

Think **KTWICE!**

SUMMER 2006 THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE ALLIANCE@IBM/CWA LOCAL 1701

Employees fight force-outs due to medical conditions

Steve Bergeron, At-large Massachusetts Governing Council Member

During my personal battles with IBM HR partners, management, nurse case managers (RN), and yes, even IBM's physicians, there was one common thread: if you are perceived as a personnel risk to the corporation, the treatment that you receive will be adjusted accordingly. On the surface you may be taking your medications, participating in IBM's well-being programs, and requesting protected accommodations, but behind the scenes exists a huge HR wheel turning; clocking your absence, tallying your medical bills, and marking you for termination.

This realization came from personal experience while working within IBM's corporate structure. But, it also came from personally and directly supporting other IBM'ers who were dealing with chronic health conditions. Yes, we do get sick; human beings are exposed to chemicals, mold, viruses, diseases, and can become gravely ill.

IBM employees I've worked with

and supported in their battles with IBM have illnesses and diseases such as fibromyalgia, degenerative cancers, heart conditions, sleep apnea, and miscellaneous surgeries. We believe many employees with illnesses have unjustly been targeted for "resource actions" and firings.

Individuals with acute and chronic health issues need the support of their employer(s). While IBM creates an image of support, their own summary plan documents, procedures, practices and policies are left in file mode, while the employees fight for the protection, job security and opportunity that IBM once offered.

Compounding these medical issues and claims for disability benefits, is the reality that employees take on depression, post-traumatic stress disorders, anxiety and other asymptomatic reactions caused by a lack of support from managers and IBM health professionals.

During these phases of unfair treatment, untenable work condi-

tions persevere. IBM employees give in without even learning that their physical impairment(s) may be impacting on a major life activity or that they can fight back if they know the right paths.

IBM, innovators in resource balancing, pile the sick into 30-, 60- or 90-day termination cycles. Often when they call me, employees have little time to take action.

As an Alliance chapter representative I have taken on the responsibility of working employees through the IBM maze of disciplinary and job cut processes.

The next steps, after getting the information from employees, is to articulate our arguments. We then have the employee challenge IBM and if need be we contact the DOL, the EEOC, state human rights commissions, and State attorney generals.

Along the way, we use the support of the Alliance@IBM where employees can find information in the Resource Action Tool Kit, and

timely articles on past IBM legal or health-related statistics.

Dues paying members are eligible for limited legal services as well as advice on pensions and workplace issues.

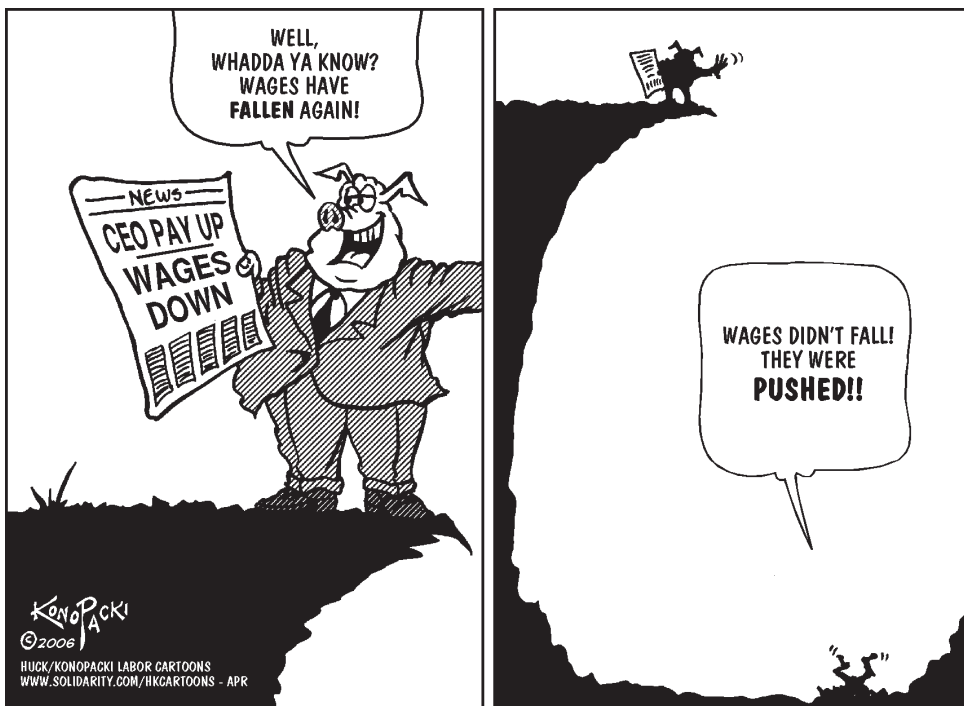
The Alliance website is also a place to tell our stories in the various comments sections and point out approaches we've used to save our jobs or the job of another.

