

## NTEU gets Telework for RICS/IVO

Congratulations to the employees of W&I, Return Integrity & Compliance Svcs, Integrity & Verification Op. They are now able to Telework. Thanks to NTEU Steward Debbie Mullikin for all of her hard work in getting this dream to become a reality.

*"There's real strength in numbers. The many rights and benefits enjoyed by federal employees didn't come easily. No one handed them to us, not Congress, not the White House, not any federal agency. NTEU members won them, at the bargaining table, through legislation, and by having a voice in the workplace where policies are implemented on a day-to-day basis."*



From Left; Debbie Mullikin, Rachel Smith, Connie Ogburn, Tammy Rowlett, Jennifer Powers, Leanne Palmer, Karen Walsh  
Back; Ray Richardson, Bryan O'Neill, Sandra Neal, Maria Varley, and , Shonda Hill.

## Boosting Morale in W&I.

Chapter 73 has been meeting with W&I Ops Chiefs to discuss employee's issues in W&I. In this meeting we brought up issues with C.R's not getting enough paper time. Many employee's have come to the union office after they have received errors for paper. These employee's complain that they forget how to do paper because it might be the first time this year they have had the opportunity to work paper cases. Management assures us that this should not effect

their Annual Performance Appraisal as a whole. Another issue that was brought up was the lack of morale amongst C.R's in W&I . We've had multiple complaints that Leads are refusing to assist C.R's and even pulling the calls that the C.R's are having trouble with and charging errors. Some managers are charging AWOL to employees that are one minute late. This combative environment is contributing to the overall morale. It's a hard job in itself-taking calls all day

and dealing with angry callers. Not having the support of management makes it so much harder. We are planning on meeting quarterly to bring forth any concerns our employees have and work on solutions to improve morale. If you have anything to add please email me at:  
Tonya.G.Morris@irs.gov

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## NTEU Chapter 73

### Fourth Street Office

Monday—Friday,  
6 a.m. —1 a.m.  
(859) 320-4649

### Gateway Office Room 111

Monday—Friday,  
6 a.m. —1 a.m.  
(859) 320-3617

### Industrial Road Retention Center

Monday—Friday,  
7 a.m.—9 a.m.  
(859) 594-6138

### Facebook

Official NTEU Chapter 73

[www.facebook.com/nteu73](http://www.facebook.com/nteu73)

## *The Force*

A Chapter 73  
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**From the Desk of NTEU73  
President  
Rick Riley .**

**“As always,  
At Your Service.”  
Rick Riley**



## Changes are Coming.

We all know that Submission Processing is closing, and with it, there will be changes. The closing is bad news; however, it can be an opportunity not only for the employees in Processing, but everyone else. Of course, there will be challenges for all of us. First let us look at the opportunities that are coming. The Commissioner liked the idea of there is work to be done and we have people who need work, so he instructed his Commissioners to study what work can be moved here. So far, we have a new ACS Call site, and there will be other work coming also. That means jobs, and lots of them. There will be more than enough jobs to go around, and maybe lots of new hires coming also!

With new jobs, comes opportunities for everyone. As new types of work, that means more manager and lead jobs. Here is what one Philosopher said “Luck is when Preparation Meets Opportunity.” So, what can you do to prepare? Prior preparation prevents poor performance is an old saying, but right now applies to what is happening here. We just finished the first Open Season for the VERA/VISP, job swaps and early retirement or a buyout to retire for many people. During this period the CORE room was over ran, just swamped. Employees needed help with their retirement, finding job swaps and help with USAJOBS. Who would have thought that management would announce jobs at the same time as the open season?

Well, I did, because October is the beginning of the Fiscal Year, and if jobs were going to come, some would be announced then. So be prepared next year for the open window and for more jobs to be announced!

Most people feel comfortable in what they are doing, or living or where they sit at work and their work group. With all the changes coming, there will be several moves. In Accounts

Management with Centralized Evaluative Review coming, they are required to realign and they are losing several departments, they must go to 18 employees to 1 manager, so there may be moves necessary there. With new jobs coming, we all may have to move to make room for new jobs. However, NTEU 73 will be sure to minimize the impact and get your input first.



