

# THE ELECTRICAL WORKER

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**BOOTS ON THE GROUND**

*Biden Promised to Rebuild With Union Jobs.  
Those Jobs Are Here.*

**T**he most radical change to the American economy in nearly a half-century is happening now.

After decades of neglect, America is reinvesting in itself, from hundred-billion-dollar factories to a small Wisconsin field on the edge of Lake Michigan, where Racine Local 430 members are racking and connecting the first union-built solar farm in the local's history.

"We're a small local, only 180 people, and until really recently, the biggest job any of us could remember was a hospital that peaked at 65 people," said Business Manager Chris Gulbrandson. "Having 30 members on one job, and a solar job that is just the first of three? That has never happened before."

Local 430 signatory contractors won the job because of provisions in the Inflation Reduction Act that reward companies with a 500% higher tax credit when they build the carbon-free economy using registered apprentices and paying prevailing wages. That economic incentive strongly favors union workers.

"The IRA definitely changed everything," Gulbrandson he said.

The IRA is one of four landmark laws passed by

## THE IBEW'S GROWING POWER

*Editorial on page 2*

the Biden administration — also including the American Rescue Plan, the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, and the CHIPS and Science Act — that reversed a half-century of economic policies that punished working families and rewarded corporations for stripping the nation for parts and shipping jobs overseas.

Local 430 is far from alone. More than 11,000 IBEW members are currently working on projects supported by these Biden-era laws. Tens of thousands more are set to work on projects breaking ground in the next 18 months.

"There is no way we have this work without the IRA," Gulbrandson said. "It's a hell of a contrast to what we saw seven years ago."

Seven years ago, a Chinese technology giant called Foxconn announced plans for a \$10 billion factory in Gulbrandson's jurisdiction. The state gave the company \$3 billion in tax incentives up front — 50 times larger than any subsidy the state had ever provided — and spent millions to develop the site.

Gov. Scott Walker, House Speaker Paul Ryan and President Donald Trump all showed up for the groundbreaking.

"This is a great day for American workers and manufacturers," Trump said, promising 13,000 jobs.

Trump's guarantee came after two years assuring the American people that "next week will be infrastructure week" a promise broken so often it became a punchline. Foxconn was Trump's first high-profile infrastructure win.

And then it just disappeared.

"We thought we had hit the jackpot," Gulbrandson said. "It's a tenth of what they promised it would be."

Earlier this year, though, the Biden economy [see article on page 3] came to Racine.

**BOOTS ON THE GROUND** continued on page 4

FROM THE OFFICERS

# Our Growing Power



**Kenneth W. Cooper**  
International President

**T**imes can be pretty good without being perfect. But even the best of times can collapse with just a few bad decisions. This is where we are as a Brotherhood and a nation. Nearly all of the numbers we use to measure our success are better now than at any point in our adult lives. The last three years we've seen, for the first time in nearly a century, promises to working people made on a campaign trail that were actually kept once the candidate was in the White House. And the result is what we always said it would be: record job growth for the nation and an unprecedented boom in our industries. The best three years of job growth in history, averaging nearly 300,000 new jobs a month. Unemployment has been at or below 4% for 30 months — the longest stretch in 50 years. While most economists predicted that a recession would follow the drop in inflation, we got nothing of the kind.

In this issue of *The Electrical Worker*, you see where those big numbers translate into real paychecks. Not coming tomorrow, and not hundreds of jobs. Tens of thousands of jobs, today. People like you in towns and cities like yours in every state are setting out on work that will last for decades. President Joe Biden bet his entire presidency on succeeding where Donald Trump failed. And one of the places where Trump failed: rebuilding America the union way. Nuclear plants that were shuttered are opening. (See last month's cover story.) Semiconductor plants reflecting half a trillion dollars of investment are breaking ground. Thousands of acres of solar panels and battery storage are being installed. By May of this year, nearly \$454 billion in Bipartisan Infrastructure Law funding had been released for 56,000 projects across 4,500 communities in all 50 states, plus D.C. and the U.S. territories. This is just a small part of the 1.2 million new clean energy jobs — including electricians, mechanics, other construction workers, technicians and factory workers — that are here or on their way, according to a study by MIT. I'm not blind. The economy isn't perfect. Since the start of the pandemic, the richest 10 people in the world have gotten, on average, \$1.5 billion wealthier every day, according to Oxfam. Every day. I hear that many brothers and sisters are thinking of handing the keys back to the billionaires because, after three and a half years, the job isn't done. But this isn't about giving a man or a party more time in power. It's about giving us more time in power. We said that if Trump won, he'd lock us out of every room and attack our ability to earn more and stay safe. We were right. We said if Biden won, we'd have a seat at the table and a generation of work. We were right both times. Let's work like hell to keep what we earned. ■

## Focused on Jobs

**O**ne of my most important roles as International Secretary-Treasurer is overseeing our great union's grassroots political program. And since it's August of an election year, it's a task I'm neck-deep in at the moment.

But I'd like to take this opportunity to step back and explain the decisions we make as your representatives at the IBEW.

Candidates for office take a wide variety of stances on every issue you could dream up. It's enough to make your head spin.

But we keep it pretty simple here at the IBEW.

I've said it many times: I don't care if you're a Republican or a Democrat, a liberal or a conservative. If you stand with the IBEW on the issues important to our jobs and our ability to provide for our families and come home safely at the end of the day, you'll have our support.

I know many of you won't agree with the decisions we make, but I truly believe that if you take the time to do the homework — and we make it very easy for you by visiting [IBEWGov.org](http://IBEWGov.org) — you'll understand.

That may mean you still vote for a candidate we don't support. I know you vote on many issues, not just your jobs. But President Cooper and I are going to give it to you straight and let you make up your minds in the voting booth.

This year, the Biden-Harris administration has earned our support, and not by just talking a good game on unions and middle-class jobs. President Biden and Vice President Harris have put words into action, passing some of the most important legislation for working people in our lifetimes.

They've poured trillions of dollars into the economy for construction, manufacturing, utilities, telecom, railroads and more, and they've put rules into place ensuring that the vast majority of new jobs created are good, union jobs.

They've appointed union champions to important positions at the National Labor Relations Board and into federal judgeships. They've showed up at our union halls and on our jobsites. They've been friends to the IBEW on nearly every issue that matters to our jobs.

But here's my pitch: Don't take my word for it. Visit [IBEWGov.org](http://IBEWGov.org) and read it for yourself.

Then make sure you're registered to vote, and make sure you get involved with your local union's grassroots program. If your local doesn't have one yet, encourage your leaders to get going.

Talk to your sisters and brothers on the job. Because, believe me, the uninformed folks among us do plenty of talking.

And when November rolls around, go vote, and take your family and your union sisters and brothers with you. This election is too important to sit out. ■



**Paul A. Noble**  
International Secretary-Treasurer

## My IBEW STORY

**Wesley Summers**, journeyman lineman  
Chicago Local 9



“I was born and raised in Muscle Shoals, Ala., and before I became an IBEW member, I worked at a taillight and headlight plant there just out of high school. I later applied for a job at Comcast and started working there installing cable, starting out at 12 bucks an hour. This was when I started meeting IBEW members from Local 558 in Sheffield, Ala., because the local had an agreement with Comcast.

Several months into my Comcast job, I got a call from my uncle, who works out of Local 9, telling me that I should get my CDLA (commercial driver's license) and apply to

the local. He said the money was incredible and it had changed his life.

With this advice and knowing that my friends in the IBEW enjoyed a great quality of life, I moved to Indiana and applied at Local 9 in Chicago.

Once I was with Local 9, I started out making almost double what I'd been making in Alabama. I was accepted into the apprenticeship and kept at it for four years while working, getting raises and receiving incredible retirement and insurance benefits all the while.

In the time that I've been an IBEW member, I met my wife and we had a daughter, got a house, bought two vehicles and more. I've been able to afford a comfortable life for my family, all thanks to working in the IBEW.

I'm extremely proud of and thankful for this union, and I want to help change people's lives in the same way that the Brotherhood has changed mine. I think our locals should continue to reach out to youth and the underprivileged in our communities to help them see what they can gain from getting involved.

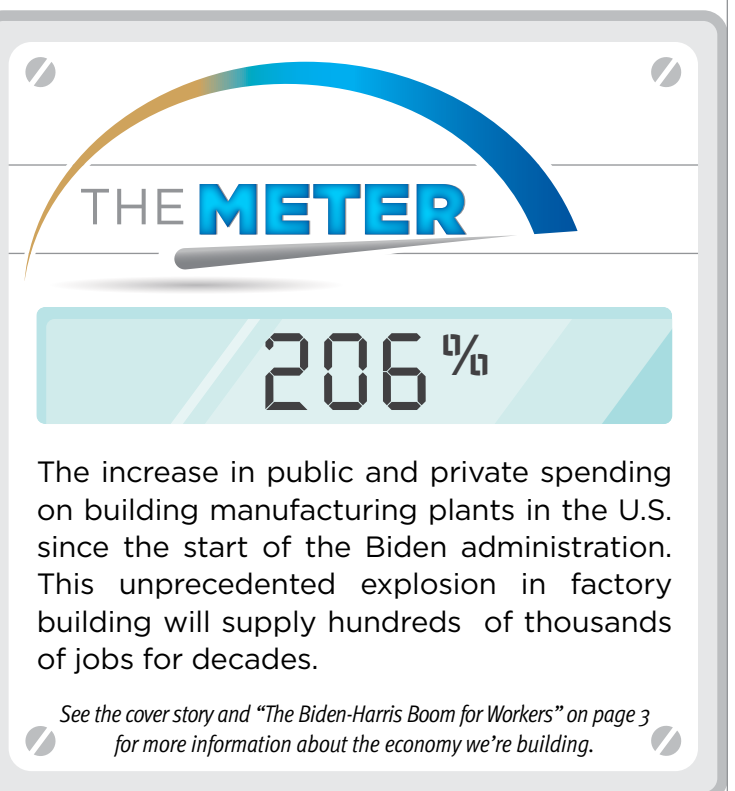
Tell them the success stories that our brothers and sisters have created through being affiliated with the IBEW. Let them know that while college is great, it may not be for everyone, and that the IBEW offers an opportunity to get a real education, get paid while receiving it and turn out as a skilled tradesperson with no student loans whatsoever.

Local 9 changed my life. I was a small-town kid who thought I'd be working a dead-end job for pennies on the dollar, and I became a man with skill in an honest trade that allows me to take care of my family and enjoy my life. I hope to one day give back through representing IBEW members and organizing non-union would-be members, both young and old, so they can change their lives, make money and have a real retirement!”

Share your story at [ibew.org/MyIBEWStory](http://ibew.org/MyIBEWStory)

### Editor's Note

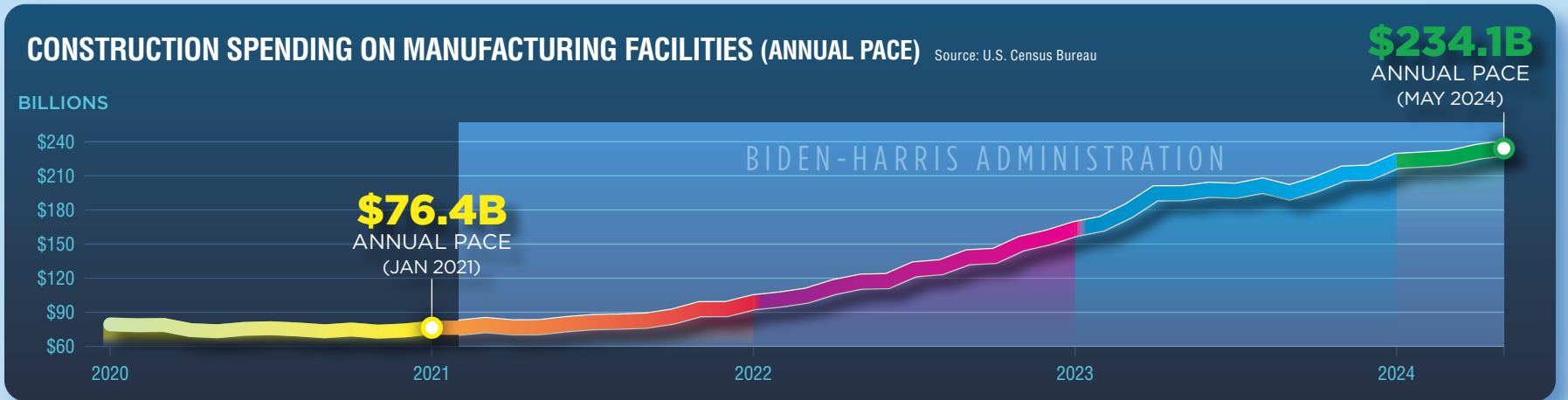
In the July 2024 edition of *The Electrical Worker*, the My IBEW Story feature on Raleigh, N.C., Local 553 member Aharon Segal included a misstatement of the scope of work that contractor Sir Raleigh Electric does. It is the largest domicile contractor in the local's jurisdiction.



# THE BIDEN-HARRIS BOOM FOR WORKERS

From infrastructure projects to vast investments in high-tech manufacturing, U.S. construction jobs are soaring, utilities are adding workers for the first time in decades and wages are up.

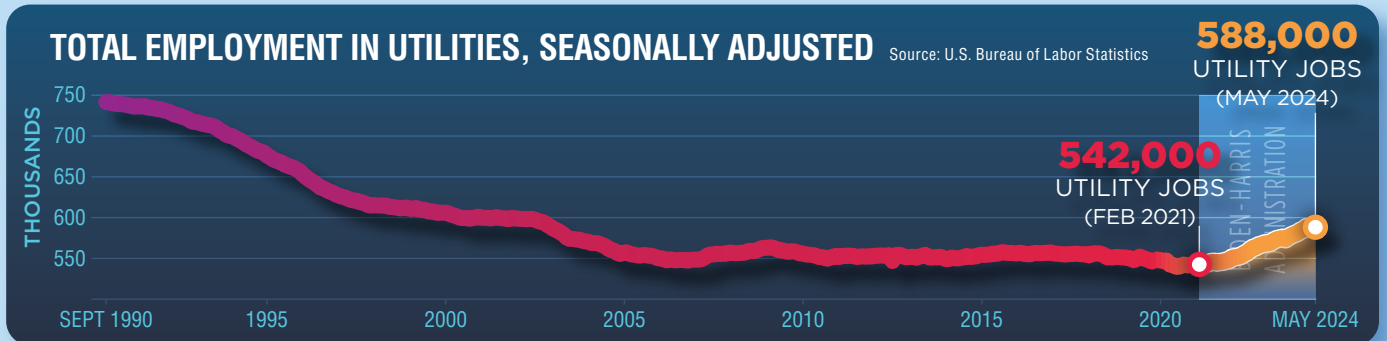
## A ROCKET RIDE FOR MANUFACTURING CONSTRUCTION



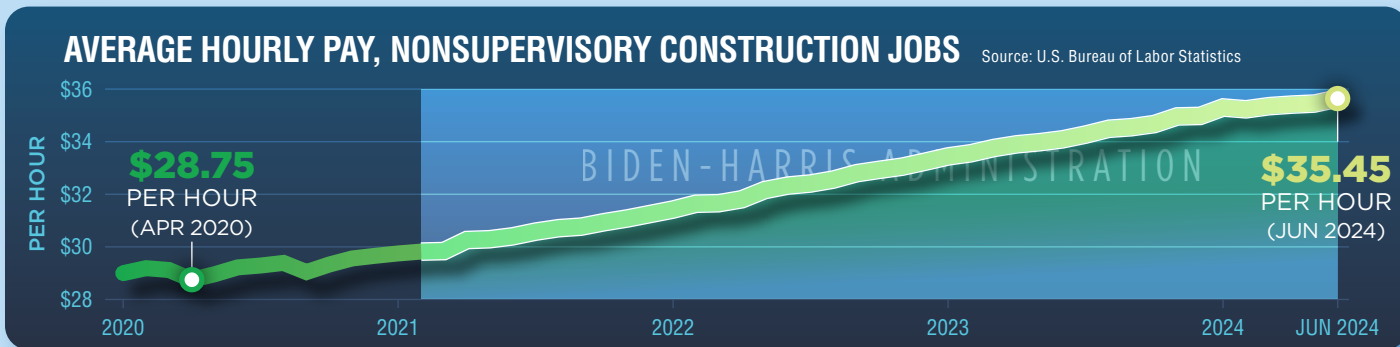
“Eyepopping,” “dramatic” and “one of the defining storylines of the economic recovery.” Those are just some of the ways that economists are describing the historic surge in construction spending on U.S. factories since passage of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and President Biden’s other signature bills, including the Inflation Reduction Act and CHIPS and Science Act. The tripling of public and private investment in American manufacturing during the Biden administration has driven an increase in nearly 800,000 jobs in the sector already — and guarantees that more will be needed.

## NEW ENERGY, NEW HIRES

Utility jobs began to plummet in the 1990s as the energy industry restructured. Now utility employment is climbing again, bolstered by the Inflation Reduction Act. And it’s only beginning: The Labor Department projects that solar, geothermal and wind power generation will be the economy’s three fastest-growing industries over the next decade.



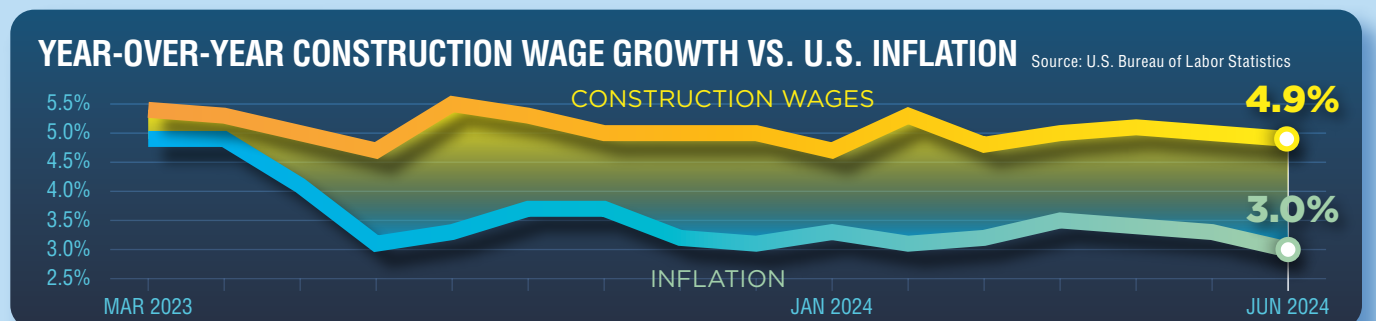
## PRO-UNION WHITE HOUSE = RISING WAGES



The Biden-Harris economic bills have ignited infrastructure and building projects, sending demand for construction workers to historic highs. But there’s another reason the sector’s average wages are up \$7 an hour since 2020. Based largely on the IBEW’s input, the new laws contain the strongest labor protections enacted in generations.

