



Via E-mail

Q-116

October 19, 2022

TO: All CWA Locals with legacy Qwest Members

FROM: Art Clemens, President, CWA Local 7800 (WUARL, Co-Chair)
Vonda Wilkins, AVP, CWA Local 7019 (WUARL, Co-Chair)

SUBJECT: Workers United Against Racism at Lumen - Race and Equity Survey

Dear Union Family:

I hope this letter finds you and yours well. We are reaching out to you about Workers United Against Racism at Lumen (WUARL). We are a group of Lumen employees dedicated to dismantling racism at Lumen. We formed in the fall of 2020 when Lumen announced that in order to honor Rev. Dr. MLK Jr.'s legacy, they would grant this as a paid holiday to all non-union employees.

This did not sit right with us, you cannot declare to be anti-racist and then behave in an anti-union manner. MLK knew that Labor Rights are Civil Rights and to pretend otherwise is the oldest trick in the book used to divide us. Furthermore, the longer we talked the more we uncovered the overt, covert and biased practices within the company that went beyond just one paid holiday. In an effort to level the playing field we asked for a meeting with CEO Jeff Storey, who instead had us meet with Bryan Smith, Labor Relations and India Slyvester, Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer.

On March 17, 2021 we met with Bryan and India, we told personal stories around how racism has affected us and we presented three demands: MLK day for all; a meeting with Jeff Storey, and; quarterly meetings with management to dismantle racism within the company. Within days we were told no, and also that our stories were old.

We have now shifted our strategy. We are developing a toolkit for Locals to use in the event your members fall victim to workplace racism. We will also be releasing a report that documents how racism plays out at Lumen. We have garnered 100 survey results and

have conducted more than 10 interviews for our report. But we still need your help. ***Can you pass this Race and Equity Survey on to your members?*** The link to the survey is here: <https://bit.ly/3oMAxMo>. We have also attached a flyer about the history of WUARL, with a QR code that links to the survey. We are happy to answer any questions you may have, we can be reached at artc@cwa7800.org or vwilkins0861@gmail.com.

In solidarity,

Art Clemens, President Local 7800 and *Vonda Wilkins*, AVP Local 7019
Workers United Against Racism, Co-Chairs

SB/er opeiu30, afl-cio

c: CWA District 7 Staff



WORKERS UNITED AGAINST RACISM AT LUMEN (WUARL)

WUARL formed after an October 2020 Lumen announcement that in honor of Rev. Dr. MLK Jr.'s legacy they would grant it as a paid holiday for **all non-union workers**. WUARL has been fighting ever since, and collectively we:

- Collected 2,000 signatures on a MLK Day for All **petition** just two weeks
- **Organized two webinars** on MLK Day with over 60 participants each
- **Secured a meeting with Lumen management** - Bryan Smith, Labor Relations and India Sylvester, Chief Diversity and Inclusion Officer

Our demands are simple and urgent:

1. **Quarterly meetings between the union and management to dismantle racism.** Granting all Lumen employees a paid holiday in recognition of a civil rights icon does not alone erase racism. We need a seat at the table to discuss on-going biases and future ones.
2. A **meeting with CEO Jeff Storey.** The power to change the status quo and truly build out a more inclusive and diverse workforce stops with Jeff Storey.
3. **MLK Day for All**, and now. For every year that Lumen doesn't honor this holiday for union members they steal almost \$1 million from us (~600 union members x 8 hrs/day x ~\$25/hr= ~\$120,000)

Racism is an age-old tool of the boss used to divide us. We must reject this tactic and fight back, even if it may seem uncomfortable. Here are two things you can do today:



1. If you work for Lumen, scan the QR code above or go to <https://bit.ly/3oMAxMo> and **fill out our race and equity survey**

1. **Follow us on twitter** Workers United Against Racism at Lumen @UnionAntiracist