# Manager's retaliation against worker costs IRS \$225K in damages.

**CASE FILE:** Internal Revenue Service, Wage and Investment Division, Austin, Texas and NTEU, Chapter 52, 117 LRP 41786 (Fed. Arb. 08/17/17).

**Ruling:** In a lengthy decision, arbitrator I.B. Helburn ruled that a manager retaliated against the grievant for prior protected activities and subjected her to a

hostile work environment, and that the agency violated the law and the agreement by allowing the manager's harassment to continue for an extended time. The arbitrator awarded \$225,000 in nonpecuniary damages and ordered leave restoration for the grievant.

**What it means:** In disputes where two individuals make competing and contradictory claims -- what the arbitrator called a "she said, she said" situation -- credibility determinations will be critical to the outcome.

**Summary:** *The grievant allegedly arrived at work one minute late and her manager reportedly ordered her to take 15 minutes of leave or be marked AWOL.* The grievance claimed that this incident was part of the manager's "long-standing pattern" of "abusive, harassing, discriminatory, retaliatory behavior" toward the grievant.

The arbitrator noted that credibility determinations were critical in such disputes. The arbitrator determined that the manager's testimony was inconsistent or contradicted by other testimony, and she wasn't "thoroughly credible." The grievant, on the other hand, was "essentially a credible witness." The arbitrator concluded that the agency didn't show that the grievant was tardy that morning, but the manager did retaliate against the grievant for prior protected activities and subjected her to a hostile work environment.

The agency further broke the law by allowing the manager's behavior to continue, the arbitrator wrote. The arbitrator ordered leave restoration and \$225,000 in nonpecuniary damages.



## A Letter from Director, Customer Account Services, W&I, Jim Clifford

I truly enjoyed the July 2017 W&I Offline about the official opening of the Career Opportunity & Resource Engagement (CORE) room! I am impressed how you created a one-stop location to provide assistance and guidance to employees affected by the Submission Processing consolidation. The coordination of the CORE room to provide available resources has already been of assistance to many. The CORE room was highlighted in Commissioner briefings and a BPR. Your willingness to come together as a team and form a Consolidation Committee has a direct impact on the workforce and future of the Service.

Thank you for your efforts!

Jim Clifford

Director, Customer Account Services, W&I  
Atlanta, GA







**United Benefits Raffle  
Winner: Mary Ann Cross  
She guessed the correct  
number of candy, 1,287.**



# Best Dates to Retire

According to FedSmith

Leave Year	Ending Date	Best for CSRS	Best for FERS
2017	01/06/2018	01/03/2018	12/31/2017
2018	01/05/2019	01/03/2019	12/31/2018
2019	01/04/2020	01/03/2020	12/31/2019
2020	01/02/2021	01/02/2021	12/31/2020