## WAGES OUTPACE INFLATION

You wouldn’t know it from media reports, but rising wages — including in the construction sector, as the chart indicates — are outpacing inflation. Meanwhile, prices for gasoline and consumer goods are either falling or remaining virtually flat month to month. And in large part because the Biden-Harris administration’s policies have boosted demand for high-skill, high-wage union construction and manufacturing jobs, the U.S. economy has kept growing, avoiding the recession that typically accompanies a fall in inflation.



# BOOTS ON THE

Continued from page 1

## THE IBEW'S 2024 PHOTO CONTEST

The IBEW Photo Contest has been The Electrical Worker's way to ride shotgun with brothers and sisters for a quarter of a century. Your pictures bring us closer together and are a showcase for the critical role members play in the life and work of North America. The hundreds of submissions we receive every year are a priceless contribution to our story. But just because something is priceless doesn't mean a value can't be put on it.

- Top Prize: \$1,000**
- Second Place: \$750**
- Third Place: \$500**

A \$200 Honorable Mention will also be awarded for **EACH BRANCH** of the IBEW:

- ▶ Broadcasting
- ▶ Inside Construction
- ▶ Outside Construction
- ▶ Government
- ▶ Manufacturing
- ▶ Railroad
- ▶ Telecommunications
- ▶ Utility



**DEADLINE: NOV. 1**

See official rules and submission instructions at [IBEW.org/photocontest](http://IBEW.org/photocontest).

Entries **MUST** be submitted electronically by Nov. 1 via the Photo Contest link on [IBEW.org](http://IBEW.org). Please contact the Media Department at [media@IBEW.org](mailto:media@IBEW.org) or 202-728-6102 with additional questions.



The \$100 million FDA facility in Atlanta Local 613's jurisdiction, funded in part by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, is one of thousands of projects putting IBEW members to work today. "Biden has done so much for us," Atlanta Local 613 Business Manager Kenny Mullins said.

On the site that Foxconn almost entirely abandoned, Microsoft announced a two-phase plan to build a \$3.3 billion data center campus. No subsidy necessary. Today, Gulbrandson has nearly 1,000 IBEW members working on Phase 1. When Phase 2 starts later this year, he will need another 500 to 600. "We are in our fourth month on site, and it's already more work than Foxconn in six years," he said. "All the promises that were made about Foxconn are being fulfilled now."



### Welcome to the Infrastructure Decade

Fiascoes like Foxconn use to happen across the country — decades of hand-outs to corporations that took everything and gave a sliver of what they promised.

The results were a country where bridge collapses were more common in headlines than bridge openings. In the year President Joe Biden took office, the American Society of Civil Engineers released its Report Card for America's Infrastructure, giving the nation's infrastructure an overall grade of C-. In only six of 17 categories was the score higher than a D.

In the three and half years since Inauguration Day, the

*Milwaukee Local 494 member Scott Dallesasse is helping build a downtown plaza, the first of a decade of work in the state funded by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law and Inflation Reduction Act.*

Biden administration and Democrats in the House and the Senate authorized more than \$3 trillion in grants and tax credits to stimulate private investment, rebuild the country and reshape the economy.

For the IBEW, which was in nearly every negotiating room with elected leaders, that means thousands of jobs right now, and the projects are only getting started.

More than 880,000 construction jobs have been created since Inauguration Day, and the construction workforce is the largest in history. IBEW membership is up to 838,000.

"We are currently tracking 523 new clean energy projects that are already announced or underway, totaling 271,713 new jobs in 47 states and Puerto Rico," said Government Affairs International Representative John Zapfel.

After decades of greed that cut the legs out from under American factories, the four laws built in "Buy American" clauses with real teeth.

The proof is undeniable. Manufacturing construction spending in the U.S. has tripled to a \$240 billion annual pace since Biden took office.

Announced plans include 163 new battery manufacturing sites, 117 new or

# GROUND *Biden Promised to Rebuild With Union Jobs. Those Jobs Are Here.*



The largest demand on Local 43 is the \$50 billion CHIPS Act-supported Micron semiconductor plant, which will put 3,000 IBEW members to work at peak and then 600 for the next 20 years, said Marzullo, at right.



The Micron plant is receiving \$6.1 billion in incentives to bring back production of semiconductors to where they were invented, back from China and Taiwan.

Syracuse, N.Y., Local 43 is quadrupling the capacity of its training center to handle a tidal wave of work. “When it is done, we will have more apprentices than we had members 10 years ago,” Business Manager Alan Marzullo said.



More than 500 members of Casper, Wyo., Local 322 are building TerraPower’s next-generation nuclear power plant in Kemmerer, funded in part by \$2 billion from the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law.

**523** new clean energy projects are underway

IBEW Membership is up to **838,000**

expanded electric vehicle manufacturing facilities, and 156 solar and wind manufacturing plants.

Clean tech and semiconductor investments alone have surpassed \$224 billion, and another quarter of a trillion dollars has been announced.

“We were in every room. We were asked about every senior position whose portfolio mattered for our jobs,” said Fourth District International Representative Austin Keyser, who previously worked with the White House on behalf of the

IBEW. “The president was clear with the environmentalists, with developers, with congresspeople: If they had language in mind, they needed to work with the IBEW because he was going to ask us before anything moved forward.”

And this is not work that is merely promised. This is not work that’s coming “someday.”

Brothers and sisters across the country are putting paychecks in their pockets, and locals are adding tens of thousands of new members.

In Jeffersonville, Ohio, more than 450 members of Portsmouth Local 575 are at work now on a \$3.5 billion electric vehicle battery plant owned by a partnership between Honda and LG. Honda is starting production of electric vehicles in the U.S. in 2026, in no small part because of tax incentives for U.S.-built EVs.

“It’s been years since we’ve been this busy. Decades,” Local 575 Business Manager Joe Dillow said of the 610-member local.

After decades of sending members out on the road, Local 575 is hosting 300 to 400 travelers.

“Portsmouth used to be an industrial area, and we are one again,” Dillow said.

The Bipartisan Infrastructure Law alone will propel over \$1.2 trillion of projects that will modernize and electrify the U.S. economy. By May, nearly \$454 billion in funding had been released for 56,000 projects across more than 4,500 communities.

A year after the law took effect, The nonpartisan Brookings Institution wrote: “President Joe Biden was right when he announced the beginning of an infrastructure decade — and we’re still in the opening stages. America’s march toward a grand rebuild continues.”

### ‘This Is Right Now’

Ten years ago, Syracuse, N.Y., Local 43 had between 500 and 600 members.

On Business Manager Al Marzullo’s desk are plans for a Phase 2 expansion of

his training center — Phase 1, built by more than 20 Local 43 members, is just wrapping up — that would up capacity to more than 400 apprentices.

“In five years, we will be home to about 6,000 people and have more apprentices than we used to have members,” he said.

This time, it’s the CHIPS and Science Act that is driving the growth. Starting Jan. 1, Marzullo expects to dispatch 400 to 500 members to the \$100 billion Micron semiconductor plant, which is receiving grants and support worth \$6.1 billion.

At peak, Marzullo said, the company will need 2,000 to 3,000 IBEW members.

And it’s all being built under a PLA.

Once the initial construction is done, Marzullo said, 600 members of Local 43 will work on site “in perpetuity.”



“Micron is just one part of the conversation,” Marzullo said. “With all the work that will grow up to support the Micron site, our hospitals, our schools, our small businesses that we have been organizing since times were hard, we need 1,600-plus members just for our original work. This isn’t the future. This isn’t ‘Maybe someday.’ This is right now. This is yesterday.”

“In my lifetime, there have been so many bad policies that it got easy to forget that government can do things to make life better for working people,” International President Kenneth W. Cooper said. “But the IBEW never forgot and never stopped fighting for working families, and every paycheck is proof. Now it’s time to rehire the president who finally listened and gave us the power to make it real.” ■



Thanks to the BIL and CHIPS Act, Panasonic is building a \$4 billion electric vehicle battery plant in De Soto, Kan., putting to work 700 to 900 members of Kansas City, Mo., Local 124.



# Canada Enacts Anti-Scab Law Unveiled at IBEW Local

*Prime Minister Justin Trudeau pledged to introduce an anti-scab bill during a town hall at Vancouver, British Columbia, Local 213's training center last year.*

The IBEW and all Canadian unions celebrated when anti-scab legislation prohibiting companies from bringing in replacement workers during work stoppages sailed through Parliament and received royal assent.

Bill C-58 prohibits employers from hiring scabs to replace union-represented workers during strikes or management-initiated lockouts in federally regulated industries.

"This is one of the most seminal moments in Canadian labor history," said Seamus O'Regan, the minister of labor and seniors. "Thanks to all the labor leaders, activists and workers who worked so hard over many decades to finally make this happen."

He'll get no argument from First District International Vice President Russ Shewchuk, who said the IBEW joined forces with other unions for many years to make an anti-scab law a reality.

"Now there isn't a hammer hanging over the head of either party during contract negotiations," he said. "This is the biggest feather you can put back in the cap of the Canadian worker."

Vancouver, British Columbia, Local 213 was one of the Canadian locals that sent members to Ottawa — or wherever they needed to be sent — during the last several years to lobby for the bill.

"I'm quite pleased," Business Manager Jim Lofty said. "We want to see it in action, we want to see it in play, and we want to see it enforced. We want to see a picket line with no scabs."

Added Shewchuk: "Workers having to worry about their jobs was unfair. It was a totally unbalanced scale. Now that scale has been equalized."

Local 213 served as the launching pad for the bill. Prime Minister Justin

Trudeau made clear during a town hall meeting at the local's training center on March 1, 2023, that anti-scab legislation was a priority.

"I have made a commitment, and I am going to hold to that commitment, that we are going to introduce anti-scab legislation before the end of this year," Trudeau told the crowd, setting off a round of applause.

Royal assent is the final step before a federal bill becomes law in Canada, similar to the president signing a bill in the U.S. It is given by the governor general or one of their deputies.

The anti-scab law doesn't go into effect for 12 months, so it likely won't be enforced until the end of June 2025. Employers will be able to request that workers stay on the job if they believe a labor action will result in threats to public safety or potential damage to the employer's property.

But the new law requires labor and management to come to an agreement on what those positions will be early in the bargaining process. If they can't, the Canada Industrial Relations Board will decide within 82 days what activities must continue. The board is an independent tribunal that resolves labor-management disputes.

"It helps all unions in their collective bargaining," said Ottawa Local 2228 Business Manager Paul Cameron, whose local has jurisdiction across the entire country and represents employees of NAV Canada, the private, non-profit corporation that operates the country's civil air navigation system, along with others.

The IBEW's railroad sector in Canada, which is represented by System Council 11, may be most affected by the new law.

Steven Martin, an international

**"This is the biggest feather you can put back in the cap of the Canadian worker."**

— First District IVP Russ Shewchuk



representative servicing System Council 11, cautioned that it's too early to judge C-58's full impact, but added that it is an excellent bargaining tool that should help the IBEW during negotiations. Even when companies didn't specifically mention replacement workers, the specter often hangs over negotiations.

"There's always been a presence at the table that they could do that," Martin said. "But regardless of the legislation, the whole intent is to get a fair and reasonable agreement without a work stoppage. We've been pretty successful in that over the years."

System Council 11 had not had a strike among its members in over 30 years, until 2022 with Canadian National Railway and Toronto Terminals Railway. In both strikes, the employers used replacement workers. The council is scheduled to begin negotiations next year on a new contract with Canadian Pacific Kansas City, one of its largest employers, and it's unclear how the new legislation will affect bargaining at that point.

Martin said he wouldn't be surprised if CPKC and other rail companies insist on using a maintenance activities

agreement going forward. Under Canadian law, such an agreement is a contract between an employer and trade union that outlines services that will continue to protect public safety.

On the other hand, the new law could bring railroad members closer together and promote solidarity because they know their job isn't in any danger from scabs, he said.

"That's a huge point when it comes to promoting solidarity and avoiding animosity and bitterness within the membership," he said.

The bill was tabled in November, and passage was likely from the beginning. The bill had overwhelming support from the Liberals, who lead a minority government, and the New Democratic Party, traditionally the Canadian party most aligned with union objectives. The NDP and the Liberals formed a strategic alliance just after the last federal elections in September 2021.

"I need to give the NDP a lot of credit for getting this over the hill," Lofty said.

Expected resistance from the Conservatives never materialized. The bill

sailed through the House of Commons by a vote of 317-0, and there was no opposition in the Senate.

A national election is expected to be held in 2025, and some observers suspect the Conservatives — who were notoriously anti-union when they controlled the government from 2005 to 2015 — didn't want to antagonize middle-class voters.

"They are trying to move to the center and capture unionized voters," Shewchuk said.

Canadian labor leaders now hope to persuade provincial governments to adopt similar legislation. British Columbia and Quebec are the only two provinces with anti-scab protections for striking workers. Shewchuk noted that such legislation is being considered in Manitoba, where the NDP gained control of the provincial government last year.

"We hope that not only we make sure this is banned at the federal level, but we can inspire provinces and territories to put in place similar legislation so that we can, once and for all, ban scab workers at every level across this country," NDP leader Jagmeet Singh told Global News. "That's our ultimate goal." ■

# NORTH OF 49° | AU NORD DU 49° PARALLÈLE

## B.C. Local Moves Quickly to Be First With Veterans Committee

One year ago, Halifax, Nova Scotia, Local 1928 steward and Royal Navy veteran Pete Cool was reaching out to members across Canada about an initiative to increase opportunities for veterans in the trades.

That objective celebrated a milestone when Vancouver, British Columbia, Local 258 became the first Canadian local to have a chartered Veterans Committee.

“I truly believe we’ll get things moving if we have great communication with our members,” said Cool, who served in the Navy for 17 years and represents the First District on the union-wide International Veterans Committee. “That’s how I found these guys.”

Those guys are Local 258 members Jamie Lowe and Jordan Geddert. They led the effort to form a committee after reading about Cool’s plans and being encouraged by Business Manager Cody Gatzke. They now co-chair the committee, which consists of 19 members.

“I was absolutely aware that we had a bunch of veterans among our ranks,” Gatzke said. “I was very surprised they were as interested and engaged in this as they were. It exceeded my expectations. Jamie and Jordan are pretty passionate about it.”

Like Cool, Lowe served in the Navy. Geddert served in the United Kingdom’s Royal Marine Commandos, seeing combat in Iraq and Afghanistan. Lowe and Geddert also are members of the International Veterans Committee.

Both credit IBEW membership with helping them avoid many of the pitfalls some veterans face, including loneliness and mental health challenges.

“When you get into the IBEW, you have that brotherhood and sisterhood,” Geddert said. “You can rely on each other. A lot of times, you spend more time with them than your family.”

Local 258 is an outside, tree trimming utility and manufacturing local with jurisdiction over all of British Columbia, so in-person interactions with brothers and sisters can be rare. But it took Local 258 less than one year to get its Veterans Committee recognized.

Lowe and Geddert reached out to every veteran in the local. That personal touch proved more effective than relying on social media.

“What really helped us is that in being a lineman, you’re part of a community that feels small,” said Geddert, who lives in 100 Mile House, about a five-hour drive northeast of Vancouver. “You know a guy who knows a guy.”

Lowe said the committee meets virtually, once every two months. It hopes to form a close relationship with Helmets to Hardhats, a partnership of 15 trade unions, including the IBEW,

that helps veterans transition to a career in the trades.

“There’s a lot of people coming out of the military that have so many good qualities that transfer into the IBEW,” Geddert said. “They would flourish. It’s a win-win in my eyes. We just have to get the word out there.”

First District International Vice President Russ Shewchuk praised Local 258 for its accomplishments.

“The commitment of Jamie, Jordan and Pete, with supports from their locals, epitomizes our union’s solidarity — quite literally — from coast to coast,” he said. “A post-military career in the trades can be a great fit professionally, offering many transferrable skills.

“Our members have taken this a step further by building connections and a community within the IBEW for veterans to thrive beyond the tools. I applaud their

continued efforts and success.”

The work already is paying off. Local 258 has added one veteran member since the committee was recognized and is working on signing another.

They also hope to form stronger relationships with veterans already in the local.

“What we’ve found is that every veteran we’ve asked has said, ‘I want to be involved,’” Lowe said. “No one has said no. We want to see every veteran have a path to a career and do what is best for Local 258.” ■

### Share your IBEW news!

IBEW Canada is seeking impactful stories from local unions and members. Please contact Shaina Hardie at [Shaina\\_Hardie@ibew.org](mailto:Shaina_Hardie@ibew.org).



Local 258 members Jamie Lowe, left, and Jordan Geddert have chartered the first local Veterans Committee in Canada.

## Le local en C.-B. forme un comité des militaires à la retraite

L’année dernière, l’ancien combattant de la Marine royale et délégué syndical de la section locale 1928 de Halifax (Nouvelle-Écosse), Pete Cool, téléphonait aux membres de tout le Canada pour leur parler d’une initiative visant à favoriser les possibilités d’emploi dans les métiers spécialisés pour les militaires à la retraite.

Cet objectif a célébré une étape importante lorsque la section locale 258 de Vancouver (Colombie-Britannique) est devenue le premier local canadien à obtenir sa charte pour le comité des militaires à la retraite.

«Je crois sincèrement que nous allons faire bouger les choses si nous entretenons une bonne communication avec nos membres», déclare M. Cool, qui a servi dans la marine pendant dix-sept ans et représente le comité des militaires à la retraite du Premier District à l’échelle du syndicat. «C’est ainsi que j’ai trouvé ces personnes.»

Il parle de Jamie Lowe et de Jordan Geddert, membres du local 258; leur effort a permis de former un comité après avoir pris connaissance du projet de M. Cool et avoir été encouragés par le gérant d’affaires Cody Gatzke. Ils occupent maintenant le poste de coprésidence du comité qui compte dix-neuf membres.

«J’étais très au courant que l’on comptait d’anciennes combattantes et d’anciens combattants parmi nous»,

prononce M. Gatzke. «J’étais très étonné de la grandeur de leur intérêt et d’engagement dans ce projet. Mes attentes ont été dépassées. Ce projet passionne beaucoup Jamie et Jordan.»

Comme M. Cool, M. Lowe a servi dans la marine. M. Geddert a servi dans les commandos de la Marine royale au Royaume-Uni; il a été témoin du combat en action en Iraq et en Afghanistan. M. Lowe et M. Geddert sont aussi membres du comité international des militaires à la retraite.

