



# TEAMSTERS LOCAL UNION NO. 1205

AFFILIATED WITH THE INTERNATIONAL BROTHERHOOD OF TEAMSTERS

246 Conklin Street • Farmingdale, NY 11735  
Phone (516) 501-1205 • Fax (516) 501-1208

*Timothy Lynch, President*  
*Edward Williams, Secretary-Treasurer*  
*Susan Roth, Vice-President*  
*Daniel DeCrotie, Recording Secretary*  
*Robert Christian, Trustee*  
*Andrew Gallo, Trustee*  
*Nelson Nuñez, Trustee*

December 2014



Dear Local 1205 Brothers and Sisters working for Baumann Bus,

As I greet you at this holiday time, I'm very glad to write to you about two things: 1) I want to update you about some hard-fought victories—and celebrate them with you. And 2) I want to give you an overview of our exciting and careful preparations for negotiating our next contract. Those contract negotiations with Baumann will begin early in 2015.

First—since over 40% of our members have less than 5 years seniority, and therefore were not present during our fight to have a Union, it's important to remember just how much was accomplished in our first Union contract. Here are just 6 examples:

- The average employee today earns between 20% and 30% more per hour than 5 years ago. And this is happening at a time when wages throughout America are falling, not rising.
- Drivers and Driver Assistants with regular runs enjoy a ½ hour more guaranteed pay per day than 5 years ago.
- Every employee gets paid for every hour worked. Before, Baumann frequently did not pay employees until they arrived at the first stop, and stopped paying them after their last drop! (And the company found other imaginative ways to rob people of what they earned.)
- Work is bid on by seniority! Before, the company pretended to go by some seniority system, but it was at the management's discretion—favoritism abounded.
- Before, employees had to pay very high rates for very bad medical and dental insurance. Today, Local 1205 members pay a much lower percentage of the medical premiums than before and get a much better Local 1205 medical plan (with Dental and Life Insurance included!).
- When employees believe they are unfairly treated and disciplined by the employer, they now have a grievance and arbitration procedure, in which the Union fights for them. Many, many jobs have been saved, and thousands and thousands of dollars in back pay awarded!

As so many Baumann workers know, those are just a few examples of the vast improvement in people's lives that exists because you had the wisdom to become Local 1205 Teamsters. In 2015, we will be fighting hard to further improve wages, benefits, and working conditions. And as your Union President and Chief Negotiator for our contract, I want to emphasize this crucial fact: the only way to win the kinds of improvements each of you deserves for the important and under-appreciated work you do, is by membership participation and a fully engaged Negotiating Committee. That Committee will be made up of Baumann Teamsters Union members and Local 1205 staff. Having members present from each location is very effective in having the employer see just how serious we are in our contract demands. It also enables me to have immediate communication with our members about the important details of what goes on in every aspect of your daily work and at each location.

We've scheduled elections at each location for members to serve on the Negotiating Committee and members to serve as alternates. (An alternate committee member fills in for Committee members who are absent.)



In the already posted election notices, there's a brief description of what is expected of Negotiating Committee members. While there's much to say about the importance and excitement of being on this committee, the main thing I'll say here is: loyalty to and pride in Union justice and a passionate desire to represent the best hopes of every Local 1205 Baumann member are essential!

## Greater Justice to So Many

**T**he Union has achieved many, many huge victories—through our contract, and our enforcement of it. Here are just 9 examples:

- 1) When extra work (including Charters) was being handed out not in seniority order, the Union protested and got this favoritism stopped, and back pay was awarded.
- 2) When many members brought to the Union's attention the fact that Baumann was deducting too much money for medical insurance, the Union investigated the matter and got the employees reimbursement for the improper deductions.
- 3) On many, many occasions Baumann has failed to pay employees their promised one year sign-on bonus or their referral bonuses. Each time the Union learns of these injustices, we intervene on the members' behalf. When it's owed, we have always succeeded in getting employees their money.
- 4) When we learned that employees were being paid a rate lower than their regular pay rate for the time spent fueling their own bus, we got this cheating stopped, and back pay was awarded.
- 5) We've won many thousands of dollars in back pay through fighting so-called payroll "errors." (Such "errors" are one of the company's techniques for cheating employees out of money they earned.)
- 6) We've won back pay for employees improperly disqualified from their runs.
- 7) We've won unjustly terminated employees their jobs back, often with back pay.
- 8) We've won employees back pay when Baumann unjustly failed to pay unused sick days and vacation days.
- 9) We've won employees back pay after Baumann unjustly failed to pay their earned snow days and earned holiday pay.

NOTE. There are many settled grievances on which we cannot comment specifically, due to the confidentiality provision in the settlements.

**F**avorably settling numerous grievances since the beginning of our contract has, yes, cost the Union many thousands of dollars in legal fees, arbitration fees, and other expenses. But Baumann sees we will never back down if a member was wronged: we will not stop fighting to protect our members' right to dignity on the job, a decent wage, the respect you so much deserve.



