

# THE ELECTRICAL WORKER

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## UNION HANDS CRAFT THE COVID CURE



*The IBEW and union crafts build and maintain nearly every major pharmaceutical and biotech production line and lab in the U.S., including the ones that are producing, bottling and distributing Pfizer, Moderna and AstraZeneca's vaccines.*

One year after the first cases of COVID-19 were diagnosed in North America, vaccines from Pfizer, AstraZeneca and Moderna are on the verge of becoming widely available.

And while IBEW members are not the scientists creating those vaccines, they have been nearly as integral to the discovery, production and distribution process as any biochemist or virologist on the planet.

From decades of building and maintaining pharmaceutical research labs to setting up new production facilities practically overnight, IBEW tradesmen and tradeswomen have been at the forefront of the pan-

## MAKING THE VACCINE

demetic response from its earliest days, and their efforts — along with those countless others around the world — have brought us to the verge of a monumental breakthrough that will save countless lives and restore order after a year of COVID-19 chaos.

“Without a doubt the vaccine that will end this scourge has and will be brought to you by the skilled craft unions. They are every bit as important as the person working at the lab bench they built,” said Tim Dickson, director of the Pharmaceutical Industry Labor-Management Association.

The vaccines from Pfizer, AstraZeneca and Moderna are scientific achievements with few parallels in human history, victories won by researchers and the craft and trade workers who know how to take their

ideas and transform them into enough medicine to heal an entire world.

According to a 2018 PILMA study, union density in pharmaceutical jobs in the U.S. is 80-90%, and the reason is clear: quality.

“It’s intuitive. Millions of lives and billions of dollars hang on the effectiveness, the reliability of these facilities. These clean rooms and fume hoods — there are tons of inert and active molecules. You can’t go cheap,” Dickson said. “You don’t go to Piggly Wiggly and get day workers to build a clean room.”

Between 2012 and 2018, nearly \$14 billion was spent on pharmaceutical construction, and nearly one-third of those man-hours were electrical. And construction has exploded with emergency vaccine funding. Industrial Info Resources, a clearinghouse for construction projects, listed 70 active jobs in December that were COVID-related worth nearly \$2 billion.

Across North America, IBEW members are making the vaccine possible and bringing it to the world.

VACCINES continued on page 4



## FROM THE OFFICERS

# Doing Our Part



**Lonnie R. Stephenson**  
International President

**T**he COVID-19 crisis has tested each of us in ways we couldn't have imagined at this time last year. Jobs and plans have been interrupted; friends and family have fallen ill, and many have tragically been lost to this virus. In many ways, it feels like we've lost an entire year to this disease.

But I'm proud to say that in this issue you'll read about the work your very own IBEW sisters and brothers are doing to bring an end to this awful pandemic. These members, who are wiring research labs and storage facilities and setting up emergency manufacturing lines in the union-dense pharmaceutical industry, are quite literally a key part of the effort to save the world from this plague.

Reading this story, it got me thinking about the importance of the work each and every one of you does each day. I doubt that many of us go to work thinking that the electrical or communications lines we're connecting or the switchgear we're manufacturing will end world hunger or bring global peace. But when you look a little closer, you realize that every job we do makes a difference. Often it's small, but sometimes it's life-changing.

After a storm, when power's out and people are suffering, the difference our line crews make can be a matter of life and death. When mission-critical freight needs to move quickly and efficiently, it's our railroad members who are up to the job.

When hospitals, bridges, data centers and power plants need to be done quickly and done right, customers know to call the IBEW. And when information needs to move across the continent at a moment's notice, our telecommunications and broadcast members are there to make it happen.

Our government members perform work of the highest importance to national security, transportation and more, and the gravity of what they do is lost on no one. And our manufacturing members are responsible for everything from flight instrumentation to life-saving medical equipment.

The point I'm trying to make is that, whether or not you're working on the highest-profile job like the COVID-19 vaccine, the work each of you does each day is important, and it requires you to approach each job with that mentality.

This idea — that every job is the most important job in that moment — is at the very heart of our Code of Excellence. The Code is why so many employers and contractors have come to understand that they can rely on us to give 100% on every job and to turn in work that's done safely, professionally and of the absolutely highest quality.

But what we as IBEW members do is more than just "a fair day's work for a fair day's pay." Every day our work improves the lives of people around us, and we should never lose sight of that. Thank you all for the difference you make. ■

# Serving Our Veterans

**I**n this month's Electrical Worker, you'll read about U.S. Army combat medic Raul Gutierrez, who is currently a first-year apprentice with Kennewick, Wash., Local 112.

Like a lot of service members reaching the end of active duty, Brother Gutierrez was looking for what was next for him. He wanted a career that would pick up where he left off and put him on a path to success.

That's where the IBEW came in.

We recognize the sacrifices that members of our military make for each of us, and President Stephenson and I want to make sure that no veteran comes home without an opportunity for success.

In October, Brother Gutierrez became the first pre-apprentice to graduate from the IBEW-NECA Veterans Electrical Entry Program entirely online. You've read about the program in these pages before. It's a pre-apprenticeship designed specifically for active duty members of the military that teaches them first-year apprenticeship basics like blueprint reading, safety and electrical code, among other things.

Then, we work with local unions where the veterans want to settle down and help secure direct entry to the apprenticeship program.

So far, the program has been based out of Anchorage, Alaska, Local 1547, working with servicemen and women from nearby Joint Base Elmendorf-Richardson. But now that it's able to be completed 100% online, we hope it will open the doors to many more women and men who've put so much on the line for their country.

Already, four more service members are enrolled online and hot on Brother Gutierrez's heels, and we hope to offer the program to many more soon. Three classes have already graduated from the in-person program at Local 1547 working with the curriculum developed by our partners at the Electrical Training Alliance, and those veterans are now among your ranks, currently first- or second-year apprentices at local unions all over the U.S.

Whether it's through VEEP or other programs like Helmets to Hardhats or the Union Veterans Council, adding these brave, dedicated men and women to our ranks only strengthens the IBEW, just like the generations of IBEW veterans who served before them.

Like the military, the IBEW is a family. Joining the brotherhood means more than punching a clock every day. It means we look out for one another, we stand with one another when times are tough, and we celebrate together when things go well. That's the power of collective bargaining and of the broader labor movement.

So, as VEEP grows and expands, we look forward to more local unions being able to participate, and we hope more veterans will come to the IBEW for a rewarding career and a new band of brothers and sisters.

Welcome to our new sisters and brothers, and thank you for your service. ■



**Kenneth W. Cooper**  
International Secretary-Treasurer

## “LETTERS TO THE EDITOR”

### Remembering Brian Malloy

I was heartbroken to hear of Brian Malloy's passing in August. My family and I owe more than I can say to Brian. I was working a Davis-Bacon job locally near Cumberland, Md., when he asked me to come see him after completing that job. When I met with him, he asked me to join the local as a VDV (voice-data-video) Specialist.

From that point on, my life changed forever. I worked 18 years as a member of the IBEW, proud of the work that I did and the great friends I made. Brian would see me and ask how my family and I were doing, always caring about the members of Local 307.

Brian was the standard for what a business manager should be for his local. He kept working hard for his members through the toughest of times in our area.

My thoughts and prayers go out to his family. Thank you, Brian.

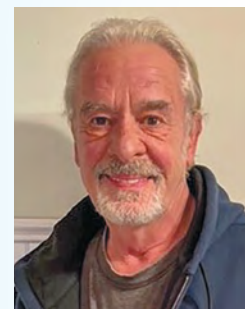
*Jim Webster, Local 307 retiree  
Cumberland, Md.*

**Editor's Note:** See our tribute to International Vice President Brian Malloy in October's Electrical Worker and on [IBEW.org](http://IBEW.org).

**We Want to Hear From You:** Send your letters to [media@ibew.org](mailto:media@ibew.org) or Letters to the Editor, The Electrical Worker, 900 Seventh Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20001.

## My IBEW STORY

**Jeffry C. Campbell,**  
Retired Journeyman Inside Wireman  
Chester, Pa., Local 654



**“**I earned a two-year degree in electrical construction after high school. I then worked for a few local contractors and at a local shipyard. I did OK, but I knew an apprenticeship in the IBEW was what I really wanted. My brother-in-law and a close friend of his were in the union.

I ended up working my way up to general foreman for a local contractor at a nearby paper mill and stayed there for nearly 34 years. That allowed me to meet, employ and help many of my union brothers and sisters during major projects or just plain mill maintenance. I retired after 39-plus years at 60-½ and am living comfortably.

The IBEW afforded me security, decent pay, great health care, great pension possibilities and a safe working environment with contractors that care about, and listen to, their employees — even making sure projects are funded for safety.

I was also blessed to be an apprentice instructor for 26 years, which gave me countless opportunities to nurture and teach upcoming apprentices, and I was on our local's examining board for 12 years. I'm thankful that I touched the lives of over 400 apprentices. Many are still my good friends.

I constantly talk up the IBEW experience to anyone that will listen. It's the best of scenarios to learn, work safely and have a career that I loved.”

**Every member in every branch has a story to tell about how the IBEW has improved their life both on and off the job. Tell us yours today for a chance to be featured here.**

**[ibew.org/MyIBEWStory](http://ibew.org/MyIBEWStory)**



# Ohio Local Helps NFL, Hall of Fame, Celebrate 100 Years of Professional Football

**M**embers of Canton, Ohio, Local 540 recently completed work on a new outdoor venue downtown that was specially built to celebrate the 100th anniversary of the National Football League. It's the latest of several major projects that are likely to bring steady work for the local and its members as the city continues to capitalize on its role as the birthplace of the league and home of its Pro Football Hall of Fame.

**"The building trades, city of Canton and Hall of Fame were all on board with the PLA."**

—Canton, Ohio, Local 540 Business Manager Aaron Brown

"Football is huge in northeast Ohio," said Local 540 Business Manager Aaron Brown. "And the Hall is an experience for fans of football everywhere, at all levels."

Built in Canton's Arts District, the \$12.3 million stadium-shaped and multipurpose Centennial Plaza is designed to be a place where visitors to the Hall of Fame can go and enjoy themselves, featuring a pavilion, a stage with a large LED screen, a café, and a children's area, plus an event lawn big enough to hold 5,000 people.

But the plaza's elaborate electrical design, along with its programmable theatrical lighting, sound system, and setups for kiosks to feature historical interactive displays, presented plenty of opportunities for Local 540's members to skillfully hide electrical conduits and related equipment and to unobtrusively attach lights to the pavilion's 65-foot-tall spires.

"It was a challenge with the steel structures and the way the plaza sits," Brown said.

Not entirely coincidentally, Centennial Plaza was built just a few blocks away from the former site of a car dealership

owned by Ralph Hay, who also was the owner of the early 20th-century Canton Bulldogs football team. There, Hay and the owners of several other teams convened on September 19, 1920, to form what would eventually become the NFL.

About 40 years later, Canton's civic and business leaders successfully petitioned the NFL to establish the Pro Football Hall of Fame in their city to honor the game's greatest contributors, and they quickly raised the funds to support the hall's construction.

It opened in 1963 next to the site of the former League Field, where the Bulldogs played until they were disbanded in 1927. Toward the end of the Great Depression, League Field was replaced by Fawcett Field; in the years since, that stadium has continuously hosted numerous high school and college football games, as well as the annual Hall of Fame Game.

In 2015, Local 540 members worked on renovations of that venue, which is now called the Tom Benson Hall of Fame Stadium. "We've got a great relationship with the city and with the Hall of Fame," Brown said.

The Hall is a 10-minute drive from downtown, and local leaders are constantly looking at creating connections between it and downtown Canton.

Centennial Plaza is one such project. Another was the recent \$21 million renovation of the McKinley Grand, a 165-room downtown hotel that had seen better days. This modernized destination, rebranded as a DoubleTree by Hilton, is now owned by the Hall of Fame.

"We had eight to 12 members working on the hotel, and another eight to 10 on the plaza," Brown said noting the team consisted of a diverse mix of journeyman wiremen and apprentices working for Hilscher-Clarke Electric, the local's largest contractor. "They're very good to work with."

The hotel and the plaza were ready to commemorate the NFL's 100th anniversary last September, although social distancing and other restrictions forced by the COVID-19 pandemic put a stop to any crowded or lavish gatherings. However, there was still a small ceremony at the plaza during halftime of the Cleveland



Members of Canton, Ohio, Local 540 recently finished work on the \$12.3 million Centennial Plaza, a stadium-shaped, multipurpose venue in the city's Arts District, where the millions of visitors to the nearby Pro Football Hall of Fame can enjoy themselves outdoors.

Browns-Cincinnati Bengals game on Sept. 17, where the facility's 11 pylons — bearing more than 25,000 names of NFL players from the league's first 100 years — were officially dedicated.

The stadium renovation, hotel revamp and plaza construction were all completed under project labor agreements negotiated one at a time between the city of Canton, Hall of Fame village and the building trades, guaranteeing that all workers on those jobs received the prevailing wage for their work.

"Here locally within the building trades, we've worked so well together," Brown said. "As an organization, we've built great relationships, but it also helps having labor on the city council." Local 540 member Kevin Hall has been a council member since 2017, while council presi-

dent William Sherer is the business manager of Ironworkers Local 550.

"The really neat thing was that the building trades, city of Canton and Hall of Fame were all on board with the PLA," Brown said. "We got everybody at the table."

Potentially providing even more work for Local 540 members down the road is the Hall of Fame Village's planned Constellation Center for Excellence, a 75,000-square-foot retail, research and office building featuring a mesh video wall next to the stadium, plus a brand new seven-story hotel, a large football-themed water park, an 85,000-square foot indoor performance center and a retail promenade.

"The Centennial plaza and the downtown Hotel is just the beginning," Brown said. "The entire area is growing and building out. The exciting part is still to come."

One of the most exciting additions to the Hall of Fame Village on the drawing board is Legends Landing, a 143-room retirement and assisted-living community for Hall of Famers, plus other former NFL players, coaches and staffers that's unique in the world of professional sports.

"As a local, we're always looking out for our members and retirees," Brown said. "It's good to see the same with the NFL and Legends Landing."

For now, Local 540 is looking with pride at what they've accomplished with Centennial Plaza. "It's a sight to see," Brown said. "It's going to be a major attraction."

"I'm proud of the leaders of Local 540," said Fourth District International Vice-president Gina Cooper. "They worked hard to ensure IBEW members were part of this historic project." ■



# UNION HANDS CRAFT THE COVID CURE

► **Continued from page 1**

## Finding a Vaccine

By the time herd immunity is achieved and life returns to whatever the new normal will be, many companies will be producing many vaccines. According to the New York Times, 57 vaccines are in clinical trials around the globe with several different strategies.

How to get the vaccines from the labs to 7 billion people is incredibly complex. But it can be better understood through the work IBEW members have done on the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine, the first one announced and the one furthest along in early December.

The vaccine itself was developed by BioNTech, a small biotech firm in Germany with no real production capacity of its own. It partnered with the U.S. biotech and pharmaceutical colossus Pfizer to help run the elaborate human trials, take the experimental vaccine and turn out hundreds of millions of doses and distribute them around the world.

Making the COVID-19 vaccine project even more astounding is that the Pfizer/BioNTech vaccine uses an entirely new technology. Vaccines don't cure diseases; they give the body a head start fighting off a disease by teaching the immune system how to combat a virus that may never arrive.

Traditionally, vaccines have worked by injecting bits of proteins stripped off dead or shattered viruses to introduce the immune system to its potential foe before an actual invasion.

Pfizer and Moderna are instead injecting designer genetic material into muscle cells, converting those cells into infinitesimal biotech factories, pumping out the proteins that form the coronavirus' shell. The body teaches itself what to look for. This would have been impossible as recently as five years ago.

## America's Research Heartlands

While the Pfizer vaccine was developed overseas, the IBEW has built most of, if not all of, the major pharmaceutical and biotech research facilities in the U.S.

Of the \$14 billion in pharma construction in the PILMA study, nearly 60% was in California and Massachusetts.

The heart of California's biotech industry is in the Bay Area, with its center just south of San Francisco in the jurisdiction of San Mateo Local 617.

"God only knows how many biotech companies there are around here," said Local 617 Business Manager Dave Mauro. "And new ones are starting all the time."

The largest — Genentech, Gilead, Amgen and AbbVie — have huge campuses, including dozens of labs and office buildings. Genentech's were first built in the 1980s and have been regularly expanded since.

Mauro estimates that for about the last 30 years, around 50% of the local's work hours have been in the biotech indus-



*Pfizer's vaccine is a nationwide effort, with precursors made in labs built by members of St. Louis Local 1 (top), industrial production of the vaccine in plants built by members of Boston Local 103 (middle), and formulated and bottled by members of Kalamazoo, Mich., Local 131 (bottom). Photo credits: Pfizer*

try and offices. And, as other work has slowed because of the pandemic, that number is rising, he said, to 70% and possibly as high as 80%.

"I imagine we miss out on the tiniest start-ups, a kitchen remodel here and some small office remodeling there, but the labs? The research buildings? That's as close to 100% as anyone could get," he said.

The story is nearly the same on the other side of the country.

"Cambridge is like the epicenter for vaccine research and modern biotech companies," said Boston Local 103 Business Manager Lou Antonellis. The high concentration of universities spins off projects from researchers and graduates that stick close to home, he said.

Two projects in PILMA's study — Vertex's Fan Pier Biotech R&D Center and the Cambridge Vaccine and Diagnostics R&D Center Expansion — cost a combined \$1.5 billion. Those were both Local 103 jobs.

There were nearly \$200 million in COVID-related projects in Massachusetts as of early December. Antonellis said that while you don't think about it every second that you're on those jobs, you don't forget what is at stake either.

"You don't think, 'I am helping to find a cure for COVID or cancer,' but we know our work has great meaning," he said.

## St. Louis

Once the initial building blocks of the vaccine are created by researchers, the mass production process begins.

For Pfizer, that will happen in Chesterfield, Mo., on the outskirts of St. Louis, where the first ingredients of its vaccine are produced.

St. Louis Local 1 only finished work on the \$250 million facility last year — \$22 million in electrical — said St. Louis Local 1 Business Manager Frank Jacobs, who himself was laid low by COVID in the fall. "Our members don't always know what the end product is they are working on," he said. "I'm sure those members will take pride in knowing their work will be part of ending the pandemic."

Pfizer is also a solid customer, he noted. "We have never lost a job on Pfizer's campus to a nonunion contractor."

