

Invisible No Longer



An investigation
into working
conditions at the
Hyatt Santa Clara



Introduction

Invisible Workers

Some silences need to be broken. Some stories need to be told.

As community and religious leaders in Silicon Valley, we believe that the experiences of workers at the non-union Hyatt Santa Clara are such stories.

Like so many other hotel workers, the Hyatt Santa Clara workers may live in our neighborhoods, attend the same houses of worship that we do, or even serve us as customers. Yet too often, their lives and their daily struggles – against dangerous working conditions, abusive labor practices, and poverty wages – remain invisible to us.

In June 2008, workers at the Hyatt Santa Clara formed a union committee with the hope of improving their lives and working conditions. They asked the hotel for a fair process to choose a union, known as a card check neutrality agreement. To date, not only has the hotel rejected its workers' demand for a fair process, but an atmosphere of fear and confusion about the union has been created among the workforce.

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The Public Hearing

In November of 2008, we convened a public hearing at Santa Clara First Baptist Church to investigate the hotel's treatment of its workers and the resulting impact on the broader Silicon Valley community. A panel of elected officials, religious leaders, and grassroots organizers heard direct testimony from Hyatt Santa Clara workers. The workers' testimonies, as well as the panelists' responses, are collected in this report.

The panelists at the public hearing concluded that the entire community suffers when Hyatt workers are denied healthy working conditions, living wages, and basic respect. We agree. Let us rise together towards justice, equality, and a Silicon Valley in which hotel workers are Invisible No Longer.

Rising Together Steering Committee:

Rising Together is a partnership of hotel workers, community, and faith organizations dedicated to making the Silicon Valley a better place to live and work.

For more information about Rising Together, see page 23.



“Because I clean so many rooms, I never take my ten minute breaks. At the end of the day, my whole body hurts. I often wake up in the middle of the night, because of cramps in my legs.”

-Eleazar Dumuk,
housekeeper at Hyatt
Santa Clara

Report Overview

Invisible Workers

Every day, Hyatt Santa Clara workers face:

- **EXCESSIVE WORKLOADS:** in one eight hour shift, a housekeeper cleans 17 or more rooms, making up to 33 beds with 99 pillows and 132 sheets. Every housekeeper surveyed at the Hyatt Santa Clara reported workplace pain.

- **LOW WAGES:** Rigoberto Gutierrez, a Hyatt Santa Clara room service employee, must work two jobs – 80 or more hours a week -- in order to provide for himself and his family. The hotel and motel industry is one of the lowest-paid industries in Santa Clara County, with average weekly wages of just \$538.

- **LACK OF RESPECT:** Zoila Compean, a cocktail server at the Hyatt Santa Clara, was moved from the evening to the morning shift where she earns less in tips; since then, the hotel has hired several young female servers to work the evening shift.

- **LACK OF QUALITY, AFFORDABLE HEALTH CARE:** Charito Bembo, a Hyatt Santa Clara laundry employee, pays \$129 each month for her health care, but had to pay \$350 as a co-pay for a minor surgery. The leisure and hospitality sector is the only major sector in Santa Clara County in which less than 50% of workers have employer-based health coverage.

Hyatt Santa Clara workers deserve:

- a fair process to choose a union, or a card check neutrality agreement.

- a voice in the decisions that affect them, so they can improve their lives and the lives of their family members.



Worker's Testimony

Rigoberto Gutierrez

Low-Wage Work

I've worked at the Hyatt Santa Clara for 11 years in room service. My first nine years I worked the graveyard shift.

I have two sons and one daughter who live with my wife in Mexico. Twelve years ago I was laid off in Mexico from my job as a financial manager. I knew that it would be very hard to find another job in Mexico, but I needed a job that could support my family and my children through their education. So I came to the U.S.

In order to earn enough money to pay the bills and support my children, I work two jobs, one at the Hyatt in room service and another job where I set up and serve banquets. Usually, I work 80 or more hours each week, and I work seven days a week. Each year, I have only about 5 days completely off.

Many people think that because I work two jobs, I must be rich. They don't know the truth. When the hotel changed from the Westin to Hyatt two years ago, the hotel changed my job classification and cut my wage from \$13 per hour to \$8.50 per hour. I had to stop putting money into my 401 k in order to survive. I am over fifty years old and I do not have any savings for my retirement.

