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The White House's \$236 Billion Assault on Blue-Collar Jobs

See page 3

**DESTROY
THESE JOBS!**



THE WHITE HOUSE
WASHINGTON

PROJECT NAME	STATE	PROJECT VALUE	JOBS
Northeast MAGLEV	MD		
ARCHES California	CA	\$20,000,000,000	
Pacific Northwest Hydrogen	WA		75,000
Sandisk Project Grit	MI	\$1,000,000,000	55,000
Canoo MegaMicro Factory	OK	\$63,000,000,000	
Nikola Multi-Product Factory 4.0	AZ	\$600,000,000	2,000
Non Electric Joliet Facility	IL	\$600,000,000	1,800
Magnis Energy Huron Campus	NY	\$90,000,000	1,380
Stellantis Battery	IL	\$670,000,000	
AES Science Gigafactory	NC	\$1,500,000,000	1,300
Nature Energy Edgecombe Battery	OK	\$1,400,000,000	1,080
RE Power KOREPlex			860
Cleveland-Cliffs White	AZ	\$2,570,000,000	722
Alcoa Joint Venture	WV	\$625,000,000	625
Canoo Oklahoma City Assembly Facility	NY	\$150,000,000	600
Borg Warner Gigafactory 2	OK	\$700,000,000	550
Aspen Aerogels Georgia	MI	\$160,000,000	500
PrismianBrayton Point Factory	GA	\$50,600,000	318
National Cement of Calif. Lebec Net-Zero Project	MA	\$1,000,000,000	250
Li-Cycle Rochester Hub	CA	\$200,000,000	250
Enchem Electrolyte Manufacturing	NY	\$3,700,000,000	220
Eiffage-Smulders Port of Albany Joint Venture	TN	\$960,000,000	220
Amprion Brighton Facility	NY	\$152,500,000	190
	CO	\$175,000,000	175
		\$95,000,000	166

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IEC Chairman
**CHRISTOPHER
ERIKSON**
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FROM THE OFFICERS

Solidarity and Safety



Kenneth W. Cooper
International President



Paul A. Noble
International Secretary-Treasurer

Last November, in an act of senseless violence, 20-year-old welder Amber Czech was murdered at her workplace by a co-worker. This tragic loss has shaken the entire construction industry, and the IBEW mourns alongside her family, friends and all who knew her. Violence has no place in our industry, whether on the jobsite or in our union halls.

Making sure every worker returns home safely to their family every day is one of the core missions of the IBEW, and we are fully committed to doing whatever it takes to ensure that no worker ever becomes a victim of workplace violence.

Safety has always been a defining priority of our union. At our founding, the electrical industry was among the most dangerous in North America. In some areas, the mortality rate for linemen was one in two. Nationally, electrical workers died on the job at twice the rate of all other industries. Union organizers themselves often faced violence — sometimes fatal violence — from anti-labor employers and the police.

Yet the newly formed IBEW fought relentlessly for tougher standards and, crucially, for the power to enforce them. Over 135 years, that fight has helped slash death and injury rates throughout the electrical industry.

Our commitment has always gone above and beyond rules and regulations. The IBEW built a culture of safety — one that expects every member to follow the standards and shows zero tolerance for anyone who does not. Just as it takes only one broken link to weaken an entire chain, one person ignoring safety puts everyone at risk.

That's why we are so focused on transforming jobsite culture by directly confronting bullying and harassment. Through the leadership of our Women's Committees, RENEW/NextGen and the Electrical Workers Minority Caucus, we are raising the bar for what a safe and respectful workplace looks like — and strengthening on-the-job solidarity so every worker is treated with dignity.

In this issue of *The Electrical Worker* are stories of women IBEW activists who are transforming our industry into places welcoming to all. Programs like IBEW Strong and our new Bystander to Upstander training program reinforce a culture where intimidation and discrimination are challenged, not tolerated. That is the union creed: An injury to one is an injury to all. Every IBEW member — regardless of gender, color or creed — deserves a workplace that is safe, welcoming and free of harassment. And it is everyone's responsibility to make that a reality.

Safety also means ensuring that every worker can recognize and respond to signs of potential violence. And it means taking a hard look at the real risks women face in male-dominated workplaces. Labor and management must work together to implement strong, enforceable health and safety standards.

We must be honest with ourselves: Too many women in construction still endure harassment and discrimination, including on IBEW jobsites. The case of Amber Czech makes painfully clear that violence against women is still a reality in our industry.

This behavior is morally wrong, and destructive to the IBEW as a whole. When workers are mistreated or marginalized, we lose highly skilled and committed members. We alienate future members. We divide workers from one another. We weaken our bargaining power and undermine the unity we need to win the wages, benefits and protections we all depend on. In short, harassment anywhere in the IBEW harms the entire IBEW.

As New Orleans Local 130 member Janelle Dejan told *The Electrical Worker*: "Bringing more women into the trade is only the beginning. The real work is making sure they stay, thrive and advance." And she is right.

It is in every IBEW member's interest to help create respectful and inclusive workplaces. When we act as passive bystanders to bullying or harassment, we weaken the bonds of solidarity that give the IBEW power. But when we speak out for our brothers and sisters, offering the support and respect they deserve, the union grows stronger.

We must also confront the mental health crisis affecting the construction industry. Suicide rates among construction workers are among the highest of any occupation. The reasons are many, including long hours, physical stress and a culture that too often treats emotional struggles with shame. The sad truth is that few locals have been spared the loss of a member to suicide in recent years. Again, every IBEW member has a role to play: Recognize when a co-worker may be struggling, ask how they're doing, and connect them with the resources our union provides.

Over the past year, the IBEW and NECA's Family Medical Care Plan has developed a comprehensive mental health initiative, partnering with the National Council for Mental Wellbeing to offer workplace mental health first-aid training and certification. And many locals are likewise investing in mental health services.

We all have a role to play in shaping the IBEW's future. Every day, we are growing, opening doors of opportunity for working people of all backgrounds. But we can continue on this path only if we work to ensure that our unions and jobsites are welcoming to everyone who shares our values: hard work, solidarity and excellence.

Committing to a harassment-free IBEW requires more than reflection. It demands action. It calls on each of us to strengthen the culture of safety, solidarity and mutual respect that has defined us for 135 years. When we look out for one another, challenge harassment and intimidation wherever they appear, support members who are struggling and ensure that every worker feels valued and protected, we build a union worthy of the people within it.

Together, we can create the kind of industry where tragedies like Amber Czech's never happen again, and where every worker can build a career with dignity, pride, and confidence. ■

My IBEW STORY

Thomas Spellman, JATC instructor
Boston Local 103



"I wanted to be an electrician at 9 years old. Growing up in Everett, Mass., I was surrounded by the families of union electricians. They were like family to me, and I gained a deep understanding of the union's role and the electrical industry through them. My uncles were in the IBEW, working as in-house electricians for Raytheon, and I saw what they did, how they wired things, and it just grabbed me. This, combined

with the strong work ethic instilled in me by my father, a Teamsters sheet metal worker, drove me to become a union electrician.