Scientists at Chesterfield use minute electrical sparks to tear holes in E. coli bacteria. A ring of designer DNA identical to those spikes that give coronavirus its name enters the bacteria through the holes. As the bacteria replicate billions of times in stainless steel vats, so does the spike protein inside the cell.

After four days, the bacteria are killed and torn open and the viral protein spills out into a soup of proteins and cell parts that is filtered and purified over the course of

1½ weeks until just the virus protein remains.

Then it's back to Massachusetts, to Pfizer's Andover facility. IIR lists three lab expansion projects there worth \$20 million just for Pfizer.

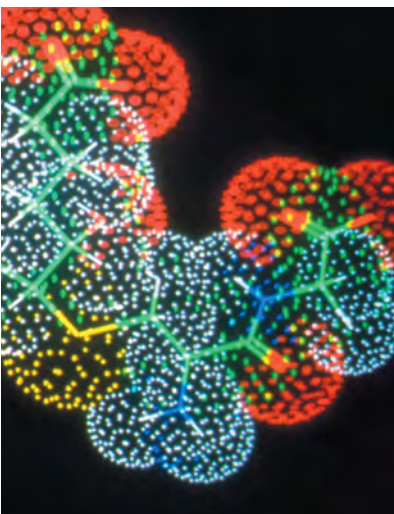
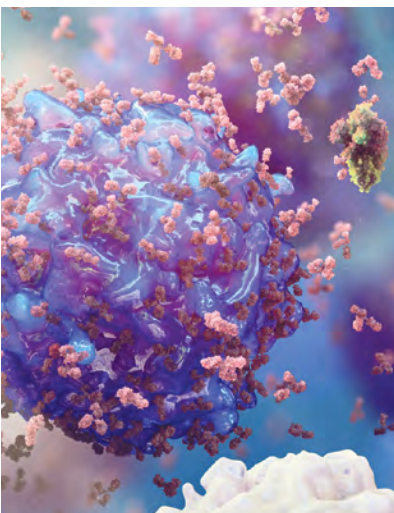
According to the Washington Post, the Andover scientists take the DNA grown in Missouri, put it in an incubator with genetic building blocks to create messenger RNA, the designer genetic bullet which transforms muscles into protein factories. The purified messenger RNA is frozen to minus-60 degrees Fahrenheit and stored in plastic bags the size of kitchen trash bags. Each one holds enough mRNA to make 5 million to 10 million doses of vaccine.

"We are building and maintaining those buildings every day," Antonellis said. "We are at the forefront. Only we have the technical capability to do that work."

From there, the bag is hung on a special frame for handling, put on trucks and driven to Kalamazoo, Mich.

## Kalamazoo

For the past several months, Kalamazoo Local 131 members have been retrofitting a warehouse on Pfizer's campus there, installing hundreds of industrial freezers that can maintain temperatures 90 degrees



below zero Fahrenheit.

"There are a lot of instrumentation and control processes and lots and lots of power drops to those freeze driers," said Business Manager Brian O'Donnell.

Before Pfizer bought the campus, it was owned by pharmaceutical manufacturing pioneer Upjohn, and for nearly a century, Local 131 members were the only electrical workers who set foot there. O'Donnell said between one-quarter to three-eighths of the annual work hours are on the Pfizer campus for his 400-member local.

"Historically we had 75 to 100 wiremen working there all year long," he said. "You could spend your whole career there, from your apprenticeship to retirement and never leave."

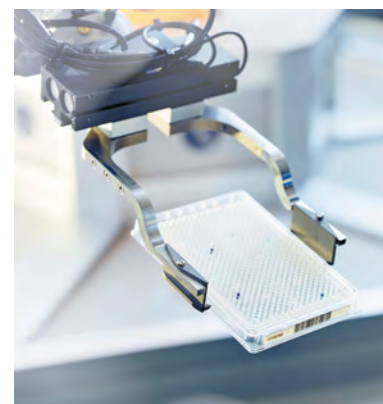
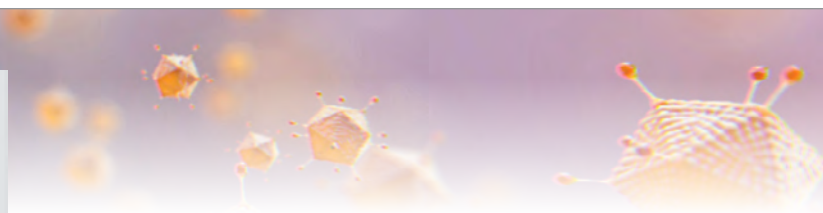
Pfizer already has contracts potentially worth more than \$2 billion if they can deliver a working, mass-produced COVID-19 vaccine. O'Donnell said he suspects that an empty warehouse on campus will house a new production line.

"Once the vaccine is a go, I am sure we will build out that dedicated building," he said. "There could be a huge rush for manpower, but there is no conversation yet."

Pfizer's announcement that its vaccine had nearly completed Phase III of its human trials with greater than 90% effectiveness means that day may not be far off. As of early December, Pfizer had filed for emergency approval to roll out the vaccine and the FDA was reviewing the safety data from the trial.

When production begins, the messenger RNA will be taken out of the freezers and combined with what the company calls "lipid nanoparticles" and readied to be put





All photo credits: AstraZeneca



*Because the standards for cleanliness and constant operation are so high in biotech and pharmaceutical facilities, unions do between 90% and 95% of all work in the industry.*

## Until the Vaccine Arrives

Since its arrival in North America last January, more than 8,000 of our brothers and sisters have been stricken by COVID-19 and at least 180 have died.

The economic cost is not as great as the loss in lives and health, but it has been severe. Lives not lost can still be changed irrevocably.

And there are still many things that could go wrong. There could be issues in producing mass quantities of mRNA vaccines; it's never been done. There are more traditional vaccine models on the way using pieces of weakened or dead virus. They have historically been slower to develop, but Johnson & Johnson says the production and scaling is better understood and could potentially make up the time.

With the vaccine so close, International President Lonnie R. Stephenson said, now it is up to everyone to protect themselves, their brothers and sisters in the IBEW and their families. IBEW members in every branch have worked tirelessly since March to do the essential work of keeping the lights on, building hospitals, manufacturing and transporting critical goods, maintaining communications and broadcast infrastructure and more, often at great risk to their own health. Now is not the time to relax and get comfortable.

"The simple things will work, if we continue to do them: wear a mask. Socially distance. Wash hands frequently," he said. "Our members who are working on vaccine projects are indispensable, but every member and the folks in our families are all precious. Be smart, be safe, and we will get through this." ■

in vials. At the moment, the machines that do that formulation work are too small for global production. Replacing them will be Local 131's job.

Once the vaccine has been formulated, it is handed over to the filling team, which currently runs two lines — the fastest of which can fill nearly 600 vials a minute. Those vials are then put in boxes and frozen to minus-70 degrees Celsius, or minus-94 Fahrenheit.

"Pfizer called and asked about manpower and the Code of Excellence and I sent them a presentation from Business Development. We did not hear back, but I don't think it went out to bid either," O'Donnell said.

He expects signatory contractor Moore Electric, who is already on site, to have a good shot at the work. "We like to think the Code of Excellence had a lot to do with that."

If it comes, O'Donnell doesn't expect the call to be more than 40 or so members.

"It's not a huge call, and this isn't exotic stuff. This is familiar work, day-to-day, just a different medicine," he said. "But the importance is not lost on anyone on what we are trying to create, how it could turn our country around. It gets its relevance from that."

## Indiana

Not all the formulation, bottling, labeling and shipping work will be done by Pfizer. The scale is too vast even for a company of its size.

One of the most important centers for pharmaceutical bottling and labeling is in Bloomington, Ind., where dozens of IBEW members from Terre Haute Local 725 and travelers are working nearly around the clock to get it ready.

The facility, owned by Catalent Pharma Solutions, has contracts with Pfizer, Johnson & Johnson and Moderna.

Work at the Bloomington site started in February, before the massive spread of the novel coronavirus, said Local 725 Business Manager Todd Thacker.

General Foreman Greg Sutton has been working at the plant for Cassady Electric nearly the entire time it has been a pharma plant. The original plan for this project, he said, was a simple expansion of an existing production line, and Cassady partnered with St. Louis signatory contractor PayneCrest to do the work.

Then the pandemic changed the world and the scale of the job. In April,

Johnson & Johnson signed an agreement with Catalent to package any vaccine it develops and prepare it for distribution — possibly billions of doses.

From no overtime and a single shift of about 15, they moved to two shifts a day, working 58-hour weeks, and from a line expansion to tearing down the older wing of the Catalent facility and starting a bottom-up build to house the expanded drug product manufacturing department.

By May, calls were coming in for more workers. They signed the deal with Pfizer. Then another call for more workers and in June, Catalent announced the partnership with Moderna.

"We didn't know until early July that this wasn't a new line but a new \$100 million, 72,000-square-foot building," Thacker said. "In September, they accelerated the work, moved the finish date to October and tripled the manpower. These were essential workers in the truest sense."

The line is far different from most production work, Sutton said, but not for workers familiar with pharmaceutical plants.

"The clean rooms are highly controlled environments, lots of air handler controls to keep the environment clean and

the process equipment is very high tech," Sutton said.

By mid-May, Cassady had just over 45 Local 725 members on site, said Sutton, with a peak in late fall at about 60 when the fill-line equipment arrived.

All of this is only a part of the production of one of the vaccines. Dozens of other companies are involved in producing vaccines and the equipment and processes to distribute them.

Baltimore Local 24, for example, has more than 150 members working on COVID-related projects for AstraZeneca, Catalent, Emergent BioSolutions and more may be on the way.

"We did soup-to-nuts production line facilities, wired labs, installed refrigeration equipment, process controls and lighting," said Local 24 Business Manager Pete Demchuk.

Local 24 has about a dozen members working on an Emergent facility where the company's vaccine is being produced.

"We are putting in freezers, automatic transfer switches and emergency generators. Lots of temporary, outage and standby work as we move things around to replace generators," he said. "There is no do-over with this stuff. The only option is unquestionable quality."





## A PUNCHLIST for the President

**P**resident-elect Joe Biden kicked off his campaign in April 2019 at a Pittsburgh Teamsters hall where he declared, “I’m a union man. Period.” On the eve of the election, he ended his campaign promising to be “the most pro-union president you’ve ever seen.”

In between, he placed union members and union families at the very heart of his campaign, preaching the gospel of collective bargaining as the surest path to leveling the playing field and restoring America’s middle class.

As he and Vice President-elect Kamala Harris prepare to take the oath of office on Jan. 20, there are even more encouraging signs for America’s labor movement. Union members and other worker advocates have prominent roles on a wide range of advisory panels, including International President Lonnie R. Stephenson.

Since the election, two dozen policy experts and union leaders have been looking in-depth at the Department of Labor and related agencies to begin to repair the harm done by anti-union appointees over the past four years.

Those pursuits and others, alongside Biden’s 50-year track record fighting for workers in the U.S. Senate and as vice president, give IBEW leaders confidence that the next administration will be one where working families are the focus.

But just as there is on any jobsite, there’s a list of tasks to be accomplished — and quickly. These are the IBEW’s top priorities for the Biden-Harris administration: our “Punchlist for the President.”

### ✓ Passing the PRO Act

**The Protecting the Right to Organize Act lives up to its name, and more, promising to put an end to the tactics that prevent most Americans from having a voice at work.** Provisions include streamlining National Labor Relations Board elections to thwart employer interference and delays; penalties — even personal liability for boards and directors — when companies fire or otherwise punish union supporters; accountability if employers fail to bargain in good faith for a first contract; protecting strikes and secondary boycotts; and reducing worker misclassification. The U.S. House passed the PRO Act last year; getting it through the House and Senate would be a landmark achievement for the new administration.

### ✓ Investing in Infrastructure

**Our nation’s decaying roads, bridges and tunnels need urgent attention.** Repairs, replacements and new construction, including rail systems, would create hundreds of thousands of jobs for the IBEW and other building trades while reducing carbon emissions and protecting lives. There is widespread belief in Washington that even with a divided Congress, bipartisan support could be had for a spending package that includes a massive investment in America’s infrastructure. Getting it passed and getting long overdue shovel-ready projects out of the planning stages and into action would be a monumental win for America’s construction workforce and for the Biden-Harris administration.

### ✓ Modernizing the Grid

**Any infrastructure plan must include a major investment in the electrical grid, and it’s so important that it’s included here separately.** Any 21st-century energy plan must protect the grid by maintaining baseload power sources and the workers who run them, but it must also ease the incorporation of the low-carbon, renewable generators of the future with a massive build-out of long-range transmission and high-tech smart grid systems in transmission and distribution. IBEW members and signatory contractors are best equipped to tackle these projects, and having an ally like Joe Biden in the White House will be key to making sure the jobs are done right.

### ✓ Fixing Multiemployer Pensions

**Protecting workers’ hard-earned pensions demands swift action on the Butch Lewis Act, which would create a Treasury Department agency to help keep troubled plans from insolvency through long-term, low-interest federal loans.** The Biden-Harris administration cannot allow a few troubled multi-employer pension plans to bring down healthy plans like our own. Your IBEW leaders have waged an intense battle to protect multiemployer plans from legislative assault under the guise of pension “reform” schemes to prop up failing plans by weakening healthy ones like ours. President-elect Biden should make signing the Butch Lewis Act one of his top priorities.

### ✓ Making Pro-Union Appointments

**Presidential appointees control the NLRB, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration, the Labor Department and other agencies that hold workers’ lives and livelihoods in their hands.** Chartered long ago to protect workers’ rights and safety on the job, the agencies have been doing the exact opposite in recent years under leadership hostile to unions. Employers break labor laws with impunity, and many workers’ complaints are dismissed without investigation. In an epic, widely condemned, failure, OSHA never issued a COVID-19 standard for employers. But anti-worker court rulings and laws have chipped away at the agencies’ authority for decades. Undoing the latest damage won’t be enough for Biden-Harris nominees. They must restore their agencies to their original pro-worker mandates.

### ✓ Enforcing and Expanding Labor Standards

**The Good Jobs for 21st Century Energy Act, introduced by Oregon Sen. Jeff Merkley in 2019, offers tax incentives to employers to create jobs with “high-road labor standards,” including strong wages, benefits and apprenticeship opportunities.** The bill supports PLAs, prevailing wage laws, standards to prevent worker misclassification and an “explicit neutrality policy on all collective bargaining issues.” Passing and signing it should be high on the Biden-Harris agenda. ■

# Tide of Persistence, Unity Brings PLAs Ashore in Honolulu

**S**ix years after Damien Kim began hounding Honolulu’s mayor to live up to his promise to support project labor agreements, the matter of PLAs finally landed on the City Council’s 2019 summer agenda.

By then, the longtime business manager of Local 1186 was also president of the Honolulu Building & Construction Trades Council. Since taking office that January, he’d been accelerating his mission.

Kim knew it was vital for the city’s trades to present a united front. That wasn’t always the case: HBCTC and a much smaller, breakaway alliance of construction unions were sometimes at odds.

His bridge-building worked. Members of both organizations, from the IBEW to the Operating Engineers to the city’s 16 other trade unions, put their solidarity on display at every hearing on Bill 37.

Its passage would ensure that big-ticket municipal projects carried the union label, including a planned concert hall, new sports arena and a multibillion-dollar overhaul of Honolulu’s wastewater system.

Tradesworkers sat and stood shoulder to shoulder in packed galleries. They sported work shirts with union logos, held signs championing good jobs and skilled labor, and warmed up for at least one hearing by chanting “Union! Union! Union!” before the council entered.

They dwarfed the other construction workers who showed up — sullen groups in shirts bearing the insignia of nonunion contractors and carrying signs calling for the ouster of the union-friendly councilman who introduced the PLA bill.

“You could see the jealousy,” Kim said. Or as his organizer, Leyton Torda, put it, “Sour grapes.” He chuckled thinking back on one hearing in particular:

“One of the nonunion guys — he wasn’t an electrician, he was from another trade — he came up to testify and he was like, ‘This bill is terrible. My company’s not going to get work. Union guys are going to get the work. They get all the benefits. They get holiday pay...’”

Torda was thinking, “Yeah, you’re right, we do. That’s the reason you join a union.”

The overflow crowd — pre-COVID-19 — made it hard to move around, but Torda saw someone on the aisle get up as the man returned to his seat.

“He was from one of the other unions and held out a business card. He said, ‘Brother, we can provide all that for you. Just join us.’ The guy took the card.”

**HONOLULU** City Council members saw past an ocean of bitter opposition — a lopsided amount of it, Kim said, from electrical contractors — and voted 7-2 in favor of PLAs in October 2019.

There turned out to be more hurdles, but the building trades had argued a winning case on the strength of their unrivaled training, expert workmanship and fierce attention to safety. Their track record on public and private projects, including many of the beachfront hotels lining Waikiki, was in plain sight.



*The A’Ali’i Residential Condominium in Kakaako in Honolulu’s popular waterfront district of Ala Moana is one of the many highly visible private and public projects built by Local 1186 members.*

**“It’s a win for our side. The city never had any language like this before.”**

— Local 1186 Business Manager  
Damien Kim





Honolulu Local 1186 hosted a small meeting in November with new Mayor-elect Rick Blangiardi, who expressed support for the PLA ordinance passed under the city's previous mayor. From left to right are Brandon Wolff (ILWU); Leroy Chincio, Honolulu Local 1260 business manager; Damien Kim, Local 1186 business manager and president of the Honolulu Building & Construction Trades Council; Blangiardi, who took office Jan. 2; Gino Soquena, HBCTC executive director; Will Chang (ILWU); and Local 1186 organizers Leyton Torda and Michael Pacheco.



Above, Local 1186 Business Manager Damien Kim testifies in 2019 at one of the hearings that led the Honolulu City Council to pass a project labor agreement ordinance. At left, Local 1186 wiremen work on a residential/commercial building against Honolulu's mountainous backdrop, a landscape filled with public and private projects wired by IBEW members.

If that wasn't enough to sway council members, the bill had strong economic appeal by specifying that contractors use at least 80% local labor on PLA projects.

That's a game-changer, said Kim and HBCTC Executive Director Gino Soquena, who was instrumental in forging the coalition between their organization and the Hawaii Construction Alliance.

"For too long, nonunion companies, especially big ones from the mainland, have been bidding on, winning, and performing work here and then taking the money outside of the state," Soquena said.