I send most of my money to my family so they can have food and a place to live, and because I am helping them pay for their education in Mexico. Often, I do not even have enough money to pay my bills. I need to use my credit card to pay for my car and my insurance. I feel bad because the debt is growing, but I also have no choice.

I know nothing about the community here even though I've worked here for 12 years. I give all my time to work. I don't know anything about the movie theaters here, about Great America, or about any other places. I want to feel like the U.S. is home, but I wonder when I will feel that way. It just feels like a place to work all the time.



“When the hotel changed from the Westin to Hyatt two years ago, the hotel changed my job classification and cut my wage from \$13 per hour to \$8.50 per hour.”

– Rigoberto Gutierrez

The Hotel Reacts

When the Hyatt found out that we were organizing, our food and beverage director came into our room service department and told us to stop working so we could listen to him. He told us that if the union came in, we would lose benefits. Then he turned to each of us and told us what would happen if we were part of a union.

The city services and facilities that residents enjoy are supported by hotel workers like Rigoberto. The City of Santa Clara collected a total of \$11.3 million in Transient Occupancy Tax revenue – taxes on occupied hotel rooms. This money comprised 8% of the city’s General Fund Operating Budget, which maintains the city’s parks, streets, libraries, public safety and other services

(Source: City of Santa Clara Accounting Services)

He told one of my coworkers that he would have to pay for his wife’s health care, and told another worker that he wouldn’t be able to call him for work if we had a union. He started talking about favors he had done for us, and told us to think about all of this, and that everything was going to change because of the union.

I was too scared to say anything in the meeting to disagree with him, and the way he pointed to each of us and said what would happen to us if we had a union made my coworkers worried that if we spoke up, we were going to get in trouble or even lose our jobs.

I am part of the union committee because I have a very simple hope. I hope to have time for myself, for my family, and time to be part of my community. Thank you for your support



“Our food and beverage director...told us that if the union came in, we would lose benefits. I was too scared to say anything.”

The Hidden Cost of Low Wages

The hotel and motel industry is one of the lowest paid industries in Santa Clara County, with average weekly wages of just \$538.

(Source: Quarterly Census of Employment and Wages, California Employment Development Dept., 2008)

To provide for their families' basic needs, low-wage workers must turn to public assistance programs. In Santa Clara County, a hotel worker earning \$12 per hour with three children is eligible for food stamps, the earned income tax credit, state sponsored children's health coverage and free school lunch -- even though he or she is working a full-time job.

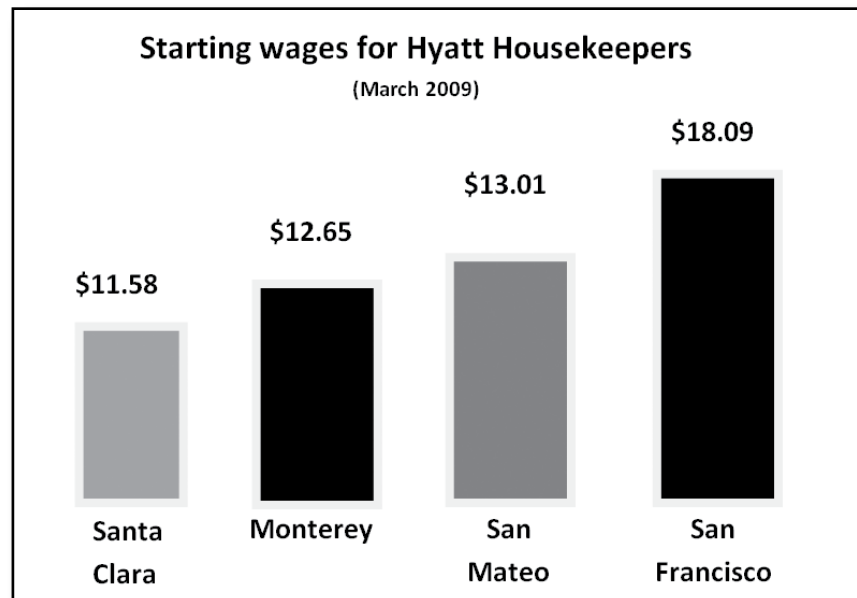
In total, the worker in question qualifies for public assistance worth \$14,482 annually

In total, the worker in question qualifies for public assistance worth \$14,482 annually, not including housing assistance. Paid for with taxpayer money, this assistance amounts to a hidden subsidy for businesses that do not pay a livable wage.