My friends, who were a few years older than me, really pioneered the way. They got into vocational school, so I knew the path forward, and I knew I had to work hard. I'd been very focused on getting in the union, but while I was waiting for that membership, at 18, I took a job at a nonunion shop intending to get experience and help the process along. Unfortunately, I was put in harm's way and had a serious workplace injury working on energized equipment.

While I recovered from my injury, I decided to leverage my childhood hobby of scuba diving and train as a certified commercial hardhat diver in Seattle. After a period of underwater construction work, I returned to my roots and applied to the IBEW. I was not accepted into the electrical program, but I was offered and accepted an apprenticeship in telecommunications. That decision launched a career path that has defined my professional life.

After graduating, I spent a decade as a skilled technician and foreman, overseeing the installation of complex telephone and data networks for major projects. I worked on the Big Dig for five years, supervising fiber-optic installation on what was considered to be the largest construction site on the planet. And when I drive through those tunnels, it's like driving through home.

I also worked at Logan Airport for 12 years. During that time, I worked for United Airlines, and I was there at Gate C19 on 9/11. I supported UA on telecommunications work — for phones, computers, setting up phone banks — during that disaster. It was a very sad moment, but I was proud that my local and I were there, helping, no questions asked.

As my career progressed, I began teaching part-time at the JATC. At this point, I had about 10 years in the industry, and they were looking for experienced people from the field. I jumped at that opportunity, which led to a full-time instructor position, and I've advanced my skills through the National Training Institute's instructor programs for more than 10 years. I didn't seek education as a profession, but it found me, and it changed my life.

I recently celebrated 35 years in the union. Thanks to the guidance, support and leadership of the IBEW and Local 103, I have built a successful and fulfilling career. Beyond professional achievement, I found a family of brothers and sisters who have served as invaluable teachers, mentors and leaders, shaping both my work and personal life. I've been able to provide for my family with excellent pay and health care, and I am secure in the knowledge that a strong pension and deferred benefits will ensure that my wife and daughter are taken care of in my retirement years.

I'm so thankful to have been welcomed into this great family and want to thank everyone who has been a part of this amazing journey. God bless the IBEW and Local 103. ■

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The number of meetings IBEW members held with members of Congress during the Government Affairs Conference in November.

See "Taking It to the Hill" on page 10.

CANCELED

The White House's \$236 Billion Assault on Blue-Collar Jobs

Green energy never did much for Weirton, W.Va., until 2022.

It seemed like solar and wind construction blossomed everywhere but here. In the northern sliver of West Virginia between Ohio and Pennsylvania, nothing stepped up when first the coal mines shuttered and then the powerhouses followed.

Weirton Steel once employed more than 10,000 workers, but the final forge went cold in 2024.

In 2022, finally, the promise of clean energy found Weirton.

That last steel mill was to reopen to make transformers for green generation stations, three of which were being built in the jurisdiction of Steubenville, Ohio, Local 246, which includes Weirton.

"There was a huge production. Then-governor Republican Jim Justice was there with his dog," said Local 246 Business Manager Kevan Brown. "We were finally getting in on a high-demand industry."

The \$150 million project was made possible by incentives in 2022's Inflation Reduction Act, which provided tax credits for the domestic manufacture of critical clean energy technology.

"I expected 200 to 250 construction jobs for at least five years," Brown said, boom times for his 350-member local.

And then all those hopes died. The signs announcing the project faded. The gate stayed chained.

In May, the materials giant Cleveland-Cliffs killed the Weirton project. It was one of five nationwide. The tax incentives in the IRA were all gutted, and there was economic pandemonium from the blanket imposition of tariffs.

Since the start of the Trump administration, at least 300 energy and transportation construction projects, worth \$236 billion, have been canceled, postponed or seriously threatened. Of that, \$131 billion in projects are outright canceled. The cancellations represent at least 255,000 lost construction jobs, according to research conducted by the IBEW and North America's Building Trades Unions.

\$131 BILLION

CANCELED

in projects

more than **255,000** construction jobs lost

These numbers only cover project cancellations or setbacks due to tariffs, tax credit revocations or economic uncertainty caused by the



CANCELED | POSTPONED | THREATENED

300

energy and transportation construction projects worth

\$236 BILLION

president's policies in the first 10 months of his term.

Most of the damage is a result of the One Big Beautiful Bill Act, a \$1.1 trillion tax giveaway to corporations and the top 1% of earners, who take home more than \$1 million annually. Those cuts come at the expense of tax incentives and grant programs in the Inflation Reduction Act, Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, and CHIPS and Science Act that spurred hundreds of billions of dollars of private investment during the Biden administration.

Almost 55% of the cancellation announcements did not include estimated job losses. The actual number of lost construction jobs is most likely much higher.

altogether," said Construction and Maintenance Director Matt Paules. "We had so much going for us, and in 10 months he's cut the knees out from under us."

A Personal Cost

The Cleveland-Cliffs project was one of 53 manufacturing construction plans worth \$134 billion that have been canceled.

Brown acknowledged that the tsunami of cancellations could have come at a worse time. There are open calls in parts of the country — at least 60 Local 246 members are traveling now.

But for the first time in too long, all of his members were going to get what their parents had: a steady job in their hometown.

It was a godsend for one of Brown's members, a veteran who was a few years away from full retirement.

"He couldn't travel for work because of all his appointments at the VA hospital. Once you get one of those VA appointments, you don't reschedule. You can't reschedule," Brown said.

The Cleveland-Cliffs transformer facility would have carried this member through to the retirement he earned without sacrificing the health care he needed.

The project would have been



The shuttered steel mill in Weirton, W.Va., was reopening as a \$150 million transformer factory. The project died when the Inflation Reduction Act was effectively repealed last summer, killing 200 to 250 jobs for Steubenville, Ohio, Local 246.

perfect for the single parents in the local, for the ones who value a family dinner more than overtime, for the people who want to show up at their aging parents' medical appointments in person and not over the phone.

Not anymore. To add insult to injury, the solar projects haven't moved forward in months.

"It's devastating," Brown said.

Instead of heading out to a local job, the veteran member took early retirement and left thousands of dollars on the table. All he needed was a few years more for a full pension.

The cancellations come at a terrible time for the power grid. For the first time in decades, power demand is growing in North America, but in 2025, imports will account for about 80% of transformer supply and 50% of the distribution transformer supply, according to an analysis by Wood Mackenzie.

190

projects in 35 states worth

\$68 BILLION

in 10 months of the Trump Administration

CANCELED

And while tariffs were sold as a way to make domestic manufacturing more competitive, the blanket policy is crippling domestic expansion and increasing the cost of imported components for U.S. manufacturers.

CANCELED continued on page 4

CANCELED**The White House's \$236 Billion Assault on Blue-Collar Jobs**

Photo courtesy of Stellantis



Photo courtesy of CCRC MagLev

The \$3.2 billion EV battery plant project in Belvidere, Ill., at left, died as the Trump administration abandoned the electrical vehicle industry to Chinese companies. Chinese dominance of high-speed trains (above) will also continue with the cancellation of Northeast MagLev. Developers expected to create more than 150,000 jobs over the life of that project alone.

CANCELED

~100 solar, wind and battery storage generation projects
= \$25 BILLION

▼ **Continued from page 3**

A Wasted Opportunity

Manufacturing was the hardest-hit sector by total dollar value, but energy generation represents the greatest number of projects canceled and threatened.