We've come a long way. We realize now there is a separation between IBM and its employees. The days of IBM caring about its employees has gone the way of the famous IBM slogan "respect for the individual."

In the interest of privacy, the IBM employees that I support meet with me periodically to review or perfect the delivery of their arguments.

After hours of support to them, some have joined the Alliance@IBM, but many more must join.

My time will always be available to my co-workers as we battle to bring decency and caring back into IBM.



Join the Alliance@IBM/CWA

Join the Alliance@IBM/CWA and join with your coworkers in building the strength and unity that we will need to reverse anti-employee benefit and personnel policies at IBM. If we work together, we can make IBM into a better and more secure place to work. Sign up below and be a part of the movement for positive change at IBM!

Name _____ Job Title _____
 Work Location/Division _____ Years with IBM _____
 Home Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Home Email _____ Home Phone _____

(Check boxes that apply)

Voting Member. I will pay monthly dues of \$10 and become a voting member of the Alliance@IBM/CWA Local 1701. Send me an application form.

Subscriber. I want to receive Alliance publications and be placed on the Alliance email list.

For information, go to www.allianceibm.org

No Raise = Pay Cut!

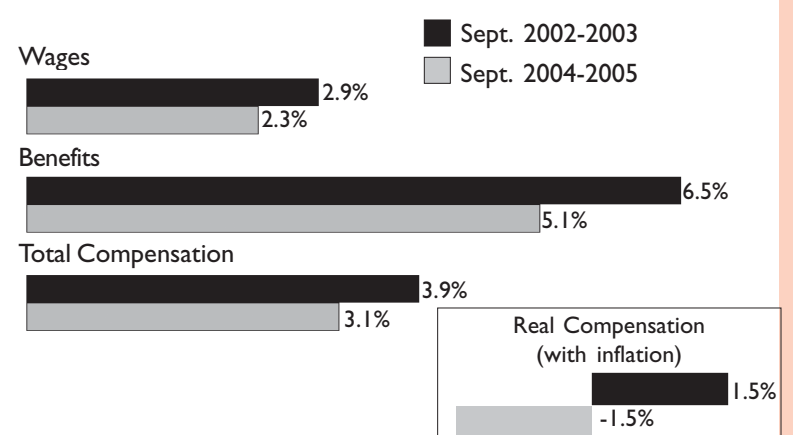
IBM CEO Palmisano receives a 29% raise and a guaranteed pension of \$75,000 a week.

How much is your raise? What will your pension be?

If you didn't receive a pay raise—then you got a pay cut!

- Prices go up
- Medical co-pay goes up
- Utilities go up
- Your standard of living goes down!

Sliding Wages/Benefits Equals Deductions in Real Compensation



Join the discussion on raises on the Alliance web site's (www.allianceibm.org) "raise comments" section.

IBM to invest \$6 billion in India. Where is your job going?

Is your job going to India? To Brazil? China? Maybe it will be to Eastern Europe. And when your job or your coworkers job is gone—then what?

IBM employees across the country are faced with this dilemma. Many have to train their replacements and then are fired. Some have been swept up in the “redeployment” scheme and find there is no severance pay.

American manufacturing workers were told that when their jobs were gone they should retrain in the IT field. Now the rug is being pulled out from under IT workers of all job titles.

Here is a quick look at where the jobs are going and what kinds of jobs:

How IBM Is Staffing Up In Low-Cost Countries			
PLACE	2003	CURRENT	WHAT'S DONE THERE
India	9,000	43,000	Data centers, software development, call centers, research
China	4,200	7,200	Software development, data centers, demonstration center, research
Brazil	4,500	9,000	Data centers, Linux development lab, call centers
Eastern Europe	2,900	5,125	Data centers, service skills centers, Linux development labs

Data: IBM Corp.

Chart from BusinessWeek magazine.