(Source: Working Partnerships, USA)

Does the Hyatt Santa Clara value its Silicon Valley workforce?

A comparison of wages, workloads, and health benefits with other Hyatt owned-and-operated hotels in Northern California.



Worker's Testimony

Zoila Compean

Lack of Respect

I'm a cocktail server at the Hyatt Santa Clara. I've worked at the hotel for 8 years, including 6 years when the hotel was the Westin. I have three children, and I take care of my 80 year-old mother who is now very ill.

I am proud to work in the service industry, where I can interact with guests from every part of the world. I like learning where each guest comes from and what brings them to Silicon Valley.

When the Hyatt took over the hotel, they moved me from the evening shift to the morning shift. Everybody who has worked as a server knows that it is harder to earn tips as a cocktail server during the morning. My income was cut in half.

I was never told directly why the Hyatt decided to move me into the morning shift, but since then the hotel has hired several young female servers who are in their mid 20s. They all work on the evening shift.

A few months ago, my father became ill and passed away. When I came into work the next day, my manager looked at me and told me I needed to put on some make up and get rid of the bags under my eyes. It was one of the worst moments I've ever had working in the service industry.

I've been told I need to go through retraining, even though I receive numerous guest compliments. And twice my managers have asked me if I would like to resign, and told me they would not contest my unemployment benefits. It feels like the Hyatt wants to get rid of me and they are trying to do everything they can to force me to quit. I need this job, so I have to take the abuse every day, but there are a lot of times my heart hurts because of the pain and humiliation I feel.

Having respect at work and being judged for the work I do, and not by my looks, is important to me. My involvement on the Union Committee has given me the courage to stand up with my co-workers and have hope that justice will come. Although we have not won yet I know we will and I can't wait for that day to come.

Thank you for your support and taking the time out from your busy schedule to listening to us today.



“A few months ago, my father passed away. When I came into work the next day, my manager told me I needed to get rid of the bags under my eyes.”
– Zoila Compean

Worker's Testimony

Eleazar Dumuk

Excessive Workloads



I was born in the Philippines and I've worked at the Hyatt Santa Clara as a housekeeper for the last 2 years. As a housekeeper I am responsible for cleaning rooms for guests to enjoy after a day of meetings or vacationing.

On weekdays, I wake up at 4:00 a.m. to prepare my lunch for work. I leave the house at 5:20 a.m. to catch the bus for the hotel. I get to the hotel employee cafeteria at around 6:45, have something to eat, and then head over to the Housekeeping Office to get my assignment.

At 8:00 a.m. our manager gives us our assignments: 17 or more rooms to clean. I pick up my supplies and head to the 8th floor. There, I begin to straighten out my cart, stacking up linen, bath towels, hand towels, face towels. When the cart is loaded, it weighs about 200 pounds.

Once inside a guest room, I collect all the trash, pick up the wet towels and take it all out to my cart. I come back into the bathroom, put on wash gloves, and get on my knees to spray the cleaning chemicals and scrub the bathtub and the walls, and then wash it off with clean water. Then I clean the toilet, clean the sink, and wipe the bathroom floor.

In a full day, I make 33 beds, change up to 99 sheets and 132 pillows.

Next I make the beds. I strip the sheets and, if the guest is checking out, I take off the pillowcases and replace them. To change the sheets, I have to lift the heavy mattresses up with one hand and tuck the clean sheets under with my other hand. In a full day, I make 33 beds, change up to 99 sheets and 132 pillows.

Once I'm done with the beds, I dust the TV, three tables, two sofas, the light stand, the lamp, the telephone and the refrigerator. When all of this is done, I go back to the bathroom and put in the new amenities. Then I start vacuuming. Before I close the door, I do one last inspection to make sure there is no hair in the bathtub, sink or floor, and to make sure the room smells clean. Then I close the door with a feeling of great satisfaction that the room is clean and the guest will enjoy it.

I do this at least 17 times each day. Because I clean so many rooms, I can't take my 10 minute rest breaks. At the end of the day, when I turn in my keys and the assignment board, I am exhausted. My whole body hurts; I don't even want to walk to the bus stop. When I get home, I head right to the couch in the living room and lie down. When I lie down I feel pain in my fingertips; it feels like getting pinched with needles. My hips and my lower back hurt from lifting so many mattresses, and my legs feel stiff. I often wake up in the middle of the night because of the cramps in my legs and the stiffness in my fingers.