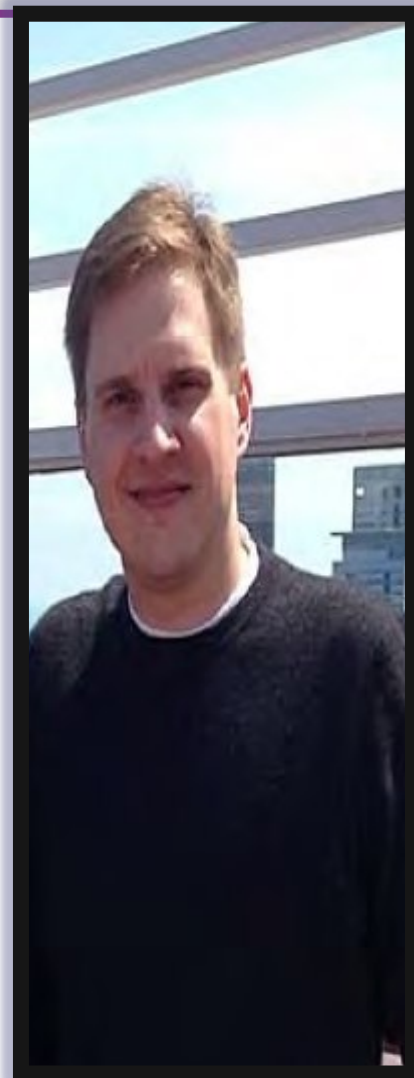


# HOLIDAY PARTY

**NTEU 73 ANNUAL HOLIDAY PARTY  
DECEMBER 8, 2017  
HOUSE OF ORANGE  
2:30-9PM  
APPETIZERS  
WILL BE PROVIDED**

## NTEU Welcomes New Attorney Dan Kaspar

**Dan Kaspar will replace Will Igoe as Assistant Counsel. Dan too is from Chicago but is originally from Peoria, Illinois. He has worked at two Union-side law firms in Chicago and interned at The National Labor Relations Board, Region 13 in Chicago. He has been an Assistant Counsel at NTEU for six years, representing IRS, CBP, and EPA Chapters. Dan has been eager to learn about things here in Covington. He has attended meetings in the 4th street office pertaining to the shut down. He has been in Gateway many times to meet with members to personally address their issues. You will find that Dan is very approachable and knowledgeable. He is a welcome addition to our team.**



Anyone not receiving A Performance Award due to a disciplinary action please contact The Union Office

**NTEU Confirms No Impact on Awards Pools from Realignment.  
Awards coming by 12/7/2017.**

Last week NTEU received the information we had requested from The IRS. It shows that the pool composition is consistent with the NPAA collective bargaining agreements between the parties. We are happy to report that The FY 2017 awards payment will be made on December 7, 2017. Employees with Electronic Funds Transfer (EFT) may see payment as early as December 4, 2017. An all-employee message about this issue will be issued very shortly. If you have any questions or comments regarding the FY 2017 NPAA awards, please send them to Tim Seidman, NTEU National Negotiator, via e-mail at [tim.seidman@nteu.org](mailto:tim.seidman@nteu.org).



## Saying Goodbye to IRS Commissioner John Koskinen.

Dear Commissioner,

Thank you for all you've done for the American people throughout your career. I want to thank you specifically for what you've done for me and the employees here at the Cincinnati Service Center. I wrote you in January and pointed out the fact that the IRS loses 15% of its employees a year and the work doesn't go away. That with the closing of our Submission Processing Center, I had people who needed that work, and you agreed passing on my idea.

Because of you, and your Commissioners it looks like there will be lots of opportunities for the employees that wish to continue their career with the IRS, and sir, that is thanks to you.

That news, has turned darkness and despair into hope. I'm hoping we get to announce the jobs soon and that any issue with space is quickly resolved. As you know, we here in NTEU Chapter 73 are willing to work to make this happen.

I wish you lots of joy and happiness in your retirement, it is one well deserved. You surely have brought a lot of joy to me and I'm proud of you sir, and very proud that I got to work for you.

Thank you

Ricky D Riley  
President  
NTEU Chapter 73



Hi Ricky,

Thanks for your message and your very kind words of support.

I'm delighted with the progress we're making, finding a good landing spot for the submission processing employees. One of the reasons we're doing so well is the cooperation we've had from you and NTEU. From the time I visited Covington early this year, it was clear to me that, with all of us working together, we could make this a much smoother and more successful transition than would otherwise be possible.

You all have been great partners and I am confident that the process will continue to focus on what's best for each employee.

All the best.

John

John A. Koskinen  
Commissioner  
Internal Revenue Service





# UNITED B E N E F I T S



## On Site Week of December 11

*Here to help with your retirement and Benefit questions.*

**VERA / VSIP**

**GRB Platform**

**FERS or CSRS Retirement Monthly Annuity**

**Social Security and FERS Annuity Supplement**

**TSP options and paperwork**

**AFLAC Accident and Critical Illness**

**FEGLI Life insurance (what happens when you retire?)**

**Short Term Disability**

**Cancer Plans**

**Hospital Indemnity**

**Dental and Vision**

**Paul & Roxie Thornton**

**423.309.2758 or 423.309.2768**

**[paul@unitedfedbenefits.com](mailto:paul@unitedfedbenefits.com)**