At least 190 projects in 35 states worth almost \$68 billion were canceled or postponed in the first 10 months of the Trump administration.

Because the IBEW was so successful in building labor protections into the Biden-era laws — requiring prevailing wage and registered apprenticeship participation, for example — most, if not all, of these jobs would have been the IBEW's work.

In addition to the canceled construction projects, the Trump administration and the Republican Congress killed 25 federal investment programs, affecting more than 1,400 projects worth in excess of \$1.1 billion.



The \$1 billion Heidelberg Cement project in Mitchell, Ind., would have been the largest carbon capture use and storage project in the world.

\$16 Billion **CANCELED**
in battery manufacturing projects within the first 10 months of the Trump administration

"We fought for decades to get our country reinvesting in infrastructure, in domestic manufacturing, and giving union workers a fair shot at the work," said International President Kenneth W. Cooper. "Trump and the Republican Congress just killed all that for nothing."

One of the largest projects to die was in Rockford, Ill.

Rockford is as solid a union town as you will find, said Local 364 Business Manager Alan Golden.

"We have 94% market share. Our large

est nonunion shop has five guys," he said.

There's work for his 1,000 members, including Walmart's largest cold-storage facility and a data center in DeKalb.

But it was still hard on the local when Stellantis shut down its facility in Belvidere in 2023.

"We're a walkthrough right now. But it isn't only about the jobs you have. It's the jobs you're going to have that matter," he said.

So it was a good day when Stellantis announced that not only would it reopen the shuttered production line, but it

would also invest \$3.2 billion to build an entirely new EV battery facility.

Golden said he expected 200 jobs from the expansion, and several dozen permanent maintenance jobs on site.

"Not everyone wants to work seven 10-hour days at a data center. Money's good, but everything else can suffer," Golden said.

Then, in June, Trump canceled a \$335 million award from a Department of Energy initiative supporting EV manufacturing and Stellantis killed the Belvidere battery plant.

About 1,300 expected jobs evaporated.

"This is a huge loss," he said. "This plant means the world to Belvidere."

A Betrayal

In total, nearly \$16 billion in battery manufacturing projects were killed in the first 10 months of the Trump administration. Belvidere was just the largest.



Photo courtesy of Kore Power

Kore Power's \$1.2 billion Buckeye, Ariz., EV and storage battery plant died after federal tax incentives weren't granted.

Meanwhile, Chinese factories built 12.4 million electric vehicles last year. U.S. factories built only 1.1 million. China exported more electric vehicles — 1.2 million — than the U.S. made in total.

The first maglev train project in the U.S., Northeast MagLev, was killed 22 years after the Chinese built their first. Today, China's high-speed rail network has 30,000 miles. The U.S. has not a single mile in service.

Nearly 100 solar, wind and battery storage generation projects were canceled, totaling nearly \$25 billion. Last year, China installed 198 gigawatts of new solar in the first five months of 2025, far exceeding the total installed solar capacity of the U.S., 177 GW.

"This is national surrender. Killing all this work not only punishes working people, it fails the country," Cooper said. The IBEW was extraordinarily successful in the legislative fights over the IRA, IJIA,

and CHIPS and Science acts. For the first time, labor standards were built into tax credit and infrastructure laws that gave union workers an equal shot.

Developers were rewarded with smaller tax bills when they paid prevailing wages and used registered apprentices.

It's possible, Paules said, that the midterms return the House and Senate to politicians who want to invest in America's future and end this war on new generation and manufacturing.

But he worries that it may take until the end of Trump's presidency in 2029. Paules said he wonders what will be lost.

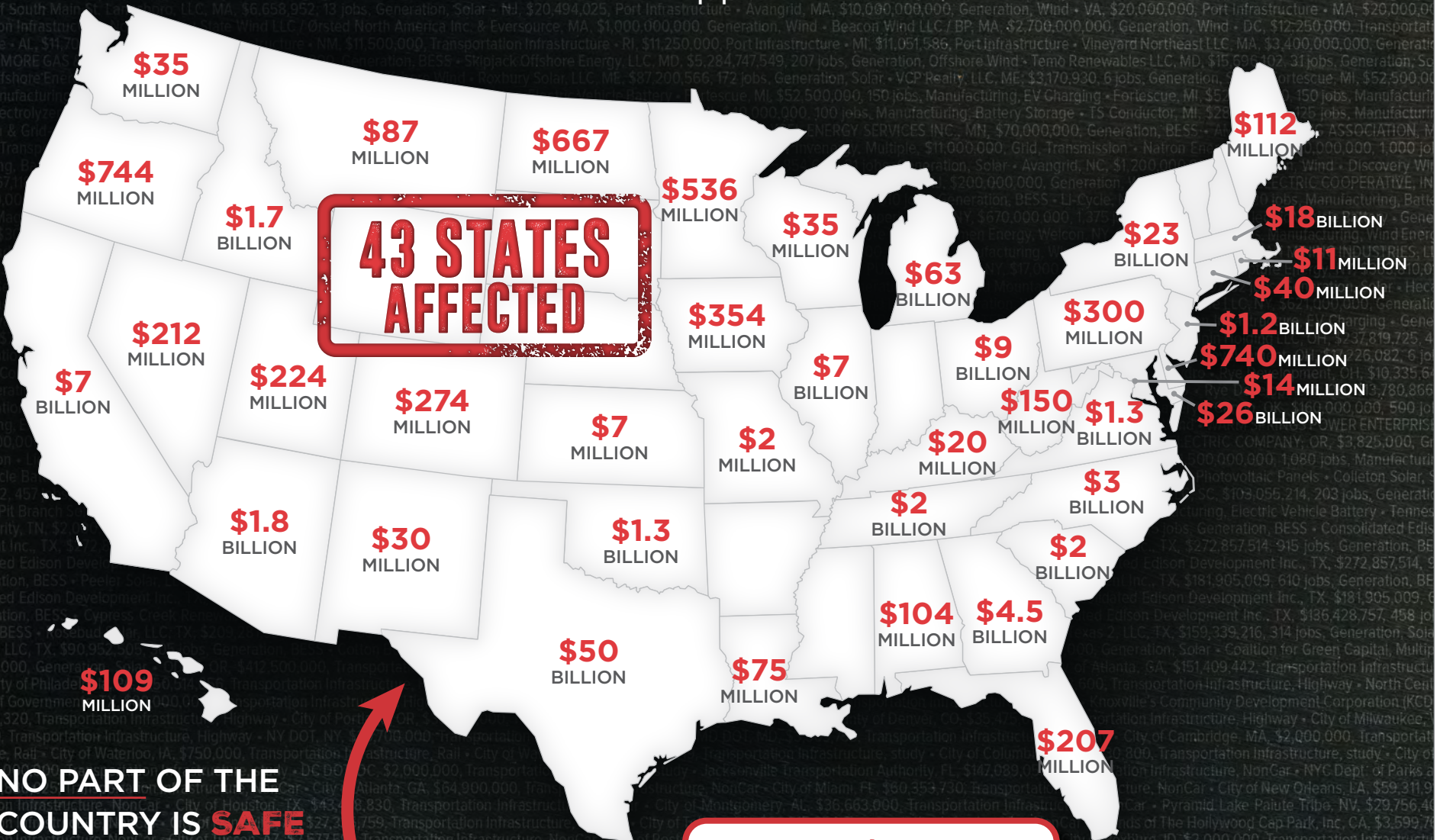
"Maybe it all comes back; we're just stalled for a while. But I doubt it. We fought for decades to build labor standards into the clean energy transition and finally got it done. We had a fair shot, even an edge, against the lowballers and bottom feeders," he said. "I worry we won't be able to get it back." ■