Les deux reconnaissent que les membres de la FIOE les ont aidés à éviter de nombreux écueils auxquels sont confrontés certains anciens combattants, notamment les défis reliés à la solitude et les problèmes de santé mentale.

«En te joignant à la FIOE, il y a cette fraternité et cette sororité», exprime M. Geddert. «Vous pouvez compter sur l’autre. Bien souvent, vous passez plus de temps avec eux que votre famille.»

Le local 258 est un local qui compte du montage de lignes, de l’émondage, du service public et de la fabrication couvrant le territoire de la Colombie-Britannique en entier, donc les interactions en personnes en la compagnie des confrères et consœurs se fait plutôt rares. Il a fallu attendre moins d’un an avant que le comité des militaires à la retraite soit reconnu.

M. Lowe et M. Geddert ont contacté tous les militaires à la retraite dans le

local. Ce service personnalisé s’est avéré plus efficace que de compter sur les médias sociaux.

«Ce qui nous a vraiment aidés, étant monteurs de lignes, vous faites partie d’une communauté qui semble petite», mentionne M. Geddert. Il demeure à 100 Mile House, à environ cinq heures de route au nord-est de Vancouver. «Tu connais quelqu’un qui connaît quelqu’un.»

M. Lowe raconte que tous les deux mois le comité se rencontre virtuellement. Le comité souhaite forger des liens solides avec l’organisme Du régiment aux bâtiments, un partenariat qui compte quinze syndicats, y compris la FIOE, d’où sa mission est d’aider les vétérans à faire la transition vers une carrière dans les métiers spécialisés.

«De nombreux anciens combattants possèdent tellement de bonnes qualités transférables à la FIOE», exprime M. Geddert. «Ils vont s’épanouir, tout le monde en sort gagnant, selon moi. Il suffit de diffuser le message.»

Le vice-président international du Premier District de la FIOE, Russ Shewchuk, fait l’éloge au local 258 d’avoir créé un comité pour les militaires à la retraite.

«Le dévouement de Jamie, Jordan et Pete, avec l’appui de leur local, incarne la solidarité de notre syndicat, littéralement, d’un bout à l’autre du pays», formule M. Shewchuk. «Une carrière post-militaire dans les métiers spécialisés peut être très avantageuse sur le plan professionnel, car elle offre de nombreuses compétences transférables.»

«Nos membres sont allés plus loin en établissant des liens et ont créé une communauté pour que les anciens combattants puissent s’épanouir au-delà des outils. J’applaudis la continuité de leurs efforts et de leurs réussites.»

Le travail commence déjà à porter fruit. Le local 258 en compte un de plus depuis que le comité a obtenu sa reconnaissance et travaille à la signature d’un autre.

Ils souhaitent également d’établir des relations plus solides avec celles et ceux déjà présents dans le local.

«Nous avons constaté que toutes celles et tous ceux que nous avons interrogés ont déclaré : “Je veux être impliqué”, exprime M. Lowe. «Personne ne nous a dit non. Nous voulons voir les possibilités de carrière s’offrir à chacun d’entre eux et de faire ce qu’il y a de mieux pour la section locale 258.» ■

### Racontez-nous vos nouvelles FIOE!

La FIOE cherche des histoires marquantes des sections locales et des membres. Veuillez communiquer avec Shaina Hardie à [Shaina\\_Hardie@ibew.org](mailto:Shaina_Hardie@ibew.org).

## POLITICS & JOBS

# For Workers, High Stakes in the States

**W**ith so much attention being paid to the presidential election this year, it can be easy to forget that the state and local levels are where a lot of decisions are made that affect workers. From heat safety to captive audience meetings, who wins and loses these “down-ballot” elections can make a lasting difference in a working person’s life.

### Heat Safety

It’s no secret that summers are getting hotter, and dangerously so. The U.S. Health and Human Services Department estimates that approximately 2,300 people died from heat-related illness in 2023, triple the annual average between 2004 and 2018. And a report from advocacy organization Public Citizen found that environmental heat is likely responsible for some 170,000 work-related injuries each year. The Occupational Safety and Health Administration is at work on a rule to establish heat safety standards at work, but the process has taken years.

States, by contrast, can often create — or dismantle — standards much faster, making a very real difference for workplace conditions. But it depends on who’s in power.

After Austin and Dallas passed ordinances requiring minimum standards like water breaks for workers, the Republican-controlled Legislature passed what was dubbed the “Death Star” bill in 2023 that prevented those common-sense and life-saving precautions from going into effect.

Florida followed suit with a similar law this year.

By contrast, the city of Phoenix, which last year saw temperatures at or above 100 degrees for 133 days, is moving to protect its workers. In a 7-0 vote, the City Council passed an ordinance requiring employers to provide access to rest, shade, water and air conditioning, as well as training on recognizing the signs of heat stress. The rule applies to city contractors and their subcontractors who work outdoors, including construction workers.

The measure was supported by the labor community, including the IBEW.

Some 100 IBEW members who work for the city fall under this protection, Local 640 Business Representative Dan Anderson said.

“We’ve been working hard over the years to get a worker-friendly council,” Anderson said. “The councilors who are up for reelection this year surely saw this as a good move for them, as well as city employees.”

### Decertification

IBEW members in states like Texas and Florida have their union-negotiated contracts on their side when it comes to heat and other safety standards. But those protections can fall by the wayside when a state legislature pushes anti-union laws that put the very life of a union at risk.

In states across the country, Republican governors and legislators are trying to find ways to decertify public sector unions. In Florida, they succeeded, and at least one IBEW local has already fallen victim. (See “Decertification: Florida’s Battering Ram to Break Down Unions” on page 10.)

While those efforts were defeated this year in Iowa, Louisiana and Utah, there’s nothing stopping those politicians from trying again next session.

In Iowa, it took the strength of IBEW members across the state and alongside labor allies to beat back a particularly nefarious decertification attempt. Building on existing anti-union legislation from 2017, the bill would have decertified a union if the employer failed to submit a list of eligible voters for the



*A number of decisions that affect workers’ well-being are made at the state and local level. Who wins and who loses “down-ballot” elections can determine everything from whether workers have adequate heat safety standards to the legality of captive audience meetings.*

recertification process, putting the onus on the union to do the work of the employer by suing them for not turning in the list.

The IBEW lobbied heavily against it, said Shane Nelson, Des Moines Local 55 assistant business manager. He and others met with Senate committee members, party leaders from both sides and other legislators in case it made it to the floor for a vote. Thanks to their perseverance, that didn’t happen. But the fight’s not over, Nelson said.

“We expect it to be back next session,” he said, noting that Local 55 has roughly 140 members in public sector utilities across the state who would have been affected by the bill.

### Going on Offense

It’s not just public sector unions that are impacted by state laws. Issues like captive audience meetings, where employers mandate that employees who are organizing for representation listen to anti-union propaganda, can be subject to state-level oversight.

These meetings, where employees are often not allowed to ask questions or hear opposing viewpoints, are incredibly popular with employers. One analysis of National Labor Relations Board elections found that 89% of companies with organizing campaigns conduct captive audience meetings.

And they work. According to the Economic Policy Institute, average union win rates drop from 74% to 47% when this tactic is used.

With a pro-worker majority in the House, Senate and governor’s mansion, Minnesota passed a ban on such

meetings last year, as did Maine. This year, Illinois and Washington followed suit, bringing the total number of states with such a protection to eight.

And these states aren’t stopping at captive audience meetings. Illinois is using its pro-labor majority to pass a number of bills that support working families, including legislation to require project labor agreements on carbon capture and sequestration projects.

“Local unions in Illinois remain active in the legislative process, and we continue to elect pro-labor candidates, and then lobby them to make sure they follow through on their promises,” Sixth District International Representative Shad Etchason said. “Elections at every level of government matter, and this is why.”

Washington now has laws on the books to develop rules for the construction industry to provide better conditions for workers who menstruate or express milk. And striking workers will now have access to health care through the state’s insurance exchange. It’s all made possible because of ongoing efforts by the IBEW and the broader labor community to get out the vote for pro-labor candidates, said John Traynor, a member of Everett, Wash., Local 191 and legislative director of the Washington State Labor Council, an affiliate of the AFL-CIO.

“It’s important to engage in the process,” Traynor said. “By passing policies like these, and by electing and reelecting pro-worker champions to office, we continue our work of expanding worker protections. Educating our membership on why all this is important is an effective way to engage them and to re-energize our movement.”

### What Winning Means

While Illinois and Washington have enjoyed pro-union trifectas in the governor’s office and both houses of the legislature for a while, it’s a new phenomenon in Minnesota and Michigan, thanks to the efforts of organized labor in recent elections.

In Michigan, that majority led to a repeal of its so-called right-to-work law last year, the first state to do so in decades. And IBEW members aren’t stopping there.

“Michigan is on the move,” Sixth District International Representative Joe Davis said. “Rolling back right-to-work was only the start. We’ve nearly solidified prevailing wage into law, and we’re moving the ball on unemployment insurance.”

Davis said he and other labor advocates are looking to expand the unemployment insurance benefit from 16 weeks to 26 and increase the weekly payout.

“Most would be surprised that this is a big issue at this time, but construction workers know that employment good times do not last forever,” Davis said. “We must be prepared for the slow work periods even when there’s low unemployment.”

Michigan members aren’t taking anything for granted in the legislative realm. They’re supporting redistricting efforts to keep the state’s House and Senate voting maps fair and representative, and free from gerrymandering.

“There is an energy starting to take off here in Michigan,” Davis said. “People are seeing what can be done with the correct people in office.”

### State Case Study: Washington

**Live in Washington? The Washington State Labor Council, AFL-CIO, of which the IBEW is an affiliate, is urging members to vote NO on Initiative 2117 and Initiative 2109.**

**Initiative 2117** would severely harm work for the building trades, including the IBEW. Funding for projects to incentivize solar, the electrification of vehicle fleets, electrical vehicle infrastructure, zero-emission and electric school buses, and countless other projects that create thousands of construction jobs would simply evaporate and undermine Washington’s climate goals.

**Initiative 2109** would give the wealthiest 0.2% of Washingtonians an unnecessary tax cut and eliminate over \$5 billion in critical funding for child care, early learning and school construction. Simply put, it would undermine school construction and other essential funding for children and the workers that build and remodel schools, including IBEW members.

*For more information on the IBEW’s policy priorities and election resources, visit [ibewgov.org](http://ibewgov.org).*



# NLRB's Historic Progress for Workers Hangs in the Balance

**W**ithout the National Labor Relations Board, the laws intended to protect the rights of workers to unionize and bargain collectively would be empty promises.

The NLRB is the enforcer, the agency created to police employers who break the law in order to derail organizing drives and delay contract talks — whatever it takes to avoid negotiating higher wages, better benefits and a safer workplace.

Whether the board uses that power to hold them accountable has everything to do with its members and the president who nominates them.

The NLRB under President Joe Biden has been the fiercest, most proactive defender of workers in modern history, boldly acting to restore the battered mission of the 1935 National Labor Relations Act: to protect workplace rights and encourage the growth of unions.

With a Democratic majority on the five-seat board and the agency's aggressive general counsel, Jennifer Abruzzo, workers who want to organize and join unions have greater rights and employers have fewer tools to stop them.

The previous board was controlled by management-side attorneys who doubled down on 40 years' worth of political assaults, court rulings and adverse policies that badly eroded the NLRA. Their tenure was a heyday for union busters, as well as the lawyers and consultants whose union-avoidance industry rakes in nearly half a billion dollars annually.

"It's as night-and-day as it gets,"

International President Kenneth W. Cooper said. "The darkest period in modern history for workers and unions followed by more justice and progress than there's been in generations. But there's a long way to go. You don't dig out of a hole that deep in just four years."

He said voters will decide in November whether the new era continues or the old one roars back.

"We know from bitter experience and because they're making no secret of their plans that a second Trump administration would slam on the brakes and reverse direction as fast they can," Cooper said.

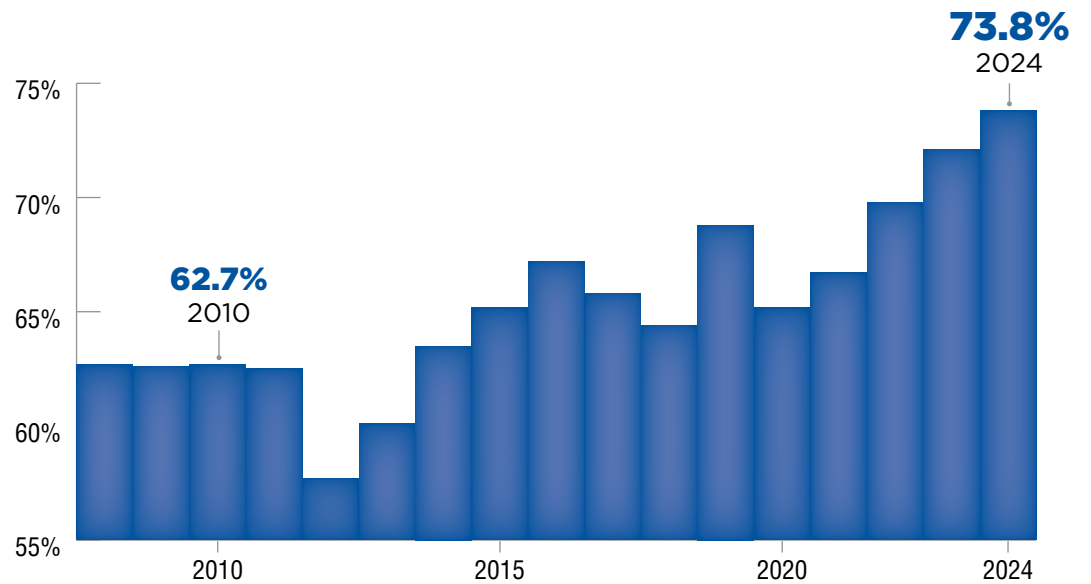
A big target would be the board's landmark Cemex decision last August, which improves the odds that illegal interference will backfire on an employer that tanks a union election.

In the past, the worst the NLRB could do in response to firings, discipline, threats and other tactics was order a new election — effectively a second chance for employers to chip away at union support. If they also had to cough up back pay and reinstate wronged workers, that was merely the cost of doing business.

The lawbreakers' strategy falls apart under Cemex, a Teamsters case against a cement trucking company that flagrantly violated its drivers' rights to unionize. Now, if the NLRB finds that unlawful tampering was the difference between a win and a loss for the union, it can order the employer to recognize the unit and go directly to the bargaining table.

## Share of National Labor Relations Board Elections that Resulted in Union Certification

Annually, 2008-2024; Through April 2024



The Biden-Harris NLRB's commitment to uphold long-eroded workers' rights has restored confidence in the board, leading to a surge in organizing petitions and union election victories over the past four years.

Source: Center for American Progress analysis of NLRB data; Chart: Axios Visuals

In June, the board applied Cemex to a Las Vegas casino charged with egregious misconduct that included handing out 500 steaks branded "Vote No" two days before the election.

The casino's "extensive coercive

and unlawful misconduct stemmed from a carefully crafted corporate strategy intentionally designed at every step to interfere with employees' free choice," the decision stated.

But the NLRB doesn't need a critical mass of wronged workers in order to act. Take the life-changing ruling in June against a contractor who refused to pay the wages and benefits negotiated by Niagara Falls, N.Y., Local 237.

The young woman who sought the local's help and at least two other employees are likely to be awarded more than \$100,000 each, based on their work hours over several years.

"We're very happy about it," Business Manager John Scherrer said. He explained that the owner had closed his tiny shop but, with the union contract still in place, quietly began doing jobs again in Local 237's jurisdiction.

"If a company signs up and says they're going to do the right thing, it's good to know that we can count on the NLRB to hold them to it, to follow the CBA," he said.

Scherrer and local organizer Nick Coyle knew the regional NLRB staff to be attentive and professional, and were impressed once again.

"They do a very good job of helping us narrow-minded construction workers navigate the process," Coyle said with a laugh. "They've really been great."

While the contractor refused to turn over records or otherwise cooperate, the NLRB forged ahead, eventually identifying two other workers who'd been cheated. Coyle said there may be others.

Third District International Vice President Dennis Affinati praised Local 237's

## Inside the GOP Plan to Kneecap Unions

**F**or 40 years, the American economic consensus was that the country did best when its richest got richer, even if it hollowed out the working class.

The three and a half years of the Biden administration have been a rebellion against death of the working family.

And it is working.

There are 14 million new jobs, including almost 890,000 new manufacturing jobs. Unemployment is the lowest since 1969.

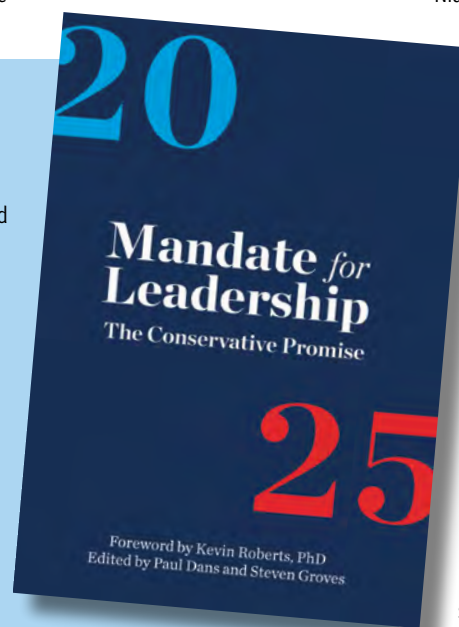
The Republicans have a plan to slam on the brakes and reverse course. It isn't hidden. They're proud of it. It's a 920-page road map for the end of a revolution that's just starting.

It's called Project 2025, and while it was published by a coalition of conservative groups, one of its lead authors is head of policy on the 2024 GOP platform committee.

These are just a few highlights of how they plan to make life worse for working people:

- ▶ Repeal Davis-Bacon, which sets prevailing wage standards for construction projects. (page 604)
- ▶ End project labor agreement requirements. (604)
- ▶ Ban card check even when a company wants it. (603)
- ▶ Ban unions from advocating for their members except in meetings with management, with no limits on corporate political spending. (600)
- ▶ Make it easier to replace union workers with nonunion workers. (606)
- ▶ Let management create "employee involvement organizations" and then chose to negotiate with them instead of the union. (599)
- ▶ Let management pay people less for the same work because of who they are. (584)
- ▶ Ban all current and former union members from jobs in the administration. (31)
- ▶ Allow states to outlaw unions for five years, to "encourage experimentation." (605)
- ▶ Ban union pension funds from requiring PLAs on projects funded by union members. (607)
- ▶ Make it easier for employers to interfere in union elections. (602)

"When someone tells you who you are, believe them the first time," said International President Kenneth W. Cooper. "For too long, too many people who should have been our friends ignored working people. Democrats may have lifted the boot off our neck only when they remembered to, but the Republicans never stopped adding weight." ■



POLITICS & JOBS continued on page 10

## POLITICS & JOBS *continued*

dogged pursuit of the case and said the board's attention to it shows how committed the agency is to seeking justice for workers — no matter how few are affected.

