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CWA vice president dies in swimming tragedy Seth Rosen was Policy Matters board chair

Seth Rosen, vice president of the Communications Workers of America, District 4, died Friday in the Outer Banks, NC, where he was vacationing with his wife, Kathi Thomas Rosen. Seth, a resident of Westlake, was the chair of the Board of Directors of Policy Matters Ohio.

“Some people are great forces for social justice, some are great friends, some amazing parents and spouses, some tremendous artists, and some are people who are warm, genuine, funny, and make you feel better every time you see them,” said Amy Hanauer, executive director of Policy Matters. “Seth was the rare person who was all of these things and more.”

Seth and Kathi had been vacationing in North Carolina while he was finalizing contract negotiations, by phone, with AT&T, whose workers CWA represents. The contract was settled Friday, and the Rosens went for a swim. Reports from friends and family indicate that the tide came in with strong waves and a powerful undertow, and Seth didn’t make it back to shore alive.

As vice president, Seth’s duties included coordination of all bargaining, organizing, and political action within the five states which make up District 4 of the Communications Workers of America – Ohio, Michigan, Indiana, Illinois, and Wisconsin, consisting of 75,000 members. He also chaired the CWA Executive Board’s Organizing Committee. Among major employers of CWA members are AT&T, Verizon, and other telecom companies; General Electric; the *New York Times* and *Wall Street Journal*.

Seth had previously served as administrative assistant to CWA Vice President Jeff Rechenbach and as an officer, chief steward, and steward in CWA Local 4309 while employed by the Ohio Bell Telephone Company.

Seth was a leader in innovative organizing, bargaining, and action projects including: a national coordinated campaign at NCR, development of a regional network of local union organizers, pioneering creative bargaining strategies at AT&T, Verizon, Cincinnati Bell, Ohio State University, University of Toledo, various television stations, and many others. Seth helped form the Cleveland Jobs with Justice Workers’ Rights Board in 1993, and the National Jobs with Justice Workers’ Rights Board in 2004.

Seth was also a gifted musician who played mandolin and guitar with the Sethro Quartet and Gene’s Jazz Hot. He was a devoted husband to Kathi and a loving father of daughter Amanda Rosen and son Josh Rosen, a musician with Mos Scocious, a Chicago-based funk band.

“Seth was a force for viewing worker and social justice broadly and for thinking about how racial justice, community organizing, labor organizing, and justice for unrepresented workers all fit together,” Hanauer said. “The world is a more just, more joyful place because he was in it”

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