\$236 BILLION

Total value of energy and infrastructure projects that are

CANCELED POSTPONED THREATENED

Of that, \$131 BILLION of projects have already been CANCELED. Here's how those missed opportunities break down:



Energy Projects	\$46 BILLION
Transportation	\$21 BILLION
Manufacturing	\$63 BILLION
Other	\$1.1 BILLION
TOTAL \$131 BILLION	

THIS HURTS ALL IBEW INDUSTRIES

STATES LOSING THE MOST

Number of Projects		Total Value of Projects	
TX	35	MI	\$63 BILLION
CA	33	TX	\$50 BILLION
NY	30	MD	\$26 BILLION
MA	18	NY	\$23 BILLION
OH	15	MA	\$18 BILLION
IL	14	OH	\$9 BILLION
MI	10	CA	\$7 BILLION
MD	10	IL	\$7 BILLION
SC	10	GA	\$4 BILLION
VA	8	NC	\$3 BILLION

THE SCALE IS IN THE BILLIONS

Sandisk Project Grit	MI	\$63 BILLION
Northeast Maglev	MD	\$20 BILLION
California Hydrogen Hub	CA	\$12 BILLION
National Cement Lebec Net-Zero Project	CA	\$3.7 BILLION
Stellantis Belvidere Battery Plant	IL	\$3.2 BILLION
FREYR Giga America Battery Plant	GA	\$2.57 BILLION
AESC Florence Gigafactory - Factory 2	SC	\$1.5 BILLION
Natron Edgecombe County Battery Plant	NC	\$1.4 BILLION
Pacific Northwest Hydrogen Hub	Multiple	\$1 BILLION
Aspen Aerogels Georgia	GA	\$1 BILLION
Joint Targeted Interconnection Queue	MN	\$1 BILLION
Heidelberg Materials Concrete Plant	IN	\$1 BILLION

These numbers are only what was known as of November. The final totals will be higher.

Source: NABTU and IBEW analysis of academic research, administration and industry announcements, media coverage, and interviews with IBEW sources

Groundbreaking Labor Leader Erikson Retires From IEC, Local 3

Commitment to Members Defined 50-year Career

International Executive Council Chairman Chris Erikson, a leader in the Brotherhood and all of American labor in his nearly 20-year tenure as New York Local 3's business manager, retired effective Jan. 1.

Erikson's retirement caps a 50-year IBEW career, but he had a front row seat to the Brotherhood long before that. He's the grandson of legendary Local 3 Business Manager Harry Van Arsdale Jr. and nephew of Thomas Van Arsdale, Erikson's predecessor. Local 3 has had just three business managers in the last 92 years.

"Harry and Tom Van Arsdale instilled in me, and I have instilled in my sons, that the only purpose of the union is to serve the membership," said Erikson, who was reelected six times since his appointment in October 2005. "I believe I have done that with distinction, and so it is time to pass the baton."



"Like many from his beloved New York City, Chris Erikson won't sugarcoat things. He'll tell you what is on his mind."

— International President
Kenneth W. Cooper

Erikson's retirement comes 10 years to the day after he succeeded Chicago Local 9 Business Manager Bob Pierson as IEC chairman.

"Despite all the upheaval in our jurisdiction, we're at a point where we're at almost full employment, with 99.2% of our members working," Erikson said. "Things are in order. Our membership has made great progress. It's time for a younger business manager to step forward."

The upheaval Erikson referred to wasn't just the financial crisis in 2008 or the COVID-19 pandemic that started in 2020. There also was the continual threat of what are commonly called "horseshoe unions," which are open shops that undercut wages and are not part of the Building Trades.

Erikson was pleased to report to his members that the average hourly total wage and benefit for Local 3 construction members was \$141 an hour in April 2025, an increase of 45% over his tenure.

International President Kenneth W. Cooper called Erikson "a giant in the IBEW's history and someone who would always offer me frank advice, even when it wasn't the easy thing to do."

"As my predecessor [Lonnie R. Stephenson] said when appointing Brother Erikson to serve as IEC chairman, his commitment to our ideals is unwavering," Cooper added. "Like many from his beloved New York City, Chris Erikson won't sugarcoat things. He'll tell you what is on his mind. I congratulate him on a tremendous career and know he will be available for counsel even in retirement."

The New York Local 3 business manager has a high profile, no matter who holds the title. The local has more than 30,000 members and has played a massive role in building the finance and cultural capital of the world and carrying out its day-to-day services.

It also played a huge part in New York City's rich labor history, a legacy of Harry Van Arsdale, who served as business manager from 1933 to 1968 and was the long-time head of the New York Central Labor Council. He became a legend not just for his service to Local 3 members, but for expanding the entire labor movement to include often-overlooked groups in society.

Like his grandfather, Erikson's impact on the IBEW went far beyond his hometown. He mentored young leaders from around the country. He was a leader in making it look more like the communities it served.

He inspired members with passionate speeches and calls to action at conferences and conventions, especially after taking on the IEC position. He gave out more than 5,000 stickers with the term "WTFU" — roughly translated as "wake up" — advising IBEW brothers and sisters across North America to vote to protect the economic security of themselves and their families.

"Across the IBEW, I've had so many great relationships with so many great people," he said. "I'm pretty proud to be part of an organization that does so much good for its members."

Plus, he was an effective steward on the IEC, a nine-member council that serves as the judicial body for the IBEW, including hearing appeals of decisions



Erikson, above left, was a Local 3 business representative in 1990 when he stood with AFL-CIO President Lane Kirkland during a five-month job action against the New York Daily News. The IBEW was one of eight unions that did not cross the picket lines of striking delivery drivers. Above right is Erikson serving as grand marshal of the New York City Labor Day Parade in 2014. At right, Erikson with Local 3 members who worked on the 9/11 Memorial & Museum.



made by the international president. It enforces the IBEW Constitution and can recommend amendments.

In that role, Erikson said he's most proud that he put the members' interests at the forefront, just as he did as business manager.

"We fulfilled our responsibilities under the IBEW Constitution and did what we are charged to do," he said.

Seventh District International Representative John Easton, who served for three years on the council with Erikson when Easton was the Houston Local 716 business manager, called him "the perfect chairman for the IEC."

"He questioned things. He just didn't accept them and let them pass through," he said. "It wasn't a rubber-stamp board. He brought a lot of integrity to the IEC."

"That's the kind of guy he was, and he did it in a very respectful manner," Easton added. "That's why I think people respected him. He wasn't there for anyone but the membership."

Erikson was reelected to the position at the 2016 and 2021 International Conventions. In 2016, he asked Easton to formally nominate him.