## An Employer's Tricks to Try to Fool Members into Not Fighting for What's Rightfully Theirs

As we prepare ourselves for bargaining, it's important for everyone to be ready for the company's schemes to disunite us and weaken our resolve. Let's be clear: the company is plotting to have us fight one another so we won't fight together for economic justice.

Some of Baumann's attempts to trick employees into backing off their contract demands can be put in terms of the following pathetic (and dire) statements:

- ❖ *"We [Baumann] can't afford to pay our bills now—what makes you think we can afford to give you a wage increase?"*
- ❖ *"Local 1205 will put us out of business!"*
- ❖ *"If the Union doesn't reduce its demands, I might as well sell the company and retire to my horse farm in Pennsylvania!"*

Often before contract negotiations begin, a company creates situations that give the impression the company is in financial trouble. For instance, it may spread rumors that it's for sale, hoping to scare workers. Baumann is doing a lot to create such an impression, from bouncing checks, to not paying the uniform company bill, to not supplying basic needs (from light bulbs to toilet paper!). The company wants us to feel worried about its financial health—not have each of us organize our power to improve each member's financial health!

Then there are tricks to make the Union seem somehow selfish. (It's like King George III telling the American colonists that George Washington would hurt them.) For instance:

- ❖ *"Local 1205 is only interested in collecting higher dues, not helping Baumann workers do better!"*

Baumann knows—and hates the fact—that the only thing that will get each and every one of you better wages and benefits is for employees to work together in our Union. As you know, every Teamster pays dues based on his or her hourly rate of pay. Therefore, it's only when you get a raise that the dues rates increase. Many Local 1205 members employed at other companies earn so much money because of the Union that they pay more than \$90 dues per month. Do the math and I'm sure you'll feel, "We can't wait for Baumann members to have that 'problem'!"—because it would mean you're making much more of the decent wages you deserve.

—Then, there's the following trick:

- ❖ *"1205 is only interested in putting you on strike—in order to punish Ron Baumann and be big shots!"*

The thing Baumann is most afraid of is: that we'll use our power in numbers to pressure the company into settling on terms more favorable to each of you. And he'll work desperately to have each of you afraid of that. The reason: he'd rather add riches to himself and his family than give you more of what you deserve.



No Union ever got a great contract without preparing for a fight. A strike is always the weapon of last resort, and can happen only if a majority of the members vote for it. The best way the company has of preventing one is to accept enough of our recommended contract improvements. Because of our Local 1205 Strike Fund and our International Union's Strike Fund, we are in a very strong position to successfully negotiate an economically fair contract—since we have the resources to weather a job action if Baumann doesn't want to be fair. A strike is not what we want to see happen, but if Baumann doesn't think the members are preparing to fight for a fair contract, we'll be getting whatever crumbs he wants to give us. The power we have to accomplish what is just, is something Baumann wants each of you to see as silly, as stupid, and as reckless.

Local 1205 members know that nothing was given to us by the generosity of any employer. Our members in the Cement industry, the Lumber industry, the Sheet Metal industry, and, yes, the School Bus industry, got their good wages and strong contracts because we organized our power intelligently and fought passionately. Our First Student members are some of the best paid school bus company Union members in the country (and have the best benefits) because they stood together and weren't intimidated by threats from their employer, the largest school bus company in America!

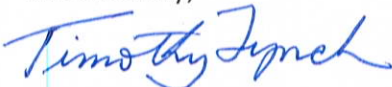
### Baumann's Scare Tactics Won't Work!

As everyone who has been around since the beginning of our contract knows, Baumann has tried to weaken and destroy the Union. One foolish scheme of the company was to try to financially cripple our ability to represent you effectively. Baumann's twisted logic was to think that if the Union was forced to arbitrate every case, go the Labor Board to enforce our rights, we'd eventually give up because the expenses would be too much for us to handle. His scheme completely backfired! Yes, we, your Teamsters Union, proudly spent millions in fighting for you—and winning millions of dollars for you in wage and benefit increases. And we are not going to stop. Through more and more members' standing up for and participating in our Union, we are more powerful than Baumann's millions, and Baumann's scare tactics won't work!

One of the many crystal clear statements made by a large number of our members in the Contract Surveys is that you don't believe you are respected by the company; you don't feel your work is valued. The way to remedy that injustice now and always is to show more and more respect for one another and organize to strengthen your Union. Our diversity and unity equal great strength.

I've negotiated thousands of Union contracts over the years, and this beautiful fact is always true, and necessary to repeat: when the employer knows the members are strong and united and support the position of their Negotiating Committee, fair contracts are reached!

In Solidarity,



Timothy Lynch  
President

**P.S. Our final General Membership meeting of 2014 will take place on Wednesday, December 17, at 115 Church Street in Ronkonkoma. We start at 7 pm. Please come!**