The ordinance covers public projects costing at least \$2 million. Because Honolulu is a city/county governing Oahu, it applies to the entire island.

Nonunion employers can still submit winning bids for major projects, but they'll need to hire from the existing union workforce or sign a union contract with their own crews.

A parade of angry contractors testified that the bill would doom them, insisting they couldn't afford union labor.

Soquena and Kim listened with disgust. It was a straw-man argument: Hawaii's prevailing wage law already required the same minimum pay for all

construction workers, union or not.

"It's not going to cost contractors one cent," Soquena said. "All these companies saying it's going to put them out of business. No. No. No. You can bid on the job. You can be the low bidder."

Kim politely approached the owners of a small, family-run electrical business. "I said, 'Look, you're bidding the same work that our guys are bidding. Everyone has to pay the prevailing wage. How is this going to be different? Why are you guys arguing this point?'"

They didn't have a good answer. Kim chalked it up to what seemed like a hearing-room epidemic of willful ignorance about the state's 65-year-old prevailing wage law.

But decades of experience told him and Soquena that some of their adversaries had darker motives — fear that they'd no longer get away with wage theft, worker misclassification, and safety shortcuts on the job.

"Some of them cheat," Soquena said. "With this law, it prevents them from doing that."

**THE BILL** was revised after the 2019 vote and sent back to the council for more

hearings in 2020. City attorneys advised Mayor Kirk Caldwell not to sign the first version, saying it infringed on the power of the executive branch to procure and negotiate contracts, and could put federal funds at risk.

The changes didn't favor labor, but unions still saw the final bill as a victory. "It's a win for our side," Kim said. "The city never had any language like this before."

Once it passed, the city and building trades negotiated the nuts and bolts of PLAs, or what the ordinance formally calls community workforce agreements.

At the contract's signing ceremony last July, Caldwell heralded it as the "first time ever in the history of Hawaii that we all come together under one roof for our working men and women in construction."

But getting there was a bumpy ride.

Running for mayor in 2012, Caldwell pledged to the IBEW and other trade unions that he'd make PLAs a reality. He won their endorsements, then let them down.

"I've been working on this with him for almost eight years," Kim said in November. "The first term he didn't do anything."

When Kim and another union leader pressed him on it, the mayor balked.

"There's plenty of time," he told them. It didn't go over well.

"We got into a little tiff and we didn't back him in 2016," Kim said. Caldwell won anyway.

"He wouldn't really give us the time of day," Kim said, then added with a laugh, "But Hawaii is a small place."

Caldwell was a regular at a restaurant where Kim's sister works. One day she called her brother, saying "The mayor was here. How come he's mad at you? Are you mad at him?"

Kim soon saw him at groundbreaking ceremony. "I walked up and put my arms around his shoulders. I said, 'I don't hate you, you're a great guy. It's just that you lied to me.'"

**THEY MENDED** fences, and Caldwell set about making good on his promise.

But none of the potential PLAs came into play before his second term ended Jan. 2, when newly elected mayor Rick Blangiardi was sworn in.

Most of the building trades, including Local 1186, hadn't endorsed Blangiardi, a TV executive who'd never run for office before 2020.

Kim was concerned. Under the revised, weaker PLA bill, the mayor had the power to decide for each project whether the ordinance would be enforced or not.

Now a new, untested mayor would hold all the cards. Two weeks after the election, Kim invited him to a meeting at the local's headquarters.

"He did poke me a little for not supporting him," Kim said. "But the meeting turned out better than expected."

Blangiardi was good-natured and didn't appear to hold a grudge, telling him, Soquena, Torda and the others that he's "all for" PLAs, union labor and "anything I can do to drive this economy."

Time will tell, Kim said, but "the way he's speaking right now is very positive."

So much so that when he asked Blangiardi about lowering the floor for PLAs to \$1 million projects, "he said he's willing to go even lower."

Looking ahead, Kim wants to work toward PLAs on Hawaii's other islands, efforts that will require the same spirit of unity that succeeded in Honolulu.

"This bill shows that we can work together and what happens when we do work together," he said. ■



# Relationships Forged, the IBEW Has Wind at its Back on Offshore Energy Work

**W**ashington, D.C., Local 70 members working for signatory contractor L.E. Myers Co. performed the on-shore transmission work for the first offshore wind farm in federal waters, as Dominion Energy's two-turbine pilot project off the Virginia Coast began operations in October.

It could be another step in the IBEW securing work on proposed offshore wind projects throughout the United States, as the federal government and many coastal states turn to the technology to meet clean energy goals and statutory requirements.

The Business Development Department, which has been working with district vice presidents to build relationships within the nascent U.S. offshore wind industry for nearly six years, is optimistic it will lead to more work on larger projects through longtime partner Dominion and others.

The electrical giant hopes to begin work in 2024 on an expansion of the pilot project that will provide energy to about 660,000 homes as part of the Virginia state government's ambitious goals to increase clean-air energy. Most Dominion utility employees in the commonwealth are members of Richmond, Va., Local 50.

"Dominion employs our utility members and it's been a long, fruitful partnership for both parties," said Jon Rosenberger, an international representative in the Business Development Department. "The company has worked with many of our signatory contractors on previous projects. Its leaders understand we have the skill level to do substation, transmission, interconnections and even inside work related to wind. All we really need to learn is the survival skill set out over the water."

Added Fourth District Vice President Gina Cooper: "The IBEW is grateful for the long and respectful relationship we have with Dominion, which has



*Left: Virginia Gov. Ralph Northam looks out during a tour of Dominion Energy's test wind farm 27 miles off the state's coast. Below: Working over deep water requires special survival training that members will be have to take before working on jobs like this one.*

Credit: Dominion Energy

resulted in many work opportunities for our members. We look forward to continuing this relationship on their commercial offshore wind projects."

Business Development Director Ray Kasmark made building inroads into the offshore wind energy market a priority when he was named director in 2015. Offshore wind farms have provided electricity to Europe for 50 years, but they are just getting off the ground in the United States.

Before the Virginia project, the only other project to be successfully completed was a five-turbine development near Rhode Island's Block Island that opened in 2016. About 50 members of Providence Local 99 performed construction work on land before the parts were sent to sea. Deepwater Wind, the project's lead developer, was acquired by Danish-based Orsted in 2019.

"Just looking at the scope and breadth of what was planned, it was something we had to get involved in as early as possible so we could increase our chances to capture the work," Kasmark said.

Soon after, the IBEW joined the Business Network for Offshore Wind, which connects groups looking to work in the industry with some of the primary companies like Orsted, nearly all of which are based in Europe. The organization is also committed to developing a supply chain.

"The importance of the IBEW is helping the European companies understand where you fit into the U.S. structure and making sure they understand your capabilities," said Liz Burdock, the president and chief operating officer of the Business Network for Offshore Wind. "These are high-voltage electrical lines. Really, [the IBEW] is the best-trained workforce we have in the United States to work these on these projects."

Being part of the Block Island and Virginia projects allowed the IBEW to build inroads in the offshore wind industry, but it does not guarantee future work. International President Lonnie R. Stephenson said members need to work to elect politicians who will ensure American-based, union workers are part of projects going forward.



Credit: Dominion Energy

unions will play in offshore wind development in the United States and I'm confident it will lead to more opportunities for our brothers and sisters. To have the effort led by one of our own in Liz Shuler makes this deal especially satisfying," he said.

Trade unions are structured much differently in Europe, so educating foreign companies about the IBEW's role has been crucial, Kasmark said.

The election of Joe Biden as president in November was a step in that direction. The Department of the Interior has jurisdiction over projects in federal waters. The IBEW and other trade unions were helped on the Block Island project by union-supportive politicians in local and state government in Rhode Island.

"I know the Interior Department in a Biden administration will be fair to the IBEW and other unions when it comes to projects in federal waters," Stephenson said. "Now, we must continue to elect state and local leaders who will do the same thing. This is an industry ready to take off and we must take steps to ensure our brotherhood is not behind."

Orsted was the engineering, procurement and construction lead for the initial Virginia project. It has not reached an agreement to work with Dominion on the larger project scheduled to begin in 2024 but is involved in several other proposed projects in American waters.

In November, Orsted announced it had reached an agreement with the North America's Building Trades Unions, of which the IBEW is a member, to work in collaboration with 14 U.S. construction unions as it develops more projects in American waters. AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Liz Shuler, a member of Portland, Ore., Local 125, helped broker the deal.

"Orsted is the major player," Kasmark said. "To get this done with them sets up all the crafts for a major market share in this industry. Developers can look at this and say, 'Let's go with them.'"

Stephenson also applauded the agreement, adding he was grateful for Shuler's leadership on the issue.

"I'm pleased that an industry leader like Orsted recognizes the vital role the IBEW and other trade

Rosenberger has been the lead contact on the Dominion project because Virginia is part of the Fourth District, which he services. But he noted the move to garner the work has been a department-wide effort in coordination with district vice presidents, and he's confident it can lead to work in other areas.

"We've had meetings with Dominion about partnering not just on this project, but in solar, energy storage, electric vehicle charging stations and a couple of on-shore wind projects," he said. "We just have a really good relationship with them."

Recently, IBEW leaders in New Jersey revealed they are working to secure work for hundreds of members at the proposed New Jersey Wind Port, which is scheduled to be built near where the Delaware River empties into the Atlantic Ocean. The IBEW also is pushing to be involved in the Skipjack Windfarm off the Maryland coast, with construction tentatively scheduled to start in 2022. Orsted is the lead developer on both projects.

"Orsted believes the best workers are always the best trained workers and we are proud to have earned a strong record for working with skilled union labor at the country's first offshore wind farm, the Block Island Wind Farm, where more than 300 union workers were employed," David Hardy, the chief operation officer of Orsted Offshore North America, said when announcing the trade unions agreement.

"We appreciate NABTU's cooperation and the collaborative approach our union partners have brought to this endeavor and look forward to learning from them and working with them on this groundbreaking partnership." ■



Credit: Dominion Energy



Credit: Dominion Energy

*Dominion Energy's recently-opened project is the first U.S. wind farm in federal waters. The company, a longtime IBEW partner, hopes to begin work on a much larger farm in 2024.*



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

## IBEW Member Tapped to Head Ontario Tradeswomen Committee

**T**oronto Local 353 Business Representative Karen Pullen will chair the newly formed Ontario Building and Construction Tradeswomen committee.

“We want women to be able to speak for women,” Pullen said of the provincial building trades’ effort to create a committee led by and serving tradeswomen.

The OBCT committee is the product of an effort by the Provincial Building and Construction Trades Council of Ontario to attract, graduate and retain more women in Ontario’s construction industry. The effort began with a women’s conference held last year where attendees — all of whom were women — crafted a resolution to create the committee as well as an advisory position on the council’s executive board specifically for a tradeswoman. Both initiatives were passed by the Building Trades Council Convention. It’s believed to be the only advisory position of its kind in the building trades in North America, said Building Trades Business Manager Patrick Dillon.

Pullen, who also chairs Local 353’s women’s committee, will serve in the advisory role. Despite these multiple hats — she also sits on the women’s committee for the Ontario Federation of Labour — she

stresses that it’s been a group effort to get the OBCT up and running. That group includes representatives from the Ironworkers, Carpenters and most other trades who, alongside Pullen, comprise the full tradeswomen committee.

“Women need to see and hear from women who have found a career pathway in the trades, and this organization will help make that happen,” Pullen said. “We’re hoping to be a place where young women can find fellowship and a place to talk.”

Ontario tradeswomen account for just 4% of the province’s construction workforce, Dillon said.

“For way too many years our industry has given more lip service to outreach for women than it has action to making it happen,” said Dillon, who is also a member of Hamilton Local 105. “This committee, which is a ground-up effort, aims to change that.”

While the coronavirus has hampered many of the new organization’s plans, they’ve still managed to secure government funding, create a website and are moving forward with training opportunities, the first of which focused on mental health.

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The Ontario Building and Construction Tradeswomen committee, chaired by Toronto Local 353 Business Representative Karen Pullen, aims to recruit and retain more women to the trades.

## Une membre de la FIOE à la tête du comité pour les femmes de métier de l’Ontario

**L**’agente d’affaires Karen Pullen de la section locale 353 de Toronto présidera le nouveau comité du Building and Construction Tradeswomen de l’Ontario (OBCT).

« Nous voulons des femmes qui vont parler au nom des femmes, » Mme Pullen qui parle des efforts déployés par le conseil des métiers de la province pour créer le comité et le faire diriger par et pour des femmes de métier.

L’OBCT est le fruit d’un effort du Provincial Building and Trades Council de l’Ontario pour attirer, diplômé et maintenir plus de femmes en poste dans l’industrie de la construction de l’Ontario. L’effort a commencé avec la conférence destinée aux femmes tenue l’année dernière, les participantes, dont toutes étaient des femmes, ont élaboré une résolution pour créer le comité ainsi qu’un poste consultatif au sein du comité exécutif du conseil spécifiquement pour une femme de métier. Ces deux initiatives ont été adoptées par le Building Trades Council Convention. Ce poste consultatif est considéré être le premier du genre dans les métiers de la construction en Amérique du Nord, mentionne le gérant d’affaires Patrick Dillon du Provincial Building and Trades Council de l’Ontario.

Mme Pullen préside aussi le comité destiné aux femmes du local 353 et assumera le rôle consultatif. Malgré les différents chapeaux qu’elles portent, elle fait également partie du comité destiné aux femmes du Federation of Labour de l’Ontario. Elle souligne que la mise en place de l’OBCT est le fruit d’un effort collectif. Le groupe qui compose le comité complet des femmes de métier comprend des représentantes des monteuses-assembleuses, des menuisières et la

plupart des autres métiers, au côté de Mme Pullen.

« Les femmes devraient voir et entendre d’autres femmes qui ont trouvé un plan de carrière dans les métiers spécialisés, et cette organisation peut le mettre en œuvre, » mentionne Mme Pullen. « Nous espérons devenir un lieu où les jeunes femmes peuvent créer des relations d’amitié et un lieu pour parler. »

Les femmes de métier de l’Ontario comptent pour 4 % de la main-d’œuvre dans secteur de la construction de la province, dit M. Dillon.

« Pendant beaucoup trop longtemps notre industrie n’a fait que dire de belles paroles pour la reconnaissance des femmes que de passer à l’action, » déclare M. Dillon, qui est aussi membre de la section locale 105 de Hamilton. « Ce comité qui est aussi un effort collectif a pour but de changer cette situation. »

Même si le coronavirus a freiné de nombreux projets de la nouvelle organisation, le comité a tout de même réussi à obtenir un financement du gouvernement, à créer un site web, et à aller de l’avant avec des possibilités de formation, dont la première est axée sur la santé mentale.

« Nous avons priorisé la santé mentale, particulièrement maintenant avec la COVID et les confinements », mentionne Mme Pullen.

Les participantes apprendront dans ce cours les bases de la santé mentale, d’identifier les signes précurseurs, et quoi faire pour venir en aide à quelqu’un dans le besoin.

« Les femmes ont tendance à trop s’engager, c’est ce qui nous a été enseigné », dit Mme Pullen. « On doit aussi veiller à notre santé, un moyen d’assu-

rer un certain équilibre. »

Le comité de l’OBCT à l’intention d’offrir des possibilités de mentorat et de formation sur la prise de parole en public et le leadership. Il prévoit également de mener un sondage. Selon Mme Pullen, le comité veut savoir pourquoi autant de femmes ressentent le besoin de quitter une carrière bien rémunérée et enrichissante, pour les hommes du moins, leur permettant ainsi d’élever une famille.

« Pour un travail d’électricienne syndiquée, tu peux gagner un salaire décent en travaillant 37 heures par semaine en plus des avantages. Et une fois avoir quitté le lieu de travail, c’est terminé pour la journée. Vous ne ramenez pas le travail à la maison, dit Mme Pullen. « Pourquoi ne pas en parler à une femme qui souhaite l’essayer ? »

Mme Pullen fait remarquer que les femmes ont tendance à perdre leurs emplois en premier et ne reçoivent pas toujours les meilleures possibilités de formation, et elles sont souvent affectées à un travail moins stimulant qui pourrait contribuer à leurs décisions de quitter leurs emplois. Le comité espère que le sondage lui permettra de mieux comprendre ces problèmes.

Mme Pullen dit que c’est son père qui l’a mis sur un chemin qui a finalement mené à la FIOE.

« Vers l’âge de 10 ans, on avait acheté un bateau. Lorsque j’ai dit à mon père que le moteur ne fonctionnait pas, il m’a remis le manuel et m’a essentiellement dit “répare-le”, » déclare Mme Pullen. « Il ne m’a jamais traité différemment de mon frère. Il a appuyé mes intérêts, ce qui a fait une grande différence. »

Toutefois, sa route n’a pas été facile lorsqu’elle a commencé. Certains hommes ont catégoriquement refusé de travailler avec elle. Cela ne se produit plus maintenant, dit-elle, mais cela ne signifie pas que le sexisme n’a plus lieu sur le travail.

« C’est moins flagrant aujourd’hui. C’est souvent plus insidieux, » mentionne Mme Pullen.

La plupart des hommes n’aiment pas le harcèlement non plus, dit-elle, ils ne sont pas à l’aise à s’exprimer par crainte de subir des représailles eux-mêmes.

« Nous devrions orienter nos efforts vers un environnement de travail exempt de harcèlement, où personne ne doit faire face à une guerre émotionnelle simplement qu’en se présentant au travail. Nous ne sommes pas payés pour ça. Nous sommes payés pour faire des travaux électriques, et non de se préoccuper de l’ego fragile de quelqu’un. »

Mme Pullen fait aussi remarquer le sentiment de valorisation et d’accomplissement qui découle d’un emploi dans les métiers, en particulier pour un sexe à qui l’on a appris que les outils électriques n’étaient pas faits pour eux. Grâce à des groupes comme l’OBCT, les femmes peuvent apprendre des métiers qui leur permettent également d’acquérir des compétences pour réparer leur propre maison, les rendant plus indépendantes et plus confiantes.

« Un nombre incroyable de femmes disent ne pas aimer leurs travaux, mais qui aiment le travail manuel, » déclare Mme Pullen. « Non seulement que nous pouvons leur offrir un emploi bien rémunéré, mais un sentiment de fierté dans leur travail et en elles-mêmes. » ■



## NORTH OF 49<sup>®</sup> continued

"We're making mental health a priority, especially now with COVID and the lockdowns," Pullen said.