Even though the two are from far different parts of the country, they have a deep friendship. Easton had served as business manager since 2001, when

Erikson was a Local 3 business representative, and the two served on the EM-5 General Electric Manufacturing System Council.

Being a native Texan, Easton heard plenty about the New Yorker. He was a little nervous about meeting Erikson at first.

He learned quickly that he had nothing to be worried about.

"You meet this guy, and you find that he's a very open and personable brother," Easton said. "From the first time I met him, you could tell he could speak to anybody."

"Meeting him was very refreshing," Easton added. "It created a bond I had with him through our system council. Then we were part of the EWMC together. It's been a lifelong friendship."

The EWMC is the Electrical Workers Minority Caucus, an IBEW committee that Local 3 has been heavily involved in since its founding more than 50 years ago. Erikson received its Lifetime Achievement Award in 2011.

He said bringing in more people of color and from historically underrepresented groups is a necessity for the IBEW to continue to thrive.

"There is no place like New York," he said. "Like my grandfather said, if you want to see what America is going to look like in five years, ride the subway."

It's imperative for members of underserved communities to have

opportunities to become foremen and take on other leadership roles on a jobsite, Erikson said. "I hope that my commitment to diversity and inclusion has been an important part of my legacy."

Erikson was initiated into Local 3 in 1975 and joined the office staff as a business representative in 1989. He was appointed assistant business manager in 2000 in charge of Local 3's maintenance department and negotiated more than 150 collective bargaining agreements.

He has received numerous honors both inside and outside the labor movement, including the Ellis Island Medal of Honor Award, which is awarded to American citizens who work selflessly to create a better society and has been awarded to eight U.S. presidents.

Local 3 has a large annual presence at the famous New York City Labor Day Parade, for which Erikson served as grand marshal in 2014. He remembers attending as a child with his grandfather and uncle and now regularly walks with his grandchildren at the event.

"You have never let me down, especially while thousands of us marched proudly year after year in the Labor Day Parade," he told Local 3 members when announcing his retirement.

He and his wife, Denise, have been married for 42 years. They have four sons, two of whom are members and all have a

Delaware Local Celebrates Return of IBEW Apprenticeship at Amtrak



At top, Robbie Sparks, president emeritus of the Electrical Workers Minority Caucus, embraces Erikson during the group's meeting at the 2022 International Convention in Chicago. Above, Erikson is introduced during opening ceremonies of the Chicago convention.

connection to Local 3.

Chris Erikson Jr. is a Local 3 senior assistant business manager, and Robert is a Local 3 business representative. Thomas is an attorney who represents Local 3. Nicholas is employed by the Joint Industry Board in New York, an initiative started in 1943 between Local 3 and NECA to prioritize a good working relationship between the two.

Erikson said he plans to spend more time traveling and riding his motorcycle in retirement but isn't stepping back from the labor movement.

He plans to continue serving numerous organizations and as president of Electrical Workers Without Borders North America, which is working to bring electrical power to homes in the 27,000-square mile Navajo Nation in Arizona, New Mexico and Utah. He also will continue as the director of the Harry Van Arsdale Jr. Memorial Association, which promotes social and educational projects that reflect Harry's legacy.

He said he is proud of the work done at Local 3 during the last 20 years, especially the construction of a modern training center on Long Island, the institution of a mentoring committee and the IBEW's Code of Excellence program and ensuring that Local 3 members are employed in the transition to clean energy.

Yet he's concerned about the union movement overall, especially during the anti-union Trump administration. He said

a renewed commitment to organizing and electing candidates who reflect labor's values is paramount.

He thanked Local 3 members in a farewell speech but challenged them to continue doing the work that keeps the IBEW strong. Brothers and sisters across the United States and Canada must do the same thing to ensure that the Brotherhood builds on the many wins during its 134-year history.

"I've had a wonderful career," he said. "I can't tell you how much I love the members and the business. I loved negotiating contracts with employers, even in difficult times."

"We're blessed as an organization, and it all goes back to Harry Van Arsdale," he added. "He created this whole thing, and I've done everything I can to maintain Harry and Tom's legacy. That's what drove me every day."

As he departs, he's giving out a new sticker. It reads: "Keep the Union Strong."

"It's pretty simple but also profound," Erikson said. "Everything we have is because of our membership in the IBEW. Our good wages, health benefits, pension, safe worksites, everything is at risk if we don't keep the union strong."

"Don't think about it, do it every day for yourselves and future generations of IBEW members," he added.

The officers and staff thank Brother Erikson for his many years of service and wish him a long, happy retirement. ■

Apprentices from Wilmington, Del., Local 2270 were honored in September as the first graduating class of IBEW-educated railroad mechanical journeymen electricians in three decades, thanks to a recently negotiated IBEW-Amtrak training program.

"There hasn't been an IBEW apprenticeship like this at Amtrak for over 30 years," said Local 2270 President Frank Gentry.

The new program "is a great opportunity to get entry-level candidates in the door and working on these good union jobs," Gentry said. "We will continue to fill jobs with qualified journeyman wiremen, but with this apprenticeship we also have the opportunity to extend offers to more men and women to join our ranks and learn the craft from seasoned IBEW instructors."

Contract negotiations and other discussions between the IBEW and Amtrak in recent years helped persuade the railroad not only to consider fixing that pay disparity but also to look at hiring apprentice-level electricians and training them in house.

The new program "is a way to get them in the door," Gentry said.

The new apprenticeship, tailored for IBEW-represented electrical workers at Amtrak, was the culmination of several years of negotiations led by Railroad System Council 7, whose jurisdiction includes Amtrak along with several other commuter and short-line freight railroads.

"Electricians are essential workers in the railroad transportation sector," said SC7 General Chairman Arthur Davidson. "This is a historic agreement for the IBEW and Amtrak."

The three-year Delaware apprenticeship, which started as a pilot program at Amtrak's maintenance facilities in Wilmington and Bear, includes classroom-based learning plus on-the-job training, all designed to fully prepare graduates to perform electrical work on all levels of Amtrak equipment. That work can range from daily maintenance and repairs to inspecting electrical

systems in locomotives, cab cars, passenger coaches and more.

"Our apprentices receive electrical trade instruction and experience related to the development of practical, versatile craftsmen versed in railroad equipment theory and practice," Davidson said.

The IBEW's support for this new apprenticeship program helped Amtrak, a for-profit corporation owned by the U.S. government, obtain federal Consolidated Rail Infrastructure Safety Improvements grants to help cover its costs.

"With this apprenticeship, we ... have the opportunity to extend offers to more men and women to join our ranks."

— Wilmington, Del., Local 2270 President Frank Gentry

"All railroad electrical workers in the U.S. are required to follow strict regulations administered by the Federal Railroad Administration," noted SC7 Secretary-Treasurer Steve Corrado.

Apprentices in the IBEW-Amtrak training program attend lectures and participate in labs, with a focus on railroad-specific electrical systems, such as diesel- and electricity-powered locomotives, inspections, cab signal testing, positive train control and more.

Safety training covers subjects such as arc-flash awareness and lock-out/tag-out procedures, along with best practices for safe movement around — and operation of — railroad equipment.