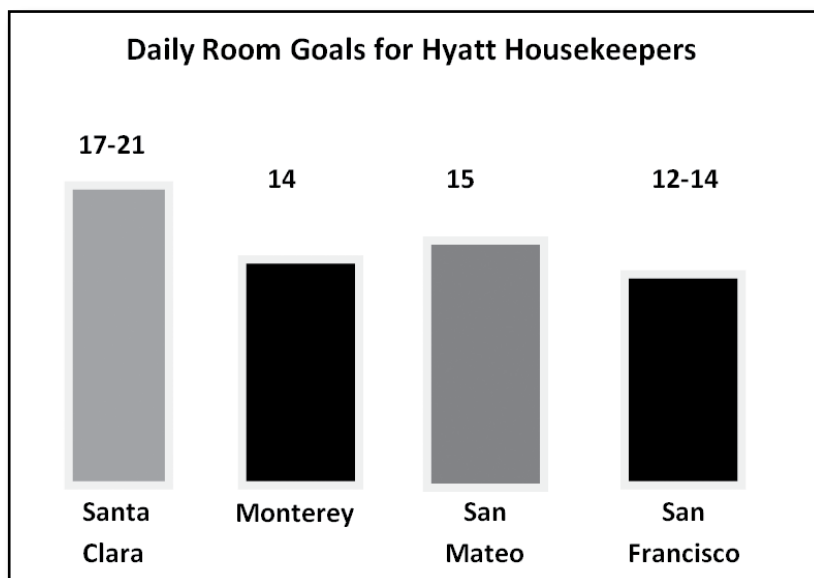
My personality has also changed. When I get home, and I am so tired, every little thing bothers me. When I see a dirty cup left on the table, I get upset with my husband. I become cranky and this puts a lot of stress on our marriage.

I am on the Union Committee and we are standing up for a fair process to choose a Union. My co-workers are scared of losing their jobs if they also stand up. Your support means a lot to us and I want to thank you for taking the time to listening to my story.

Sidebar or Call-out:

“Does Hyatt Santa Clara value its Silicon Valley workforce?”

A comparison of workloads with other Hyatt owned-and-operated hotels in Northern California.



“When I lie down I feel pain in my fingertips; it feels like getting pinched with needles. My hips and my lower back hurt from lifting so many mattresses, and my legs feel stiff.”
- Eleazar Dumuk

Living With Pain

Hotel Workers and Healthcare

The Leisure and Hospitality sector is the only major sector in Santa Clara County in which less than 50% of workers have employer-based health coverage.

(Source: 2003 and 2005 California Health Interview Survey)

At the Hyatt Santa Clara, housekeepers are typically asked to clean 17 or more rooms each day. In order to complete their room quotas, many housekeepers report skipping their ten minute breaks – rest periods that are necessary to prevent Repetitive Stress Injury.

In November and December of 2008, we surveyed 50% of the workers in the housekeeping department at the Hyatt Santa Clara. **Every housekeeper that was surveyed reported workplace pain, and 75% wake up in the middle of the night because of the pain they suffer.**

Where do housekeepers feel pain?



Worker's Testimony

Charito Bembo

I work in the laundry department at the Hyatt Santa Clara. I operate the ironing machine, putting linen into it and taking the linen out. I've worked there for 5 years.



I want to tell you about the healthcare I receive through the Hyatt. Each month, I pay \$129 to cover only myself. One month ago, I needed to have a minor surgery to remove bladder stones. When I showed up at the hospital, the registration agent told me that in order to have the surgery; I needed to pay \$350 as a co-pay. I was surprised! I thought, "I pay so much for my insurance every pay day, why do I have to pay \$350 dollars for a co-pay?"

I asked the registration desk, "Will I have to pay anything else?" They told me, "It depends on your health care." I'm still waiting to see what the rest of the bill is.

I had to take a month off from work to recover from my surgery, but I still had to pay the \$129 for health care. I don't have any savings left after my \$350 co-pay, so if I get another bill for the surgery, I don't know how I can keep paying for health care.