The courses will teach participants the basics of mental health, how to identify the warning signs, and what to do in order to help someone in need.

"Women tend to take on way too much. It's how we're taught," Pullen said. "There also needs to be self-care, a way of ensuring checks and balances."

The OBCT committee further intends to offer mentoring opportunities and training on public speaking and leadership. They're also planning to conduct a survey. Pullen says they want to know why so many women feel the need to leave what is, for men at least, a lucrative and rewarding career — and one that you can raise a family on.

"With a union electrician job, you can bring home a decent wage for working about 37 hours a week, with benefits. And when you clock out, you're done. You don't bring the work home with you," Pullen said. "Why wouldn't you tell any interested woman to try it?"

Pullen noted that women tend to be the first let go from a job and they don't always get the best training opportunities, often relegated to less challenging work, which could contribute to their decision to leave. The survey, they hope, will give them a better understanding into these issues.

For Pullen, she says her father put her on a path that eventually led to the IBEW.

"When I was about 10, we got a boat and when I told my father that the motor didn't work, he handed me the manual and basically said, 'Fix it,'" Pullen said. "He never treated me any different than he did my brother. He supported my interests and that made a big difference."

Still, it was a difficult road for Pullen when she first started. Some men outright refused to work with her. That doesn't happen now, she says, but that doesn't mean that sexism has left the jobsite.

"It's less overt today. It tends to be more insidious," Pullen said.

Most of the men don't like the harassment either, she said, but they don't necessarily speak up, likely fearing reprisal themselves.

"We should be working toward a harassment-free workplace, where no one has to deal with emotional warfare just by showing up to work. That's not what we're paid for. We're paid to do electrical work, not deal with someone's fragile ego."

Pullen also noted the sense of empowerment and accomplishment that comes from a job in the trades, especially for a gender that's been taught that power tools aren't for them. With groups like the OBCT, women can learn a trade that also teaches them skills to fix their own homes, making them more independent — and confident.

"There are an awful lot of women out there who aren't happy with their jobs but who are mechanically inclined," Pullen said. "We can give them not just a good-paying job, but a sense of pride in their work. And in themselves." ■

# THE FRONT LINE: POLITICS & JOBS

## Veterans Program Graduates First Online Pre-Apprentice

This past October, U.S. Army veteran Raul Gutierrez became the first person to finish his pre-apprenticeship program completely online.

Gutierrez is a graduate of the Veterans Electrical Entry Program's computer-mediated learning course, which allows participants to take classes online that prepare them for an IBEW apprenticeship.



*Kennewick, Wash., Local 112 member Raul Gutierrez was the first person to complete the online version of the Veterans Electrical Entry Program last year.*

"The biggest thing that stood out for me was the program itself," said Gutierrez, who is now in his first year as an apprentice with Kennewick, Wash., Local 112. "It's nice to see an organization actually come out and provide a path for veterans to join them, especially the IBEW which can provide veterans with a very good career."

VEEP, which is open to service members and their spouses, is usually done in person over seven weeks toward the end of a person's military service. But starting this year, the Electrical Training Alliance, the training arm of the National Electrical Contractors Association, created an online option as way to expand access to the program. Instead of having to go to Alaska to participate in Anchorage Local 1547's program, currently the only place offering the in-person version, servicemen and women can complete their work online from wherever they're at and whenever it works with their schedule.

"I've been really impressed by the program," said Local 112's Training Director Kris Tuura. "It's a great way to give veterans a jumpstart into the electrical trade, which is the whole point of a pre-apprenticeship."

VEEP's computer mediated curriculum, which currently has four new participants following in Gutierrez's footsteps, covers the core components of a first-year inside wireman apprenticeship like reading blueprints, safety, the electrical code and DC theory. Math classes are provided by the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. ETA Curriculum Specialist Greg McMurphy,

who used to be an instructor with Local 112, provides support to the online trainees, including details like sending them their local's tool list to familiarize themselves with.

"I was really glad to see [Raul] come through the location where I went through my apprenticeship," McMurphy told Kennewick's NBC Right Now.

Gutierrez, who served for one year in South Korea and nine months in Afghanistan as a combat medic, says he came in with very little electrical experience, but the program got him up to speed.

"Everything was new to me," said the Yakima Valley native. "But the online learning went well. I thought the curriculum was very detailed and easy to understand."

With a self-directed program, it's important to have a strong work ethic, something that's practically par for the course for veterans, and one of the reasons they tend to make such good electrical apprentices.

"With a military background, you know they can follow the rules," Tuura said. "They come in disciplined so you know

you don't have to worry about them."

It's good for the veterans too. The flexibility offered by the online curriculum can allow more service members a way in, not to mention a plan for what to do once they leave the military.

"I'm really excited we're doing this for veterans," Tuura said. "It's a great way to support the men and women who have given so much to protect our country."

With so many in-person activities currently on hold or scaled back because of the coronavirus, the computer-mediated option may grow in popularity.

"I see the online option growing regardless," said Local 112 Business Manager Travis Swayze. "I think the COVID pandemic has pushed organizations to that point earlier than expected, but I think people are finding that it's now a viable option."

For Gutierrez, he says he's happy to be home and starting this new chapter.

"I just want to thank the IBEW for giving me this opportunity to join the union," he said. "I'm excited to begin." ■

## Expanding Opportunities in Fast-Growing Solar Field

Leaders at St. Louis Local 1 are doing their part to make sure the IBEW plays a big role in the booming growth of solar energy in their region. The local recently assumed a leadership role in an innovative pilot pro-

gram designed to help city leaders identify and recruit men and women into the electrical field, especially those from often untapped communities.

"We're doing a good job of keeping up with the demand for solar, and there's no end of that demand in sight," said Local 1 Business Manager Frank Jacobs. "This pilot has the potential to help us stay ahead for years to come and give more people the chance to get a solid, middle-class union job in this critical field."

Initial work on implementing the city's Solar Workforce Development Pilot began in 2019. The various restrictions associated with the COVID-19 pandemic, however, delayed the start of the city's actual recruitment process until this past November.

"We have a good, longstanding relationship with the city," Jacobs said. "They knew they could rely on the IBEW to be a willing and knowledgeable partner in their efforts." A big advantage to the pilot, he said, is that it's built using established, existing local resources, rather than trying to come up with something completely new.

The city is well acquainted with Local 1's decades-long commitment to diversity. Its community outreach efforts extend into dozens of St. Louis-area high school career fairs each year, with an eye toward broadening electrical career opportunities for minorities by targeting students in school districts with large minority populations.

In recent years, anywhere from a quarter to nearly half of Local 1's apprentices have been minorities, with the mentoring program at the local's Electrical Industry Training Center helping to produce a more than 90% graduation rate.

For this workforce development pilot, an application process helps to narrow the list of recruits to no more than 20. After these men and women are selected, some of the other pilot partners, such as the St. Louis Building and Construction Trades Council's Building Union Diversity program, will help ensure that they are prepared to handle the challenges of working in a professional environment. Other pilot partners will be charged with helping participants overcome some potential employment barriers, such as a lack of access to transportation, childcare and work clothes.

Once all of that has been sorted out, the IBEW component will kick in, with the journeymen wiremen of Local 1 spending a few days sharing some of their solar installation expertise, mixing desk-based learning with on-the-job work to give participants a taste of what a typical electrician might experience installing solar arrays. Trainers from Local 1 will then assess participants' interest and help them determine whether an apprenticeship, and eventual solar installation work, is for them.

"We think a program like this could be really effective in getting information out to the public about good-paying jobs in the electrical industry," said Dennis Gralike, director of apprenticeship at the Electrical Industry Training Center.

And there are plenty of jobs to be had, especially in the solar field. Major solar projects on their way to the St. Louis area include a joint venture recently announced between IBEW signatory contractor Aschinger Electric and Azimuth Energy that plans to focus on utility-scale and commercial solar projects. There's also Ameren's neighborhood solar program, which promises to bring installations to its customers who have space for solar panels, say, on their rooftops or in their parking lots.

"This is an innovative way for us to make strides with the city's ambitious climate protection goals while advancing diversity and equity in the workforce at the same time," said St. Louis Mayor Lyda Krewson of the program. "We're fortunate to have strong community partners willing to join us in taking a leadership role in this endeavor."

The pilot was developed by the St. Louis Office of Sustainability with support by a grant from the Energy Foundation through the Bloomberg Philanthropies American Cities Climate Challenge. St. Louis is one of 25 cities selected to participate in the Challenge, an effort to help cities take action to reduce pollution that contributes to climate change and affects public health.

Being "all in" on renewable energy initiatives is nothing new for Local 1. Its training center's pioneering Electric Vehicle Infrastructure Training Program has been crucial in supporting the growing electric vehicle industry, and Dr. Linda Little, the assistant director of the training



*Evidence of St. Louis Local 1's longtime commitment to renewable energy initiatives is seen at the array of photovoltaic cells covering part of its training center's parking lot.*



center, helped develop the EVITP for a national audience. The center's own covered parking lot has been blanketed with photovoltaic cells for years.

One hoped-for outcome from the pilot, after its partners have assessed each step of the program, is a robust recruitment set-up that will help close some of the gaps that have existed traditionally between solar installation training from non-IBEW sources and the successful placement of knowledgeable trainees in solid, middle-class union jobs in the solar industry.

"We're thrilled for the chance to bring our union's solar classroom education and field instruction to this program," Gralike said. "Training is among the many things the IBEW does best." ■

## Ontario Government Funds Initiatives for Tradeswomen and Safety

The Ontario government will provide CA\$37 million in funding to increase job training, with CA\$450,000 dedicated to the Provincial Building and Construction Trades Council to support women in the trades and health and safety training.

"We're very pleased to have the support of the Ontario government," said First District International Vice President Tom Reid. "The IBEW has been a leader on these issues and we look forward to continuing our work within the building trades to bring in more women to these well-paying and fulfilling careers."

The announcement was made by Premier Doug Ford on Sept. 3 at the training center for Hamilton, Ontario Local 105. Having the premier speak at an IBEW center is a good sign, says Local 105 Business Manager Steve Fox.

"To have the provincial government on the same page as the IBEW when it comes to supporting quality electrical careers is a tremendous success," Fox said. "It's a testament to all the good work the IBEW has done in building relationships that the government chose to make this announcement at our union hall."

The premier was joined by Minister of Labour, Training and Skills Development Monte McNaughton; Parliamentary Assistant to the Minister of Labour, Training and Skills Development Jane McKenna; and members of the Provincial Building and Construction Trades Council of Ontario.

"The IBEW [Construction Council of Ontario] is very proud of our female apprentices and journeypersons who provided training demonstrations to Premier Ford and Minister McNaughton during their visit," said James Barry, executive secretary treasurer of the CCO, to the Daily Commercial News. "We appreciate that the Ontario government has announced investments in training, reinforcing the importance that only highly trained and certified professionals should be undertaking dangerous work such as electrical work."

Patrick Dillon, business manager for

the Building Trades Council, noted the changes to safety protocols the trades have had to make this year because of the coronavirus.

"There has been a lot of cooperation with the government and the contractors' associations and the building trades to collectively work at cleaning that up. They've done a reasonably good job, but some contractors think that we should start relaxing the protocols moving back to pre-COVID," Dillon told Daily Commercial News. "It's just not going to happen. We've got some educational work to do around that."

Dillon, who is also a former business

manager of Local 105, said there's also a need to address mental health issues during this stressful time.

"The more we get into this stuff, the more mental health challenges are being highlighted," Dillon said. "Funding will be directed towards those programs and initiatives." ■

*Ontario Premier Doug Ford, center, toured the Hamilton, Ontario Local 105 training facility in September as part of an announcement of provincial funding to support women in the trades as well as safety training.*



## SPOTLIGHT ON SAFETY

### Oregon and California Adopt Emergency COVID-19 Standards

Two West Coast states have stepped up to provide protections for working people during the ongoing coronavirus pandemic, joining just two others that have done the same, largely in the absence of a federal rule.

"I applaud these efforts to create clear standards on how to keep everyone safe during this incredibly uncertain time," said International President Lonnie R. Stephenson. "No one should have to choose between a paycheck and the possibility of getting sick — or getting a loved one sick."

Oregon's emergency temporary standard took effect on Nov. 16, with certain parts phased in, after months of pressure from the state's AFL-CIO chapter and other labor organizations. Included in the new standard, which was drafted with input from labor groups, including the IBEW:

- Employers must ensure six-foot distancing between all people in the workplace, unless it can be shown it is not feasible for some activities.
- Employers must ensure that all individuals — including employees, part-time workers and customers — wear a mask, face covering or face shield in line with the Oregon Health Authority's statewide guidance.
- Employers must provide masks, face coverings, or face shields for employees free of cost.
- Employers must maximize the effectiveness of existing ventilation systems, maintain and replace air filters, and clean intake ports providing fresh or outdoor air. The temporary rule does not require employers to purchase or install new ventilation systems.
- Employers must conduct a risk assessment — that involves participation from employees — to gauge potential employee exposure to COVID-19, including addressing specific questions about minimizing such exposure.
- Employers must develop an infection control plan addressing several elements, including when workers must use personal protective equipment and a description of specific hazard controls.
- Employers must provide information and training to workers about the relevant topics related to COVID-19, and in a manner and language understood by workers.
- Employers must notify affected workers within 24 hours of a work-related COVID-19 infection.
- Employers must cooperate with public health officials if testing within the workplace is necessary.
- If an employee must quarantine or isolate, the employer must follow proper work reassignment and return-to-work steps.

The rules, which include further specifics for certain industries, are set to expire in May, by which time the Beaver State plans to have a permanent standard in place. Oregon AFL-CIO President Graham Trainor said the temporary rule was "a step closer to workplace safety, but with room for improvement."

"Oregon OSHA's Emergency Temporary Standard is a strong step forward, but eight months into this pandemic we are seeing a tremendous increase in cases both at work and throughout our communities," he said in a statement on Nov. 19. "As we move closer to drafting a permanent standard, we must see stronger ventilation requirements for all industries. Infected air needs to be moved out of places of employment and clean air in, and the Emergency Temporary Standard only requires all other employers to optimize their current systems. Keeping workers safe cannot be done through half-measures."

Just a few days later, California issued its own emergency workplace rule for the coronavirus. Under the new standard, which can be extended for up to 14 months, employers are required to:

- Write and implement a COVID-19 prevention program.
- Identify COVID-19 hazards and work with employees to correct them.



Credit: National Renewable Energy Lab via Flickr

*Oregon and California passed emergency coronavirus rules in November, providing protections for workers in lieu of a federal standard.*

- Ensure all employees are separated from others by at least six feet wherever possible.
- Provide face coverings and ensure employees wear them properly.
- Improve ventilation, maximize outdoor air and install partitions to reduce aerosol transmission where distancing isn't possible.
- Investigate and respond to workplace COVID-19 cases, and report the information to the local health department whenever required by law.
- Ensure workers who become infected don't return to work until certain criteria are met and pay them throughout their quarantines.
- Provide free testing to all employees who may have been exposed. In the event of a major outbreak, provide testing every two weeks until there are no new cases for a 14-day period.
- Provide training and instruction to employees on COVID-19 policies as well as information on related benefits the employee may be entitled to.

The standard took effect 10 days after a Nov. 19 unanimous vote by the board that oversees California's Division of Occupational Safety and Health, known as Cal/OSHA. Despite the lopsided decision, it included more than seven hours of public comment, reported KQED. At one point there were over 550 attendees, both supporting and opposing the measure. But in the end, after listening to comments that started at 10 a.m. and ended after the sun had set, the worker's voice won the day.

"I don't want to have this on my conscience that we didn't do something when we actually had the chance to do it," said Board Chair David Thomas.

Oregon and California join Virginia and Michigan as the only other states to adopt such a standard.

Workers across industries, along with labor organizations, have been calling for a federal-level standard, something which could be done through the Department of Labor's Occupational Safety and Health Administration, but so far, OSHA has chosen only largely unenforceable guidance and overreliance on its general duty clause, a broad guideline that rarely results in citations or meaningful penalties.

As president-elect, Joe Biden vowed to issue mandatory workplace safety rules that employers must follow to protect workers from the coronavirus, reported Politico, believing that a national standard is preferable to a patchwork of state regulations, and that doing so would get more people back to work faster since everyone would be following the same rule.

"Without a federal standard, we're leaving countless workers across the country to essentially fend for themselves," Stephenson said. "That's not how you lead, especially during a crisis like this. We're hopeful that the new administration, led by Joe Biden, will take concrete action to protect working families regardless of where they live." ■



# CIRCUITS

## Denver Local Renovates Home for Special Needs Family

When the Gines family had to move out of their home because of its dilapidated state, they weren't expecting to get a renovation out of it, but thanks to Denver Local 68 members and others in the Colorado Building and Construction Trades Council, that's just what happened.

"As soon as we heard about their situation, we wanted to help," said Local 68 Business Manager Jeremy Ross. "Something had to be done and we wanted to be part of it."

Local 68 learned of the family through county commissioner Chaz Tedesco, who reached out to the Building Trades for help. The family of 10 includes eight children with special needs. One daughter has cancer and is currently in the hospital. Another sibling is on dialysis after having had two kidney transplants.

"They had more than their hands full," Ross said.

The Gines inherited their home from the mother's parents, but it was in need of major repairs. There was rodent damage, the electrical wasn't up to code, a sewer line broke in the basement. Eventually the county determined the house was no longer safe to live in. It would essentially need to be demolished and rebuilt. That's when the Building Trades and others in the community stepped in to help.

"When you see someone who needs a home, and that's in our wheelhouse, you give them a helping hand," Ross said.

Signatory contractor Sturgeon Electric donated materials and will handle the service change. The Labor Management Cooperation Committee pledged up to \$10,000 as well, Ross said. Once the family is able to move back in, they will have an entirely new electrical system, from service to switches, complete with tamper-proof outlets.

"I would like to thank Jeremy and all the officers of 68 for their leadership, but most importantly I would like to thank and commend these members of Local 68 for showing their community just what brotherhood means," said Eighth District International Vice President Jerry Bellah. "I am so proud of the way they have represented their local and the entire IBEW."

There has also been an outpouring of support from the greater Denver communi-

ty, reported the local ABC affiliate Denver 7. While the family initially had to separate, with some children moving in with relatives and others staying with their parents in a motel, they've since been reunited and are staying in an apartment until the renovation is complete. Donations from the community have helped cover their costs.