"We talk a lot about the big ways that the NLRB is expanding organizing rights and forcing employers to bargain in good faith, and under President Biden, that really is something we haven't seen to this degree in our lifetimes," he said. "But workers also need to know that the board is meant to be there for them as individuals, and when it's run and staffed by fair-minded people like it is now, that's exactly what happens."

Staffing levels, however, remain an urgent problem. The agency's \$299 million budget has been virtually flat for a decade, leaving scores of field jobs open. Despite an extra \$25 million passed by Democrats in 2022, Abruzzo says the agency needs at least four times as much additional funding.

Through efficiencies, she has managed to fill some vacancies. But they are stopgap measures at a time when the board's workload is exploding, the result of workers and unions feeling more confident about filing election petitions and unfair labor practice charges.

"You can do the math," Abruzzo told the Federal News Network in a May interview. The \$25 million bump "basically kept our lights on," she said. "It did not allow us to do the necessary hiring of critical positions. ... Our caseload continues to outpace our staffing capacity."

The agency won't get any help from House Republicans, who now control the purse strings. They are champing at the bit to bleed the NLRB dry, knowing they'd have a clear path if their party were to take the White House and both chambers of Congress in November.

Their animus is unchecked on a House committee that oversees labor and pension issues. The GOP majority routinely calls hearings to condemn the board's advancements for workers and lines up anti-union lawyers to excoriate Abruzzo and board Chair Lauren McFerran in absentia.

Abruzzo replaced the rabidly anti-union general counsel Peter Robb, who aided President Ronald Reagan in 1981 when he fired the air traffic controllers and began stacking the historically neutral NLRB with management lawyers. Biden fired Robb within an hour of being inaugurated on Jan. 20, 2021.

Abruzzo set a new tone as soon as she was confirmed that July, writing to staff: "[I]t is critical that the NLRB vigorously protect the rights of workers to freely associate and act collectively to improve their wages and working conditions. This memo should be seen as a road map."

The pace and scope of the policy overhaul that followed stunned the labor movement and enraged the business lobby.

One early change, broadening the interpretation of "make-whole" remedies, may help the Local 237 electricians as the NLRB determines how much money each is entitled to receive from the boss who scammed them.

The revised make-whole policy began with an Abruzzo directive and was affirmed by the board in a precedent-setting IBEW case involving telecom workers in California.

Although the Fifth Circuit Court of Appeals partially overturned the ruling, it remains NLRB policy to seek more than back pay and lost benefits for workers who are harmed financially by an employer's unfair labor practices. Reimbursements could include medical bills, penalties for tapping into retirement funds, credit card interest and fees, and even the loss of cars and homes.

Cooper stressed that labor's adversaries will continue to use the courts and Congress to try to undermine the board's authority and that the only way to stop them is at the ballot box.

"It's the circle of life politically," he said. "The president nominates NLRB members, who have to be confirmed by the Senate. The House controls the budget. Federal judges decide whether board decisions survive. The president and Senate decide who those judges are. And we decide who goes to the White House and Congress."

"We are so close to real change — at the NLRB, the Department of Labor and every other agency that is finally prioritizing workers over corporate greed," Cooper said. "But to get there, we must reelect the most pro-worker, pro-union president of our lifetimes and give him a Congress that will support his vision and his values." ■

## Decertification: Florida's Battering Ram to

**A** law aimed at gutting Florida's public sector unions has started bearing fruit, and IBEW members are getting caught in the crosshairs.

The Republican-dominated Legislature passed, and Republican Gov. Ron DeSantis signed, a law last year to make it all but impossible for many public sector unions to maintain their certification.

Most of those unions must now have at least 60% of members paying dues. If not — and the law also prevents the automatic deduction of dues payments from an employee's paycheck — the union has to be recertified with a vote of members.

With Florida being a so-called right-to-work state — where employees are allowed to free-ride, enjoying the benefits of a collective bargaining agreement without contributing their share of the costs of negotiating and enforcing that contract — unions already face an uphill battle when it comes to getting members to pay their fair share.

"I've heard people say things like, 'Why should I pay dues when I can get it for free?' Or, 'I'll pay dues when I see how it goes,'" Jacksonville Local 177 Business Manager Alan Jones said. "I'm afraid it may take losing representation for them to see the difference and how it will impact them. I hope it doesn't come to that, but it's certainly possible."

For members of Gainesville Local 1205, that day has come. The local's only public sector unit, representing employees who work for the city of Ocala, couldn't meet the threshold demands and lost its certification. Business Manager Lanny

**"It's keeping unions out of politics, which is intentional. They're not just shutting down unions — they're shutting out our voice."**

— Lanny Mathis, Gainesville, Fla.,  
Local 1205 business manager



Mathis said that the local is not yet planning a recertification effort because the interest just doesn't seem to be there.

"I hate to say it, but at this point in time, they've won," Mathis said.

In a sign of just how partisan the law was, certain public sector unions, among them those representing the police, corrections officers and firefighters, were carved out of the onerous requirements. Those unions also tend to support Republican candidates.

"The law was really targeted at the teachers' unions, which have gone to battle with DeSantis. We were collateral damage," Fifth District International Representative Erik Jones said. "It doesn't make any sense. Utility workers, many of whom are public sector workers, are first responders just as much as the police and firefighters, but they don't have to jump through all these hoops every year."

Local 177 represents maintenance workers in Duval County Public Schools and will face its own

recertification test to see if they don't have 60% of members who do have enough interest to vote.

He's hopeful that the local will survive this round, but he's not sure it will survive next year if it still does.

"It gets to the point where you're just afraid to do anything," Alan Jones said.

That weariness is a byproduct of the bill but a fear of losing representation, including membership, is what they would have before the law was passed.

"It's keeping unions out of politics, which is intentional," Mathis said. "They're shutting down unions — they're shutting out our voice." Even with their

## The Members and the Work: The IBEW's Nonpartisan Federal

**I**n a U.S. presidential election year, it can be easy to get caught up in partisan fighting and forget who your true friends are. Fortunately, the IBEW's policy agenda, from new nuclear jobs to apprenticeship standards and speedy permitting, cuts across party lines.

"It's extremely important for the IBEW to identify and help elect candidates, whatever the letter after their name, who are committed to creating good union jobs and securing our hard-won job protections and benefits," said International President Kenneth W. Cooper.

The IBEW's nonpartisan priority must always be — and only be — on the members and the work, Cooper stressed.

"What matters to us is that they support us and our families," he said. "It's what we ask our members to keep top of mind when they cast their ballots."

There are many common-sense and worker-focused parts of the IBEW's policy agenda that members should remember as they speak with officials and as they vote, added Danielle Eckert, assistant to the international president for government affairs.

"There's nothing stopping local voices from being heard," Eckert said. "We should be 'in the room' with all of our elected officials to help lay the groundwork for their support on the IBEW's legislative priorities."

One recent example of this strategy's success is the bipartisan passage of the ADVANCE Act, an IBEW-backed bill to make it easier for the Nuclear Regulatory Commission to develop and deploy new nuclear energy facilities. The new law builds on the union, pro-worker language that the IBEW lobbied for and won in such legislation as the Inflation Reduction Act and the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law by directing the NRC to prioritize redevelopment of brownfield and retired fossil fuel sites. This supports the IBEW's objective of finding good jobs in the growing nuclear power industry for workers laid off when coal- and gas-fired power plants close.

There's lots more to do, Cooper said. "We need our members to help us push for more project labor agreements, for registered apprenticeships that train more of our brothers and sisters, and for expanded Davis-Bacon prevailing wage provisions on more public works projects," Cooper said.

### Here are some other national-level policies the IBEW is working on:

- There is strong agreement among Republicans and Democrats that the U.S. power grid needs to be transformed to handle the country's growing electricity demand. Approving transmission line construction permits can create thousands of jobs for IBEW members, but these jobs are often held up because the process for granting permits, already lengthy and complex, gets further bogged down — sometimes for years — by lawsuits or other legal tactics. Last year, independent Sen. Joe Manchin of West Virginia introduced the Building American Energy Security Act, something Cooper called "a good bipartisan first step" toward speeding up the permitting process in a way that achieves the country's energy objectives while respecting community input and following environmental laws.
- After the fiery February 2023 derailment of 38 freight train cars near East Palestine, Ohio, Sen. Sherrod Brown, an Ohio Democrat, introduced the Railway Safety Act, which not only aims to prevent similar future disasters but also includes language to require rail car and engine inspections be performed by qualified and trained mechanical inspectors, something that would secure more work for the IBEW's Railroad Branch members. Brown's bill, along with Pennsylvania Democratic Rep. Christopher Deluzio's companion measure in the House, also would mandate two-person crews on freight trains, another IBEW safety priority. Both bills have co-sponsors from both parties. Another rail-focused bill backed by the IBEW that has bipartisan support in both houses of Congress is the Railroad Employee Equity and Fairness Act. Companion versions introduced by Democratic Rep. Janice Schakowsky of Illinois and former Republican Sen. Rob Portman of Ohio aim to insulate payments made from the Railroad Unemployment Insurance Account from automatic, across-the-board budget cuts.
- The Biden administration and the NLRB have found success in using the federal rulemaking process to make it easier for workers to gain union representation. A U.S. Supreme Court ruling in June, however, could hobble that process and threaten the

## Break Down Unions



his summer. Alan Jones said of members paying dues, but cards for an election.

at those members will remember those members will remember 177 started representing them they went seven years without a every year. But even if the unit will have to do it all over again sn't meet the 60% threshold.

point where it gets tiresome," and constant struggle isn't a feature. Mathis said unions are g that might upset their mem-making endorsements in races re.

unions out of politics, which is said. "They're not just shutting re shutting out our voice." backs against the wall, IBEW

members and other labor advocates were able to get some reprieve. Another part of the law required full audits every year, which could cost more than \$10,000. But thanks to lobbying by IBEW members and others, the law was amended to require a simpler financial statement, something IBEW locals already do.

"Thank God we got rid of the audit requirement," Erik Jones said. "For a small local, that amount of time and money just isn't feasible."

Erik Jones noted that most employers value their relationship with the IBEW, so they aren't pushing for decertification, even in cases where a local may be at risk.

Still, the law is forcing locals to spend resources on things like tracking down dues instead of bringing in new members or doing any of the other multitude of duties required of a local.

"Most of these units are small, maybe 50 to 100 members, and they're spending at least one day every month calling members just to get them to pay their dues," Erik Jones said.

With an anti-union Republican supermajority in the Legislature and DeSantis not up for re-election until 2026, it won't be quick or easy to turn the tide, but IBEW locals aren't stopping when it comes to educating their members and getting them to the polls.

"Local elections have consequences," Mathis said. "Vote with your brain, not your emotions. Quit getting your news on Facebook and get on sites with your legislators' voting records. You've got to be educated on what's happening and why." ■

## General Strategy

NLRB's ability to administer labor law.

That's another reason the IBEW continues to support passage of the Protecting the Right to Organize Act, or PRO Act, which aims to strengthen workers' rights to organize, appropriately classify contract workers as employees and impose harsher punishments for employers that violate workers' rights. The act also would impose stiff penalties on employers that violate the National Labor Relations Act.

Companion versions of the PRO Act now making their way through both houses — introduced by independent Sen. Bernie Sanders of Vermont and Democratic Rep. Bobby Scott of Virginia — had the support of nearly half the Senate and 216 House members as this article was being prepared.

- Lawmakers in both parties have shown a willingness to take on China over that country's actions that harm U.S. commercial interests. In March, the IBEW joined four other national labor unions in asking U.S. Trade Representative Katherine Tai to investigate, under Section 301 of the Trade Act, China's unfair policies and practices to undermine fair competition and dominate maritime, logistics and shipbuilding industries. Tai has pledged "to undertake a full and thorough investigation into the unions' concerns." ■

### WHERE TO GET VOTING INFORMATION:

Did you know that only 66.8% of the voting age population actually cast a ballot in 2020? With so much on the line, from preserving the right to organize to making sure that President Joe Biden's massive job-creating laws are fully enacted, it's never been more important to make your voice heard and to do your part to elect pro-worker candidates at all levels of government.

Get the information on where and how to vote in your state at [ibewgov.org/additional-resources](https://ibewgov.org/additional-resources) or by scanning the QR code. From there, you can download and print a flier with your state's specific information to share with others. ■



## GROUNDING IN HISTORY

### Lighting the Way in the Halls of Power

In 1932, at the height of the Great Depression, IBEW International President Howard Broach voiced the frustration of the nation: "We see no constructive effort to create jobs, no lessening of anti-union activities. Perhaps government and big business do not want a constructive labor movement, perhaps they want curtailed production and class warfare."

His message was clear: It was time for business and government to defend, not attack, labor's contribution to industrial progress. But for such a seismic cultural shift to succeed it would require a leader up to the challenge. With the election of Franklin D. Roosevelt that fall, the IBEW and the nation got exactly what they needed.

Having an ally of labor in the White House opened doors never thought possible. The first victory for the trades was the passage of the National Industrial Recovery Act, signed by FDR in May 1933. This groundbreaking legislation established labor-code language for maximum work hours, minimum wage and the right to collective bargaining. The National Labor Board was established to ensure employers' compliance with the act, and advisory committees were used to coordinate efforts between the board and the Labor Department.

Broach served on several of these committees, as did his successor, Daniel Tracy, who was appointed international president in July 1933. The expertise of IBEW's leadership would be an essential tool for the government's effort to combat economic stagnation. It was also a critical moment for the IBEW, with membership dwindling to 50,000.

Tracy hit the ground running and oversaw successful organizing drives at several NIRA projects, including the Tennessee Valley Authority, the Works Progress Administration and the Civilian Conservation Corps. These efforts laid the groundwork for the Rural Electrification Act, a project tailor-made for the IBEW.

As a construction and manufacturing boom was taking shape across the country thanks to FDR's New Deal policies, Tracy's leadership won recognition from the highest level of government. In 1935, he was appointed by FDR as the first American delegate to the International Labor Conference in Geneva. In 1938, he was appointed labor adviser to the secretary of state at the Pan American Conference in Peru.

By 1940, the results of having an ally in the White House and a dedication to big organizing drives were clear: IBEW membership had risen to 200,000.

As the U.S. emerged from the Great Depression, a new storm was on the horizon. War had broken out in Europe, and the U.S. needed to



International President Daniel Tracy took advantage of New Deal policies to organize vast swaths of workers.

mobilize its industrial strength. Again, FDR turned to the IBEW for its expertise and offered Tracy the role of assistant secretary of labor, a position that would oversee all military and war-related construction projects.

Tracy accepted the position in July 1940, stating, "I believe the interests of the IBEW and organized labor as a whole could best be served by having persons cognizant of the aims and interests of labor in key government positions." He served in this role until the end of the war.

Tracy was not the only IBEW leader whose expertise was called on to strengthen our country's industrial might. Joseph Keenan, a journeyman from Chicago Local 134, became secretary of the Chicago Federation of Labor in 1937. In 1940, he was transferred to Washington, D.C., to represent the American Federation of Labor on the National Defense Advisory Commission and the Office of Production Management, where he worked to mobilize the national defense.

In recognition of his leadership abilities, FDR appointed Keenan vice chairman for labor on the War Production Board in 1943. Assisting him was yet another IBEW leader, Edward Brown,



FDR appointed Local 134's Joseph Keenan vice chairman for labor on the War Production Board.

who had been appointed international president in 1940 after Tracy stepped down. Brown sat on the National Defense Mediation Board alongside Keenan, where they helped settle disputes between labor and management.

It was primarily through the efforts of these three men that the IBEW membership secured 95% of all defense-related electrical contract work during the war.

After the war, Keenan was sent to Germany to advise Gen. Lucius D. Clay and serve as President Harry Truman's special coordinator between labor and industry for reorganizing trade unions.

For his efforts in rebuilding war-torn Europe, he received the Presidential Medal of Merit, which is on display at the IBEW Museum in Washington, D.C.

In 1954, Keenan was elected international secretary, a position he held until his retirement in 1976. He served as labor liaison for John F. Kennedy's and Lyndon B. Johnson's election campaigns.



Edward Brown, who succeeded Tracy, sat on the National Defense Mediation Board.

As for Tracy, he was reelected international president in 1946 and served as Truman's labor delegate at the founding convention of the United Nations in 1947. He continued to strengthen the union's apprenticeship programs and established its first pension fund. At his retirement in 1954, IBEW membership was 650,000, making it the largest of all the AFL affiliates.

The level of success achieved by the IBEW, set during one of the darkest periods in recent history, is a testament to the skills of the membership. The election of a fierce labor ally in the White House gave the IBEW a seat at the table, and the union's leaders seized that opportunity to put members to work. ■

Visit [nbew-ibewmuseum.org](https://nbew-ibewmuseum.org) for more on how to support the IBEW's preservation of its history. Have an idea for this feature? Send it to [Curtis\\_Bateman@ibew.org](mailto:Curtis_Bateman@ibew.org).

# POWER AT WORK

## APPRENTICESHIPS

### W.Va. Local's Big New Building Will Deliver Training Closer to Home

A huge new state-of-the-art training facility now sits behind the union hall of Huntington, W.Va., Local 317, making good on the local's ambitious promise to greatly expand its apprenticeship and bring training closer to where many members live.

Local 317 Business Manager Shane Wolfe was joined by Fourth District International Vice President Gina Cooper and other IBEW and local dignitaries for the building's ribbon-cutting ceremony on May 31. A steady stream of construction and organizing opportunities and a growing market share were among the reasons for the expansion, he said.

"We outgrew our existing building," Wolfe said. "We'll continue to offer training in it, but the new one will let us offer additional and expanded training."

Wolfe said the new facility will help Local 317 train as many as 500 apprentices per year — more than eight times the previous capacity. "It'll be ready for full operation when apprenticeship classes resume in September," he said.

"This training center represents more than just a building," Cooper said. "It embodies a commitment to empowering individuals, fostering growth, and nurturing the talents that will drive our future."

The \$4 million, 10,000-square-foot facility, with its 45-foot-high ceiling, boasts plenty of room for year-round training on utility pole and bucket safety, plus a conduit lab for wire-pulling instruction.

