extra re-employment rights, regarding immigration and safe housekeeping workloads.**

2007 Contract Fight:

The Culinary Union held one of its biggest rallies ever where thousands of members packed the Union's parking lot.

2013 Contract Fight:

It took nearly two years to finalize negotiations for 44,000 of its members. The settled contracts secured benefits for thousands of Culinary Union families for five years. The contact has new housekeeping language for dealing with trashed rooms, changes in food and beverage terms that aim to provide the flexibility needed to reopen closed venues and bring workers back to their jobs, and all workers kept their current free, high-quality health insurance. In 2014, nine casinos in Downtown remained without a new contract. Members voted to call for a strike against these unsettled Downtown properties. **Negotiations continued around the clock and were successful.**

The fight continues: This year our reopener is the number one priority. Our brothers and sisters from Station Casinos, Trump Hotel Las Vegas, Palms, and Aliante are fighting for justice and respect at their workplaces. With the same strength and resilience demonstrated by Culinary Union members in 80 years, **we know that we will win!**

STAY UP-TO-DATE >>

with what's happening!

Get text messages updates about upcoming events, contract negotiation updates, and important news.

**Text "member"
to 877-877**

@Culinary226



@Culinary226



Facebook.com/Culinary226



Did You Know?

Need to buy new plates? You can support the Citizenship Project by buying a charitable plate from the DMV.

Since 2001, the Citizenship Project has helped over 14,000 people become U.S. citizens. And all services are FREE!



**Alcohol Awareness Training Online . . . for ONLY \$8
for Culinary & Bartenders Members ONLY**

1. Go to www.culinaryunion226.org
2. Click on For Members then choose Alcohol Awareness
3. Follow the easy directions

For questions,
please call the Union at

(702) 385-2131

News from Your Health Fund

Text-Messaging Program



The Culinary Health Fund will soon start using a Text-Messaging Program! Some of the messages they would like to send you include:

- **Surveys** – because it is important for them to know how you feel about the Fund
- **Benefit change information** – they want to keep you informed about any benefit and/or copay changes
- **Upcoming Wellness Classes and reminders** about the classes if you have signed up for one
- **Events** such as the Back to School, Flu Shots, Spring Health Fair, and others



**Fund Customer
Service Office
702-733-9938**

Meet Some of the Culinary Advocates

They are Here for You!

Advocates are your personal Culinary Health Fund “helpers”. They can help you get answers about your Culinary medical, dental, vision and prescription benefits. They can also help with eligibility requirements, and can explain what it takes to keep your coverage active.



**Culinary Advocacy
Group
702-691-5665**



Carmen speaks Cantonese and Mandarin. She has worked at the Fund for 6 years. Carmen enjoys helping participants and resolving any issues they may have with their medical claims and benefits.

“If you know someone at work that only speaks Chinese and needs help, let them know that I’m here and ready to help.”

你認識Carmen嗎？她在工會福利部服務了六年，會說廣東話及普通話。她熱愛幫助別人解決問題，如果你有任何關於工會福利、保險、或是退休金的疑問，請聯絡Carmen。

“如果你或是你的同事需要申請工會的福利，或者有其他關於工會福利的疑問，請打我的直線電話702-691-5667。”

Aneliese speaks English and Spanish. She is very outgoing, friendly and knowledgeable about the Fund’s Wellness Programs as well as the benefits. She works primarily with the Diabetes program and the Healthier U program. She also helps organize the Culinary cooking classes that are focused to help participants eat healthy and more delicious foods.

“You don’t have to guess about your benefits or your health. All you need to do is reach out to an Advocate and ask. When it comes to your health and benefits, you can be sure that we are always here to help.”