

NFFE News



NFFE Local 1429 Proves Good Preparation Leads to Organizing Success

September 6, 2019

In August, the members of NFFE Local 1429, working at Letterkenny Army Depot in Chambersburg, Pa., conducted a three-week organizing drive and enjoyed great success. The Local added scores of new members, and with three weeks of increased visibility and lots of new information being circulated at the worksite about all the good things the union does for employees, the Local was able to greatly expand its base of support on the Depot.

While the union did many things right to achieve such an effective membership building effort, NFFE Local 1429 President Scott Guyer explained the simplicity of their formula. “We prepared well,” said Guyer. “We devised a plan of action and then we followed through with it.”



NFFE-IAM National President Randy Erwin (center), with officers of Local 1429 during his visit last month.

According to Guyer, planning for the organizing drive – which the union is entitled to conduct for two months out of the year according to their collective bargaining agreement – began a couple months out. Local leaders got together, picked a time to do the multi-week drive, communicated that to management, and began making preparations to execute their organizing plan that had been drawn up earlier in the year.

Next the Local began outreach. Union stewards located in virtually every building on the Depot began asking members and potential members about the issues they wanted to hear more about. “Our stewards went around ahead of time and got the interests of the workers - what they were thinking, what they want to see the union doing, and stuff like that,” said Guyer. “We put a lot of trust in our stewards and they did a fantastic job. I can’t say enough about those folks. Kudos to them. Because of them [the organizing drive] worked out really good.”

That outreach effort helped lead to success when the organizing drive occurred weeks later. “When the organizing drive finally arrived, we went directly to the folks that we had heard were on the fence about joining the union,” explained NFFE Local 1429 Chief Steward Darryl Mull. “We got them the information they were looking for, and we got most of them to join.”

Another strategy the Local deployed was to connect Letterkenny workers with some of the efforts the union does on their behalf every day in Washington, D.C. – things like fighting to protect their jobs, their pensions, their pay, and their workplace protections, all of which are currently under attack. To do this, the local brought in numerous speakers, including NFFE National Business Representative Jim Davis, experts on NFFE members-only benefits, and NFFE National President Randy Erwin.

“We appreciated these folks coming to speak because showing folks the bigger picture is really important,” said Mull. “Workers need to know what the union is doing for them every day to help them. Sometimes it takes someone coming in from out-of-town for folks to make that connection.”

“I am so grateful for all the hard work done by the leaders of NFFE Local 1429 to help grow the union,” said NFFE National President Randy Erwin. “This drive was a really big undertaking, but because of their hard work and preparation it was a resounding success. Congratulations to Local 1429 President Scott Guyer and all the officers and stewards who helped make this tremendous organizing drive happen!”

www.NFFE.org