"We'd talked about doing this for years, and talked with NECA all along the way," Wolfe said, referring to the IBEW's partners at the National Electrical Contractors Association.

Funding for the expansion came from Local 317's general fund. "Our members were on board, and our contractors were more than willing to supply it" with their equipment, Wolfe said.

For decades, Local 317's union hall and the original Joint Apprenticeship Training Committee building next door have been good neighbors within Huntington's largely residential West End community, something that helped smooth the



buying of houses and vacant lots behind the hall to make room for the new facility, as well as the work with city leaders to rezone the parcels as "neighborhood commercial."

"Our neighbors have thanked us for spending money here" to develop the area, Wolfe said.

Construction of the new building began in fall 2022. "We made certain our members helped build it," Wolfe noted.

Local 317's nearly 1,500 members work in inside and outside construction, line clearance tree trimming, radio and television, telephone, and utility in 24 counties in West Virginia, 15 in eastern Kentucky, 19 in southwestern Virginia and two in southeastern Ohio.

The local's sprawling jurisdiction was top of mind in the decision to expand: Until recently, members who needed outside construction or utility training often had to get it at the IBEW's



Huntington, W.Va., Local 317's new training center — right behind the hall in Huntington — will be able to take 500 apprentices per year, more than eight times the previous capacity. At left, Mike Browning from independent Sen. Joe Manchin's office addresses the crowd at the May 31 ribbon-cutting ceremony.

American Line Builders Apprenticeship and Training facility in Medway, Ohio, near Dayton.

"For us near Huntington to go two and a half hours to Medway is not as bad, as opposed to someone in southwestern Virginia who has to go five or six hours," Wolfe said. One such member is Daniel Cooper, a Wytheville, Va., resident whom Wolfe noted with pride was honored at this spring's IBEW Construction and Maintenance Conference as Instructor of the Year.

"This will help all of our members and their families," Wolfe said. "We'll still be using Medway, but now they can release instructors to use us" as a closer satellite facility.

A good portion of Local 317's growth, Wolfe said, has come from ongoing organizing wins, such as the nearly 100 new members recently brought in from telecom firms New River Telecom and Thayer Power and Communication.

"It's definitely a recruiting tool when they see our new facility," he said.

The business manager said his local's substation and transmission line work outlook is strong, as is the forecast for inside construction jobs, thanks largely to two IBEW signatory contractors that are employing Local 317 members on the \$3.1 billion Nucor steel mill being built near Point Pleasant, W.Va.

"We have roughly 50 members on site now, with 150 at peak in mid-summer," Wolfe said, and as many as 70 maintenance jobs could become available for the IBEW when construction finishes in the next few years.

"I told them, 'Let's do a bang-up job on this so you can stay with it for 20 to 30 years,'" he said. "That's a good way to keep our folks close to home."

Also on hand for the May 31 grand opening were Michael Browning, a member of West Virginia Sen. Joe Manchin's staff, and Jennifer Wheeler, a former Huntington City Council member who is running to replace term-limited Mayor Steve Williams, a longtime Local 317 friend now running for governor.

Wolfe also noted that state Del. Evan Worrell, who represents the greater Huntington area and leads the Legislature's two-dozen-member Republican Labor Caucus, was there, too.



Fourth District International Vice President Gina Cooper cuts the ribbon on Local 317's vast new training facility. She's joined by, from left, Local 317 Treasurer Chad Simmons, Vice President Lance Moore, Business Manager Shane Wolfe, Executive Board member Gary Murray, Recording Secretary Tim Akers and Executive Board member John Jackson.

# TRANSITIONS

RETIRED

## Todd Newkirk



Seventh District International Representative Todd Newkirk retired June 15, capping a 30-year career that took him from organizing his nuclear power station in Kansas to testifying before Congress and helping launch the Utility Code of Excellence, among other achievements.

“They say you can judge the value of someone by the size of the hole they leave. Todd has left a big hole. It’s going to be hard to fill,” said Paul Lira, former Topeka, Kan., Local 304 business manager and a longtime colleague of Newkirk.

A master instrumentation and control technician by trade and member since 1994, Brother Newkirk came into the IBEW when he helped organize his fellow workers at the Wolf Creek Generating Station. It took a few tries. But once the drive was successful, it earned the designation of being the only nuclear plant to be organized through a National Labor Relations Board petition for the initial unit and not through accreditation, or gaining new members by adding them to an existing unit, Newkirk said.

It was also where Newkirk met former Seventh District International Vice President Jon Gardner, who was then an organizer assigned to the campaign. Rumor had it that Newkirk was a potential union supporter, so Gardner went out to visit him.

“I take pride in knowing that I was the first IBEW representative to talk to Todd,” Gardner said. “I’ll admit I was a little nervous when I knocked on his door. House calls can be interesting. You never know when you’ll get a gun in your face. But Todd invited me in and we talked for over two hours. That’s when the campaign got started. He built my confidence up, and I realized we could really do something.”

They lost the first vote by a relatively small margin, Gardner recalled, but with Newkirk’s input, they tried again the next year and were successful, organizing the roughly 200-person unit into Local 304.

“I can’t overemphasize how important Todd’s efforts and support were in securing that victory,” Gardner said.

After serving as a steward, negotiator and organizer at the plant, Newkirk was hired by Local 304 as an assistant business manager in 1997. In that role, he continued to negotiate, and he handled grievances and served on several employer-sponsored and state-certified apprenticeship training committees. He also earned a reputation as a disciplined, procedure-driven guy with a penchant for data.

“I was a ‘fly by the seat of my pants’ type. Todd was the opposite,” said Lira, who worked with Newkirk when they were both assistant business managers. “We made a good team. We complemented each other.”

By 2004, Newkirk had caught the eye of the international office and was hired on as an international representative in the Utility Department working on generation, renewables and environmental legislation. Working in Washington, D.C., was an eye-opening experience, Newkirk said.

“I had no clue how big our need to have good politics to back workers and families was until

then. Before that, most of my corporate worker life was inside a fence,” he said.

Newkirk’s duties took him all the way to Congress, where he testified on the importance of Helmets to Hardhats, which helps servicemembers find jobs in the unionized trades after finishing their military service. He also worked with the Nuclear Regulatory Commission, where he pushed for new nuclear projects and fought deregulation at the state level.

“Part of my job was to visit jobsites. Being run off nonunion ones was always a special kind of fun,” he recalled.

Newkirk was also part of the team that introduced the Code of Excellence to the IBEW’s utility members, something he did alongside then-International President Edwin D. Hill.

“President Hill shared some of his personal experiences as an IBEW leader at about every Pennsylvania town we rolled through while wheeling his car through hills and curves like he was on the NASCAR circuit,” Newkirk said. “It was priceless.”

In 2009, Newkirk moved back to Kansas, where he serviced all the branches throughout the Seventh District. He also has the distinction of serving on the Kansas State Workforce Board under both Republican and Democratic governors.

“Todd didn’t see the political, just right and wrong,”

Lira said. “He could talk to anyone. He’s very straightforward. It was always about getting the job done.”

In any role he had, Newkirk could be counted on for having a handle on the relevant data, and he had a knack for interpreting dense material,” Lira said.

“Todd could wear people out with details,” Gardner said. “It helped with negotiations and arbitration, though. I’m pretty sure there were times when he got companies to settle just by drowning them in discovery.”

Looking back at his tenure with the IBEW, Newkirk said the confidence he gained and things he learned during his first union campaign sparked his interest in organizing, and he thanked Gardner and others, including then-International Representative Steve Moulin, for inspiring him.

“I honestly still believe organizing our power plant saved it from being sold or shut down,” he said, noting that the plant is slated to keep running until 2045. “Today, we would be considered a Code of Excellence success story, but back then it was just taking care of business the right way with good leadership.”

Newkirk said the bargaining unit at Wolf Creek has grown to roughly 450 members, which is no small task in a right-to-work state.

“If you have not worked on organizing campaigns in a right-to-work state, you don’t know what you’re missing,” he said. “Today, my family knows choosing the IBEW was the right choice. Thirty years ago, several family elders thought I was risking the best job within 500 miles and that I’d be fired for seeking representation. But we persevered. Now, seeing second-generation IBEW workers at the facility covered by the contract that was originally ratified by their working parents in 1994 is a special, warm feeling.”

Now that Brother Newkirk is retired, he said he’s got some projects around the house that need his attention, and he’d like to see Willie Nelson play again. But mostly he’s looking forward to

“Evan votes 99.9% with us,” Wolfe said, adding that during Worrell’s election campaigns, “our members have canvassed for him.” The caucus backs traditionally labor-friendly policies such as apprenticeships and restoring prevailing-wage provisions for state-financed projects, policies in opposition to the state Republican Party’s platform.

Wolfe told WSAZ-TV that he hopes the new training facility will encourage more young people to consider careers in the electrical field.

“I would recommend any students that are not college-bound and they still want to work with their hands and provide for their families doing that type of work, come see us, we are hiring. We will continue to be hiring,” Wolfe said. ■

### IN ACTION

## IBEW Clout at the White House



“It was awesome!” That’s how Allentown, Pa., Local 375 Business Manager Paul Anthony, pictured speaking above, described a day at the White House solely for IBEW local leaders from Pennsylvania. Their meetings with Biden-Harris administration officials from the Energy, Transportation, Commerce and other departments focused on the surging opportunities for IBEW members, as billions of dollars for infrastructure and other projects pour into their state. Similar summits have been held for Wisconsin and Michigan locals, with others in the planning stages. Meanwhile, the White House has hosted scores of IBEW members at “Communities in Action” events to discuss job-creating investments in individual states.



A recent gathering of Alaskan stakeholders included Anchorage Local 1547 Business Manager Doug Tansy and apprentice Jana Mabie, pictured above. Citing attention from Cabinet members and other high-ranking White House staff, as well as subsequent meetings with the Alaska delegation on Capitol Hill, Tansy said it’s clear that labor is no longer on the sidelines. “It was extremely encouraging to be welcomed into the conversation and to be asked what we’re looking for, consideration of our wishes and needs,” he said. “We asked for training funds, we asked for funding for power storage, we asked for a lot of stuff.” Tansy said he also came away with invaluable White House contacts, as Anthony and guests at other events also stressed. “We always say, ‘President Biden’s union friendly,’ Anthony said. “But he’s also really friendly with the IBEW, and we really appreciate that.” ■

TRANSITIONS continued on page 14

## TRANSITIONS *continued*

making up for the lost time he spent on the road and away from his family.

“I have a tribe of grandkids ready to make that happen,” he said.

Newkirk and his wife, Tonya, also have plans to see Europe, where they intend to travel by train with only backpacks.

“If Henry Miller started the IBEW more than 130 years ago on a train, why can’t we give it a shot?” he said. ■

### APPOINTED Al Davis



International Representative Al Davis, who successfully handled numerous agreements — and disagreements — as business manager of Las Vegas Local 357, has been appointed director of the Council on Industrial Relations/Bylaws and

Appeals Department.

Davis has served the IBEW at the International Office since 2019, when then-International President Lonnie R. Stephenson asked him to come to Washington and work in the Construction and Maintenance Department. A year later, Stephenson gave him an opportunity to work with the CIR/Bylaws team.

“As a business manager, I’d seen how the CIR worked from that side,” Davis said. “When I got here, it was what I expected it to be.”

Founded in 1920 and considered the U.S. labor movement’s oldest dispute resolution system, the Council on Industrial Relations is unique in that it partners the IBEW with the National Electrical Contractors Association to help most of the union’s construction locals get their disputes arbitrated by a group of their industry peers.

“That’s better than going on strike,” Davis said.

From his birth in Ventura, Calif., Davis was exposed to the IBEW via his traveling journeyman wireman father, also named Al. The younger Davis spent a lot of his free time with the older one as he went where work could be found.

The family eventually settled in Las Vegas, and in 1981, as a favor to his father, Davis gave college a try at the University of Nevada, Las Vegas, aided by a scholarship through Local 357. After the end of his junior year, though, Davis left UNLV and headed into the desert heart of Nevada and worked as a laborer, then as an inspector, at the Tonopah Test Range, a nuclear weapons development facility operated by the U.S. departments of Defense and Energy.

While Davis was at Tonopah, Local 357 Business Manager Cecil Wynn, a longtime family friend, asked him to be the local’s “inside person” there, relaying management information to Wynn as a “pepper.”

When Davis’ position was eliminated a short time later, Wynn offered him a Local 357 apprenticeship in exchange for his service as a salt on a mostly nonunion hotel construction project. Wynn was true to his word, and in May 1989, Davis was initiated into Local 357, where he quickly went on to serve on, and later lead, his local’s Organizing, Picket and Welfare committees.

Davis also taught at Local 357’s Joint Apprenticeship and Training Committee. In 2003, the local hired him as a full-time organizer. The following year, he was promoted to director of organizing.

In 2009, Davis became assistant business manager. Two years later, he was appointed

business manager, a position he went on to hold for three elected terms, until his 2019 appointment to the International Office.

In January 2022, after more than two years with CIR/Bylaws, Stephenson appointed Davis as director of the Inside Construction Organizing Department. Six months later, Stephenson asked Davis to return to CIR/Bylaws and work again with Mike Kwashnik, the department’s director since 2017.

“We worked hand in hand every day, as a team,” Kwashnik said. “We both saw every item that came into the office. Together we reviewed and recommended every item that was submitted to the department for approval of the international president. Al is well versed in every aspect of the department and a great asset to the IBEW.”

Among his many CIR/Bylaws duties, Davis fully participated in each of the council’s quarterly three-day meetings. “I served during the pandemic, too,” he said, with sessions held via teleconference rather than in-person in Washington. “That was a lot of work.”

As the department’s name implies, though, there’s more to the CIR/Bylaws job than resolving disputes. The department handles locals’ charter requests and proposed bylaw changes, for example, along with amalgamations and defunctions and any resulting membership transfers and contract changes. CIR/Bylaws also reviews locals’ purchases, renovations and other expenditures, and it processes election disputes and appeals to the international president and to conventions.

“There’s just a lot of moving pieces,” Davis said. “It keeps it interesting.”

The department is responsible, as well, for implementing the changes and updates to the IBEW’s pattern bylaws resulting from amendments to the IBEW Constitution that are adopted at the union’s international conventions. Ensuring that the changes from the most recent convention in 2022 get accurately made in the bylaws of the union’s nearly 800 locals “has been a daunting task,” Davis said.

“As a business manager, you think you know the constitution,” he said. “Here, you learn something new every day.”

Davis’ appointment as director was effective July 1. Kwashnik, a member and former business manager of Wilkes-Barre, Pa., Local 163, now serves his home Third District’s office as an international representative.

“Al is well prepared to take the department into the future,” Kwashnik said. “I’m 100% confident he’ll do a fantastic job as the new department director.”

Davis and his wife, Vicki, have been married since 2000. They have one daughter, Lauren.

Please join the IBEW’s officers and staff in wishing Brother Davis the best of luck in his new role. ■

### APPOINTED Danielle M. Eckert



Danielle Eckert has been appointed assistant to the international president for government affairs, effective July 1, capping a meteoric rise through the IBEW from new member to leading one of the most effective political operations in

the country.

Only 10 years ago, Eckert was a forklift

operator for Norfolk Southern in her hometown of Altoona, Pa., waiting for the results of a test to become a locomotive electrician. When she passed, she joined Altoona Local 2273, and the trajectory of her life changed.

Today, Eckert is as likely to be found at the White House or on Capitol Hill as at a local union hall or a factory floor. Since coming to the International Office in 2014, Sister Eckert has become one of the most effective advocates for unions in the country and helped build — along with Austin Keyser, the outgoing assistant to the international president — the IBEW’s Government Affairs department into one of the most influential political organizations in the history of the American labor movement.

“There is no one in D.C. like Danielle, and everyone in D.C. who meets her knows it,” Keyser said. “There are plenty of smart people and hard-working people here, people who are experts on policies because they’ve studied it. When Danielle talks about changing the American economy to serve working people, congresspeople know, their staff know, the president knows, she is not just representing our members, she is our membership. And that makes her unshakable.”

Back in 2012, Eckert had just started as a union janitor for Norfolk Southern and was grateful for the chance.

It was a far cry from her dream of becoming a high school government teacher, the career she’d gotten her college degree for and joined the Army Reserves to pay for.

But it was a start, and it led to the forklift job and offered a promise of more and better.

She needed that start badly. A succession of substitute teaching jobs — and moonlighting at a convenience store — wasn’t providing anything like the stability she wanted for her young family, even when she was offered a position at the chain’s corporate office.

Joining Norfolk Southern looked like a lifeline when an Army “battle buddy” and IBEW member recommended it to her. She knew plenty of people who would have given their right arm for a shot at the steady income and good benefits a union railroad job offered.

“I was married, had Charlee and was working at Sheetz,” Eckert said. “We couldn’t make ends meet with daycare.”

After joining Local 2273, Eckert said, she didn’t exactly throw herself into local politics, but she volunteered to do the things the local needed that no one was doing: organizing events and outings for the members, organizing the Christmas party at the train shed.

But she began volunteering for more formal positions at the local, first as registrar and then, in 2019, running for and winning a seat on the executive board. Almost immediately, Eckert was furloughed from the operator position.

“I thought I would have to look for work and leave the IBEW,” she said.

Local 2273 Chairman Dan Dorsch told her not to leave yet and launched a campaign to find a place for her, putting her resume in the hand of Mike Welsh, then the Third District international vice president. It worked. In 2020, International President Lonnie Stephenson appointed Eckert as an international representative in the Political and Legislative Affairs Department.

“She was one of the best students we ever had here,” Dorsch said. “Dani is a very hard worker and a fast learner, and she has a work ethic that can’t be beat.”

A year later, Stephenson appointed her director of the department, making her one of the youngest directors in the history of the IBEW.

In the four years since her appointment, the

IBEW forged a series of legislative accomplishments that did the most for organized labor in America since the New Deal nearly a century ago.

The American Rescue Plan, the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law, the Inflation Reduction Act, and the CHIPS and Science Act transformed the economic consensus that had dominated American political thinking since Ronald Reagan was elected in 1980.

“We rejected the idea that the purpose of the American economy is to make rich people richer, and we built a team of policy experts that could lay out what an alternative should look like,” Eckert said. “In the Biden administration, we had partners who didn’t just let us in to talk — something the Trump administration never let us do — they put us at the table. And when everyone else left the room, the president asked us to stay. On policy after policy, the president made it clear that unless we said yes, he was saying no.”

How deeply the IBEW, Stephenson and the renamed Government Affairs Department were involved in crafting many of those bills is not widely known, but at key moments, representatives of the IBEW were the critical voices in the passage of these bills.