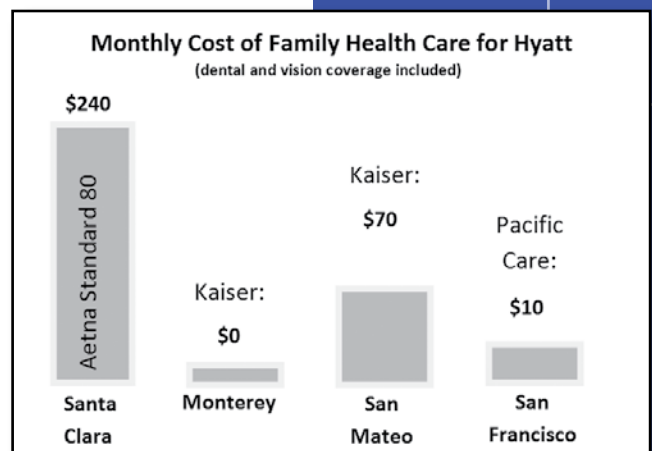
I'm 68 years old and a great-grandmother. I take four kinds of medicine. I worry that I could get hurt at work because when you pull the sheets out from the ironing machine, they are still damp and very heavy. I need my health care. But every day I wonder if the bill is coming and what will happen to me.

Thank you for listening to my story.

Does the Hyatt Santa Clara Value its Silicon Valley Workforce?

A comparison of health care costs with other Hyatt owned-and-operated hotels in Northern California.

SEE CHART BELOW



The Community Responds

Paul Fong, California State Assembly, District 22



As middle-class manufacturing jobs disappear, millions of workers have become increasingly dependent on service jobs. These service workers are part of the backbone of our economy. They are our mothers, our fathers, our daughters and our sons. These are our neighbors. They are our community.

Unfortunately, the stories we have heard tonight are about excessive workloads resulting in increased injuries – preventable injuries – and workers with inadequate or no health care at all. I strongly believe that the community I live in has a responsibility to make sure that our neighbors receive fair treatment, and an honest day’s pay for an honest day’s work. This is why my family came to this country. This is the American Way.

As your next Assembly member, I am here to let you know that your community will be watching and working to see that employees who work countless hours and provide valuable services have stable, healthy jobs that they can depend on to raise a family and achieve the American Dream.

“The community I live in has a responsibility to make sure that our neighbors receive fair treatment, and an honest day’s pay for an honest day’s work.”

– Paul Fong

Jamie McLeod, Santa Clara City Council Member



Santa Clarans like to talk about our city being a great place to live, work, and raise a family. From what we have heard tonight, that is not always true.

Although Santa Clara businesses subsidize our city services, if business practices result in injuring workers, then more services will be required by the community. Listening to these testimonies tonight tells us that treating workers badly does not make good business sense for our city.

We come to a decision: do we change our values or seek to change these business practices?

Based on the testimonies I have heard tonight, business practices must be changed to protect workers’ rights which include decent wages, reasonable workloads, and health care.

Thank you. Your honesty has helped to identify an important need for action in our community. For if Santa Clara is to truly be a great place to live, work and raise a family, then we need to re-focus our attention on bringing current practices in line with our values.

Rev. Margo Tenold, Co-Director, Council of Churches of Santa Clara County



From the first pages of the Christian Bible, it teaches that all people are made in the image of God and are, therefore, to be treated with respect. From the story of the exodus, it is made clear that God desires that none should be slaves, overworked or under-compensated. In Jesus' life and ministry, again and again he noticed those whom everyone else overlooked: the workers, the poor, the ill, and the marginalized. The kingdom he worked to bring into being was a world characterized by justice and compassion, rather than greed and power over others.

The testimonies of these workers indicate that our society is far from the traditional Christian ideal. But, in the last half of the twentieth century, Christian thought has reclaimed the biblical vision that God seeks to raise up the oppressed and teaches us that often the poor and marginalized are our teachers as are those who have spoken tonight. Their pain, perseverance and desire to do their very best in serving the guests of the hotel inspire me. I vow to stand with them.

“Their pain, perseverance and desire to do their very best in serving the guests of hotel inspire me. I vow to stand with them.”
– Rev. Margo Tenold

Katia Lopez, Campaigns Chair, Californians for Justice



Many of the women in my family are hotel workers who have struggled in their jobs for many years. I experience the struggle because I see the complete exhaustion of my mom and aunts when they come home, then make dinner and do chores. After very little sleep, they have to repeat this routine, week after week.