In addition to Delaware, the IBEW-Amtrak training program has been made available to apprentices at the railroad's training facilities in California, Illinois, Indiana, New York and the District of Columbia. Successful graduates

will join hundreds of highly skilled IBEW electrical workers who maintain Amtrak's fleet nationwide.

"Their electrical skills will be crucial to the safe movement of equipment and provide reliable passenger service, all while aligning with the IBEW's Code of Excellence," Davidson said.

Negotiations toward the apprenticeship training agreement further helped the IBEW achieve other beneficial provisions, such as a requirement to have a local union representative at each location serve as a training committee member who reviews work schedules and proposed program revisions.

Under its agreement with the IBEW, Amtrak pays for apprentices' tuition, textbooks and other related fees, as well as lodging, meal reimbursements and transportation as necessary. Qualified journeymen will be eligible for additional compensation for mentoring apprentices, and there is also agreement language calling for training curricula to be submitted annually for the general chairman's review as railroad and train technologies evolve.

"The dedication of our IBEW apprentices in becoming qualified electrical journeymen for the railroad will prove to have a positive impact in allowing the daily operations of Amtrak to thrive," Davidson and Corrado said in a statement. "We strongly believe this to be a great accomplishment and recognize the benefits of the training program to both parties."

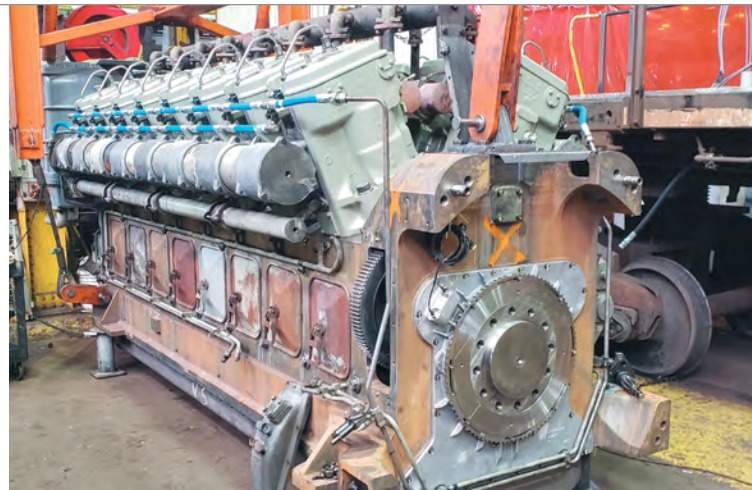
"We are proud of our members' success and congratulate each and every one of them on their achievements," they said. "We would also like to thank Brother Gentry, who serves on the apprenticeship committee and upholds our objective of ensuring apprentices satisfactorily complete the program."

Joining Davidson, Corrado and Gentry at the inaugural graduation ceremony in September were representatives from Amtrak's management team, along with staffers from the offices of Delaware's delegation in Congress: Rep. Sarah McBride and Sens. Lisa Blunt and Chris Coons.

"It's a good new group of electricians," Gentry said. ■



In September, apprentices from Wilmington, Del., Local 2270 became mechanical journeyman electricians following their graduation as the first class to complete a newly established IBEW-Amtrak apprenticeship training program. Pictured, from left: IBEW Railroad System Council 7 Secretary-Treasurer Steve Corrado, instructor Sam Smith, and Local 2270 Vice President Dominick Davis; apprentices Scott Wexler, Matthew Callaghan, Anthony Hinton, Jeremy Nembhard, Charles Durand, Thomas Berry Jr. and Ian McHugh; Local 2270 President Frank Gentry; and apprentices Kevin McCauley, Mark Racine, Tyler Noll, Nicholas Berry, Mark Poore and Norman Briggs.



Pa. Rail Members Help Reach Milestone on DC-to-AC Locomotive Conversion

Multiyear Project Bringing Steady Work in Altoona

Thanks to the work of IBEW electricians with Altoona, Pa., Local 2273 and a spirit of solidarity with other trades, 1,000 upgraded Norfolk Southern locomotives are in service throughout the eastern half of the U.S.

For nearly 10 years, 12 day-light-shift and 10 second-shift Railroad Branch electricians at Norfolk Southern's Juniata have been stripping direct-current power units from the railroad's 4000-series locomotives — many of which are decades old — and replacing them with modernized units driven by alternating current.

“We’ll strip them the whole way up through the shop and then rebuild them as they’re coming back down.”

— Altoona, Pa., Local 2273 President Kevin Beers

“Speed is a lot more controlled with an AC-powered traction motor,” explained Local 2273 Chair Kevin Beers, “and the adhesion is more stable with it on the tracks.”

Because of a series of technological improvements in recent years, “these AC locomotives now are unbelievable with their power and traction,” said Railroad System Council 6 Chair Shannon Spotswood, whose jurisdiction includes Local 2273.

“We used to have a whole spectrum of stuff that we had to be able to troubleshoot and work on,” said Spotswood, a 25-year IBEW member who worked in a Roanoke, Va., Local 813-represented Norfolk Southern shop and later served for 15 years as the local’s chair. “The AC stuff didn’t really start coming on strong at Norfolk Southern until probably 15 years ago, and now they’re dominating.”

The IBEW’s work at Juniata

supplements locomotive upgrades also taking place at a Wabtec facility in Erie, Pa., whose workers are represented by another union.

“We do like 20 a year here,” Beers said. “Overall, it’s been a pretty well-thought-out joint effort with Wabtec and Norfolk Southern.”

Local 2273 Vice President Chris Snyder noted that Railroad Branch workers at Norfolk Southern’s facility in Roanoke, Va., helped convert 47 locomotives to AC power before that plant’s closure in 2020.

“With next year’s projected 20, we’ll have done here, in-house, 239 locomotives,” Snyder said.

At Juniata, the roughly nine-week locomotive upgrade process works assembly-line-style. “We’ll strip them the whole way up through the shop and then rebuild them as they’re coming back down,” Beers said.

It takes about two weeks to dismantle locomotives’ DC systems, followed by four to five weeks of rebuilding.

“It’s nothing different from what we’re used to in this shop already,” said Beers, whose local represents more than 130 Norfolk Southern workers who service and maintain hundreds of locomotives every year. “We can do just about anything here.”

And they do it well, Spotswood said. “I’ve been up there several times in the past few years, and I know those folks there have a diverse set of skills,” he said. “What’s really phenomenal is they have the ability to lift a whole locomotive in the air. It just blows your mind at what they’re able to accomplish.”

Once the main upgrade work is complete, the locomotives undergo a week of load and diagnostics testing on an outdoor track at Juniata’s yard before receiving a fresh coat of paint.

“One benefit for them is they’re getting a new cab and an upgraded management system,” Snyder said. “They’re stating that the fuel efficiency is 25% better, it’s a 40% greater reliability for the locomotive itself and a 55% better hauling capacity.”

Beers said the whole process — a team effort by all the crafts involved — has been running smoothly.

“There’s a larger sense of brotherhood [at Juniata],” Spotswood noted. “We’re all union brothers and sisters, so we all have the same objective.”

That’s crucial when it comes to working safely, he said.

“If we don’t work together in a seamless fashion, somebody’s going to get hurt,” Spotswood said. “With the amount of weight of some of these objects, people can lose fingers, hands or even lives.”