Eckert said the clearest example of this came very late in negotiations over President Joe Biden’s most important and most personal legislative accomplishment, the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law. Some of the more conservative senators were refusing to include language about prevailing wage standards in a part of the bill.

“Three days before it passed, we were not endorsing the bill. We had been working on this bill for 18 months, and it was about to die,” she said. “The president called President Stephenson and said, ‘I heard you’re not happy.’ We held up that bill until we got what we needed for our members — and the president was able to deliver.”

Eckert said what surprises her the most about the last four years is how closely the union works with lawmakers and the people who implement the laws.

“It’s way more collaborative than I imagined it would be. We have direct lines into the Department of Energy, the Treasury, that are priceless for creating and protecting our work. I never thought Capitol Hill offices would reach out to us, but they want our input,” she said.

Eckert said her top priority in the short term will be working with locals to explain why reelecting Biden is so critical: “We are choosing between two futures,” she said.

In one, the IBEW continues to change our economy by winning more power and resources for working families.

In the other, the economic changes the IBEW has made are reversed and working people settle for anger and having people to blame.

“I know people feel left behind. So much of my own family feels like they were abandoned, and they are angry about it, and rightly so,” she said. “But having someone to blame doesn’t pay for daycare. Anger doesn’t get your kid braces. Power does. And right now, unions have power, but it could all slip away.”

Please join the officers and staff in wishing Sister Eckert the best as she assumes her new role. ■

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# LOCAL LINES

## Brotherhood and Fair Compensation

L.U. 16 (i), EVANSVILLE, IN — Our local invites all those who support the labor movement to the weekly brotherhood nights after work on Wednesdays at Taylor’s 2 Steakhouse in Oakland City, Ind. This is a great time and place for everyone to catch up with one another in a relaxed setting.

The annual Turkey Testicle Festival was in April. This outpouring of generosity was once again successful in raising several thousand dollars for members in need. Many thanks to all who made this event possible and to everyone who came to support this worthwhile cause.

The hall recently signed an agreement with Sargent Electric for an incentivized pay scale on its battery storage project at the AES Indiana facility in Petersburg. Based on their current schedule, journeymen and apprentices can each receive up to \$300 in additional compensation per week.

After several weeks of fruitless negotiations, Business Manager Ryan McRoberts was forced to go to the Council on Industrial Relations to fight for a fair and equitable contract for the membership. Details of the results will be available on our website ([ibewlocal16.com](http://ibewlocal16.com)) and at union meetings.

*Donald P. Beavin, P.S.*

## Rebuilding Baltimore

L.U. 24 (es,i&spa), BALTIMORE, MD — Greetings from Charm City. After the tragedy of the collapse of Baltimore’s Francis Scott Key Bridge in March, many industries across Maryland were forced to temporarily close. Local 24 signatory contractor Mona Electric Group got to work wiring temporary trailers for the salvage and recovery efforts at the site.

As of this writing, the channel to the Port of Baltimore has been reopened, and port-related



*Local 24 Business Manager Mike McHale at the bill signing in Annapolis, Md., thanking Gov. Wes Moore for his legislative work this session.*

businesses are getting back to work. It will be years before the bridge over the Patapsco River is rebuilt, and current estimates put the earliest completion date in fall 2028. We’d like to recognize all of our union brothers and sisters, especially those in the International Longshoremen’s Association, for their work to help reopen Baltimore for business.

In other news, bills signed into law in Maryland this legislative session included the Critical Infrastructure Streamlining Act of 2024 (SB0474). This makes it easier for customers with large back-up generation requirements to build in our state.

Additionally, Gov. Wes Moore signed the Brighter Tomorrow Act (SB0783) and the Working for Accessible Renewable Maryland Thermal Heat (WARMTH) Act (HB0397). These newly enacted laws include strong labor language on solar and network geothermal projects.

Live Better/Work Union.

*Mike McHale, B.M.*

## Local 26 Congratulates Graduates and Scholarship Recipients

L.U. 26 (ees,em,es,govt,i&mt), WASHINGTON, DC — On June 1, the 78th annual JATC graduation ceremony was held. Congratulations to all the graduates!

Local 26 is also proud to announce the four winners of this year’s Local 26 Scholarship Award:

1. Mariah Bispo, daughter of Brother Michael Bispo, graduated from Martinsburg High School and will be pursuing a major in exercise physiology and a minor in dance.
2. Penelope Blaydes, daughter of John Blaydes, graduated from Northside High School and plans on majoring in environmental science.
3. Natalie Bozman, daughter of Brother Jeffrey Bozman, graduated from Huntingtown High School and will be majoring in accounting.
4. Elizabeth Walsh, daughter of Brother Dennis Walsh, graduated from River Hill High School and will be pursuing a major in psychology.

Best wishes to the following retirees: Randy Boucher, Theodore Dingle Jr., Robert Hawthorne, Gales Higbie, Gregory Jviden, Timothy Johnson, Harold Lethbridge, Ron Meyer, William Poss, Edward Rhoades, John Roberts Jr., Kenneth Robertson, Kenneth Shiflett, Leonard Sowards, Fonzie Taylor, Candi Whetstine, Daryl Whitt, Timothy Williamson, David Wilmot, Kenneth Woodside and Andrew Yansen.

The following members have passed away since our last article: William Blinkhorn Jr., Rick Bosarge, Christopher Broadnax, George Brown, Daniel Calvert, Charles Connor, Riley Gaines Jr., Steven Gerardi, William Noel, David Ross and Arthur Sharp.

*Joseph F. Dabbs, B.M.*

## Local 34 Celebrates 125 Years

L.U. 34 (em,i,mt,rts&spa), PEORIA, IL — 2024 has been a busy year for our local, and our work outlook remains strong with a 95% market share. Between our Peoria and Quincy apprenticeships, we graduated 40 apprentices and are projected to welcome 62 new incoming apprentices across our three classifications.

Local 34 would like to congratulate our Peoria Rivermen hockey team for winning the President’s Cup. As a proud sponsor, we were honored to have the trophy brought to the hall by the team for a photo op.

Our recently formed and chartered RENEW committee is gaining momentum and planning its first event, a bags tournament June 29.

Planning also continues for the celebration of our 125th year, to take place Oct. 11. The Milwaukee Tool Shed Band is scheduled to perform, and our 125th anniversary committee has designed some memorabilia to commemorate the event, including a book and a challenge coin. Happy anniversary, brothers and sisters, and I hope to see you all there!

*Zach Helms, P.S.*



*Local 34 leaders hold the President’s Cup won by the Peoria Rivermen hockey team.*

## COMET Delivered

L.U. 38 (i), CLEVELAND, OH — Organizers Tom Petrasek and Kevin Wilson, along with Business Manager Dan Gallagher and President Michael Muzic, once again taught COMET class to inside and VDV apprentices. COMET education is imperative on the importance of organizing, market share growth, and fulfilling the first object of the IBEW Constitution.

Work outlook for the inside and VDV branches continues to be strong. At the time of this writing, several projects are underway, including three large projects at Cleveland Clinic; Sherwin-Williams’ new global headquarters; Sherwin-Williams’

R&D center in Brecksville, Ohio; Rock & Roll Hall of Fame expansion; Progressive Field; Cleveland Police headquarters; Huntington Convention Center of Cleveland; and Fidelity Hotel. All of these projects are working under project labor agreements.

*Dan Gallagher, B.M.*



*Organizers presenting the COMET class to Local 38 fourth-year apprentices.*

## Honoring History, Lighting the Future: Local 40 Celebrates 100 Years

L.U. 40 (em,i&mps), HOLLYWOOD, CA — Our local celebrated its 100th anniversary May 4 at Warner Bros. Studios, featuring facades from movies and television and props such as the Batmobile and the iconic “Friends” couch.

Business Manager Stephan Davis and guest speakers celebrated the union’s history. Davis praised the journey from humble beginnings, “where a handful of determined individuals dared to dream of a better future, to the present, where our union stands stronger than ever, our journey has been nothing short of extraordinary.”

Notable speakers included International President Kenneth W. Cooper and International Secretary-Treasurer Paul Noble, who applauded



*From left, International Secretary-Treasurer Paul Noble, Business Manager Stephan Davis and International President Kenneth W. Cooper celebrate Local 40’s 100-year anniversary.*

## Submitting Local Lines Articles

Local Lines are printed monthly on an alternating even/odd local number schedule. They can be submitted by designated press secretaries or union officers via our online form. For deadlines and questions, please visit [ibew.org/media-center/submitting-local-lines](http://ibew.org/media-center/submitting-local-lines) or email [locallines@ibew.org](mailto:locallines@ibew.org).

We make every effort to assist local unions in publishing useful and relevant local union news; however, all final content decisions are made by our editorial team. Please adhere to a 200-word limit.

If you have an idea for an Electrical Worker story, please contact the Media Department at (202) 728-6219 or [media@ibew.org](mailto:media@ibew.org).

## Trade Classifications

(as) Alarm & Signal	(et) Electronic Technicians	(mps) Motion Picture Studios	(rts) Radio-Television Service
(ars) Atomic Research Service	(fm) Fixture Manufacturing	(nst) Nuclear Service Technicians	(so) Service Occupations
(bo) Bridge Operators	(govt) Government	(o) Outside	(s) Shopmen
(cs) Cable Splicers	(i) Inside	(p) Powerhouse	(se) Sign Erector
(catv) Cable Television	(it) Instrument Technicians	(pet) Professional, Engineers & Technicians	(spa) Sound & Public Address
(c) Communications	(lctt) Line Clearance Tree Trimming	(ptc) Professional, Technical & Clerical	(st) Sound Technicians
(cr) Cranemen	(lpt) Lightning Protection Technicians	(rr) Railroad	(t) Telephone
(ees) Electrical Equipment Service	(mt) Maintenance	(rtb) Radio-Television Broadcasting	(tm) Transportation Manufacturing
(ei) Electrical Inspection	(mo) Maintenance & Operation	(rtm) Radio-Television Manufacturing	(u) Utility
(em) Electrical Manufacturing	(mow) Manufacturing Office Workers	(ws) Warehouse and Supply	(uow) Utility Office Workers
(es) Electric Signs	(mar) Marine		

*Efforts are made to make this list as inclusive as possible, but the various job categories of IBEW members are too numerous to comprehensively list all.*

## LOCAL LINES

the union's Hollywood contributions. President Cooper emphasized the union's role in building Hollywood: "What you've done for the last century here in Hollywood is truly amazing."

Noble referenced the current contract negotiations between Local 40 and the studios. "Hollywood is making big profits, and workers deserve a piece of that success," Noble said. He added, "Our movement is going to grow bigger and stronger than ever, and the IBEW is leading the way."

The event honored retired Business Manager Tim Dixon for his service, and he spoke about the union's founding: "While it's almost impossible for us to comprehend what the founding 12 members [of Local 40] went through to form this union, I don't think there's any way that they could imagine that Local 40 would survive 100 years ago, let alone what we've achieved in that time."

The event honored the resilience, progress and solidarity of Local 40. But it also looked to the next generation of members, as Business Manager Davis urged a renewed commitment "to building a future worthy of the sacrifices made by those who came before us, and to fight for a world where every worker is treated with dignity and respect."

Congratulations to Local 40 on 100 years!

*Stephan Davis, B.M./F.S.*

## We Don't Bluff

L.U. 46 (as,c,cs,em,es,et,i,mar,mo,mt,rtb,rts&st), SEATTLE, WA — Our local's Limited Energy unit began negotiations in January. Unfortunately, negotiations did not go well, with NECA's Puget Sound chapter being unwilling to discuss basic quality-of-life improvements, such as paid holidays and safety equipment, with our team.

With record-breaking turnout, our unit voted to go on strike, which started April 11. Hundreds of our members were out daily on the picket line.

It has been amazing to witness the dedication of our members. They were out on the line at 3 a.m. in the rain, no matter whether they were sick or hurting. Our support members came in at 4 a.m. every morning to make sure that they have



*Local 46 Limited Energy strike general and captains.*

breakfast and lunch out on the line.

We would like to thank all the locals that shared their support, whether it be financially to our strike fund or with a photo and comment on our social media. Your support empowers us to continue in our fight.

While our siblings from Local 46 and other trades in the area have shown great support, we have also seen apathy and disregard from our own local family. Too many actively disregarded the picket and crossed lines. Ask yourself what solidarity means to you. Are you proud as you walk past your family as they stand on the street fighting to improve their lives and yours? We hope you choose to be a better union sibling. We are all stronger when we stand together — don't let them divide us!

We managed to reach a record contract and end the strike.

One day longer — one day stronger!

*Megan Kirby, P.S.*

## A Growing City

L.U. 124 (ees,em,i,mar,rts,se,spa,t&ptc), KANSAS CITY, MO — Brothers and sisters, as many of you know, there's much happening in Kansas City in 2024, with more work to come!

On the Missouri side, Building 3 of Meta is ongoing and is expected to staff up this summer. The South Loop Project, a four-block park cap over Interstate 670, is just a few million dollars shy of its fundraising campaign, but the difference should be easily obtained. They are expecting two of the four blocks to be completed before the 2026 FIFA World Cup.

On the Kansas side, the Panasonic battery plant is still in its first phase and continues to staff up. On May 29, Gov. Laura Kelly signed into a law a bill passed unanimously by the Kansas Legislature that greatly improved worker's compensation in the state. One of the measures of the bill increased the maximum compensation available for injured workers or their dependents and tied it to cost of living, with automatic increases to compensation levels to make sure it doesn't fall behind in the future. Before the signing, Kansas was ranked 50th in workers' compensation.

The negotiations team has been working hard for a couple of months and is nearing an end. The new contract, pending approval from the membership, starts Aug. 26.

*Bo Moreno, B.M.*

## MCL Benefit Upgrades

L.U. 134 (c,catv,em,govt,i,mt,rtb,rts,spa&t), CHICAGO, IL — The Midwest Coalition of Labor was established in 2018 by five building trades unions in Chicago. The MCL mission is to provide top-tier benefits at the lowest possible costs. Adding value to union membership without increasing costs enhances loyalty and enriches member experience. Today, the MCL proudly represents more than 300,000 members from 400 locals in 14 states. In March 2024, the new MCL handbook was released, with substantial upgrades to current benefits and some new offers as well. The free \$10,000 life insurance policy that all active Local 134 members would receive has been upgraded to \$15,000.

Also, \$5,000 in free accidental death and dismemberment coverage is available to all active union members, with the option to purchase additional coverage. A variety of new programs include



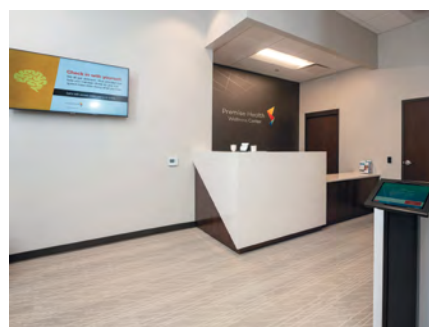
*Local 164's class of 2024.*

discounted hearing aids (made in America), discounted hotels, a conceal and carry insurance program, tax preparation, and free roadside assistance.

Most members have opted to enroll and purchase up to \$365,000 in additional life insurance with no medical exam and no questions asked. Please take the time to review the MCL handbook to see the benefits available to all Local 134 members. More information is available at [coalitionoflabor.org/union/ibew-local-134](http://coalitionoflabor.org/union/ibew-local-134).

Brothers and sisters, please stay tuned as this administration moves closer to galvanizing our commitment to expand access to affordable primary care. Soon we will be integrating with the Premise Health Wellness Center in Northbrook, Ill.

*Donald Finn, B.M./F.S.*



*Local 134 will partner with Premise Health Wellness Center in Northbrook Ill., to expand member access to affordable primary care.*

## Local 150 Celebrates 110 Years of Solidarity

L.U. 150 (es,i,rts&spa), WAUKEGAN, IL — On April 29, 1914, at 8:10 p.m., our local became a reality for 15 dedicated charter members whose foresight and commitment to the cause of labor solidified and enabled our success over the last 110 years. Local 150's current members owe much of the benefits and prosperity we have today to the pioneering efforts of our founding brothers. The roll call of our great labor leaders is as follows: W. Browne, W. Dalton, A. Flood, R. Greensled, C. Hawker, H. Homer, J. Hoover, H. Huber, E. Jones, F. Lener, J. Miller, F. Miller, T. Mitchell, E. Swan and O. Swan.

Our history is one of great accomplishment, brotherhood and union solidarity. As current members, let us continue this path, ensuring our future to be even brighter than our past. God bless the IBEW and Local 150!

Brothers and sisters, look out for our new apprentices in the field. Include, encourage and promote the Brotherhood, participation in our events and safety on all jobsites!

Mark your calendars: Aug. 17 is our annual golf outing, and Aug. 24-25 is the IBEW softball tournament in Champaign, Ill. Call the hall (847-680-1504) to sign up for these events.

Solidarity forever!

*Aaron M. Rendon, R.S.*



*From left, Executive Director Kwatuuma Cole Sayers of Clean Energy BC; Local 258 B.M./F.S. Cody Gatzke; Minister of Energy, Mines and Low Carbon Innovation Josie Osbourne; BC Hydro President/CEO Chris O'Riley; and President Merran Smith of New Economy Canada.*

## Local 164's Class of 2024

L.U. 164 (c,em,i,o&t), JERSEY CITY, NJ — At our May general meeting, we acknowledged and celebrated the accomplishments of the inside electrical class of 2024. These young electricians completed their related instruction requirements and are close to completing their apprenticeship. Soon, they will all be moving into the next exciting phase of their career as journeyman wiremen.

Special acknowledgment and congratulations are in order for apprentice Marcel Miller, who achieved the highest GPA for the 2023-2024 semester with 97.35%. Marcel also received the Local 164 "Top Dog" award for achieving the highest average over his five-year apprenticeship with 96.18%.

Business Manager Dan Gumble; President Tom Sullivan; and the members, officers and staff of Local 164 and the JATC congratulate the apprentices and wish them a safe, healthy and prosperous career as Local 164 journeymen. We know you will represent the IBEW and Local 164 with pride.

*Warren Becker, V.P./P.S.*

## Local 258 Prepares to Answer BC Hydro's Call for Power

L.U. 258 (ees,em,lctt,o&u), VANCOUVER, BC — BC Hydro has announced its first call for power in 15 years. The purpose of the call is to ensure clean, renewable and affordable electricity for people in British Columbia and to create jobs as the province's economy grows.

The corporation is looking to work with First Nations and local independent power producers to procure 3,000 gigawatt-hours per year, enough to increase BC Hydro's current power supply by 5% and power more than 250,000 homes or 1 million electric vehicles per year. Projects arising from this call are estimated to create as many as 1,500 jobs per year.

