



# An Update on Union Organizing at Newspapers

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April 10, 2019

# Agenda

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- 01** Recent Organizing Campaigns (2018 & 2019)
- 02** Digital Organizing and Traditional Print Media
- 03** Union Strike Votes
- 04** An Update from the Trenches

# RECENT UNION ORGANIZING CAMPAIGNS (2018 & 2019)



## The Los Angeles Times

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# Los Angeles Times

- After 136 years union-free, the Los Angeles Times editorial employees voted 248 to 44 in favor of representation by the NewsGuild last January.
- Unit Scope: All full-time and regular part-time editorial employees nationwide
- Unit Size: 389 employees
- Case No. 21-RC-210958
- <https://latguild.com/>



# Casper Star Tribune

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- After 127-years union-free, employees at the Casper Star Tribune newsroom voted in favor of representation by the NewsGuild in February 2018.
- Unit Scope: All full-time and regular part-time newsroom reporters, photographers, copy editors and community news editors employed by the Employer in the State of Wyoming at and out of its facility located in Casper, Wyoming
- Unit Size: 12 employees
- Case No. 27-RC-214229
- Union Local: Denver Newspaper Guild, Local 37074

# Casper Star Tribune

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- Negotiations for an agreement began in April 2018 and employees unanimously ratified a first contract on December 17, 2018.
- Highlights of the 2 year agreement include:
  - A minimum annual salary of \$30,000
  - No discipline or discharge except for just and sufficient cause
  - Ability to reduce more senior employee where junior employee has abilities or differences in qualifications
  - Up to 16 weeks' severance pay for reduction in force
  - 2% wage increase effective 12/1/18
- Link to CBA: <http://denvernewspaperguild.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/01/Casper-Star-Tribune-Contract.pdf>

# The Daily Hampshire Gazette and Valley Advocate

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- Voted 40 to 29 on December 12, 2018 for representation by the NewsGuild
- Unit Scope: All full-time and regular part-time employees employed at 115 Conz Street, Northampton, Massachusetts
- Unit Size: 72
- Case No: 01-RC-230891
- <https://www.pvnewsguild.org/>



## Omaha World-Herald

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# Omaha World-Herald

- Vote of 71 - 5 in favor of NewsGuild representation
- Unit Scope: All full-time and regular part-time News Department employees employed by the Omaha World Herald, including Reporter/TBL Host and Producer
  - No decision made at time of election with respect to the following titles: Business Editor, Video Editor, Deputy Metro/Regional Editor, and Assistant Metro Regional Editor
- Unit Size: 91
- Case No: 14-RC-227251
- <https://owhguild.com/>



# Chicago Tribune

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- On May 8, 2018, the NewsGuild withdrew its representation petition after Tribune Publishing agreed to voluntarily recognize the Union
- Unit Scope: Voluntarily recognized three units:
  - Chicago Tribune and RedEye
  - Suburban publications: The Beacon-News, Daily Southtown, Elgin Courier-News, Naperville Sun, and Hoy
  - Design and Production Studio
- Unit Size: Approximately 235
- Case No: 13-RC-219062 (case withdrawn)
- <https://www.chicagotribuneguild.com/>



## Additional Examples of Voluntary Recognition

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- On September 17, 2018, the NewsGuild withdrew NLRB Case No. 05-RC-226846 after Tribune Publishing agreed to voluntarily recognize the Union on behalf of employees at the Virginian-Pilot, Daily Press, Virginia Gazette, and Tidewater Review.
- On February 21, 2019, only 10 days after the filing of the petition, the Union withdrew Case No. 01-RC-235667, after Tribune Publishing agreed to voluntarily recognize it on behalf of employees at Hartford Courant.

# The Morning Call

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- Employees at the Morning Call voted 31 to 12 for representation by the NewsGuild on March 19, 2019
- Unit Scope: All full-time and regular part-time newsroom employees employed at 101 North 6<sup>th</sup> Street, Allentown, Pennsylvania facility
- Unit Size: 47
- Case No: 04-RC-236523
- <https://twitter.com/mcallguild?lang=en>

**THE MORNING CALL**

# The Southern Illinoisan

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- By a vote of 12 - 0 on May 17, 2018, the newsroom staff at the Southern Illinoisan selected the NewsGuild to be its exclusive bargaining representative
- Unit Scope: All full-time and regular part-time employees in the news and sports sections, including reporters, sports reporters, director of photography, copy editors, news assistants, and news clerks employed by the Employer
- Unit Size: 14
- Case No: 14-RC-219195
- <https://twitter.com/sinewsguild>