The outlook on the 4000-series

locomotive work appears steady, Beers said, with upgrades to Norfolk Southern’s Evolution series locomotive now being looked at, as well. It’s a measure of good news for Local 2273, which is among many in recent years whose ranks have been gutted by most railroads’ adoption of “precision scheduled railroading,” a radical, penny-pinching efficiency strategy that has resulted in the elimination of hundreds of IBEW and other union workers’ jobs.

“At Juniata, they take great pride in being the best at what they do,” said Spotswood, who was System Council 6’s vice chair before he became chair in July.

Members of Altoona, Pa., Local 2273 have helped strip hundreds of Norfolk Southern locomotives like this one (above left) down to the wheels (above center) and then rebuild them to house new AC-powered traction motors (above).

Aside from the improved emissions and longer locomotive lifespans that come with the upgrades, “it’s just so impressive to see a locomotive come in that’s 20 to 30 years old be stripped down to the frame and then watch it all come back together,” Snyder said. ■



‘Union Rights Are on the Ballot’

IBEW canvassers and phone bankers are busy every autumn in New Jersey and Virginia, where legislators and statewide leaders are on the ballot in the odd-numbered years between federal elections. Tireless get-out-the-vote efforts yielded historic outcomes Nov. 4, helping elect worker-friendly governors and substantial pro-worker majorities in the New Jersey Assembly and the Virginia House of Delegates. Those victories magnified labor’s success nationwide, as union-endorsed candidates overwhelmingly won city, county and other local races. **Bottom photo:** Richmond, Va., Local 666 and fellow union members before a September canvass. **Top left:** Volunteers outside Newark, N.J., Local 1158, which hosted labor walks every weekend. **Top right:** At the hall’s Oct. 11 launch, now-Gov. Mikie Sherrill prepares to hug Tom Kelly, East Windsor Local 827 business agent and president of the Passaic County Central Labor Council. “Union rights are on the ballot,” Sherrill told the crowd. “The fight for PLAs is on the ballot. The fight for collective bargaining is on the ballot. The fight for your wages is on the ballot. The fight for your families is on the ballot in New Jersey.” ■



NORTH OF 49° | AU NORD DU 49° PARALLÈLE

New Federal Office Is Massive Opportunity for IBEW Canada

The federal government has formed an agency that will combat permitting gridlock on big infrastructure projects, giving the IBEW a powerful tool to organize more work faster.

The Major Projects Office's mission is to streamline the regulatory process on projects deemed to be in the national interest. This will enable Canada to make more effective use of its massive natural resources in a changing world economy, especially as the ongoing tariff war with the U.S. shows no signs of slowing down and it looks for new trading partners.

That means thousands of more jobs for skilled construction workers — not just now, but for decades to come, said First District International Vice President Russ Shewchuk.

"This is the greatest organizing tool in the history of the IBEW in Canada," he said. "I'm working extremely hard to share information with our business managers across the country and to ensure our local unions are ready to embrace these changes that are coming."

Prime Minister Mark Carney followed through on a promise made during the federal election campaign to institute the office. Not coincidentally, it is based in Calgary, Alberta — far away from Ottawa and in the heart of Canada's energy industry.

Shewchuk and other Canadian building trades leaders have been in regular communication with government officials to ensure that the coming projects are built by skilled union construction workers. That included two days of discussions with federal officials and other stakeholders on Parliament Hill in late September.

A formal agreement has not been reached, but he is optimistic.

"The First District has a front seat during these negotiations," said Shewchuk, adding that John Zerucelli, the secretary of state for labour, has been a key ally. "This government is opening the door for our advice and our recommendations so these projects can be built at the speed and scale they want them developed," he said.

"It's been an excellent, positive experience so far," Shewchuk added. "I believe the commitment is there. We're looking to sit down with them further to get these things written down on paper and commitments locked up."

Carney and Major Projects Office Director Dawn Farrell, a longtime energy executive in the private sector, announced seven new projects in November, including a mine for critical

minerals in New Brunswick, a hydro project in Nunavut and a transmission line in British Columbia.

"These projects [were chosen] to reinforce our nation," Carney said.

That is in addition to five projects announced in September, including work at the Port of Montreal that Shewchuk expects to employ IBEW members.

The office has a mandate of creating good-paying jobs that benefit local communities. It will include clean energy projects and involve Canada's Indigenous population in all discussions.

There's no better way to support a community than creating good-paying, family-supporting union jobs, Shewchuk said.

"The biggest thing you can do to invest in your people is to allow them to work under a collective bargaining

agreement," he said. "Society will take care of itself, and people will not be relying on handouts to survive."

Shewchuk, who has met with Carney himself, said the projects will touch multiple IBEW branches besides construction, including utility, manufacturing and telecommunications. The demand will put even more emphasis on organizing and bringing more people into the Brotherhood.

That's why he believes it will be the best thing to happen to the building trades. IBEW members showed that they can handle the largest projects when they were instrumental in the



First District International Vice President Russ Shewchuk, right, meets with Prime Minister Mark Carney during a major projects announcement in Edmonton on Sept. 11.

Phase 1 building of the LNG Canada and Site C Energy Project in British Columbia. They'll also play a role in building Phase 2, the largest private-capital pro-

ject in Canadian history.

"It makes me proud that we're not only building a strong workforce now, but for the future as well," he said. ■

Share your IBEW news!

IBEW Canada is seeking impactful stories from local unions and members. Please contact Shaina Hardie at Shaina_Hardie@ibew.org.

Le nouveau bureau fédéral est un immense débouché pour la FIOE

Le gouvernement fédéral a mis sur pied un nouvel organisme qui permettra de lutter contre les blocages liés à l'octroi de permis pour les grands projets d'infrastructures; donnant à la FIOE un outil puissant pour syndiquer plus de travail en moins de temps.

La mission du Bureau des grands projets est de simplifier le processus réglementaire sur les projets jugés d'intérêt national. Ceci permettra au Canada d'utiliser plus efficacement l'énorme ressource naturelle dans une économie mondiale changeante, surtout quant à la guerre tarifaire en cours avec les É.-U. qui ne semble pas ralentir et qui cherche de nouveaux partenaires commerciaux.

Ce qui veut dire des milliers d'emplois pour les travailleuses spécialisées et les travailleurs spécialisés du secteur de la construction; pas seulement aujourd'hui, mais pendant des décennies, déclare Russ Shewchuk, le vice-président international du Premier District.

« Il s'agit du meilleur outil d'organisation syndicale dans l'histoire de la FIOE Canada », dit-il. « Je travaille extrêmement fort pour partager l'information avec nos gérants d'affaires au pays et pour m'assurer que les sections locales sont prêtes à accepter les changements à venir. »

Le premier ministre Mark Carney a respecté sa promesse faite durant sa

campagne électorale fédérale en créant ce bureau. Ce n'est pas une coïncidence si le bureau se trouve à Calgary en Alberta, loin d'Ottawa et au cœur de l'industrie énergétique canadienne.