The long hours and excessive workloads are not the only hardships. Hotel workers have to care for their children's education and future – taking them to the library and reminding them to do homework -- on top of coming home exhausted from a day of work.

It is very important that young people speak up for their educational rights and for workers' rights. If we do not, we may find ourselves working exactly the same way as our parents: for low wages and no benefits. We must support hotel workers in their struggle to ensure that we are creating a community that respects all of us.

The Community Responds

Leslie Bulbuk, President of Bay Area Municipal Elections Committee



The members of my community perform every type of job, come from every economic background, and come from every race and ethnicity, but we share with hotel workers the common human struggle to build a better life.

The urgency of that struggle is heightened because so many of you perform demanding jobs that severely threaten your health and damage your bodies.

The Hyatt Santa Clara has failed to grasp an important concept: when each of us is empowered to build a better life, we all benefit. My own organization, which works for justice for the lesbian, gay, bisexual, and transgender (LGBT) community, holds our annual dinner for over 600 people at a union hotel, because we support justice for all. There are many organizations that have the same policy, and if the Hyatt Santa Clara would do the right thing, they would benefit economically.

I am here tonight to bear witness to the obstacles and the injustices you face in your struggle to build better lives for yourselves and your families, and I will take your message to my community.

Fr. Robert Brocato, Human Concerns Commission of the Diocese of San Jose



I represent a long tradition of Catholic Social teaching that holds up human dignity as the fundamental organizing principle for society. Work is regarded as participation in God's creative power, always to be revered.

Hotel workers' labor should enhance the well-being of their families, their communities and their spiritual lives; that is why the Catholic Church insists that health and safety cannot be disregarded for the sake of higher profits.

Workers' lives are affected by economic decisions; therefore, they have a right to participate in those decisions. The Church has consistently taught that all workers have the right to organize so they can collectively work for their common good. The Church supports the Hyatt Santa Clara Hotel workers in their need for a fair process to decide whether to unionize.

Hotel workers are vitally important not only at work, but as cherished members of our churches and our communities. As the Church has supported past campaigns by hotel workers, janitors and airport workers, the Church stands now with the Hyatt hotel workers.

“I am here to bear witness to the obstacles and the injustices you face in your struggle to build better lives for yourselves and your families”

– Leslie Bulbuk

Arturo Gomez, Artistic Director, SOMOS MAYFAIR

We support the hotel workers' struggle because it's part of our own struggle. SOMOS Mayfair works every day with the poor working families - the invisibles - in our community and we can testify to their pain and poor living conditions. We, the unions and the community are working together for justice, hope and dignity for the working invisibles.

As an organization we work with immigrant families and we believe that unions are a very important part of this work. Unions are organized to get better working conditions for employees. We support the right of workers to organize for a fair process—for card check neutrality because the workers need to be respected for their own decisions. This is the only way our community members can get better salaries, health care insurance, and other benefits for themselves and their families.



“We, the unions and the community, are working together for justice, hope and dignity for the working invisibles.”
– Arturo Gomez



The Community Responds

Over 100 community members attended the “Invisible No Longer” hearing on November 19, 2008. Here are some of their reactions:

I’m Vietnamese, Chinese American. I escaped Vietnam to seek freedom in America. I cannot imagine this is America. Why are we treating people this way?

– **Kimberly Diep**

It is unacceptable for some of us to enjoy comfort at the expense of those who work to provide those comforts. We need to recognize the worth of each person and family.

- **Deborah Rogers, Stanford student**

I worked as a housekeeper 9 years ago. Those days I cried because I felt exploited, exhausted, but alone. When I heard the workers’ testimony I cried because I know now we are together fighting for justice. Sí, se puede. – **Martha Campos, Comité Cesar Chavez**

We will work to educate the Japanese American community about your struggles. Thank you for your courage – **Gary Jio, Nihonmachi Outreach Committee**

I have heard similar stories at the Low-Income Self-Help Center. We need to come together to protect all poor and low-income people. – **Peg Elwell**

It was shocking to hear that a worker must have two jobs and still cannot earn enough to support their family – **Erik Larsen, AFSCME Local 101**

I was disturbed by hearing about the working conditions these men and women face. Being loyal at the hotel does not have any rewards.