Asbestos issues have delayed the project, but Ross said they should be done early this year. Among those helping from Local 68 are members of the local's RENEW committee, the IBEW's initiative to engage younger members of the union.

"RENEW has been great through all this," Ross said. "Someone has stepped up practically every time we've asked."

The committee got started around spring of 2019 and have done trunk-or-treat events for Halloween, installed lights at a group home and volunteered at a women's shelter.

"They've really been on a tear," Ross said. "Young people with a bunch of young energy is a great asset to have."

Ross says that Local 68's 2,000 inside construction members have been deemed essential in terms of coronavirus restrictions. And they know how fortunate that makes them.

"When you have opportunity, you have an obligation," Ross said. "Helping a family in need is part of that." ■

## IBEW Local 1 Lights Up for Suicide Prevention

The headquarters of the IBEW's very first local looked a little different this past fall, at least from the outside, as it lit up its building with teal and purple lights in honor of National Suicide Prevention Month.

"With an issue this important, we wanted to be part of the effort to help raise awareness," said St. Louis Local 1 Business Manager Frank Jacobs.

Each September, mental health advocates and others use National Suicide Prevention Month to spotlight a topic that's often very difficult to talk about, making actions like Local 1's all the more important because they draw attention to the issue in a curiosity-piquing, nonjudgmental way.

Jacobs said that when they last renovated the hall, they made all the outdoor lights LED, so the colors can be easily changed at any time, something the local



St. Louis Local 1 lit up the outside of its headquarters in teal and purple last September as part of National Suicide Prevention Month.

does periodically throughout the year. So when they heard about the work the area building trades were doing to do support the issue, they were all in. And members appreciated the gesture of glowing teal and purple solidarity.

"Suicide is an issue that hits close to home for those of us in the building trades," Jacobs said. "Unfortunately, we have lost far too many to suicide."

The Centers for Disease Control and Prevention reports that overall suicide rates in the U.S. have increased. It's been the 10th leading cause of death since 2008. And the hardships wrought by the coronavirus have only contributed to a further mental health erosion. A weekly CDC report from June 2020 found that 40% of adults reported struggling with mental health or substance use and that 11% of adults seriously considered suicide.

Construction workers have one of the highest rates of suicide compared to other industries, according to the CDC. In 2016, the rate for men in construction and extraction occupations was almost twice the total suicide rate for non-military working men, and five times greater than the rate for all fatal work injuries in the industry.

"The construction industry is a tough job," Jacobs said. "You don't get paid if you don't work, so guys will often take a couple pills to get through an injury and in some cases things spiral out of control."

According to the National Suicide Prevention Lifeline, research has shown that people who are having thoughts of suicide feel relief when someone asks about them in a caring way, and that acknowledging and talking about suicide may reduce, rather than increase, suicidal thoughts. Similarly, individuals are more likely to feel less depressed, less suicidal, less overwhelmed and more hopeful after speaking to someone who listens to them without judgment.

"We want to do whatever we can to

help our brothers and sisters who may be suffering," Jacobs said. "We're here for them and we want them to know that."

*If you are in crisis or are experiencing suicidal thoughts, you can call the National Suicide Hotline at 1-800-273 TALK (8255). If you're uncomfortable talking on the phone, you can also text NAMI (the National Alliance on Mental Illness) to 741-741 to be connected to a free, trained crisis counselor on the Crisis Text Line. ■*



"When you see someone who needs a home, and that's in our wheelhouse, you give them a helping hand."

— Local 68 Business Manager Jeremy Ross

◀ Denver Local 68 members were part of a community-wide effort to renovate the home of a family with eight special needs children.

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# TRANSITIONS

## DECEASED

### William R. Mundt



The officers regret to report that William R. Mundt, a retired international representative for the Ninth District, died on Oct. 18. He was 92.

Mundt was born in 1928 in the northeastern Waterloo, Iowa, suburb of Oelwein, which is where he received his elementary

and high school education and also served as a Boy Scout. In 1946, he said goodbye to his parents and eight brothers and sisters and joined the U.S. Navy, attending communication schools in San Diego and in Las Cruces, N.M., repairing and maintaining telephones and field communications systems.

Upon completion of his tour of duty in 1948, Mundt returned to Iowa, where he was initiated into Davenport Local 1858 and worked jobs at Petersen Electric and John Deere. (Local 1858 was later amalgamated into Davenport Local 1379.) It was in Iowa where he married his wife, Shirley, in 1949.

**“We always went with him on campaigns ... when school was out.”**

— Mundt's daughter, Local 2295 retiree Cherie Parrish

Soon after, Mundt moved his family east to Rock Island, Ill., and worked for International Harvester for nearly 12 years. He also served a stint as a shop steward before becoming the local's financial secretary from 1956 to 1958. For two years after that, Mundt was the local's business manager.

“He was actually working two jobs to support his family,” his daughter, Cherie Parrish, recalled, “and then International Harvester started laying people off.” Mundt had relatives near Los Angeles, she said, so one summer while the family was out there visiting, he filled out some job applications.

The one job that panned out for him, Parrish said, was an IBEW contractor gig with Litton Industries, a major defense contractor that's now part of Northrup Grumman.

There, Mundt transferred his membership to Los Angeles Local 2295 and signed up to work on the local's committees for safety and negotiating. (Parrish said she also became a Local 2295 member, working for another defense contractor, Raytheon.)

“He was very union-minded, even before he joined the staff” in the Ninth District, Parrish said. “He did a lot of negotiations with different plants back in the '60s.” He also kept up his labor education, taking classes from Los Angeles's Catholic Labor Institute.

In December of 1962, then-International President Gordon Freeman assigned Mundt to a temporary position as a special Manufacturing and Organizing Operations Department organizer.

“Tony Bellissimo and Duke Schultz really got him involved,” Parrish said, “and recommended his appointment to the Ninth District office as an international representative.” At the time, Bellissimo was assistant director of Manufacturing and Organizing Operations, while Schultz was a Ninth District international representative.

Six months into his temporary assignment, Mundt was appointed by Freeman to be an international representative assigned to the Ninth District. In that role, Mundt organized and serviced a wide variety of locals covering manufacturing, maintenance/operations, telephone, government, radio/television and construction.

“He even tried to win Litton Industries,” Parrish said. “He made it a family thing. He would have us kids do handbills and stand outside holding signs. We'd go into

the local office and fold letters and envelopes.” Litton proved a tough nut to crack, though, and after several tries, Mundt was unsuccessful. Still, it demonstrated his dedication to the cause, she said.

Parrish said that as an international representative her father was always busy, but he still managed to make time with his wife, daughter and two sons a priority. “We always went with him on campaigns during the summer when school was out,” she said. “During one summer vacation, he had to go to an organizing campaign in Idaho, and we went, too. It was interesting.”

Mundt also was attracted to politics at all levels, she said, and he served as campaign manager for the successful third term run of Larry Townsend, a fellow international representative, who represented California's 67th District in the State Assembly. “He was really into politics after that,” Parrish said.

Following 25 years of dedicated service in the district office, Mundt retired in 1988; a year later, he and his family had moved back to his beloved Iowa. There, Mundt built a home on a 16-acre tract of land, most of which was dedicated to the farming of oak and black walnut trees. “It was a bird sanctuary,” Parrish said, “with deer, turkeys and other wildlife.”

Mundt remained active in retirement, serving on the Oelwein Chamber of Commerce and Area Development. He joined American Legion Post No. 9 and was its commandant for 10 years, and he was, for a time, president of Oelwein's Hub City Heritage Corporation's Railway Museum. “Oelwein used to be a major rail hub,” Parrish explained.

In his spare time, Mundt continued to enjoy his various hobbies, including leather crafts, photography, golfing, woodworking and camping in his spacious back yard. He also was a member of Zion Lutheran Church.

Please join the Brotherhood in sending our condolences to Brother Mundt's family. ■

## DECEASED

### George Santiago



Retired Third District International Representative George Santiago, who was a leader in New York Local 3 helping to improve the lives of thousands of Puerto Rican and other Latino members after World War II, died at his home in Orlando, Fla., on Oct. 9. He was 91.

“He led a full life,” said Michael Santiago, one of two surviving sons. “It definitely was a life of giving. He would do anything selflessly for anybody without expecting anything in return.”

Born in San Sebastian, Puerto Rico, Brother Santiago moved to New York City in 1946. He became a Local 3 member when he was hired by a lamp and fixture shop where employees had IBEW representation.

His professional career was interrupted from 1950 to 1953, when he served in the U.S. Army in Germany as a medical technician and company clerk. He returned to his job in New York afterwards, where other Puerto Ricans working at the shop asked him to serve as a steward.

Brother Santiago accepted and quickly became a leader in Local 3. In 1958, he assisted legendary Business Manager Harry Van Arsdale and others in the formation of the Santiago Iglesias Educational Society, which was formed to allow Local 3 to better understand the growing Puerto Rican labor force in New York City — many of whom were already working in Local 3's manufacturing sector.

The society remains active today, fostering Latino leaders not just in Local 3, but in politics and community activism in and around New York City.

“In the beginning, you didn't know what you were dealing with,” said former Local 3 business agent Edwin Lopez, whose father, Jose, also worked with Van Arsdale and Santiago to get the society off the ground. “You didn't

know if you were going to face discrimination in hiring or discrimination on the job.

“George and his peers worked together to give a voice to the worker and a voice to those who weren't being heard,” added Lopez, who now serves as the executive secretary of the New York chapter of the National Electrical Contractors Association.

**“It definitely was a life of giving. He would do anything selflessly for anybody without expecting anything in return.”**

— Michael Santiago, son of retired Third District International Representative George Santiago

That work opened several doors for Brother Santiago within the greater New York City labor community.

In 1961, then-mayor Robert Wagner named him one of 17 members of his Committee Against the Exploitation of Workers. He later was one of the organizers of New York's Puerto Rican Day Parade, which began in 1958 and continues to this day. He also was active in the Police Athletic League and was an organizer of the Puerto Rican Community Development Project, which was formed to fight poverty within the Latino community.

“He wanted to prove being born in Puerto Rico wasn't a limitation,” Michael Santiago said. “He was always pushing the boundaries.”

In 1966, he moved to the Third District office, where he was an international representative serving the manufacturing branch, which had more than 300,000 members across North America at the time.

Michael Santiago said his father's fight for working people became nearly all-consuming at times.

“He was just such a giving man,” his son said. “He did everything he could for anybody. I can't tell you how many times he would take me out to walk the picket lines for people, many of whom he didn't know.

“We would go to Kmart and pick up a charcoal grill and go right to the picket line. I would be handing out hot dogs to people. He was always there to help.”

Santiago's original dream when he came to the United States was to become an architect, but he wasn't able to enter a college or architecture program because they didn't accept much of the education he received while growing up in Puerto Rico.

Education turned into a major force for the rest of his life. He went on to earn a bachelor's degree in labor management from Thomas Edison State University in New Jersey; a master's degree in urban studies from Queens College in New York; and a doctorate in sociology from City College of New York. He retired as an international representative in 1992 and later moved to Florida.

“New York City is a rough town at times,” Michael Santiago said. “I can't tell you the times he would see a homeless person and not just throw him a couple of bucks, but go and get a meal and give it to him and something to drink. He went out of his way to make sure that person was fed. I'd like to think that person was fed physically and spiritually.”

Besides Michael, Brother Santiago is survived by another son, George; his wife, Miriam; and a stepson, Andis Tamayo. Daughters Jeanette Nelson and Katherine Goosch preceded him in death.

“What I would say about George is that he represented the heart and soul of what Local 3 is about,” Lopez said. “It was about being committed to bettering the life of the worker. That was done through the efforts of people like George Santiago.”

The officers and staff send their condolences to Brother Santiago's loved ones and many friends during this difficult time. ■

## IBEW MEDIA WORLD

In addition to your monthly issue of The Electrical Worker, check out the wealth of IBEW-related information online.

### www.ibew.org

Get all the news for and about IBEW members, including the online and PDF versions of The Electrical Worker, at IBEW.org.

### YouTube & Vimeo

IBEW members have continued to do great work across North America despite the challenges posed by COVID-19. Watch and share some of these short video stories at [YouTube.com/TheElectricalWorker](https://www.youtube.com/TheElectricalWorker) and [Vimeo.com/IBEW](https://www.vimeo.com/IBEW).

### HourPower

New York Local 3's Amber Light Society has



been promoting and supporting women in the trades for decades. Now, they're helping women take the next step into supervisory positions with the Rising Tide Résumé Project. See more at [IBEWHourPower.com](https://www.ibewhourpower.com).

### ElectricTV

Local 611 electricians working



with signatory contractor B&D Industries have put the focus back on smaller service jobs that aren't often done union. Learn more about how they're making it work at [ElectricTV.net](https://www.electrictv.net).



# LOCAL LINES

## Restoring Our Communities After Devastating Fires

L.U. 47 (lctt,mo,o,u&uow), DIAMOND BAR, CA — Greetings, brothers and sisters, and Happy New Year.

Our sentiments go out to anyone who has suffered or had loved ones suffer from the coronavirus, and our condolences to those who have lost family to this terrible pandemic.

At the time of this writing, 4.1 million acres and counting have burned in the 2020 California wildfires, and our field crews are hard at work restoring infrastructure and electricity in California's hardest-hit areas. Many IBEW members and others have lost property in the fires.

Bargaining continues in the cities of Anaheim, Colton and Banning and at Bear Valley Electric.

All of our local events have been canceled through the end of 2020 due to COVID-19 restrictions.

We're sad to report the deaths of Local 47 members Justin Conrad, Mike Fournier, Luis Ortega, Leonardo Sanchez, Daniel Steinle and John Williams, as well as James Dewey and Jessie Galindo, who were working in our jurisdiction from Local 42. Our condolences and prayers are with their loved ones.

Work safe and buy union!

Mitch Smith, P.S.



Pat Lavin swears in Local 47 new member Brother Mike Cater, who served four years in the U.S. Marine Corps.

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## Wind Farm Organizing Win

L.U. 51 (catv,lctt,o,ptc,rtb,t,u&uow), SPRINGFIELD, IL — We were successful in organizing the employees at Invenergy in Grand Ridge Wind Energy Center in Marseilles, Ill. Invenergy is one of the six largest owners of wind-generation plants in the United States and North America's largest privately held renewable power-generation company. This is the first organized wind farm within the IBEW, and contract negotiations will begin soon. Our thanks to Joe DiMichele, international lead organizer, for his help throughout the process.

We mourn the following members who we lost in 2020: Jerry Lee Beebe, William J. Bowman, Reagan Brown, Ray V. Dennis, Joseph Evans, Randy P. Harden, Richard "Dick" Harting Sr., William E. Hayes, Dean Heinz, Gene Hill, Kevin Holder, Jimmy Hurley, John F. Isaacs, Donna Kelley, Romaine D. Lund, James Masten, Howard Nailer, Robert Pollard, W. Michael Reatha-ford, Robert Richards Jr., John "Jack" Ringwald, John Roberts Jr., Michael Sheumaker, Danny Simmons, Loren Sparling, Robert Swadener, Curtis Swanson, James Vietti Jr., Tim Vieweg and John P. Wilson.

While none of us can predict what 2021 will bring, we gladly say goodbye to 2020. We wish you and your families a happy New Year.

Karlene Knisley, B.R.

## COVID-19 Takes a Toll

L.U. 55 (c,lctt,o&u), DES MOINES, IA — Hello, brothers and sisters: COVID-19 has taken a toll on just about everything we do. By the time you get this, the election will be over, and maybe we can have a little peace and quiet for the next 3 years. No matter who you voted for, let's come together and support our president to make our country great. A crew working for Burns Electric along Merle Hay Road in Johnston, Iowa, is in the process of converting 3-phase

overhead 336 conductors to 3-phase 1,000 kcmil underground conductors. It includes several federal switch gears and has numerous taps of 1/0 to feed local businesses. This crew is doing an outstanding job, and it's a good example of union labor at work.

Our local is in serious need of linemen. If you're looking for a job, give us a call! Our local is working through the pandemic and keeping its members as safe as possible. Shane Nelson, assistant business representative, just wrapped up two contracts: Osceola Electric just signed a 5-year contract (with 4%, 4%, 3.5%, 3.5%, 3.5%), and L.E. Myers mechanics settled for 3.25 % for 3 years and an increase to their retirement and

benefits plan. This is just the start of a very busy negotiating time. It's the middle of winter now, and we need to look out for frostbite and ask for help in backing up trucks or heavy equipment, especially during low visibility. See you back in a couple months.

Myron Green, P.S.



Kris Robinson, Bo Opstvedt and Jeremy Parker work for Burns Electric along Merle Hay Road in Johnston.

## National Apprenticeship Week Proclamation in Spokane, Wash.

L.U. 77 (lctt,mt,o,t&u), SEATTLE, WA — November 8-14, 2020, was National Apprenticeship Week. The City of Spokane, Wash., issued a proclamation officially recognizing this time as Apprenticeship Week. The proclamation was presented to Local 77 and Local 73, as well as other labor organizations in eastern Washington. The mayor of Spokane gave the proclamation and presented it to Assistant Business Manager Mike Brown.

Brandon Arkle, Exec. Board

## Despite Setbacks, Construction Projects Move Forward

L.U. 103 (cs&i), Boston, MA — In the wake of job closings and economic uncertainty due to COVID-19 here in Boston, there is some good news to report: The massive Winthrop Square high-rise project is moving forward. Millennium Partners, which builds large

complicated projects in Manhattan, Miami, Washington and San Francisco, has been planning the new, 690-foot, 60-story tower in downtown Boston for several years; but the project lost financing after financial setbacks in March due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Millennium recently announced that they have received key financing to ensure that the \$1.3 billion project continues to move forward. The Winthrop Square project will add to Millennium's portfolio in Boston, which includes the Ritz-Carlton in the old combat zone area and the Millennium Tower in Downtown Crossing that opened in 2016 after being delayed by the 2008 recession. The lab/bio/pharmaceutical market has also provided some much-needed stability to Boston and Cambridge construction markets in an unstable COVID world.

Jimmy Fleming, R.S.

## Focusing on IBEW's Primary Work

L.U. 125 (lctt,o&u), PORTLAND, OR — Politics matter, so thank you to everyone who donated, volunteered, phone banked and supported political campaigns. No matter which candidate you wanted to win, we hope you used the opportunity to educate politicians on the importance of working families' issues. With results in hand, it's time to resume focus on our primary work.

