



TWU Leader: Part of a Growing Trend

Newly Organized Transit Staff Analysts Get 2.5% Raise, Benefit Gains In Pact

By **BOB HENNELLY**

Under the terms of their first Transport Workers Union Local 100 contract, 500 staff analysts who work for the Metropolitan Transportation Authority will get a 2.5-percent raise, a \$500 bonus, longevity pay, a commuter pass and paid overtime, according to Local 100 president Tony Utano.

The contract was overwhelmingly approved, with 192 yes and just two no votes. It runs through July 13, 2019.

The workers in the new unit are not civil service and are employed by the Manhattan and Bronx Surface Transit Operating Authority, a subsidiary of the MTA.

A White Collar Push

This contract is part of a successful white-collar organizing drive by Local 100, which has traditionally represented blue-collar operational job titles throughout the transit system. The staff analysts hold desk jobs throughout the transit system doing payroll, procurement, and scheduling.

“When you combine the computer specialists with the staff analysts, we are at about 1,200,” said Mr. Utano in a phone interview. “It means people want to join unions, which is great. And they want to join the TWU.”

“I am just so happy the TWU picked us up,” said staff analyst Yolanda Tabb, 53, who has 18 years on the job. “I think at one point we went five to six years without any raise.”

She said Level 1 staff analysts start at \$48,000. She is responsible for researching and authenticating applications for reduced fares submitted by the disabled. Before coming to the MTA, she was a Caseworker



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for the city Human Resources Administration for several years and worked in the shelter system.

Overcame Resistance

Ms. Tabb said that inside her office there was initially reluctance from her younger colleagues to sign up with the union. “You know, they come in and say, ‘Hey, I am only going to be here a few years, and then I am moving on,’ and that’s when I would say ‘that’s what I said and then life happened,’” she said in a phone interview.

She continued, “And the other thing we heard was, ‘You only need a union if you get into trouble and I don’t get into trouble.’” In response, the veteran staff analyst told her younger colleagues that in her career sometimes trouble found you, in the form



‘HAPPY TWU WANTED US’: Yolanda Tabb, a staff analyst with 18 years on the job, said some of her colleagues hesitated to seek union representation, but that past experience taught her the value of having that protection in areas from discipline to compensation.

of a personality clash with a boss.

A Wake-Up Call

She said the layoffs her unit experienced back in 2010 drove home the value of having union protection. “A colleague that worked right next to me and who had over 20 years on the job was just let go.”

Mr. Utano observed that the surge in organizing was not isolated to his union. “But now it seems like everybody in the Transit Authority is organizing,” he said. “You have the Supervisors union organizing. You have the General Superintendents with a new union. The bosses are organizing. But you can understand why it’s happening. A person told me they didn’t see a raise for seven and a half years.”