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LOCAL 727 MEMBERS OVERWHELMINGLY RATIFY COCA-COLA REFRESHMENTS CONTRACT

Chicago Teamsters Approve 3-Year Agreement Including Management-Level Health Care Benefits, Annual Raises and Retroactivity

Teamsters Local 727 members voted by a 17-to-1 margin on Sunday, Jan. 10, to overwhelmingly ratify a new three-year contract with Coca-Cola Refreshments in Niles and Alsip, Ill.

The agreement provides annual wage increases, retroactivity and improved health and welfare benefits for 319 Coca-Cola production and warehouse workers and transport drivers.

“From the very beginning, the hardworking men and women at Coca-Cola Refreshments wanted their voices heard, and by standing together they’ve achieved a strong contract that respects the work that they do,” said John T. Coli, Secretary-Treasurer of Local 727. “The union applauds each and every one of our members for staying unified and showing us all what can be accomplished through fair and responsible collective bargaining.”

Local 727 secured the fair agreement after members nearly unanimously authorized an unfair labor practice strike against Coca-Cola Refreshments and took to the picket line for 27 days on Dec. 3. The union continued to work toward a new contract during the unfair labor practice strike through traditional bargaining and federal mediation. Both sides reached tentative agreement on Dec. 29. In the weeks since, Local 727 representatives met with workers and distributed full copies of the agreement to ensure Coca-Cola members understood the scope of its provisions.

The new agreement transfers Local 727 members into a new health and welfare plan previously available to Coca-Cola management. The health care improvements translate to significant out-of-pocket cost savings for workers, who will receive annual wage increases and employer-matched 401(K) retirement benefit contributions. Raises in the first year are retroactive to May 1.

The contract vote was held following Local 727’s general membership meeting on Sunday. Coca-Cola Teamsters voted 170-10 to approve the agreement, which was recommended by the Bargaining Committee for ratification.

The new three-year contract expires April 30, 2018.

Teamsters Local 727 is an affiliate of Teamsters Joint Council 25, America’s premier labor union for Chicago, Illinois and northwest Indiana.