This year will bring negotiations with some employers who have historically made for long, and at times contentious, bargaining. Business representatives will be working alongside Business Manager Eri, clerical staff and YOU to prepare and work to achieve mutually beneficial results during negotiations. Due to the COVID-19 pandemic, we will do everything possible to keep negotiating committee members safe during bargaining.

As we head into 2021, we thank you, our members, for your continued commitment to our union. Best wishes for a safe, joyous and prosperous holiday season. And for those of you who often answer the call to restore power or otherwise support those efforts, we see you. It is often not easy and certainly not convenient work to keep the lights on; so thanks for stepping up and doing what is needed.

Marcy Grail, A.B.M.

## Welcoming New Leadership

L.U. 129 (i), Lorain, OH — On August 10, 2020, the membership elected John Novak as business manager, J.R. Roark as president, Jay McKay as vice president, Kurt Kauk as treasurer and Mark Schueszler as recording secretary. Also elected to the Executive Board were Pat Bell, Mark Burnette, Jay Hasenflue,

## Submitting Local Lines Articles

Local Lines are printed monthly on an alternating even/odd schedule. They can be submitted by designated press secretaries or union officers via email ([locallines@ibew.org](mailto:locallines@ibew.org)) or U.S. Mail. We have a 200-word limit. We make every effort to assist local unions in publishing useful and relevant local union news; however, all final content decisions are based on the editor's judgment. Our guidelines and deadlines are available at [www.ibew.org/media-center/IBEW-News-Media-Center/Submitting-Local-Lines](http://www.ibew.org/media-center/IBEW-News-Media-Center/Submitting-Local-Lines). Please email or call the Media Department at (202) 728-6291 with any questions.

## 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	
(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.



Paul Kress, Mike McKenzie and Paul Reeves.

On behalf of the new officers and the general membership, we recognize and congratulate retiring Business Manager Jeff Bommer and Recording Secretary Tim Koperdak for their many years of dedicated service.

Thanks also go to Dave Shaffer, who served for 13 years as an organizer. Dave will continue to provide valuable knowledge and experience to the local.

Despite the ongoing COVID-19 situation, we will move forward into 2021 with activities that bring members together outside the jobsite. Our goal is to improve monthly meeting attendance, provide new opportunities to serve the local and facilitate concerns through open lines of communication. Having just completed the 2020 election process, we fully realize the political differences that our local and the community have. We must continue to educate union members on the importance of supporting candidates who fight for working families and the right to organize.

At present, the work picture remains fairly good, and we anticipate a busy 2021.

*Paul Kress, P.S.*

## Wisconsin Goes Blue

L.U. 159 (i), MADISON, WI — We thank our staff and members for all their hard work on the presidential election. We were stoked to see Wisconsin go blue.

As we submit this, our Holiday Fantasy in Lights crew has just turned on the lights for our biggest and longest-running winter lights display ever. We set up a week earlier this year, and we are excited to share our handiwork with the community. A special thanks to our tireless retirees, who have put in many long hours building, repairing and prepping the displays since July. We could not have done it without them.

During the pandemic, we are doing our utmost to advocate for our members and to help keep classes going, members working and jobs running as safely as possible. Kudos to everyone for being resilient, and carrying on as best they can, during these challenging times. We welcomed new Referral Agent Ken Jungenberg to the Local 159 staff in July. He has been a quick learner, and we are pleased to have him on board.

*Sue Blue, B.M.*



Wisconsin Assembly District 51 candidate Kriss Marion (left), and Business Manager Sue Blue (right).

## York Electrical Institute Accredited by the Council on Occupational Education

L.U. 229 (em&i), YORK, PA — We are proud to announce that, after years of hard work by the board and staff, York Electrical Institute is now accredited by the commission of the Council on Occupational Education (COE). This thorough process involved an extensive self-study involving officers, staff and students of the institute; we thank them all for their cooperation during this process. The accreditation process also involved an intensive review by a visiting team of professional educators representing COE. We were able to demonstrate that IBEW-NECA apprenticeship programs meet their high standards of quality and integrity in post-secondary career and technical education.

This accreditation, recognized by the U.S. Department of Education, will bring additional credibility and awareness to the professional men and women of Local 229 and the outstanding work done through the Electrical Training Alliance for our apprenticeship programs. We look forward to the opportunities this accreditation creates for our members and our school.

*Timothy Griffin, P.S.*

## New Officers and Negotiations

L.U. 245 (govt,lctt,o,rtb&u), TOLEDO, OH — Well, it's a new year, and there are lots of new things happening here at Local 245. First and foremost, we have a number of new officers. Shane Bauman is the new business manager/financial secretary, replacing Larry Tscherne, who is retiring after many years in that position. Brian Gendaszek is the new president, Travis Brown is vice president and there are a number of new faces on the Executive Board. We would like to thank all the officers who are leaving and welcome all the new ones.

On the negotiation front, the year will start with Davis-Besse and Lake Township negotiations in progress. The linemen from both outside and Toledo Edison are back after traveling this fall to Louisiana, Alabama, Texas and New Jersey for storm work. At Toledo Edison, as a result of the coronavirus, the union and company have come to an agreement to allow 2020 vacation to be carried over to 2021. Work on the outside remains steady with seven new apprentices, and we hope to see the work picking up soon.

On a personal note, I received my 50-year pin at the October local meeting. I am proud to have been a member for 50 years and have benefited greatly from IBEW membership.

Stay safe, and pray we have a better year in 2021 than last year.

*Ray Zychowicz, P.S.*

## Local Gains and Losses

L.U. 269 (i&o), Trenton, NJ — An election season like no other came and went as the local saw a majority of their preferred candidates elected. The importance of having labor-friendly officials at the state and local municipal levels cannot be overstated. These officials hold the purse-strings to the coffers that fund local and state projects, which provide the good-paying jobs that are the lifeblood of our industry. As distasteful as politics may seem to some of our members, we should all keep this in mind: If we do not pay attention to our local politicians, rest assured, they will pay no attention to us.

On a more somber note, the local lost a good man in late October with the passing of Brother Jona-



Jonathan Grant Fregans (1974 - 2020)

“steamed clams.” His yearly contribution earned him the nickname “The Clam Man,” which he embraced as an honor. Jonathan Fregans was a good man, and he will be sorely missed. Rest in peace, Brother.

*Brian Jacoppo, P.S.*

## Thanks to Volunteers & COVID Update

L.U. 275 (catv,em&i), MUSKEGON, MI — Local 275's Electrical Workers Minority Caucus members recently participated in the International Day of Service at the Muskegon C.I.O. Hall. The volunteers completed much needed electrical upgrades to the building and accomplished more work in one day than everyone thought they could. [See photo bottom, right.] It is a great testament to the power of the IBEW and coming together for the community through volunteerism. A sincere thank you to all who donated their time.

The recent upswing in COVID-19 cases has affected the state of Michigan and Local 275 as well. We have been forced to close the hall to in-person foot traffic and have limited our hours of operation to 8:00 to noon. We urge all of our members to observe the 6-foot rule, wear face masks and wash hands frequently.

I would also like to take a moment to thank Local 275 Organizer/Registrar Walter Christophersen and member volunteers for months of hard work during this year's election cycle. While we were able to accomplish a lot, we still have much work to do. Thanks again!

*Jonas Talbott, B.M.*

## Steady Work & Bracing For a Legislative Fight

L.U. 291 (c,i,mo,o,rtb&rts), BOISE, ID — Greetings all, and Happy New Year! 2020 has come and gone, and we are welcoming in 2021. I am writing this pre-Election Day, and I am hoping that we will inaugurate President Biden into the White House.

Even with all of its difficulties, 2020 was a banner year for construction in Boise. While many IBEW locals across the country had jobs closing down, we were fortunate to be putting members to work. Thank you to our traveling brothers and sisters who assisted us in getting our job calls filled. Unfortunately, our telecom branch lost 17 premise technician positions at AT&T/DirecTV, but our call center continues to hire and grow. Congratulations to our graduating apprentices: Edward

Bittinger, Philip Boucher, Kramer Brown, Derrick Chavez, Matthew Elliott, Hunter Gibson, Dallas Hash, Paul Heistuman, Kristopher Kellner, Phineas Lammer, Tye Thomas, Steen White and Matthew Wilder.

As we look into the 2021 Idaho legislative session and our governor's continued plan to make Idaho the least regulated state in the U.S., we already know there will be more attacks on licensing and apprentice-to-journeyman ratios.

Here's hoping 2021 will be a great year across the IBEW for our members and their families.

*Mark Zaleski, B.M.*

## Union-Busting Stirs Up a Fight & Honoring Our Retirees

L.U. 309 (i,lctt,mo,mt,o,rts,spa&u), COLLINSVILLE, IL — In what should have been a quick and easy first contract, the clerks at Clinton County Electric Co-op have become the targets of an anti-union lawyer hired by the Board of Trustees. After eight contentious meetings, the nine-member, all-male board has offered zero raises for four years and zero contracts. Local 309 received favorable initial decisions on two unfair labor practice charges, and now it's up to the Board to agree to terms or take it to court. While this process continues, Business Manager Tim Evans is urging members who get their power from Clinton County Electric Co-op to “contact your Board and consider running for the Board.”

2020 saw the cancellation of our annual retiree dinner. This popular event brings members together to reflect upon and celebrate the contributions of our retirees. It is always a wonderful time, and we hope to resume this great tradition in 2021. In addition to many others, Local 309 would like to recognize 73-year honorees Robert C. Bingman, Raymond P. Mullins and Richard P. Voss, and 76-year honoree Billy N. Lewis.

*Carlos S. Perez, R.S.*

## Taking Less and Giving More

L.U. 313 (i&spa), WILMINGTON, DE — We extend a big thank you to all the members who helped with the general election and even our Local 313 election. As we have said before, “Our ultimate strength lies with the participation of our members.”

By taking less and giving more, you can increase Local 313's net worth. Deciding to do just one thing with your local in the upcoming year can make a big difference. It could take many forms, like voicing an opinion, attending a meeting or a game, engaging with a member who needs a lift, improving conditions on the job or eliminating a bad one, setting an example, staying in touch with the hall or old tool buddies, visiting the website or learning about issues that concern you, inviting buddies out after work and inviting the whole job, or running a good job — it's all good! Wherever you see yourself, step up — not back. We are better together. Stay safe.

*James R. Murrian, B.M.*



Local 275 EMMC volunteers participate in upgrades to the Muskegon C.I.O. hall.

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## LOCAL LINES

## Changes and Challenges

L.U. 343 (i,spa&st), LE SUEUR, MN — Happy New Year, brothers and sisters! We start by congratulating Brother Andy Toft on 40 years of service to the IBEW and Local 343. Brother Toft was initiated in 1979, and in the late 1980s, he joined the apprenticeship committee. In the early 1990s, he became a JATC instructor teaching night classes as well as a part-time training director. Andy went on to become our first full-time training director, where he's served the last 20 years. The apprenticeship program now has 3 full-time instructors, 2 training facilities and more than 170 apprentices attending daytime classes.

After a successful stint as an instructor, Brother Mike Bambrick Jr. stepped into the lead role as training director in June, four months into the pandemic and only two months before the start of school. There was no past practice to fall back on. Mike now has a playbook for hybrid learning: online instruction one week with limited in-person labs and staggered classroom attendance the next week. Congratulations, Andy; and good luck, Mike!

Work remains slow at home. Remember the "Rules of the Road" when traveling. You are representing Local 343, and you are a guest of the local: Follow their agreement; stay out of their affairs; and remove your name from other books.

Shop union-made, buy union-made.

*Tom Small, P.S.*

## The Unionmen

L.U. 369 (em,es,i,lctt,o,rtb,rts,spa,u), LOUISVILLE, KY — For this month's submission, I came across this poem, "The Unionmen," by Henry Hewson and wanted to share it with every IBEW member:

Some members keep their union strong.  
While others join and just belong.  
Some dig right in, some serve with pride.  
Some go along just for the ride.  
Some volunteer to do their share.  
While some lay back and just don't care.  
On meeting night some always show.  
While there are those who never go.  
Some do their best, some build and some make.  
Some never give, but always take.  
Some lag behind, some let things go.  
Some never help their union grow.  
Some drag, some pull, some don't, some do.  
CONSIDER WHICH OF THESE ARE YOU?

*Gene Houlthouser, Pol. Dir.*

## COVID Updates &amp; Remembering a Brother Lost

L.U. 449 (i,o,u,rtb,rts&spa), POCATELLO, ID — Brothers and sisters, I am very disappointed that we were not able to get together and have our Christmas party this year. It is just crazy how much COVID-19 has changed our worlds in such a short time. This pandemic has been a serious obstacle to getting jobs started and keeping our members working here at home.

Instead of scrambling to fill calls, we are just hoping that it turns around soon and that we all make it through safely. Fortunately, we have been able to rent a space large enough to hold our regular meeting over the last few months.

Congratulations to Brothers Mike Ruffridge and James Stump on their retirements. Thank you for being part of the local, and I hope you each have a long and exciting retirement.

In memoriam, Brother Bob Richmond: Our heartfelt condolences go out to his family and friends. I am truly grateful I had the chance to get to know Bob after he retired. I have worked with his son Brent and

grandson Bobbie, and you can see the powerful influence he has had in their lives. Bob was a great brother and caring friend and will be truly missed.

In closing, I want to wish everyone a Happy New Year and a safe winter.

*Ned Jones, B.M.*

## Apprentices and Instructors Adapt to a New Model of Learning

L.U. 481 (ees,em,i,mt,rts,s&spa), INDIANAPOLIS, IN — Like many locals, we had to cancel or postpone most of our normal events during the 2020 calendar year. One of the events that was postponed was our annual apprenticeship graduation banquet. The instructors and apprentices have had to adapt to new ways of working in the classroom. Although it was not easy, our instructors made it happen, and our apprentices were able to complete the required class time to continue on the path to becoming journeymen wiremen and journeymen installer techs. Thank you to the instructors for working long hours and for their ability to adapt and overcome.

With that said, we want to recognize the recent classes of JWs and JTs who successfully completed the apprenticeship program: Job well done! We also want to recognize several who stood out among their classmates and received additional honors. Apprentice of the Year winners were Jason Arnold, Ellis Gary, Rachel Goetz, Ben Richter and Jacob Riehle. Solidarity winners were Jason Arnold, Michael Dragonette, Rachel Goetz, Shanelle Hayes and Sarah Waltz. Congratulations! Continue to stay involved throughout your career. The IBEW is only as strong as you, the member!

*Jeff Wheeler, B.M.*

## Local Solar Projects, Local Election Results

L.U. 531 (i), LAPORTE, IN — There has been a gradual change away from coal-fired generation of electricity towards more green methods like wind and solar, and our local area is no exception. NIPSCO, the Northern Indiana Public Service Company, has made the decision to move away from coal. At the time of this writing, NIPSCO announced a finalized plan in Jasper County for a 900-megawatt solar installation to replace the coal generators at the Schahfer Generating Station.

While many people are in favor of changing to greener energy production, there are those who are still opposed to some of the newer technologies. Regardless of these opinions, the fact is that these types of projects will continue. Several contractors in our local have already been involved in the installation of some smaller projects. Local unions need to be up to date with the education of their members for these newer technologies in order to keep up with the changing times.



Local 531 members participate in the Adopt-A-Highway program near ArcelorMittal in Burns Harbor.



Local 569 conducts a union meeting in October.

I would also like to take this time to congratulate some of the winners of our recent local elections: Jim Clarida, business manager; Don Hamann, president; Mike Lowenthal, vice president; Robert "Buster" Kerkes, treasurer; Dave Kohler, recording secretary; Tom Pahs, Tony Hurt and Eric Cusick, Executive Board. Congratulations to you all.

*Jeremy Woolever, P.S.*

## Charging Into 2021

L.U. 569 (i,mar,mt,rts&spa), SAN DIEGO, CA — Although 2020 and COVID-19 brought many hurdles, our local didn't stumble: Our hall remained open, our members went to work and we laid the groundwork to strengthen our pipeline of work for 2021 and many years ahead.

Our clean transportation victories will create thousands of new jobs for our members, including clean truck standards, with new charging infrastructure; the MTS transition to zero-emission bus technology; and the upcoming legislative requirement that all projects funded or authorized by the California Energy Commission, California Air Resources Board or California Public Utilities Commission will require EVTP certification.

Additionally, we won work through PLAs, political victories and business development that will put our members to work, including a PLA on the new \$3 billion Pure Water Project, 60 schools in Imperial Beach and Chula Vista, the new courthouse downtown, the new SDSU Aztec Stadium and a new ground-up Kaiser hospital in North County.

This month, we're kicking off negotiations for another inside agreement — "IBEW 569 Needs Another Raise" — so be sure to get your swag and show support for a strong new contract. We're hoping 2021 will be much brighter; stay safe and thank you for keeping our union strong.

*Gretchen Newsom, Pol. Dir./Organizer*

## Graduating Apprentices Become New Journeymen

L.U. 611 (catv,es,govt,i,lctt,o,spa,t&u), ALBUQUERQUE, NM — I hope everyone had happy and safe holidays. As of this writing, the local has stayed busy with calls coming in regularly for FaceBook and Los Alamos. Intel is now down to just a few men; hopefully they will ramp up again after the first of the year.

Due to COVID-19, the JATC was unable to hold a graduation ceremony for the graduating apprentices in 2020. Those apprentices are Estevan Aragon, Victor Armendariz, Gregorio Ayala, Patrick Baca, Joshua Butler, Ryan Cosgrove, Marcello Dionisio, Jarrad Duran, Manuel Esquivel, Cade Garcia, Alan Hammack, Timothy Martinez, Eric Mondragon, Gregory Pazzi, Omar Rivera and Philip Vialpando. Congratulations to all of the new journeymen.

On behalf of the local, I would like to extend condolences to the family and friends of our members that have recently passed away: Robert Anderson, Marvin Gueffroy, Oscar G. Loya, Donald Moon, Harry Trujillo and former Local 611 President Edward "Ed" Mros.

*Darrell J. Blair, P.S.*

## Staying Safe, Healthy And Grateful

L.U. 617 (c,i,mo&st), SAN MATEO, CA — The world has changed dramatically over this past year. We thank Business Manager Dave Mauro and his staff for keeping the membership well informed during the COVID-19 crisis. Our latest fall quarterly is an excellent example of communicating pertinent information to our membership: guides to COVID-19 testing sites, financial help, applying for Local 617 scholarships, helpful information for those affected by the fires in California and much more. All union events — pin party, picnic, veterans breakfast/fall fest and Christmas party — have been postponed for safety reasons.