Local 258 has launched a campaign to advocate for the funding of projects that benefit local communities, use local contractors and employ unionized workers.

Business Manager/Financial Secretary Cody Gatzke commented: "The IBEW is prepared to answer BC Hydro's call for power by providing the skilled workforce that independent power

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producers, power line contractors and BC Hydro require to construct and maintain the power system. We are proud to offer the only power line technician apprenticeship program in British Columbia. The IBEW stands behind the utilization of B.C.-based contractors and union workers, ensuring that economic and reconciliation opportunities benefit local communities.”

*Emily Organ, P.S.*



Local 306's newest members from Horvath Electric.

## When It Rains, It Pours

L.U. 302 (i,rts&spa), MARTINEZ, CA — At the beginning of May, we had our annual golf tournament. The weather was interesting — it poured — the only day it rained the entire month. Once again, we would like to thank one of our retirees, Brother Steve Sloper, who was a great help in putting the tournament together. We would also like to congratulate the winning team: Matt MacDade, Keith Sanford, Reva Sanford and Niutao Tuimavave. In spite of the rain, they were able to post a score of 14 under.

This June, we celebrated the graduation of our inside apprentices. Local 302 congratulates the following members and their families and wishes them well in their future careers: Jonathan Belden, Alysia Blakeman, Christopher Broadnax, Canada Bryant, Phon Chanthanasak, Henry Cruz, Joseph Cruz, Brandon Dennison-Borja, Mikayla Ducey, Daniel Echeverria, Shane Giracca, Joseph Jensen, Thurston Johnson, Justin Kennard, Miles Mangoba, Jared Martinez, Dylan McCall, Andrew Mendoza, Mitchell Mikkelson, Caitlin Rich, Mauricio Sanchez, Dominic Sparacino, Jason Sullivan II and Jonathan Tejada. The local is proud to welcome them as new journeymen inside wiremen.

*Tom Hansen, B.M./F.S.*

## Collaborative Effort Brings In New Contractor

L.U. 306 (i), AKRON, OH — A recent collaborative effort among several northern Ohio IBEW locals, Thompson Electric and NECA resulted in Horvath Electric joining our ranks. Joining the IBEW expanded Horvath Electric's access to skilled labor and qualified personnel. This partnership can also

enhance job security, ensure fair wages and benefits for workers, and provide opportunities for professional development and training.

By welcoming Horvath Electric, the IBEW can expand its membership base and influence within the electrical contracting sector. It strengthens the union's bargaining power, increases solidarity among workers, and promotes the values of fairness, safety and professionalism in the industry.

Overall, this collaborative effort is a positive step towards fostering a strong and dynamic electrical industry that benefits both employees and employers.

I would like to welcome Nick Twitchell, the former owner of Horvath Electric, and the following new Local 306 members: Mark Abshire, Tristan Ange, Dale Clark, Jack Cruz, Christopher Foreman, Andrew Henderson, Matthew Jenne, Ian Lashua, Christopher Lyons, Antonio Pamas, Brandon Rice, James Scheel, Daniel Stopperich, Dominic Szuhay and Douglas Verbic.

In other news, I am pleased to inform you that both the residential and commercial contract negotiations have been successfully ratified. I extend my heartfelt congratulations to the residential and commercial graduates of 2024.

As we continue to grow and strengthen our union, let us remember the importance of solidarity and support for one another. Together we can achieve great things!

*Chuck Zittle, A.B.M.*

## Local 340 Advances Community Participation

L.U. 340 (i,rts&spa), SACRAMENTO, CA — In the first half of the year, our local had the privilege to

participate in many local community events. We hosted quite a few industry nights to help expand our membership and reach many more local hands. The local hosted trade shows in a few cities, including Yuba City, Chico, Citrus Heights and Elk Grove. We participated in Sacramento's Country in the Park. We reached our local high school in Elk Grove with our Taking It to the Streets event.

The local has also helped provide opportunities for growth for our members, such as COMET classes. We recently started a series of classes that we are excited to roll out for members who missed out during their apprenticeships due to COVID-19. We have had huge turnout for our new member orientation, an informational onboarding class for those new and returning to the union.

We are proud of the many strides Local 340 has taken. We hope the remainder of the year brings as much potential as we have seen thus far.

*Robert D. Ward, B.M.*

## Local 354 Gains Paid Holidays After Yearlong Campaign

L.U. 354 (i,lpt,mt,rts,spa,t&mo), SALT LAKE CITY, UT — The fight for worker's rights in "right to work" states often feels like an uphill battle, and it's difficult to know which issue to address when there are so many.

This is why Local 354 decided to put our focus on one specific goal, and thus began its Paid Holidays Campaign with Red Shirt Wednesdays. Every Wednesday, members of Local 354 wore their red shirts to their respective jobsites with these words printed on the back and sleeves: "Short Weeks Not Short Checks/Paid Holidays For All." The message seems to have been received, as an agreement was reached on the first offer. This is a sharp contrast to last year's bargaining process, which went to mediation. "What this shows us is that solidarity works," said Local 354 President Cody Lindsey.

*Alissa Skinner, P.S.*

## Hard Rock Rockford

L.U. 364 (catv,ees,em,es,i,mt,rts&spa), ROCKFORD, IL — The summer has just seemed to fly by for our local. We have had a fantastic year of work, with projects that keep coming as well as some major ones wrapping up.

Our Facebook project in Dekalb has roughly 350 IBEW members on site with work continuing into 2025. Expectations remain high that the

remaining two buildings will be built, but as of this writing, no confirmation has been given. This project continues to set the gold standard for construction, with all deadlines having been met or beaten. Many thanks to all our traveling sisters and brothers who have helped us staff our work through these unprecedented busy times.

Our project with Yukon Cold Storage is moving along nicely, with roughly 70 IBEW members on site and a price tag of \$1.2 billion for the overall project size, 1.3 million square feet.

We have multiple school projects either completed or wrapping up as the school year returns at the end of August.

Last, the Hard Rock Casino Rockford project looks to be completed and will open around Labor Day. This historic project is 30 years in the making and has finally come to fruition. Many long hours and hard work have gotten this project across the finish line, and Rockford couldn't be prouder.

*Brad F. Williams, P.S.*

## Local 488 Works St. Vincent's Medical Center Renovations

L.U. 488 (i&mt), BRIDGEPORT, CT — For more than 100 years, St. Vincent's Medical Center has been treating the health care needs of the Bridgeport community. Originally known as St. Vincent's Hospital, it was incorporated in 1903 and opened in 1905. In 1976, the old hospital moved to the new St. Vincent's Medical Center, a 440,000-square-foot building almost twice the size of the old one. The name was changed to reflect the organization's expansion and offering of comprehensive services.

Local 488 members have worked with St. Vincent's Medical Center on many expansion projects over the years, and we are proud to continue the center's expansion by renovating its third floor. The third floor, once known as the executive wing, will be converted into six state-of-the-art operating rooms, a new doctors' lounge and locker rooms. The Post-Anesthesia Care Unit, consisting of 35 patient beds adjacent to the operating rooms, will also be renovated. The total renovation by Elite Electrical Contractors LLC will be just under 30,000 square feet when it is completed in fall 2025.

*Jerome White, R.S.*

## Local 494 Holds Job Fair

L.U. 494 (em,i,mt,rts,spa,t&govt), MILWAUKEE, WI — In May, our local collaborated with NECA and hosted an electrical job fair at the Brookfield Conference Center. More than 160 potential members of all skill levels attended the fair. Attendees were interviewed by 21 local contractors, and some were offered employment on the spot.

The fair was staffed by Local 494 members and representatives, organizers from the surrounding locals, and the Sixth District. Attendees enjoyed how informative and helpful the event was for networking and career development. Just one week after the job fair, we signed up 10 new

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100% cotton orange unisex t-shirt. Features RENEW and NextGen logos on the sleeves and IBEW logo on full back.

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Pocket watch, gold-tone case with chain, custom embossed dial with IBEW logo and date. Watches have a two-year manufacturer's warranty.

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Local 488 members on site with Elite Electrical Contractors, LLC.

LOCAL LINES

members, with more potential members getting hired every day. All told, it was a great success.

We extend our heartfelt gratitude to all the attendees for their invaluable contribution to making this job fair a remarkable achievement. Your support and participation have set a high bar for upcoming electrical job fairs. We look forward to your continued involvement in our future endeavors.

Robert "Bob" Weber, Bus. Rep.



Local 494 member assisting job fair attendees at Brookfield Conference Center.



Local 654's proud new journeymen.

local wishes these new journeymen the best of luck and health in their future careers.

Christopher J. Schieler, P.S.

Classes Completed for Local 654 Apprentices

L.U. 654 (I), CHESTER, PA — Our local extends a huge congratulations to our graduating apprenticeship class. Seventeen men who started their journey in September 2019 completed five years of training May 1. These new journeymen are James Antolino, Anthony Argain, Brandon Ciminera,

Corey Curtin, Ean Diehl, Joseph Heck, Gabriel Kikut, Greg Kosmidis, Kevin Kuddar, Jason Kyriakos, Mac McClenahan, Daniel McKenna, Jeffrey Metzger, Donato Much, Evan Sides, Nick Van Horn and Al Watkins.

A celebration was held at the Philadelphia Union soccer stadium in Chester. This was a great time and perfect spot to celebrate, with the stadium having been built by Local 654 electricians. Our

Local 702 Members Walk in HerrinFesta Parade

L.U. 702 (as,c,catv,cs,em,es,et,govt,i,it,lctt,mo,mt,o,p,pet,ptc,rtb,rts,se,spa,st,t,u,uow&ws), WEST FRANKFORT, IL — We had a great turnout for the HerrinFesta Parade in Herrin, Ill., on May 25. Thank you to all of our members and their families who came out and enjoyed the day.

Work for the inside branch of Local 702 continues to ramp up. Solar work is in full swing, with five utility scale solar projects being built by Local 702 members.

Jamie Hatfield, A.B.M.



Local 702 members and their families at the HerrinFesta Parade.

In Memoriam

Local Surname	Date of Death	Local Surname	Date of Death	Local Surname	Date of Death	Local Surname	Date of Death	Local Surname	Date of Death	Local Surname	Date of Death
1 Jurotich, T. F.	5/24/24	9 Ellington, N.	3/22/24	48 Kruzchkov, E.	5/23/24	103 Hartman, M. F.	11/29/23	146 Long, T. W.	5/24/24	317 Cantor, R. A.	4/11/24
1 Mlynarczyk, J. A.	5/20/24	9 Hallam, R. L.	4/7/24	48 Uusitalo, A. R.	5/6/24	103 Nelson, P. M.	5/3/24	146 McClelland, C. E.	6/30/22	332 Guzman, A. D.	5/21/24
1 Nordmann, F. W.	5/17/24	9 Kent, J. A.	5/18/24	51 Jiles, J. E.	12/16/21	103 Sullivan, T. J.	2/28/24	150 Wells, R. A.	4/2/24	332 Rizzo, A. J.	4/17/24
1 Trimble, M. P.	3/5/24	11 Acton, D. W.	3/3/24	51 Wroblewski, R. J.	5/12/24	104 Caissie, C. H.	1/11/24	159 Yurs, J. S.	5/17/22	340 Frank, R. W.	3/21/24
2 Richardson, M. A.	5/2/24	11 McDonald, V. M.	1/13/22	53 Kunch, R. D.	3/12/22	105 Geroux, E.	11/11/22	164 Lach, R.	11/5/23	340 Morgera, F. R.	4/20/24
2 Rosenmiller, S. K.	9/28/23	11 Melbar, N. G.	12/29/23	57 Ashbaker, O. K.	5/12/24	105 Grigoras, C.	5/18/24	164 Mitschele, H. A.	5/24/24	340 Smith, D. E.	10/6/23
3 Basandella, V. G.	1/4/24	11 Mendoza, M. A.	1/14/24	57 Helmandollar, R. P.	3/24/23	106 Bigelow, J. M.	3/28/24	164 Roberge, P. D.	5/14/24	349 Ballantine, M. F.	5/22/24
3 Bremer, J. P.	4/13/24	11 Phipps, J.	5/27/24	57 Padgett, J. B.	5/13/24	109 Ibsen, J.	1/11/22	175 Taylor, W. L.	5/24/24	349 Griffis, D. V.	3/20/24
3 Calcano, J. C.	5/27/24	11 Schaerrer, M. L.	3/29/24	57 Wallgren, G. B.	3/25/24	110 Simon, M. D.	8/2/22	175 White, D. D.	5/30/24	349 Kipp, L. D.	1/8/24
3 Cimino, M. R.	1/15/24	11 Spenker, M. J.	2/18/24	58 Adams, D. W.	5/16/24	111 Wiese, N. E.	4/29/24	191 Johnson, D. E.	5/3/24	349 Smith, R. W.	1/25/17
3 Cohen, E. B.	3/16/22	11 Sylvia, R. F.	2/18/24	58 Kelly, J. P.	4/11/24	115 Green, E. L.	4/5/24	191 Van Riper, S. L.	5/15/24	349 Wessels, F.	5/16/24
3 Connelly, T. M.	5/2/24	16 Daggy, W. E.	3/24/24	58 Kennedy, G.	5/11/22	115 John, A. A.	5/1/24	193 Romanotto, V. J.	4/24/24	351 DiCamillo, J. M.	4/24/24
3 DiTomasso, J. C.	10/14/23	16 Tarr, R. E.	2/10/22	58 Lambert, T. V.	5/6/24	117 Schorler, J.	6/8/24	194 Davis, J. H.	5/23/24	351 McGarrigle, J. W.	6/3/24
3 Ebeling, G.	4/18/24	17 Holland, R. J.	3/12/23	58 McEldery, C.	4/23/24	120 Collins, A. J.	5/21/24	196 Ayala, E.	2/3/24	351 Pheasant, C. D.	4/24/24
3 Ferraro, V. A.	4/7/24	17 Wallace, C. R.	3/27/24	58 Mulrooney, E. O.	5/12/24	124 Penson, D. L.	3/30/24	197 Wissmiller, D. H.	5/4/24	353 Knott, A. S.	5/6/24
3 Gatto, M. L.	4/4/24	18 Jimenez, M. N.	1/27/24	58 Napolitano, M.	5/13/24	124 Silvey, M. M.	5/25/23	212 Knapp, M. A.	4/13/24	353 Moore, K. R.	7/19/22
3 Jackowski, W. A.	3/9/22	20 Butler, B.	11/3/23	58 Odren, R. G.	6/1/24	125 Webb, E. L.	11/30/20	212 Peters, G. L.	5/16/24	353 Murphy, J. J.	5/14/24
3 Johnson, L. A.	4/7/24	22 Smith, D. C.	5/10/24	58 Pointe, R. P.	5/13/24	126 Faber, J.	5/15/24	213 Chramosta, F.	2/7/24	353 Shields, T.	1/20/24
3 Kennedy, D. J.	5/8/24	24 Anderson, P. R.	2/27/24	64 Kusk, E. E.	3/25/24	126 Hartsock, G. J.	5/10/24	213 Millikin, H. R.	1/24/24	353 Storto, M.	5/20/24
3 Kenny, J. T.	5/3/24	24 Edge, W. B.	5/22/22	64 Loncar, P. T.	12/11/21	126 Holtry, J. E.	4/8/24	213 Salterio, J. B.	9/14/23	353 Tantakis, P.	10/26/23
3 Lane, G. A.	5/26/24	24 Meredith, H. F.	10/29/23	68 Campbell, L. M.	4/27/24	126 Magnavita, T. F.	6/17/22	233 Lamping, D. D.	3/2/24	353 Westbrook, W. G.	4/25/24
3 Martino, J.	4/11/24	24 Parker, R. W.	1/15/24	70 Phares, R.	5/25/24	130 Chauvin, E. J.	5/6/24	236 Krute, E. S.	5/14/24	353 Young, A. J.	5/20/24
3 McCarren, J. T.	5/28/24	26 Blinkhorn, W. D.	4/7/24	71 Rodefer, C. W.	5/12/24	130 Raley, J. E.	7/5/22	236 Langlois, J. M.	4/26/24	354 Myrick, D. W.	5/11/24
3 McCormick, R. J.	4/16/24	26 Gaines, R. L.	4/4/24	76 Dovey, J. G.	1/20/24	134 Bonner, C. A.	4/14/24	236 Threw, R. W.	5/25/22	354 Rydalf, F. D.	2/28/24
3 McCormick, T. J.	3/3/24	26 Norris, J. L.	5/19/24	77 Adams, A. G.	3/9/24	134 Cech, G. J.	2/25/24	252 Smith, R. A.	5/20/24	354 Tangren, J. C.	5/26/24
3 Palm, H. D.	5/16/24	32 McPheron, J. D.	5/17/24	77 Wiesner, M. P.	10/13/23	134 Cunningham, T. N.	5/12/24	254 Grozell, G. R.	6/4/24	357 Calderon, M. A.	12/26/21
3 Phillips, L. G.	1/2/24	34 Hamilton, L. E.	4/30/24	80 Russo, R. R.	5/1/24	134 Dangles, C.	4/29/24	254 Lewis, W. D.	4/6/24	357 Hammond, R. A.	5/4/24
3 Prince, A. M.	8/6/22	35 Defemia, G. F.	5/24/24	82 Zeliaskas, C. L.	6/3/24	134 DeLeshe, S. R.	3/11/24	257 Stricklan, C. M.	3/10/22	357 Murray, J. P.	6/5/24
3 Puccio, R. J.	1/4/24	38 Klein, D.	5/17/24	86 Shadders, R. R.	2/4/24	134 Fenske, K. K.	7/11/23	258 Bjorkman, G. C.	12/2/23	357 Nettles, W. S.	5/17/24
3 Riley, S. R.	4/7/21	38 Lewis, W. T.	5/1/24	90 Kleinschmidt, R. F.	3/23/24	134 Fibiger, R. C.	4/3/24	258 Carter, R. F.	12/4/23	357 Piggott, G. D.	4/25/24
3 Rubino, J. A.	3/6/24	41 Reiford, C. F.	5/13/24	95 Allison, D. L.	4/27/24	134 Geanopolus, R.	4/15/24	258 L'Arrivee, K.	12/17/21	363 Lattimore, A.	4/5/24
3 Ryan, G. J.	5/7/24	42 Fields, J. D.	5/16/24	97 Kelly, J. I.	12/11/21	134 Husko, R. J.	10/31/23	269 Fillingier, D. S.	7/25/22	364 Harrolle, T. A.	6/7/22
3 Scannapieco, A. G.	3/31/24	42 Mahon, J. J.	9/18/23	98 Carroll, E. F.	3/19/24	134 Jones, L. D.	1/22/21	280 Hines, R. E.	3/24/24	364 Rydberg, A. C.	4/29/24
3 Seibert, T.	1/22/22	43 Greeley, J. E.	4/18/24	98 Conkey, T. J.	3/16/24	134 Mazzone, M.	2/20/24	292 Peterson, K. J.	4/2/24	365 Martin, D. R.	5/17/24
3 Stampfel, H.	5/3/24	44 Weidinger, L. J.	5/8/24	98 Gilligan, J. J.	2/6/24	134 Monfeli, L. S.	5/30/24	295 Jensen, L. R.	4/15/24	369 Carpenter, W. T.	5/18/24
3 Terwilliger, E. J.	5/12/24	46 Galbraith, L. H.	4/16/24	98 Klinger, D. J.	5/5/22	134 Morse, R. B.	7/26/22	302 Conness, L.	2/8/24	369 McCord, B.	5/12/24
3 Vodicka, J. P.	5/14/24	46 Gonzales, J. V.	1/26/24	98 McNeill, C. W.	5/5/24	134 Oliveras-Maldonado, A.	6/2/24	302 Richter, R. J.	5/26/24	369 Miller, D. K.	5/15/24
6 Briggs, W. J.	3/1/24	46 Vaughan, M. B.	9/16/23	98 Robinson, L.	4/12/24	303 Chisholm, D. A.	6/2/24	306 House, C. H.	6/2/24	369 Whelan, M. J.	11/23/23
6 Cirelli, D. S.	3/30/24	47 Rodriguez, R. O.	4/25/24	98 Zoolalian, E. H.	2/28/24	306 House, C. H.	6/2/24	306 Stafford, W. D.	5/11/21	379 Vick, J. E.	2/16/21
8 Crook, C. C.	5/7/24	48 Everdell, V. K.	5/4/24	102 Cox, J.	2/26/24	134 Schuett, M. A.	4/26/24	307 Robertson, J. J.	5/30/24	387 Living, M. J.	3/7/24
8 Hammer, R. C.	5/9/24	48 Foltz, M. J.	4/13/24	102 Reeves, D. P.	4/17/24	134 Schuster, A. W.	4/11/24	307 Robertson, J. J.	5/30/24	400 Giacchetto, S. J.	4/13/24
8 MacDonald, D. J.	7/28/23	48 Hamel, R. H.	5/20/24	102 Sweeney, W. R.	5/17/24	134 Zemla, E. R.	4/22/24	309 Cooper, G. T.	3/27/24	405 Standley, R. C.	3/30/24
8 Myers, T. F.	1/6/23	48 Jacobsen, R. M.	3/5/24	103 Feeney, J. P.	3/24/24	136 Malone, D. N.	12/3/23	309 Lodes, D. J.	5/20/24	424 Armstrong, G. B.	3/24/24
8 Newby, T. E.	12/12/23	48 Jansen, W. J.	2/14/23	103 Gibson, R. P.	4/6/24	143 Wagnar, C. W.	1/26/24	313 Sutphin, C. L.	2/17/24	424 Coutu, R. P.	3/17/24