– **Pastor Claudell Huey,
New Mission Church of God in Christ**

Transforming The Industry

Hyatt Santa Clara workers deserve respect and a fair process to choose a union, or a card check agreement. Here is a story from a hotel worker at the Doubletree San Jose – a hotel only 5 miles from the Hyatt Santa Clara.

SUZANNE BAILEY

I've worked at the Doubletree San Jose for over 16 years. I started out as a banquet captain and in 2001 I transferred to purchasing.

In 2006, UNITE HERE and the Doubletree entered into a card check agreement. The process was very smooth, and in one month almost 80% of my coworkers had signed cards saying they wanted to form a union. Dan Fenton from Team San Jose and Reverend Reginald Swiley counted the cards, so everything remained confidential.

Before our contract, I was paying close to \$200 each month for health care just for the two of us. Now I pay \$35 a month for healthcare.

When we learned that the hotel recognized our union, it was one of the happiest moments my coworkers and I had. We cried, we screamed, we hugged each other.

Having a union and a union contract has changed my life.

I'm the primary provider for my family and I have a 13-year old son who was born with a neurological disorder. Each month, he needs special medication. Before our contract, I was paying close to \$200 each month for health care just for the two of us, not including the cost of his prescriptions. I constantly worried whether I could take care of him after paying the mortgage, bills, and health care. As a mother, that feels horrible.

Now I pay \$35 a month for healthcare. The difference in my life is night and day. Just as important, being part of a union I've learned to believe in myself and to know that I can improve my life and the lives of my coworkers. I've learned that there is hope.

“Just as important, being part of a union I've learned to believe in myself and to know that I can improve my life and the lives of my coworkers. I've learned that there is hope.”
– Suzanne Bailey

Transforming The Industry

What You Can Do

As members of the Silicon Valley community, we have the power to improve Hyatt workers' lives.

When you sign a pledge of support for Hyatt Santa Clara workers, you let the hotel know that it is accountable for its treatment of workers:

We pledge to support Hyatt Santa Clara workers in their efforts to create a hospitality industry that values working people. We believe they should have a fair process to choose a union and support their campaign for justice, including a boycott of the Hyatt Santa Clara if called for by its workers.

**Sign the pledge at:
risingtogether.wordpress.com**



When you book an event make an informed decision.

Go to: inmex.org

When you travel know which hotels treat their workers fairly.

Go to:
hotelworkersrising.org/HotelGuide/

Just Journeys

The Progressive Jewish Alliance has helped to launch Just Journeys, an education campaign that encourages ethical travel. They have created a list of specific steps travelers can take to respect the workers who provide for our comfort. These include:

Tipping the housekeeper who cleans the room the suggested rate of \$2 – 5 a day.

Saving the housekeeper time and shoulder strain, by:

Keeping the room as clean as possible, throwing trash in the garbage can, piling towels in an accessible location, and stripping the bedsheets.

Filling out the comment card, knowing that the worker who cleaned the room might receive a bonus or special commendation if guests appreciate her or his work.

For more information visit: www.pjalliance.org

**“Jewish tradition insists that all workers
deserve dignity in the workplace.
Deuteronomy 24:14-15 states: “You shall
not abuse a needy and destitute laborer.”
Act on your values and stay at hotels where
those who tuck in your sheets can also sleep
soundly at night.”
– Zachary Lazarus, Progressive Jewish Alliance**

Hyatt Workers' Struggles

The most important issues for me are a decent wage increase and respect at work.

– **Tim Corre, Laundry Attendant**

It is difficult for me to accept that I can't pay for my benefits such as insurance and I can't pay for a doctor for myself.

– **Fernando Bonales, Bartender**



I am very committed to my work, but it is difficult because they give me too much work.

– **Maribel Arroyo, Housekeeper**

The most difficult part of the job is scrubbing the tub in the bathroom, but I am proud of my work.

– **Nenita Ite, Housekeeper**

I do not have medical insurance from the hotel because I cannot afford it. – **Huy Tran, Bellman**

The hardest part of my job is making a lot of beds, because they have a lot of sheets and you have to tuck the sheets under the mattress.

– **Margarita Aldama, Housekeeper**

The most difficult part of my job is pushing the linen bins.

– **Charito Bembo, Laundry**

Hyatt Workers' Hopes

My hope is that I can earn a little more for savings for the future and that my daughters and granddaughter can study.

