

CHAPTER 49 NEWS

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August 27, 2004

CHAPTER 49 WINS LISA RIOS ARBITRATION!

By
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NTEU Chapter 49

NTEU Chapter 49 has learned great news.

Lisa Rios, a long time call site employee, was picked up to be a Revenue Officer a few years ago. Management made what both Lisa and Chapter 49 felt was a serious error. She was terminated in the spring of 2003. The Chapter leaders felt strongly that proper procedures were not followed with Lisa. Our Field Representatives in Chicago agreed and arbitration was invoked. The hearing on this matter was heard in the late spring of this year.

We received the Arbitrator's decision on August 6th. We are overjoyed that the Union's position substantially prevailed. In our view, Lisa was never given the proper coaching. We also believed that her Opportunity Period was not handled properly. We are extremely gratified that the Arbitrator saw the merits of our arguments.

Lisa should be reinstated as an RO in the near future and will get back pay and benefits for all the time she has been gone.

I would like to extend a special thanks to all those who worked on getting Lisa reinstated - it was truly a team effort. Stewards Dean Crawford & Pam Fruggiero realized there

was a problem early on and assisted Lisa in the early stages.

Chapter 49 Vice President Susan Wright's insight was valuable throughout the process and she selflessly put in many hours of her own time to assist during the arbitration hearing. NTEU attorney Anne Dasovic realized this was an injustice from the outset and helped prepare the case to go to Arbitration and assisted in the convincing legal brief that was submitted to the Arbitrator after the hearing. Head of our Chicago Field Office Mike McAuley did what I consider a brilliant job in leading NTEU in this Arbitration and convinced the Arbitrator that our side was correct by arguing that Lisa wasn't given a fair shake. A big thank you to all of you for what you did to assist Lisa!

A special thank you goes out to retired Chief Steward Karen McKibben. Karen was tireless in her defense of Lisa throughout the whole process. This was going on as Karen's career was winding down but instead of "mailing it in" she was a ferocious advocate for Lisa. I consider Lisa getting her job back the crowning jewel in Karen's NTEU career. When I contacted Chapter Vice President Susan Wright late on August 6th, we decided it was only fitting that Karen contact Lisa with the news that she was being brought back through the efforts of NTEU. Fantastic job Karen!

Lastly, I want everyone out there to remember something. This Chapter will do what it takes to make things right. Often times we will have conversations with management at several different levels to try and make them see our point of view. When that doesn't work we will use everything we have in our legal and contractual toolbox get our point across.

I am overjoyed that Lisa will be rejoining our ranks and I hope that all of you out there will be as well. (Lisa gave permission to disclose this information)

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TIME IS RUNNING OUT: JOIN NTEU AND GET \$25 IN GAS!

Time is running out for you to take advantage of an offer to all those joining NTEU Chapter 49. If you sign-up by September 17, Chapter 49 will give you a card worth \$25 of gasoline. Check with any steward or officer about joining NTEU. It's easy and puts you squarely behind the institution that has your interests in mind.

COURT DENIES TP ACCESS TO EE EVALS

Compliance employees are very aware of how RRA '98 resulted in emboldened actions by taxpayers and some tax pros to intimidate IRS workers. A federal district judge in New Jersey has ruled that taxpayers may not have IRS employee personnel records (including performance appraisals) as part of a judicial proceeding. NTEU filed a legal brief in support of the employees in this case. For more details on this ruling, check our Chapter 49 Web site at www.nteu49.org

JOB COMPETITIONS: HOW EEs WIN BUT STILL LOSE

You've probably heard the old adage that you can win the battle but still lose the war. Many IRS employees are feeling the impact of winning a job competition but losing a job anyway. Recent wins by IRS in job competitions have still resulted in job losses. Why? Because the rules established by the White House make it very tough for government workers to win a job competition without shedding jobs as part of the "most efficient organization" (MEO) proposal to bid against private sector firms. In Information Technology, a recent IRS job competition resulted in IRS keeping the work, but 218 MITS

employees will lose their jobs as a result. Another recent successful job bid by IRS to keep the Area Distribution Centers (ADCs, handling printed publications and forms) resulted in the closing of centers in Richmond, Virginia and Rancho Cardova, California, putting 274 IRS employees out of work. NTEU has had to go to court to enforce the law on how IRS is handling the situation with mailroom employees where one worker in Indiana is impacted. NTEU National President Colleen Kelley put it this way - "After devoting their careers to the IRS, these loyal civil servants are not just losing their jobs, they are losing their health care, their homes, their hope for a better future for their children and a secure retirement." President Kelley is particularly concerned about the IRS refusal to use all the tools Congress has made available to the agency in helping with some of the pain resulting from employees being victimized by these job losses. Then there is the push by the White House and some in Congress to allow private companies to collect federal taxes. NTEU continues to fight the battle on Capitol Hill opposing efforts to allow private collection firms into collecting taxes for IRS. IRS is now refusing to even brief NTEU on important job competition developments, resulting in NTEU filing a national grievance since this is a change in past practice. IRS has taken further actions trying to restrict our rights in competitive sourcing issues. The fight continues. Chapter 49 will continue to keep you up-to-date.

NATIONAL TREASURY EMPLOYEES UNION CHAPTER 49

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