In Memoriam continued

Local	Surname	Date of Death	Local	Surname	Date of Death	Local	Surname	Date of Death
424	Cunningham, B. C.	5/24/24	611	Maxwell, M. S.	11/6/21	915	Fields, H. A.	5/16/24
424	Liesemer, D. M.	5/25/24	611	Meadows, J. T.	5/2/24	917	Crowley, J. L.	4/28/24
424	Speigl, F. J.	5/24/24	613	Ellis, T. C.	5/15/24	948	Fay, M. M.	4/3/24
428	Cahill, D. J.	5/2/24	613	Norman, J. L.	5/27/24	953	Ubel, J. R.	11/14/23
429	Wall, M. R.	1/9/23	613	Walters, C. H.	1/21/24	968	Alderman, D. Y.	4/6/24
440	Esau, D. S.	5/1/24	625	Weeks, P. G.	12/2/23	993	Goddyn, J. F.	9/28/23
440	Suarez, A.	6/16/22	640	Beck, J. E.	4/17/24	1049	Mahoney, R. D.	4/2/24
443	Deal, J. M.	5/30/24	640	Booker, R. J.	5/6/24	1141	Brown, G. E.	2/27/24
445	Conkell, J. R.	5/31/24	640	McCawley, G.	5/15/23	1186	Eliason, C. E.	8/8/23
453	Benedetti, W. J.	4/8/24	641	Stanfield, C. F.	10/21/23	1245	Paynter, W. C.	4/22/24
453	McGill, M. L.	4/14/24	648	Ryan, R. J.	4/9/24	1249	Brill, F. J.	2/20/22
456	Furkey, S. A.	5/10/24	649	Fitzgerald, J. T.	12/17/23	1249	Gardner, R. L.	5/7/22
456	Harrison, P. D.	5/4/24	654	Clark, J. M.	3/17/24	1253	Hynds, R. L.	5/29/24
456	Lyons, T. A.	6/4/22	654	Mayo, R. S.	5/9/24	1260	Rocha, J. S.	1/29/24
466	Damron, D. A.	4/22/24	673	Edelinsky, R. J.	4/17/24	1393	Breeden, W. J.	4/13/24
474	Burch, J. R.	3/14/24	681	Crosby, J. B.	3/23/24	1393	Vicari, J. D.	6/5/22
474	Russell, J. E.	4/2/24	683	Hawes, C.	5/2/24	1547	Bowman, M. T.	3/27/24
477	Kessler, S. A.	3/22/24	684	Browder, A.	2/28/24	1547	Burke, R. W.	5/21/24
479	Benoit, C. J.	4/27/24	688	Yetzer, J. M.	4/21/24	1547	Gerken, G. H.	4/9/24
479	Canada, G. R.	4/23/24	692	Krupa, W.	2/28/22	1547	Wuestenberg, D. E.	3/17/22
481	Chupp, J.	5/12/24	697	Downs, J. M.	6/3/24	1687	Brown, R. J.	6/8/23
481	Reid, J. D.	3/6/24	702	Evans, S. E.	5/13/24	2067	Ogibowski, T.	4/26/24
488	Conley, M. E.	4/22/24	702	McCullough, J. D.	5/8/24	2085	Chwartacki, J.	5/14/24
490	Courtemanche, G. P.	5/20/24	712	Harry, R. K.	5/17/24	2085	Kereliuk, G. P.	5/24/24
494	Barelmann, N. O.	2/6/24	712	Smart, J. W.	10/20/23	2150	Terrill, J. C.	5/25/24
494	Stern, J. F.	5/11/24	714	Bice, F. H.	12/16/23	2166	Gionet, E.	5/5/24
502	Floyd, D.	5/13/24	714	Cooper, T. L.	5/9/24	2286	Wilson, J. D.	2/13/24
502	Godwin, D. L.	4/21/24	716	Lusk, R.	2/26/24	2330	Lambe, W. F.	3/28/24
520	Atkins, G. D.	4/11/24	716	Mayfield, D.	3/24/24	I.O. (3)	Mc Caffrey, J. J.	4/19/24
532	Westerman, J. W.	3/11/24	716	McDaniel, D. W.	3/26/22	I.O. (18)	Reese, B. R.	5/4/24
538	Walker, J. F.	3/15/22	716	Smith, J. D.	4/7/24	I.O. (20)	Nelson, W. L.	5/28/24
538	Woods, R. E.	4/24/24	716	Wiggins, T. J.	4/12/24	I.O. (104)	Sullivan, J. B.	4/26/22
551	Beaudin, A. M.	5/7/24	728	Pillot, M. E.	4/22/24	I.O. (134)	Kohn, H.	3/17/24
557	Bowden, C. H.	6/9/24	728	Yates, K. J.	4/30/24	I.O. (134)	Wangerin, L.	5/25/24
569	Anderson, D. K.	5/12/24	743	Hall, W. R.	10/30/23	I.O. (1263)	Davis, J. S.	4/21/24
569	Cosgrove, G. M.	5/30/24	760	Clapp, L. D.	5/2/24	I.O. (1263)	Dotson, D. R.	5/25/24
569	Miller, R. D.	5/3/24	768	Straszewski, D.	5/11/24	I.O. (1969)	Williams, L. J.	4/13/24
569	Montesano, R. A.	11/6/23	769	Wilson, R. A.	4/8/24	Pens. (I.O)	Avila, D.	2/23/22
569	Waldon, J. C.	5/6/24	776	Pinckney, B.	4/10/24	Pens. (I.O)	Ballwanz, R. P.	4/23/24
573	Compton, M. A.	3/17/24	784	Stout, C. M.	5/25/24	Pens. (I.O.)	Boley, A. R.	4/20/24
576	Bowman, C. R.	5/19/24	804	Shantz, J. L.	9/28/23	Pens. (I.O)	Elder, A. W.	3/15/22
576	Phillips, D. R.	4/13/24	816	Cothron, J. D.	3/7/21	Pens. (I.O)	Geske, J. E.	5/7/24
577	Sachtjen, R. J.	5/12/24	816	Irby, R. A.	5/15/24	Pens. (I.O)	Itter, K.	5/6/24
583	Marquez, E.	4/27/24	816	Routen, J. W.	5/3/24	Pens. (I.O)	Mitchell, H. J.	4/15/24
595	Curry, R. E.	5/2/24	861	Sigur, D. A.	12/26/23	Pens. (I.O)	Steffen, R. E.	5/14/24
596	Close, P. L.	5/25/24	861	Williams, L. J.	4/9/24	Pens. (I.O)	Timber, F.	3/27/24
596	Stanley, C. E.	3/18/24	890	DeSarbo, F. M.	2/6/22	Pens. (I.O)	Traver, R. L.	2/23/22
611	Knittig, D. G.	5/12/24	906	Chapman, J. S.	5/9/24	Pens. (I.O)	Wright, R. A.	2/28/24

This list shows members for whom PBF death claims were approved in June 2024.

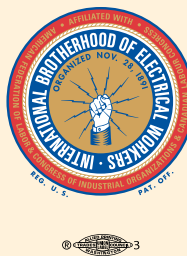


International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers

The *Electrical Worker* was the name of the first official publication of the National Brotherhood of Electrical Workers in 1893 (the NBEW became the IBEW in 1899 with the expansion of the union into Canada). The name and format of the publication have changed over the years. This newspaper is the official publication of the IBEW and seeks to capture the courage and spirit that motivated the founders of the Brotherhood and continue to inspire the union's members today. The masthead of this newspaper is an adaptation of that of the first edition in 1893.

EXECUTIVE OFFICERS	Fourth District	Third District	THE ELECTRICAL WORKER
<b>William W. Riley</b>	<b>William W. Riley</b>	<b>Dennis C. Affinati</b>	Editor <b>Kenneth W. Cooper</b>
<b>Kenneth W. Cooper</b> International President	Fifth District <b>Donald B. Finn</b>	Fourth District <b>Gina P. Cooper</b>	<b>Matt Spence</b>
<b>Paul A. Noble</b> International Secretary-Treasurer	Sixth District <b>Mark H. Cunningham</b>	Fifth District <b>Glenn Brannen</b>	<b>Tim Lawson</b>
<b>INTERNATIONAL EXECUTIVE COUNCIL</b>	Seventh District <b>Leroy J. Chincio</b>	Sixth District <b>Michael Clemmons</b>	<b>Alex Hogan</b>
Chairman <b>Christopher Erikson</b>	Eighth District <b>Tom N. Griffiths</b>	Seventh District <b>Christian J. Wagner</b>	<b>Curtis D. Bateman</b>
First District <b>Joseph P. Calabro</b>	<b>INTERNATIONAL VICE PRESIDENTS</b>	Eighth District <b>Jerry Bellah</b>	<b>Asifa Haniff</b>
Second District <b>Myles J. Calvey</b>	First District <b>Russell N. Shewchuk</b>	Ninth District <b>David E. Reaves Jr.</b>	<b>Ben Temchine</b>
Third District <b>William Hamilton</b>	Second District <b>Michael P. Monahan</b>	Tenth District <b>Brent E. Hall</b>	<b>Sean Bartel</b>
		Eleventh District <b>Mark D. Hager</b>	<b>Colin Kelly</b>
			<b>Rix Oakland</b>
			<b>Colleen Crinion</b>
			<b>Michael Pointer</b>
			<b>Janelle Hartman</b>
			<b>Joe Conway</b>
			<b>Emily Welsh</b>
			<b>Mike Palm</b>
			<b>Javier Pierrend</b>

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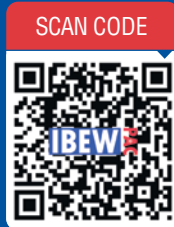
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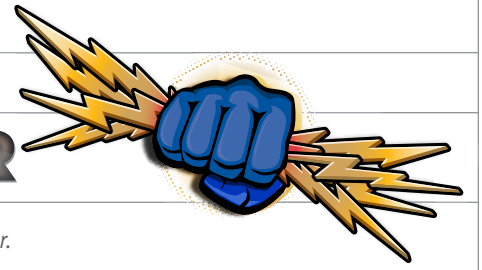
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# WHO WE ARE: PROFILES IN POWER

Profiles in Power is an occasional series of articles highlighting IBEW members who serve their communities in public office and what they do with that power.

## Wisconsin Member Is ‘Problem Solver’ on Local Commission

It was just a few months after being appointed to the Sheboygan, Wis., County Board in 2017, and Curt Brauer wasn’t feeling well. He was sluggish and tired.

No one would have blamed him if he felt like he was pushing himself too much, considering that he was already a business agent for Milwaukee Local 494 and immersed in numerous community organizations.

Even after bypass surgery that December, Brauer wasn’t backing down.

“I’ve never walked away from a challenge,” he said. “I think that is something that is ingrained in us as electricians during our apprenticeship. We’re problem solvers. We don’t walk away from a fight.”

Brauer, who was appointed to the board after a previous member died, won his election in 2018 with 67% of the vote. He’s been reelected thrice since without opposition and now serves as vice chairman of the 25-member board. It oversees about 850 employees and 19 departments in Sheboygan County, which has about 120,000 residents and is about 55 miles north of Milwaukee.

“Curt is the kind of guy that you know you can talk to him and have a great time,” former Local 494 business manager and current Sixth District International Representative Dean Warsh said. “It’s just such a welcoming personality.”

Brauer’s health is fine now, and he’s loved sitting on the nonpartisan board, comparing it to the teamwork and camaraderie found in a successful local union. Like any government body, the board benefits from having an IBEW member’s perspective. Brauer has found that especially true since he moved into the vice chairman position.

“It’s been very interesting to have department heads or fellow supervisors say: ‘Hey, you’re a union guy. What would you do in this situation?’” he said. “I get that a lot when it comes to working with developers, and that’s one of the things I really appreciate about being on the board.”

Brauer also serves as chairman of the board’s Health and Human Services Committee, giving him a voice on important health issues in the area, including opioid addiction. He was one of a handful of local leaders to meet with Wisconsin Sen. Tammy Baldwin on the issue earlier this year.

John Zapfel, an international representative in government affairs, is a Local 494 member and was serving as its political director when Brauer ran for office.

He was an outstanding candidate because he was well known in the community and was interested in working on issues, not being a showman, Zapfel said.

“Curt just wants to get things done and sees the value of working with others, not just trying to sail through and not get anything done,” he said.

Brauer is a lifelong Sheboygan resident and a second-generation Local 494 member. His son, Alex, is now going through his apprenticeship.

He’s long been active in the community, and he took on additional roles when he was named a business agent in 2013, wanting to show how Local 494 and the IBEW are increasingly a force for good. He sits on the board of directors of the local Habitat for Humanity chapter and Lakeshore Technical College, from which he graduated.

Thus, he was an ideal candidate when local officials approached him about filling the unexpired term. He remembers asking Warsh — who was the Local 494 business manager at the time — for some advice.



Making the jump to running for office can be daunting, however, starting with the amount of time it takes and reaching out to people asking for their vote.

Brauer understands. He wondered whether it was right for him. So he suggests keeping it simple.

**“Don’t be afraid to try it out. You don’t have to do it forever. But once you do it and see the effect you can create on people’s lives, that’s huge.”**

— Curt Brauer, Milwaukee Local 494 business agent and vice chairman of the Sheboygan County Board

It took about one second for Warsh to answer. “Do it,” he said.

“He was perfect for it because everyone in the community knows him and all the activities he was doing,” Warsh said. “But I’m a big believer in that everyone should be involved in something.”

Indeed, Warsh can list numerous Local 494 members involved with government bodies around the state. It ensures that the union voice is part of decision-making and has helped Local 494 successfully advocate for members with government officials from all levels.

“That’s where everything starts,” he said. “That’s where everyone runs for the school board or something local, and that’s how they move up. The more members we get into higher positions of government, the more power we have.”

IBEW members routinely donate time to their communities. It’s one of the tenets of membership.

First, attend meetings of bodies you are interested in and get informed on the issues. Second, if an election seems overwhelming, search out a position on an appointed board.

“Don’t be afraid to try it out,” he said. “You don’t have to do it forever. But once you do it and see the effect you can create on people’s lives, that’s huge.”

When getting involved, do so with a “mindset of collaboration,” Brauer said. He said that is easier to develop on a nonpartisan board, like the one he serves on in Sheboygan, but he’s convinced it can be done in all government bodies.

“Our country administrator recently retired after 24 years, and he’s been a friend and mentor to me. He always told me to never be the biggest person in the room. Good leaders always lead by putting the right people in the right spot at the right time.”

That’s an approach that IBEW members develop on the job, no matter the branch.

Having members serving in political and policy positions also requires a commitment from the business manager and other leaders in local unions, Warsh said.

He sometimes would reschedule meetings to accommodate Brauer’s and other members’ responsibilities on government boards and legislative bodies. But the payoff was worth it.

“It all starts with the business manager being accepting,” he said.

Zapfel said he gives the same advice to members considering a run for public office that Brauer used.

“If there’s any hesitancy, look at the different boards and commissions in their communities, whether it’s a planning commission or architectural commission or whatever,” he said. “Get on a board and apply yourself. If you like it, run for office. That’s institutional knowledge will provide great insight not just for yourself, but the IBEW in the future.”

“As the late [International President Edwin D. Hill] would say, if you don’t have a seat at the table, you’re probably on the menu,” Zapfel added. “Why not get engaged and show the IBEW agenda on that stage?”

Brauer said he has no plans to run for another office, such as the Wisconsin Legislature. He appreciates the collaborative nature of the board. Partisan politics seldom come up. Conversation almost always centers on what is best for the community, he said.

“It is relieving to know you don’t have to pander to one side or the other,” he said.

Scan the QR code for more information about how to run for office in your community. ■



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