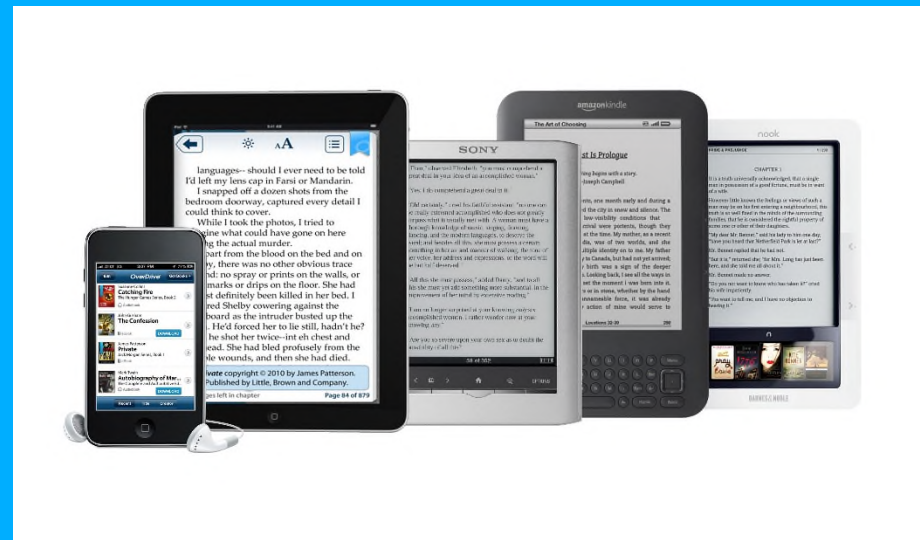
# Missoula Independent

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- On April 6, 2018, employees at the Missoula Independent in Montana voted for union representation by the NewsGuild.
- Unit Scope: All full-time and regular part-time editorial, production and sales employees working out of the Missoula, Montana facility
- Unit Size: 10
- Case No: 19-RC-216809
- Paper closed on September 11, 2018



## DIGITAL ORGANIZING VERSUS TRADITIONAL PRINT MEDIA



# NewsGuild versus WritersGuild

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- In 2015, the NewsGuild received \$500,000 from parent CWA to focus organization efforts on digital newsrooms.
- The WritersGuild, although much smaller by the numbers, has had significantly more success in the digital space.
- Prominent WritersGuild digital bargaining units include:
  - HuffPost
  - Vice
  - Slate
  - The Onion
  - Salon
  - Thrillist

# NewsGuild versus WritersGuild

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- NewsGuild has also had recent success in its digital organizing efforts, organizing:
  - BuzzFeed
  - Conde Nast
  - Law360
- The two unions have positioned themselves differently, both in organizing and in bargaining.
- For example:
  - The WritersGuild may not insist on just cause language or require overtime rather than compensatory time.
  - HuffPost's CBA with the WritersGuild does not require layoffs strictly by seniority



# RECENT UNION STRIKE VOTES



# Law360 – NewsGuild of New York, Local 31003

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- On October 23, 2018, employees at Law360 voted to authorize a strike as they continued to negotiate for a CBA
- By November, the Union brought in “Scabby the Rat”
- On December 18, 2018, the employees of Law360 unanimously ratified their first contract
- The 4-year agreement included:
  - Salary floor of \$50,000
  - 2% guaranteed increase in 2020
  - Additional possible merit raise
  - Ratification bonus



# Slate Magazine – Writers Guild of America - East

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- Voted 52-1 on December 11, 2018 to authorize a strike after 8 months of contract negotiations
- An agreement was ultimately ratified on January 16, 2019
- Agreement included:
  - Minimum salary of \$51,000
  - Severance pay of up to 28 weeks
  - Minimum 3 weeks' vacation





# AN UPDATE FROM THE TRENCHES

# The Washington-Baltimore NewsGuild

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- Represented client in election in December 2017. Conducted by mail ballot
- Began negotiations in May 2018 and continuing to-date
- Biggest takeaways:
  - Attuned to issues that are important to millennials
  - Emphasis on diversity
  - More sophisticated technologically than typical industrial unions
  - Inoculate against traditional arguments against unionization





**Thank You**