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Local 274

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Wyndham Philadelphia Historic District Hotel Workers on Strike

After extraordinary pandemic hardships, hospitality workers in Philly say Black Work Matters and walk off the job during week of "Strikesgiving"

Philadelphia—This morning at 5am, dozens of Wyndham Historic District hotel workers who are members of UNITE HERE Philly Local 274 went on strike in their efforts to secure livable wages and safer workloads for the majority Black, Brown and immigrant workforce.

At 5:00am, housekeepers, bartenders, food service staff, cooks, laundry attendants, dishwashers and bellmen all walked off the job or failed to report to a scheduled shift at the hotel, instead joining a picket line in front of the hotel. They were joined in solidarity by other union members, community supporters, clergy and political allies. Around 7:30am, Philadelphia Marathon runners passed the picket line on their official route that morning.

Workers at the hotel—the majority of whom are Black, Brown and immigrant—are saying: "We should define what recovery looks like! Black Work Matters!" People of color have been hit hardest by the pandemic and should not be left behind. In late October, one hundred percent of workers overwhelmingly voted to authorize a strike and workers held pickets on November 8 and 15, as well.

A 2019 UNITE HERE survey of over 150 housekeepers at other Center City hotels found that over 93% were working in pain:

"Cleaning rooms is hard work. I usually make around 24 beds per day. They are very heavy to lift. We have to scrub the tubs and move furniture. We are rushed to finish our assignment on time. It's wearing down my wrists, my knees, my back. I work under a lot of pressure. When I get home, I'm too drained to do any activities with my baby," says Renee Holmes, Housekeeper.

In 2016, the [Black Work Matters Report](#) highlighted the importance of transforming hospitality jobs in Philadelphia to transform the deep poverty in Philadelphia's Black communities. UNITE HERE Local 274 members have been successfully transforming those jobs both before, during and in the aftermath of the COVID pandemic. They have already succeeded in getting other Center City hotels to agree to contracts with raises that would get full-time housekeepers to an annual income of \$46,000 and reduced workload to make hotel jobs safer. Workers demand Wyndham do the same.

UNITE HERE Philly Local 274 is the union that welcomes you to Philadelphia, representing 4,000 private sector hotel and food service workers who work at the stadiums, airport and hotels throughout the Philadelphia region. We serve the food, hold the door, carry the bags, clean the rooms, and wash the laundry. Ninety-eight percent of our members were laid off at the start of the COVID-19 pandemic, and sixty percent remain out of work today. Now, we're fighting to make sure Black, Brown and immigrant workers aren't left out of an industry recovery.

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