

THE NEWSPAPER GUILD-CWA OF ALBANY



Local 31034
890 Third Street
Albany, New York 12206
www.albanyguild.org
email-office@albanyguild.org

Telephone 518-482-9218
Fax 518-482-9232

AFL-CIO, CLC



October 16, 2012

George Hearst, *Publisher*
Times Union
Box 15000, News Plaza
Albany, New York 12212

Dear George:

When we met with you last week to learn of your intention to lay off two newsroom employees, you said the reason for the cuts was insufficient revenue. You said you needed two more positions cut for the 2013 budget.

Imagine our shock Monday morning, then, when we received the email that the Times Union is hiring a new senior vice president for advertising and marketing even though we already have a vp for advertising. We can only presume this person is being brought in at a six-figure salary.

We're stunned that the finances have rebounded so quickly.

Given this hire, we now call on you to rescind the layoffs. It is simply wrong to lay off two employees with young children and then hire a high-end executive.

We have been told that in introducing the new executive, you said his job was to bring in more revenue to "feed the hungry beast downstairs."

That is one scrawny beast these days. The newsroom has suffered the brunt of recent staff cuts. There are now only seven reporters covering municipal governments. There is only one reporter covering all of Saratoga County. There are two features reporters and three full-time sports reporters. The photography staff has suffered repeated cuts as well.

The readers of the Times Union are ill-served by continued gutting of the people who produce the news and photography that makes people buy our NEWSpaper.

We are the capital of New York state, the seat of state government, and now we have no political cartoonist. We are buying a new press, and you are trying to lay off a photographer known for the beautiful composition of his photos.

We also note that the new executive's title includes marketing. Two years ago, you gutted the marketing staff and laid off three employees.

Given this new hire, and how it contradicts your statements of just last week about the newspaper's fiscal condition, we call on you to rescind the layoff notice given to our members last week. They should not lose their jobs to fund yet another top executive.

Sincerely,

Tim O'Brien,
President

Mark Hempstead,
Secretary

Brian Nearing,
Chief Steward