The IBEW has recognized Keefah Khalil as the 2019 Apprentice of the Year. She exemplifies what unions are about: teaching others and getting involved in union activities. Congratulations, Keefah.

Work has remained steady in the Bay Area, and we are grateful. After years of hard work, our 2020 inside wiremen class finally had its graduation, although online and virtual.

The IBEW-NECA Wellness program has been a big success, offering free wellness screenings, fitness classes, flu shots and a healthy lifestyle program. Many thanks to Denise Brown and BayArea Sport.

Through these uncertain times we still have much to be grateful for. Please stay safe.

*Kenn Perfitt, P.S.*



## Members Gained and Lost & New Contractors

L.U. 625 (c,ees,em,i,it,mar&mt), HALIFAX, NS — The following members have recently retired: Brian Atwell, Joe Bates, Gerard Decoste, Phil Denton and Rob Hiscock.

We recently lost the following members: Wendell Reid March, Steve Tanner in April; Tom MacPherson in May; Rod McInnis, Ken R. MacDonald in August; Ken Hartt in September and Bill Coffin in October.

Congratulations to Eric Bona, Jack Fraughton, Iain Gillies, Mark MacInnis, Matthew McCarron and Kenzie Murdock on completing their Certificates of Qualification and becoming Red Seal Electricians.

We held our annual golf tournament at Penn Hills over 2 days, September 20 and 27, this year. We had a total of 63 members who participated.

Local 625 would also like to welcome newly organized contractors J. Dill Electric, MacGillivray Law Office, Atlantica Contractors Shipbuilding and TJ Electric (PEI).

*Bradley Wood, B.R./Organizer*

## Contract Negotiations & Work Update

L.U. 649 (i,lctt,mt&o), ALTON, IL — Contract negotiations are complete for a 3-year agreement under the GPPMA at P66 Refinery. Contract negotiations continue at Argosy Casino. Negotiations are not going well due to COVID-19 keeping the number of patrons low.

Ameren has abundant linework with construction with new substations and upgrades to old substations.

The work scene remains steady. Many thanks to local and traveling IBEW brothers and sisters for maintaining work during the pandemic.

Best wishes to newly retired members. Thank you for your years of service in the IBEW.

Brother J.W. Pat Bohn needs prayers, as he underwent heart transplant surgery. Recovery has been difficult.

The front LED message board has been replaced after an automobile driver shattered the existing sign beyond repair.

As always, many thanks to Alan and Terry for providing this information to share with the local!

*Terry Wilhite, P.S.*

## Elections Conducted Despite COVID-19 Restrictions

L.U. 683 (i), COLUMBUS, OH — Greetings, brothers and sisters. Our work outlook continues to be strong considering the ongoing issues we all have been dealing with. Thank you to local and traveling members for your professionalism and dedication on the job.

Local 683 elections were delayed by one month due to the coronavirus, but they were successfully held on July 9. Thank you to Election Judge Jeff Deckard and his staff for doing an excellent job conducting an election under coronavirus restrictions!

The 2020 IBEW 683 election results are as follows: Ed Moore, business manager; Pat Hook, president; Jeff Hinton, vice president; Kim Jones, recording secretary; Joe Stahl, treasurer.

Elected members of the Executive Boards are Anthony Ciardelli, Dillon Isaac, Jim Laemmler, Mike McNeeley, Mike Morey and Tracy Starcher. Examining Board members elected in 2020 are Kyle Brown, Jonathan Obert and Jesse Sheck.

The following 2020 Convention delegates were elected: Anthony Ciardelli, Dustin Gockenbach, Pat Hook, Dillon Isaac, Mike McNeeley and Mike Morey.

*Pat Hook, Pres.*



*Local 1015 members practice social distancing while staying IBEW strong.*

## Keeping Members Safe

L.U. 1015 (em&i), WESLACO, TX — We would like to send a big Texas salute to all of our brothers and sisters and their families who have taken a stand and have stayed home to fight COVID-19.

Our office has taken necessary precautions and coordinated all requirements to be up and running and to ensure that our members are able to pay their dues. Mr. Sergio A. Salinas, business manager/financial secretary, has provided our membership the option to pay their membership dues over the phone via credit card, making it easier to keep all necessary insurance coverage in place during this national crisis.

Even though our office was closed to the public, Mr. Osvaldo Cabada, training director of our RGV-LE-JATC apprenticeship program, made the needed arrangements to ensure that our students were able to continue their classes online at home, with 10 students scheduled at a time for hands-on training.

Thank you to all the first responders and essential personnel who work in hospitals and other locations to ensure that businesses remain open. We pray that this crisis will go away soon.

Great job, everybody!

*Pablo Puente Jr., R.S.*

## Donation Helps Provide Food to Long Island Families

L.U. 1049 (lctt,o,u&uow), LONG ISLAND, NY — As part of our charitable giving initiatives, we have donated \$2,000 to Island Harvest to help support the food bank's essential food collection initiatives as the number of food insecure Long Islanders continues to rise.

Business Manager Pat Guidice notes that "The Covid-19 pandemic has hit Long Island in a tremendous way, including impacting Long Islanders, just like us, who need to provide for their families. Now, many months later, we are still dealing with a pandemic that has drastically increased families' needs, including those that never thought they would be faced with food insecurity. Local 1049 is happy to help our Long Island neighbors in every way we can."

Local 1049's financial donation will support Island Harvest's Turkey & Trimmings Collection Campaign so that Island Harvest can provide a meaningful holiday experience to people who struggle with hunger each day.

*Jim Cooper, Pres.*



*Business Manager Pat Guidice, President Jim Cooper, Political Director Kasey Scheid and President/CEO of Island Harvest Food Bank Randi Shubin Dresner.*

Space Flight Center in Prince George's County, Md. and have 160 Local 1501 members working there.

*James Boyd, F.S./P.S.*

## Local 1547 Donates to Food Banks Statewide

L.U. 1547 (c,m,l,ictt,o,t&u), ANCHORAGE, AK — Business Manager Dave Reaves announced that Local 1547 is donating \$24,000 to food banks/pantries throughout the state of Alaska. He noted, "The pandemic has put tremendous strain on families across Alaska and food insecurity is at an all-time high. Along with worker safety, one of the objectives of the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers is to 'assist each other in sickness and distress.' We believe that no Alaskan should go hungry and are confident that our donations will help the cause."

The recipients of the IBEW donation are Food Bank of Alaska, Anchorage (\$5,000); Fairbanks Community Food Bank (\$5,000); Homer Food Pantry (\$1,000); Kenai Peninsula Food Bank, Soldotna (\$2,000); Salvation Army, Kodiak Food Pantry and Cordova Food Pantry (\$1,500 each); Southeast Alaska Food Bank, Juneau (\$3,000); Love in Action, Ketchikan (\$3,500) and Valdez Food Bank (\$1,500).

*Melinda Taylor, Comm. Dir.*



*Local 1501 President Guthrie with an "IBEW for Biden" sign posted at the union hall.*

## Negotiations During Quarantine

L.U. 1501 (ees,em,mo,pet,rt&t), BALTIMORE, MD — Business Manager/President Dion F. Guthrie, along with committee members

Fred Richards, David Parks, Nathan Allen and Neil Becker, are diligently working to negotiate a new collective bargaining agreement with executive staff members of Northrop Grumman Systems Corporation. Zoom conference has been necessary in this endeavor because of COVID-19 quarantining. The Northrop Grumman Systems Corporation, along with several smaller subsidiary companies, are currently doing work at NASA's Goddard



*Shop stewards Bob Jewell, Sheryl Glasen, Allen Roemhildt and Nate Taylor present a donation to Kathryn Mead (center) of the Cordova Salvation Army.*

# IBEW MERCHANDISE



### BLACK BEANIE HAT - \$5.00

100% acrylic knit hat with embroidered 1" IBEW initials.

### TERVIS ICE BUCKET - \$25.00

Genuine Tervis Ice Bucket with IBEW logo. Features double wall insulation to prevent condensation, includes lid and tongs.

### LADIES LONG SLEEVE SCOOP NECK T-SHIRT - \$11.00

100% certified ring spun organic cotton long sleeve scoop neck t-shirt.

Shirt is semi-fitted for the perfect length and fit.

Features IBEW initials with fist and lightning bolts on left cuff.

*These items and more are now available at your IBEW Online store.*

[www.ibewmerchandise.com](http://www.ibewmerchandise.com)



In Memoriam

Members for Whom PBF Death Claims were Approved in November 2020

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	Beckermann, J. L.	5/29/20	32	Fahncke, M. J.	8/24/20	130	Ritter, R. A.	7/14/20	303	Toy, D. E.	8/24/20	520	Cuellar, B. R.	8/3/20	777	Martel, S. J.	4/19/20
1	Goetz, G. F.	9/8/20	35	Sanfosso, A. R.	9/7/20	130	Stockton, R. A.	8/25/20	304	Karl, F. G.	6/30/20	520	Cullum, L. J.	7/24/20	816	Flowers, R. W.	8/21/20
1	Johnson, A. L.	9/11/20	38	Goe, C. W.	10/1/20	130	Wagner, R. J.	7/27/20	304	Riedel, C.	8/25/20	532	Stoltz, R. L.	8/29/20	861	Menard, J. W.	7/30/20
1	Rice, W. J.	9/5/19	38	Walker, F. E.	9/19/20	134	Coath, R. W.	8/5/20	306	Goodspeed, A. E.	8/15/20	545	Holloway, L. E.	8/6/20	870	McKenzie, J. J.	2/12/20
1	Streckfuss, I. T.	4/16/20	40	Young, G. H.	6/9/20	134	Daszek, D. E.	4/3/20	306	Hill, R. R.	2/3/20	551	Vallee, J.	7/30/20	873	Kinder, E. E.	5/28/20
1	Wheeler, P. J.	9/23/20	41	Kirsch, J. J.	9/18/20	134	Nixon, J. H.	7/18/20	306	Jamison, B. L.	5/15/20	553	Fogleman, S. E.	8/4/20	876	Bishop, E. G.	8/16/20
2	Pickett, E.	8/31/20	41	Miller, W. H.	9/10/20	134	O'Grady, T. F.	7/7/20	309	Dumstorff, V. B.	11/17/19	558	Ayers, F. L.	9/6/20	889	East, R. L.	7/1/20
2	Wilken, V. E.	7/27/20	41	Petschke, T. A.	8/30/20	134	Petrich, F. J.	8/5/20	322	Garza, A.	8/17/20	558	Landrum, C. R.	7/23/20	903	Lott, A. J.	8/18/20
3	Ammirati, A.	9/4/20	43	Clark, P. D.	5/15/20	134	Pierz, H. W.	8/17/20	326	Williams, K. J.	5/23/20	567	Hallett, W. J.	8/2/20	915	Saffold, W. M.	8/2/19
3	Biondo, J. M.	9/14/20	43	Mack, E. J.	5/13/20	134	Raff, A.	2/27/20	332	Meihofer, J. E.	6/8/20	568	Dion, G. A.	2/11/20	934	Roberts, C. M.	4/11/20
3	Calascibetta, A.	8/6/20	44	Farris, D. L.	8/5/20	134	Ramirez, F.	6/12/20	343	Flynn, L. J.	9/19/20	568	Gendron, J. C.	8/25/20	952	Green, E. E.	4/30/20
3	Carter, F. J.	9/9/20	46	Cumbie, D. A.	3/28/20	134	Shanahan, E. C.	7/9/20	349	Bartley, H. W.	7/19/20	569	Hanson, J. H.	8/10/20	952	Lee, T. J.	7/24/20
3	Diamond, D.	8/25/20	46	Rohwein, D. J.	8/9/20	134	Stieber, D. R.	10/1/20	349	Hernandez, J.	7/6/20	570	Barnes, M. H.	8/30/20	953	Magle, J. R.	7/12/20
3	Folberth, A. C.	4/14/20	47	Ortega, J. M.	4/29/19	134	Tokarski, M.	9/5/20	353	Beech, L. N.	8/2/20	577	Krause, W.	6/6/20	993	Bates, G. L.	8/18/20
3	Fonseca, M. I.	4/9/20	47	Wright, B. L.	8/30/20	134	Warda, B. E.	3/30/20	353	Callaghan, K. P.	10/1/20	584	Sullivan, R. D.	8/8/20	993	Beach, B.	8/11/20
3	French, D.	8/16/20	48	Doane, H. B.	8/31/20	134	Woods, W. S.	8/9/20	353	Hegedus, L. J.	7/15/20	586	Bradley, S. E.	7/3/20	993	Berton, S.	8/11/20
3	Hansen, J. R.	5/8/20	48	Emmons, L. E.	7/14/20	136	Halsey, J. G.	5/16/20	353	Kokotsis, N.	3/26/20	586	Egan, T. M.	5/6/20	993	Maskulak, D. G.	9/17/20
3	Harper, T. A.	8/19/20	48	Jones, W. J.	9/12/20	136	Jones, D. R.	4/10/20	353	Stojanovic, G.	6/21/20	586	Sobilo, H.	6/16/20	993	Ristau, E.	11/22/18
3	Jones, M. D.	4/12/20	48	Pasch, P. A.	8/10/20	139	Logue, S.	5/30/20	353	Vinskas, B.	8/25/20	595	Miller, D. L.	7/28/20	995	Fautheree, I. N.	7/23/20
3	Lander, R. C.	6/26/20	48	Vitko, L. D.	12/1/19	150	Craft, S. D.	4/3/20	354	Anderson, L. R.	4/15/20	595	Vermillion, S. A.	3/12/20	1002	Taylor, R. L.	9/2/20
3	Libbon, R. W.	7/22/18	58	Budziak, R. E.	9/12/20	150	Geraldi, J. J.	6/13/20	354	Campbell, D. L.	3/30/20	596	Cormier, J. K.	9/9/20	1077	Cutrer, R. M.	5/16/20
3	Lovejoy, C.	4/27/20	58	Burns, W. D.	9/2/20	158	Vandenlangenberg, R. J.	8/14/20	354	Grant, R. L.	8/25/20	602	Long, L. E.	7/13/20	1116	Qasim, N. I.	12/5/19
3	Martinez, R.	9/4/20	58	Fornelli, F. A.	9/25/20	160	Bachmeier, W. P.	8/18/20	357	Carpinelli, J. J.	8/21/20	605	Smith, W. D.	5/12/20	1141	Harper, J. L.	9/19/20
3	Masella, R. S.	8/6/20	58	Glugla, A. A.	5/14/20	160	Erickson, J. E.	6/30/20	357	Owen, J. W.	4/21/20	606	Acevedo, J.	8/30/20	1141	Hockert, J. C.	12/1/19
3	Nuszer, R. S.	9/7/20	58	Gruchala, P. L.	4/14/20	160	Glader, D. R.	4/30/20	357	Paske, J. A.	8/11/20	611	Anderson, R. E.	7/10/20	1141	Simms, D. J.	8/31/20
3	Paganelli, R. P.	6/1/20	58	LaRue, A. M.	7/28/20	160	Crabtree, T. W.	8/31/20	363	Couch, R. E.	5/29/20	611	Gueffroy, M. A.	7/29/20	1142	Barrett, R. C.	8/21/20
3	Rouwendal, C. B.	9/13/20	58	Martin, R. C.	9/2/20	175	Garner, C. L.	8/28/20	364	Garza, O. A.	8/2/20	611	Loya, O. G.	9/5/20	1205	Kelley, E. M.	3/31/20
3	Santiago, G.	10/9/20	60	Zettner, S. B.	2/13/20	175	Smith, S. L.	9/12/20	364	Weed, R. L.	8/9/20	613	Ashley, C. R.	4/1/20	1206	Harris, D. D.	6/30/20
3	Seidel, J. F.	8/16/20	66	Gerstenberger, B. H.	7/14/20	175	Hartman, J. L.	7/12/20	369	Anderson, L. W.	7/20/20	613	Cantrell, C. K.	8/5/20	1212	Brown, M.	9/1/20
3	Weltman, I. M.	9/11/20	66	Ghiselli, R. F.	1/6/20	177	Costa, M. E.	3/5/20	369	Boggs, M. P.	9/12/20	613	Morgan, A. J.	8/17/20	1253	Clark, S. B.	2/23/20
3	Wolliaston, E. A.	4/8/20	68	Stanley, D. P.	6/19/20	191	Todhunter, F. E.	3/24/20	369	Cherry, G. E.	9/7/20	613	Rimer, F. R.	8/19/20	1393	Gabbard, R. M.	8/26/20
5	Blank, H. J.	9/1/20	73	Akin, C. K.	6/18/20	191	Graybiel, J. D.	8/26/20	369	Freeman, H. G.	9/10/20	613	Warren, C. E.	4/14/20	1393	Nelson, W. H.	6/3/20
5	Frank, A. A.	6/14/20	76	Gadley, R. K.	6/15/20	194	Walker, E. L.	7/31/20	369	Kittle, C. E.	8/2/20	613	Yates, C. A.	8/20/20	1426	Daniels, L. A.	4/30/20
8	Lewandowski, P. C.	8/30/20	77	Bates, J.	9/11/20	194	Hughes, C. J.	9/19/20	369	Robertson, R. L.	7/14/17	625	Reid, W. C.	3/25/20	1439	Brightwell, R. R.	8/31/20
8	Myers, T. D.	8/30/20	77	Ferrier, M.	7/17/20	212	Jansen, W. B.	7/3/20	369	Rodgers, D. W.	8/12/20	640	Andrews, J. E.	7/23/20	1516	Mays, W. L.	9/17/20
9	Anderson, C. S.	12/12/19	77	Maier, H.	8/21/20	212	Lightfoot, C. C.	9/13/20	387	Calhoun, Q. G.	8/3/20	640	Chiccarella, R. J.	8/6/20	1547	Wright, J. S.	8/5/20
9	Harrison, S. J.	9/10/20	82	Brown, D. W.	8/8/20	212	List, P. E.	9/21/20	391	Vickers, J. D.	8/31/20	654	Osborne, H. C.	7/14/20	1579	Hendrix, J. E.	6/29/20
9	Ratajczyk, T. L.	9/27/20	82	Chellis, M. R.	9/9/20	212	Neeley, C. F.	9/11/20	405	Harrison, R. W.	8/22/20	656	Vance, P. S.	4/25/20	1579	Randolph, S. I.	9/1/20
9	Thurber, D. R.	5/26/20	82	Libbee, R. W.	7/15/20	212	Rice, G. D.	7/14/20	405	Quinn, N. E.	8/12/20	659	Bandy, D. L.	5/19/20	1687	Gauvreau, J.	4/16/20
11	Barber, M. W.	2/19/20	82	Stanley, C. R.	8/30/20	212	Desautels, L.	4/5/20	424	Habrun, D.	8/31/20	659	Butchas, B. A.	7/25/20	1749	Miller, F.	4/24/20
11	Cold, R. J.	6/29/20	86	White, W. C.	8/19/20	213	Marshall, R. J.	3/7/20	424	Wang, J.	7/25/20	659	Ramsey, G. L.	3/12/19	2150	Schrank, R. E.	6/15/20
11	Cox, J. L.	6/18/20	96	Zenaro, C. H.	9/4/20	213	Martin, C. D.	6/30/20	426	Teslow, G. D.	8/10/20	659	Tycer, G. M.	9/23/20	2286	Cunningham, J. R.	4/10/20
11	Ibarra, R.	7/8/20	98	Magee, D. M.	7/21/20	213	Pedersen, O.	7/15/20	429	Johnson, R. L.	5/1/20	665	Bierwagen, R. A.	7/3/20	I.O. (160)	Ness, J. A.	10/9/20
11	Keeling, R. D.	6/7/20	99	Mollo, D. M.	7/18/20	213	Davis, R. C.	5/14/20	429	Moore, S. R.	8/28/20	665	Hersey, R. L.	4/15/20	I.O. (280)	Stephens, I. H.	8/12/20
11	Leffel, E. L.	8/12/20	100	Cavalieri, E. E.	9/9/20	220	Spain, L. G.	9/20/20	429	White, C. H.	9/4/20	666	Jamerson, J. I.	7/15/20	I.O. (311)	Witmer, R. L.	9/1/20
11	Miller, R. F.	8/24/20	102	Hurban, J. M.	8/7/20	226	Harty, L. F.	9/12/20	433	Edwards, W. H.	3/14/20	666	Pace, J. H.	8/1/20	I.O. (359)	Westberry, E. A.	7/14/20
11	Smith, N. J.	6/29/20	102	Schlagenhaft, J. S.	10/6/20	231	Nieber, H. R.	7/9/20	436	Bowen, L. L.	8/7/20	676	Hinote, J. R.	8/16/20	I.O. (760)	Davenport, H. D.	9/17/20
14	Boley, J. A.	6/28/20	103	Corrigan, D. L.	5/18/20	236	Perkins, C. J.	7/3/20	445	Bennett, R. G.	8/15/20	676	Jimmerson, J. W.	9/5/20	I.O. (1319)	Bell, C. E.	8/19/20
17	Clark, D. E.	6/26/20	103	Missett, J. G.	7/27/20	237	Irwin, C. T.	2/16/20	456	Buckelew, W. E.	5/5/20	682	Smith, J. C.	7/11/20	Pens. (353)	Gustavson, U.	6/1/18
17	Graham, J. E.	6/25/20	103	Quigley, J. R.	4/30/20	245	Dick, P. T.	8/8/20	456	Maurer, E. J.	4/24/20	683	Coville, B. M.	8/8/20	Pens. (404)	Welshman, M.	4/7/20
17	O'Connor, J. J.	2/2/20	103	Schena, L. C.	8/1/20	246	Skinner, J. R.	6/20/20	466	Richardson, M. R.	8/18/20	683	Glass, J. M.	9/22/20	Pens. (I.O.)	Brummel, N. J.	2/17/20
17	Walker, D. G.	7/21/20	103	Sullivan, C. M.	6/30/20	246	Saunders, C. H.	8/13/19	474	Epperson, B. E.	8/20/20	684	Rice, R. A.	8/3/20	Pens. (I.O.)	Burnell, D. E.	9/21/20
18	Collins, R. E.	3/29/20	105	Arthur, J.	9/16/20	257	Steenenson, H. J.	2/17/20	474	Hegwood, M. E.	9/10/20	692	Masse, L. L.	3/13/20	Pens. (I.O.)	Corbett, P. H.	8/17/20
18	Jeffers, R. W.	8/17/20	105	Provo, R. W.	7/29/20	258	Lively, J. H.	9/14/20	474	Patterson, R. C.	2/4/20	697	Clayburn, J.	6/15/20	Pens. (I.O.)	Cotter, W. R.	8/28/20
18	Jones, A. F.	5/3/20	105	Warren, D. C.	3/13/20	270	Frazine, R. L.	3/14/20	474	Phillips, B. R.	9/22/20	697	Faroh, P. J.	9/22/20	Pens. (I.O.)	Foehn, R. C.	4/6/20
18	Thompson, L. M.	3/24/20	110	Holland, M. J.	9/12/20	275	Yutzy, P. E.	7/20/20	474	Self, W. N.	9/3/20	697	Gould, D. O.	9/27/20	Pens. (I.O.)	French, D. L.	5/4/20
22	Pulliam, K. L.	8/2/20	112	Day, D. A.	9/2/20	275	Schneider, L. J.	7/16/20	474	Young, M. C.	9/3/20	697	Wilson, J. T.	8/31/20	Pens. (I.O.)	Gizdich, E. W.	9/12/20
22	Schoening, T. A.	8/18/20	112	Knight, G. N.	9/6/20	278	Weaver, H. W.	2/12/20	477	Barnhill, A. C.	8/25/20	712	Palumbo, R. A.	6/24/20	Pens. (I.O.)	Gregory, J. F.	8/4/20
24	Trigger, C. M.	9/19/20	112	Richardson, T. D.	9/28/20	280	Kyes, C. R.	8/9/20	477	Miller, C. T.	8/30/20	716	Ford, C. E.	7/22/20	Pens. (I.O.)	Harbinson, J. E.	8/19/20
24	Witts, L. E.	8/6/20	113	Luckey, J. J.	8/14/20	291	Herschberger, E. F.	9/30/19	479	Crabtree, A. L.	3/23/20	728	Durham, M. R.	5/23/20	Pens. (I.O.)	Jones, J. F.	4/7/20
25	DeFiore, A.	9/24/20	113	Nuss, R. J.	4/30/20	292	Klobe, J. A.	4/30/20	479	Harper, D. F.	9/20/20	728	Gibson, G.	7/31/20	Pens. (I.O.)	Krawczyk, G.	6/3/20
25	Grafer, M. B.	5/25/20	124	Jones, R. W.	6/10/20	292	Schauff, G. E.	9/11/20	479	Harrison, H. E.	7/10/20	728	O'Connor, M. W.	8/10/20	Pens. (I.O.)	Leonard, A. T.	8/17/20
25	Haas, A. C.	6/22/20	125	Craig, D. E.	5/15/19	292	Slovak, R. G.	9/18/20	479	Marioneaux, R. L.	6/27/20	743	Henry, C. L.	9/14/20	Pens. (I.O.)	McDonald, D. J.	1/27/20
25	Pigott, P. M.	4/27/20	125	Hill, K. D.	9/4/20	294	Dufseth, J. D.	8/18/20	479	Smith, J. E.	4/20/20	760	Collins, J. H.	8/31/20	Pens. (I.O.)	Miller, R. C.	7/5/20
25	Romano, P.	9/19/20	125	Nisley, T. W.	7/31/20	294	Farnsworth, R. M.	8/4/20	480	Watt, D.	9/5/20	760	Petree, G. L.	8/7/20	Pens. (I.O.)	Nellis, D. G.	9/18/20
25	Varone, S. M.	7/18/20	129	Stradtman, H. P.	8/26/20	294	Pliml, F.										