– **Margarita Aldama, Housekeeper**

My hope for the future is for security in old age, to not have to depend on anyone and to ensure my family's future.

– **Rigoberto Gutierrez, Room Service**

My hope for the future is to be somebody in life to serve the community.

– **Byron Esquivel, Cocktail Server**

My hope is that we win what is fair.

– **Lorena Reyes, Housekeeper**

My hope for the future is to be able to pay for benefits at a better rate.

– **Fernando Bonales, Bartender**

My hope for the future is to reach my retirement.

– **Nenita Ite, Housekeeper**



What Does It Take to Clean One Room?

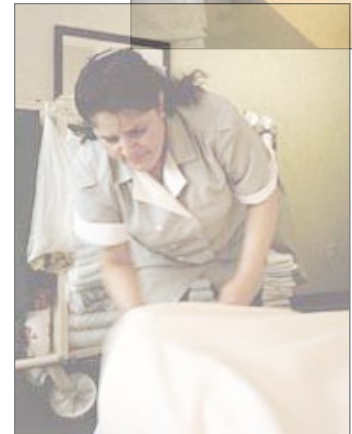
Bedroom Tasks:

- ✓ Remove all room-service items from room
- ✓ Strip bed(s) of all sheets, blankets, and duvets
- ✓ Place bottom sheet on each bed and tuck 4-8 times
- ✓ Place top sheets and blanket on each bed and tuck 4-8 times.
- ✓ Spread duvet on bed
- ✓ Remove 3-8 pillowcases per bed and stuff pillows into fresh cases
- ✓ Dust all nightstands and desk
- ✓ Carefully restock and arrange pens, papers on desk
- ✓ Dust armoire or dresser, including behind the TV
- ✓ Clean TV screen
- ✓ Retrieve TV remote and rearrange TV guides
- ✓ Pick up trash and empty bedroom's wastebasket
- ✓ Collect, wash and dry dirty glasses
- ✓ Dust vents
- ✓ Put away all ironing boards and other equipment
- ✓ Check whether or not lamps and lights work
- ✓ Vacuum all floors



Bathroom Tasks:

- ✓ Pick up soiled towels and place on cart
- ✓ Replace soiled towels
- ✓ Clean and disinfect toilet bowl
- ✓ Wipe down top and side of toilet
- ✓ Restock toilet paper
- ✓ Wipe down counter tops
- ✓ Clean sink(s) and polish faucets
- ✓ Replace and arrange toiletries
- ✓ Clean bathroom mirror
- ✓ Wash and dry coffeepot and cups and rearrange on counter
- ✓ Scrub inside of bathtub
- ✓ Clean/replace shower curtain or scrub shower door
- ✓ Clean bath and shower walls
- ✓ Pick up trash and empty bathroom waste basket
- ✓ Mop floor
- ✓ Dust vents



Rising Together

Hotel Workers and Community United

About The Authors

Rising Together was formed in the fall of 2007 when a number of community organizations joined with UNITE HERE! Local 19 to unite their efforts for economic and social justice in Silicon Valley. It strives to create a partnership that transcends the boundaries of color, occupation, gender, sexual orientation, religion, employment, and immigration status.

In August of 2007, hotel workers participated in a march, led by CHAM Deliverance Ministry, to end homelessness and poverty. There, they heard a service worker share how he was affected by the housing crisis as well as by not having a union: he was forced to sleep in his car because he could not afford housing on poverty-level wages.

We cannot separate justice in our communities from dignity at work.

That experience led Rising Together to the idea that we cannot separate justice in our communities from dignity at work.

Since the march, hotel workers have spoken to religious congregations across Silicon Valley and participated in community events including demonstrations for peace, the San Jose Pride march, and forums about school funding. Similarly, Rising Together has marched, picketed, and rallied alongside hotel workers struggling for new contracts, and have supported the non-union workers of Hyatt Santa Clara in their struggle for a fair process to choose a union.

As Rising Together's steering committee, we come from different organizations and backgrounds, but we have been able to educate one another – not only about the injustices we each face, but also about how we can work together to solve the problems that concern us all.

Rising Together is committed to achieving decent housing, health care, living-wage jobs, safe working conditions, quality education, and equal rights for all. Through our actions, we hope to plant the seeds of a just future in which no human being is invisible.

RISING TOGETHER STEERING COMMITTEE:

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