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Press Release

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“Hotel Workers Rising” One Year Anniversary Carnival

Le Meridien and Hyatt Fisherman’s Wharf Workers Commemorate One Year Fight

(June 18, 2009, San Francisco, CA) – Hundreds of hotel workers and community members will march in downtown San Francisco and the Wharf to commemorate their one year campaign anniversary in seeking respect, job security and better livelihoods at two major hotels: the *HEI Le Meridien* and the *Hyatt Fisherman’s Wharf*. The marches will begin today, June 18, 2009 at 4:15 p.m. at each hotel: 333 Battery Street for Le Meridien and 555 North Point Street for Hyatt Fisherman’s Wharf.

Since June 2008, HEI and Hyatt workers have called on management to respect their choice whether or not to form a union through the majority sign-up process – the same process used by numerous other hotels in San Francisco and across the US. In fact, most of the major hotel corporations operating in San Francisco – including the Hyatt Corporation – have adopted it for hotels they open in the future.

Despite workers’ repeated appeals to adopt the fair majority sign-up process, HEI and Hyatt have both refused. As a result, on February 24, 2009, many workers at both HEI Le Meridien and the Hyatt Fisherman’s Wharf delivered their signed petitions to management, calling on guests to boycott these hotels. Even in the face of a faltering economy and intimidation tactics from hotel management, this worker-called boycott holds strong today.

San Francisco hotel workers are not alone in calling on these two companies for respect. As Antonio Arenas, a server at the Hyatt Fisherman’s Wharf hotel says, “With the support of hotel workers from across the country, we are able to stand stronger, fight longer, and build greater power.” Similar struggles are underway at various other HEI and Hyatt hotels, including the HEI Hilton in Long Beach, The Hyatt Regency in Indianapolis and Hyatt Regency in Santa Clara.



In their efforts to win a majority sign-up agreement, HEI and Hyatt workers have received widespread community support. The LGBT community, in particular, has played a pivotal role through its “Sleep with the Right People” campaign. This campaign involves hotel workers and the LGBT community uniting to fight for work place justice. One current effort revolves around exposing the Hyatt Corporation’s hypocrisy.

Douglas Manchester, the owner of the Manchester Grand Hyatt in San Diego donated \$125,000 to a political committee supporting Proposition 8. At the same time, the Hyatt Corporation spends millions

UNITE HERE, Local 2
Hotel Workers Rising Boycott Press Release
June 15, 2009
Page 2

of dollars on various LGBT marketing campaigns. In addition to the Hyatt Corporation not respecting hotel workers, it has shown itself as anti-worker and anti-gay.

As the summer travel season gains momentum and as the month of June continues to celebrate the LGBT community, through PRIDE events, workers at both San Francisco hotels continue to organize and build community support. In the spirit of PRIDE, Local 2 is celebrating the workers' courage and determination in a Carnival themed one-year campaign anniversary picket at both hotels. Community members are encouraged to wear costumes, masks, boas and beads. Following the march tonight, Hyatt and HEI workers ask hotel guests to continue respecting their boycott until hotel management respects their voice.

UNITE HERE! Local 2 is the union of food service and hotel workers in San Francisco and San Mateo Counties. It represents about 13,000 members in the hospitality industry. For more information visit www.unitehere2.org or contact Riddhi Mehta at 707-695-2364 or rmehta@unitehere2.org