# Local 26 Retirees' Medical Equipment Program Helps Families Heal, Stay Connected

**M**arilyn Pittore's husband, Joe, was diagnosed with small-cell lung cancer in February 2011. He battled the disease for more than two years before passing away in 2013.

Joe Pittore had excellent insurance because he was a journeyman wireman and member of Washington, D.C., Local 26. He also had access to Medicare.

Yet, there were times when the Pittores had needs come up that had to be dealt with quickly and additional help was required, especially when it came to medical equipment. Such was the case when Joe went into hospice care.

A program administered by Local 26's Retired Members Club moved a hospital bed and transport chair into the family home that day.

"Everything during Joe's treatment that we needed was there," Marilyn said. "It was there unconditionally for as long as you needed it. They were so gracious and helpful. They helped us in every way, getting us whatever we needed."

Marilyn's involvement with the program didn't end there. As an IBEW widow, she also secured medical equipment for her brother and mother when they were dealing with serious health issues.

"Medicare does not pay for durable medical equipment," she said. "These were all items that would have come out of pocket at a time when all three illnesses were very traumatic and very costly."

"It was certainly a big, big help. Even though we have wonderful insurance, it does not pay for everything."

Susan Flashman, the retiree club's recording secretary, voluntarily does much of the program's day-to-day work. She understands where recipients like the Pittore family are coming from.

In 2011, Flashman underwent surgery when a cyst in her brain started to grow and affected her motor skills, forcing her to retire after a nearly 30-year career as a journeyman wireman.

She had been aware of the program in the past and volunteered to help. Accessing equipment for her recovery without worrying how to pay gave her a deeper appreciation for it.

"I've been on the other side," she said. "The equipment makes life so much easier. As long as someone keeps moving



Counterclockwise from top: Local 26 retirees Susan Flashman and Rusty Griffith; Local 26 retirees club president Dick Bissell; and a shipping container filled with medical equipment for loan.

and they don't feel isolated, they will heal."

That isolation can be even worse during the COVID-19 era. Flashman and others involved are constantly reaching out to those in need of help. The needs are greater since the pandemic started in March, she said.

"They get depressed," she said. "When that happens, you start feeling isolated and you want to be independent. Anything that gives you more independence is going to help your mental status as well."

The program dates back to at least the 1950s. Flashman remembers it being run out of a closet at Local 26's old hall in the District of Columbia, but it really took off when it moved to a new hall and training center in suburban Lanham, Md., in 2006.

With the extra space, organizers were able to acquire more and larger equipment. Flashman credited Rick Warner, who was the head of the program at the time and is now vice president of the Retired Members Club, for making it a more professional operation.

There's now enough equipment that some of it is stored in a large shipping container outside the building.

"My goal is to get everything out," she said. "It doesn't do any good to be sitting in our room."

The program is not just for older

members either. A modern knee walker — with wheels, hand brakes and a padded seat for resting the knee and keeping the foot elevated — might allow an injured family member to continue working.

Flashman recalls a member's 4-year-old son, who broke one of his legs and was in a near-full body cast. She and the family worked to find a piece of equipment that would allow the boy to travel safely in an automobile.

"We had to find a seat that was specialized and where they could have him lay down and be secure," she said.

They succeeded, and at no cost to the family. The boy eventually recovered.

Even members and retirees not directly touched by the program play a role. It is funded by their donations. Some donate state-of-the-art equipment that is no longer being used. Others turn over cash that is used to purchase it. The

retirees club also sponsors an annual raffle to raise funds.

"This program has long represented what being a part of our union is all about," Business Manager George Hogan said. "It's brothers and sisters looking out for each other as they go through difficult times. One of the best parts of my job is hearing from a family about how much it helped when they badly needed it. Many thanks to our retirees club for their work and our members for stepping up and supporting it."

They won't find many bigger advocates than Marilyn Pittore, who gets a bit emotional when talking about Flashman and club president Dick Bissell, Flashman's husband. Shawn Schmitz, Joe and Marilyn's son, followed his father into the trades and is now a Local 26 member.

"I can't tell you how wonderful those two are," she said. "We are so blessed to have them, with their willingness to jump in and do what is needed at any time. They say we didn't start this program but I tell them, 'You just perfected it.'"

"I'm a very proud union wife and this union is just what we say it is. We take care of one another. We laugh with each other, we cry with each other and we support each other. It gave us a wonderful life." ■



*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.

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We welcome letters from our readers. The writer should include his or her name, address and, if applicable, IBEW local union number and card number. Family members should include the local union number of the IBEW member to whom *The Electrical Worker* is mailed. Please keep letters as brief as possible. *The Electrical Worker* reserves the right to select letters for publication and edit all submissions for length.

### Send letters to:

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## WHO WE ARE

# An Unlikely Texas Leader Puts Members First, Breaks Barriers Along the Way

**L**etty Marcum just needed work when she interviewed at El Paso Local 583 in 2007 to be a part-time assistant to the office manager. She had been a homemaker for 15 years on the East Coast and now she was back in her hometown, a single mom with no job and a high school diploma.

Thirteen years later, she is the twice-elected business manager of Local 583 and the president of the El Paso Building Trades Council.

"Letty is hard working. She is unafraid. She is committed. She is smart, strategic and really nice," said Texas AFL-CIO President Rick Levy. "She is a rising star in the labor movement in Texas."

Sister Marcum isn't the first woman to run an IBEW local. That was Annie Malloy, who was president of the all-female telephone operators sub-local 104 formed 108 years ago in Boston. She isn't the even the first woman to run a construction local. Asenath McLeod took that title at Raleigh, N.C., Local 553 back in 1991.

At present, there are at least two dozen women running IBEW locals and the first female international vice president, the Fourth District's Gina Cooper, was sworn in last year. But Sister Marcum's meteoric rise to local and community leader is still remarkable.

Because, of course, none of that was apparent on her first day at Local 583 in 2007. Seventh District Organizing Coordinator Javier Casas was Local 583's business manager at the time. He ran a two-person office, himself and an office manager. It is a smaller local deep in the heart of right-to-work America.

The office manager needed help, but only a little, they thought.

"I was looking for a part-time student. My niece was friends with Letty's sister," Casas said. "It was a simple interview: answer phones, take messages. Be friendly with members."

But little by little, Casas says, she



*Left: El Paso Local 583 Business Manager Leticia "Letty" Marcum being sworn in as president of the El Paso Building Trades Council. Below: Marcum, right, during the 2020 presidential campaign.*

was delegated more duties.

"Letty is always asking questions about the agreement. 'What does this mean? What does this mean?' he said. 'Eventually, she could answer the questions. And members would call, and she answered theirs.'"

"I was horrible. I would ask, 'Why this? Why this? Why does this apprentice have to go before a review board? Why? Why?'" Marcum said. "Mr. Casas always had patience for me. But eventually he said, 'Unless you sit in this chair, you don't know.'"

Within a year, she was full-time. Casas said he really saw her shine when she helped on dispatch.

"She was good at it," he said.

"I am good at it," she confirmed. "Mr. Casas would say, 'This guy doesn't like short calls.' And I would say, 'I got this.' And I would talk to him. 'Do a good job. This shop is always keeping on hands if you do a good job.' And he would take it."

"I don't know how she did it," Casas said. "She was a hell of a dispatcher."

"He didn't know how I did it?" she said. "I didn't know how I did it!"

Marcum had no background in unions. She was often alone in the office, but she picked it up quickly and loved helping people.

"I did ERTS, per capita, helping retir-



ing members with paperwork," she said. "A contractor would call and ask how many were on the out of work list and I would say, 'How many you need? You need 50? I can get you 50.' And they would say, 'You sure you're not the business manager?' and I said, 'No. But I am here to help.'"

In 2008, Marcum started night school to get her bachelor's degree in business. The local also bought a building with a social hall attached and Mar-

cum took over organizing events there, including weddings, retirements and quinceañeras.

"Mr. Casas kept saying I should find something better. 'Don't feel like you have to stay here,' and, 'You deserve more money,'" she said. "It was tough, writing papers at 3 a.m., but my family is great and I have five brothers and sisters and they helped me."

When she graduated, she didn't leave. When the office manager retired in 2011, she stepped into the role.

Then, in 2012, Casas was bumped up to state organizing coordinator. The assistant business manager filled out the rest of his term but was challenged in the election and lost. The new business manager made Marcum a member of the local, but their working relationship was otherwise rocky. Marcum won't go into details, but in August 2015, she quit.

But that didn't stop the member calls. "Her guys," as she calls them, kept on with the questions. And pretty soon, one of those questions was, "Why don't you run for business manager?" By January 2016, she ran out of reasons for saying "no."

She moved in with her father, stopped looking for other work, enlisted her family's help making flyers and hosting

events. She ate into her savings and ran.

"I don't want to say anything negative," she said. "I just thought I could do better."

The membership agreed. She won a runoff in July 2016.

"When I first heard, I thought 'There's no way. This will never happen,' and at each step it did," said Seventh District International Vice President Steven Speer. "I knew her when she was secretary for Javier, and she is just very impressive. No, she didn't have complete technical knowledge of what we do in the field, but her job doesn't require that, so much as commitment to serve the members. Her desire to serve and learn and then work makes her highly effective."

One of the first things she did was get the El Paso Building Trades Council meeting again. It was homeless for a time and wasn't meeting regularly. Then she started roping people in like it was a job she was dispatching. Pretty soon, she was indispensable, and when they looked for a president they looked no farther than Marcum.

"Without a mover and a shaker, it won't shake on its own, right? Well, I just realized, 'That's me now,'" she said.

She was unanimously elected president in 2017.

There have been doubters and detractors. But that doesn't bother her, she says.

"One contractor said I was the worst thing that happened to the local. That's nothing. 'Pfft. You done? Now it's my turn,'" she said. "Mr. Casas always said, 'You don't have to prove nothing to nobody. You show them. They will see.'"

She reorganized the health insurance plan that was bleeding the local and didn't cover spouses, started winning outside market share and expanded organizing. Now, she is also treasurer of the El Paso Central Labor Council.

In 2019, she won reelection by 60 points.

"Any question was answered when she was reelected. People can say the first time may have been a fluke. But that reelection? No one can say anything," Speer said. "Nothing."

After her first election, Marcum attended the International Convention in St. Louis. She visited the Henry Miller Museum, the birthplace of the IBEW, and signed her name next to all the others on the I-beam in the basement. She says, she looked around and thought, "I deserve to be here."

She and Casas were looking at the IBEW Constitution when she says she turned to him.

"There is a lot of he, he, he; where is the she? Look at this, Javier. This is BS," she said laughing. "What, they never thought there would be a woman? That is my mentality." ■



*Thirteen years after she was hired as a part-time secretary with no union experience, Sister Marcum was re-elected as business manager and is a rising star in Texas organized labor.*