IBM employees have sent comments about this job shifting to the Alliance. One employee had this to say: I was also a solid 2 performer for over 26 years and I still got the axe. With a resource

action, they say it's about your position being deleted, moved, or downgraded, so your performance has nothing to do with it. It's the old “nothing personal” line and they'll even try and find you a new position in the company. My position had to go to Brazil, so I had no job left and lots of competition for a few jobs nobody really wanted anyway (100% travel, relocation at your expense). Skills, level, and your performance mean nothing. That only re-enforces their position that it also has nothing to do with your age or full retirement coming up soon. -Anonymous-

From another employee: Last week at Poughkeepsie, many of us were told that our jobs had been “redeployed” to Brazil. What a sad state of affairs as management continues to entrust more and more critical business operations to others outside the USA.

Help the Alliance expose the shifting of jobs offshore.

Do your part by sending us information on:

- Where your job is going
- Where you are located
- Your job title
- Your age

Also call your local news organizations, write letters to the editor and above all call your political representative and demand they protect American jobs from being offshored! IBM wants you to be silent. It is time to tell IBM we will be silent no longer!

Study Reveals “Jobless Recovery” in Tech Labor Market, Despite Industry’s Contrary Claims

Just 76,300 new Information Technology jobs added since April 2003; new jobs total fewer than one-quarter of those lost earlier in the decade.

SEATTLE, WA — Job growth in America’s information technology sector has been significantly less robust than industry leaders have claimed, and fewer than one-quarter of the IT jobs lost during the early part of the decade have been recovered over the past three years, according to a new study released today by the nation’s leading union of high-tech workers. With limited exceptions, the so-called “recovery” of the IT sector has been a jobless one, the study found, even though an economic recovery began more than five years ago.

The report entitled “Information Technology Labor Markets: Recovering, But Slowly” was prepared by the Center for Urban Economic Development (CUED) at the University of Illinois, Chicago for the Washington Alliance of Technology Workers, an affiliate of the Communications Workers of America (WashTech/CWA).

The study examined the state of the IT industry through February 2006 (the most recent month for which data was available), assessing employment trends nationally and in eight key metropolitan labor markets. It is a follow-up report to “America’s High-Tech Bust” released by WashTech and CUED in September 2004.

“Technology job growth is weak at best in most major markets across the country,” said WashTech/CWA president Marcus Courtney. “Tens of thousands of highly-skilled American IT workers remain unemployed or underemployed, while at the same time - more and more technology jobs are being shipped out of the country.”

To read the full report go to www.washtech.org.

SSR’s Sold Out to Qualxserv

In April, with only 30 days notice, 400 IBM SSR’s were sold to Qualxserv, a company that services low end printers and office equipment. The SSR’s were also told not to talk to the media or their customers about this deal.

The IBMers affected were understandably angry. First, they received very short notice of the transfer. Second, like so many of IBM’s “deals,” the senior employees stand to lose significant Pension money.

The Alliance asked these workers how they felt about the sell-off and their future with Qualxserv. Here are some of their replies to the following questions:

Do you believe you got a fair shake from IBM?

“No. The managers offered no encouragement and were only concerned with processing the paper work on time.”

“IBM’s process of picking ‘according to what we wrote on the products being moved over’ is a lot of bunk. Seems like they got rid of the ones they wanted based on age and favoritism.”

“IBM said they were picking people geographically. That is not true. There are big holes geographically. Our

customers have been kept in the dark and this will hurt them.”

How do you compare your working conditions, pay and benefits at Qualxserv with what you had at IBM?

“In my territory I am the only one who came over and now I have to cover ½ the State. I put in over 1,000 miles the first week.”

“My move will cost me 1 week of vacation, 2 personal holidays and when the year is up, I figure they will cut our pay.”

“The benefits stink. I now have to pay \$500 a month medical deduction and \$75 per person deductible for dental. The pay is supposed to stay the same for a year but the CEO of Qualxserv said they weren’t as generous as IBM. The handwriting is on the wall.”

“Everyone is up to their necks in alligators because Qualxserv was not prepared for the workload and every day is a challenge trying to reach dispatch and cover calls.”

Would you be interested in an organizing campaign or Qualxserv employee organization to advocate for employees?

“Yes, definitely. I can read between the lines and this is a raw deal for us.”

Important information on the Alliance@IBM web site, www.allianceibm.org:

HR webcast including the new “PBC 2 and managed out” scenario.

http://www.allianceibm.org/jrm2006hrwebcast_030206.pdf

Also be sure to view and participate in the Job Cut, Pension, General, and Raise comments sections.

News and information updated frequently.



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