M. Shewchuk et d'autres leaders des conseils de la construction canadiens communiquent régulièrement avec les fonctionnaires du gouvernement pour s'assurer que les projets à venir seront construits par une main-d'œuvre spécialisée et syndiquée du secteur de la construction. Ceci comprenait deux jours de discussions avec les fonctionnaires fédéraux et d'autres parties prenantes sur la Colline du Parlement à la fin du mois de septembre.

Un accord formel n'a pas été conclu, mais il est optimiste.

« Le Premier District occupe une place de choix dans ces négociations », mentionne M. Shewchuk, en ajoutant que John Zerucelli, le secrétaire d'État (Travail) a été un allié clé. « Ce gouvernement est ouvert à nos conseils et à nos recommandations pour permettre aux projets d'être réalisés selon la cadence et l'envergure souhaitées », dit-il.

« Jusqu'à présent, l'expérience a été excellente et positive », ajoute M. Shewchuk. « Je crois que l'engagement est là. Nous cherchons à nous asseoir avec eux dans le but de mettre les choses par écrit et assurer l'engagement. »

M. Carney et la première dirigeante Dawn Farrell du Bureau des grands projets, une dirigeante de longue date dans le secteur privé de l'énergie, a annoncé en novembre sept nouveaux projets, notamment une mine de minéraux critiques au Nouveau-Brunswick, un projet d'hydroélectricité au Nunavut et une ligne de transport d'électricité en Colombie-Britannique.

« Ces projets ont été choisis pour renforcer notre pays », formule M. Carney.

Ces projets s'ajoutent aux cinq autres annoncés en septembre, dont l'ouvrage prévu au Vieux-Port de Montréal où on s'attend à embaucher des membres de la FIOE, mentionne M. Shewchuk.

Le mandat du bureau est de créer des emplois bien rémunérés qui profitent aux localités. Les projets d'énergie propres seront inclus ainsi que la participation de la population autochtone du Canada dans toutes les discussions.

Rien ne permet mieux de soutenir les milieux que la création d'emplois bien rémunérés et syndiqués qui permettent de nourrir une famille, formule M. Shewchuk.

« La meilleure chose que vous pouvez faire pour investir dans ton

monde est de leur permettre de travailler sous une convention collective », dit-il. « La société prendra soin d'elle-même et les gens ne dépendront pas sur l'aide pour survivre. »

M. Shewchuk qui a rencontré M. Carney, a dit que les projets concerneront différents secteurs de la FIOE en plus de la construction, notamment le service public, la fabrication et les télécommunications. Cette demande mettra davantage l'accent sur la syndicalisation et amènera plus de gens dans la Fraternité.

Voilà pourquoi nous sommes convaincus qu'il s'agit de la meilleure occasion pour les métiers de la construction. Les membres de la FIOE ont démontré être suffisants capables de mener à bien les plus grands projets grâce aux rôles qu'ils ont joués dans la phase 1 de LNG Canada et dans le barrage du Site C en Colombie-Britannique. Ils joueront également un rôle dans la phase 2, le plus grand projet en capitaux du secteur privé dans l'histoire canadienne.

« Je suis fier de dire que nous bâtissons une main-d'œuvre forte, autant pour le présent que pour l'avenir », dit-il. ■

Racontez-nous vos nouvelles FIOE!

La FIOE cherche des histoires marquantes des sections locales et des membres. Veuillez communiquer avec Shaina Hardie à Shaina_Hardie@ibew.org.

POWER AT WORK

New Orleans Local's Sparky Sisters Are Fostering Next Generation of Women

For most of her career, Janelle Dejan was one of the only women in New Orleans Local 130. It's a story that could be told just about anywhere in the U.S. and Canada. But today, Dejan and her sisters at the local are building a committee to support current women members but also to help cultivate the next generation and beyond.

"My hope is simple. That every woman who puts on her tools in Local 130 knows that she is not alone, she is not invisible and she is not without power."

—Janelle Dejan, Local 130 member

"We're not just preparing women for the workplace they walk into today. We're preparing the trade for the workplace it needs to become tomorrow," Dejan said.

The impetus for a Women's Committee came from Local 130 sisters attending events like the IBEW Women's Conference and Tradeswomen Build Nations, an annual conference

put on by North America's Building Trades Unions.

"Attending the IBEW Women's Conference was an amazing experience," Local 130 member Jenni Bivona said. "We made connections and friends, and we wanted to foster that enthusiasm back here in New Orleans."

Bivona, Dejan and others started small, with a group text and sharing information and resources. Fueled by the sisterhood they found at those events, they created their own committee, the Sparky Sisters.

"A Women's Committee is essential for the future generations of women in our local," said Isabel Salathe, a fifth-year apprentice. "It gives us a space to discuss issues on jobsites, as well as foster political engagement in the community."

Having a Women's Committee can help recruit the next generation in high schools, too, Local 130 Business Manager Rodney Wallace said.

"I would go to career fairs at high schools, and so many young ladies would walk right past us, and when we

would try to engage them, they would reply with either 'I'm a girl' or 'That's a man's job,' he said. "Helping our women to be more visible in our local and our community can only help to change that mentality."

Dejan added that once women members join, it's crucial to retain them.

"Bringing more women into the trade is only the beginning. The real work is making sure they stay, thrive and advance," said Dejan, who

co-chairs the National Taskforce on Tradeswomen's Issues. "The Sparky Sisters gives women in Local 130 a place for mentorship, leadership opportunities and honest conversations about jobsite culture, all of which help women stay and grow in the trade."

The necessity of having a space to address workplace culture can become paramount when the culture is hostile — and even deadly. Amber Czech, a welder in Minnesota, was bludgeoned to death

Local 130 sisters are taking inspiration from Women's Conferences and building their own committee.

by a male co-worker last November while on the job. Some of the work that Dejan does with the task force centers on gender-based violence and harassment.

"What happened to Amber represents a devastating failure of workplace culture and safety across the industry," said Dejan, who's contributing to a publication documenting Czech's story and calling for real reforms to protect all tradeswomen. "A Women's Committee gives Local 130 the structure to address these realities proactively and directly."

The Sparky Sisters are in the process of getting credentialed as a formal IBEW Women's Committee, and they're building a strong foundation for it now. They're doing direct outreach at apprenticeship orientations and using group texting and conversations at the hall, sharing the energy and information they gained from Tradeswomen Build Nations.

"Personal invitation matters," Dejan said. "When women feel seen and valued, they show up."

Wallis noted that many of the women involved in Sparky Sisters also participate in other groups like the local's Electrical Workers Minority Caucus and RENEW chapters. RENEW focuses on engaging young members in the union.

"They participate in everything," Wallis said. "It's good to see them getting involved with something that's uniquely set up to empower them."

Bivona, Dejan and Salathe said that the response from the Local 130 membership has been positive, and that having their local's leadership on board is incredibly important.

The more they can bring home the solidarity from events like the IBEW Women's Conference and Tradeswomen Build Nations, the more welcoming they'll be, Dejan said.

"My hope is simple," she said. "That every woman who puts on her tools in Local 130 knows that she is not alone, she is not invisible and she is not without power." ■



Taking It to the Hill

In a whirlwind day of advocacy on Capitol Hill in November, local IBEW leaders and members attending the union's Government Affairs Conference collectively took part in 176 meetings with Senate and House lawmakers from both parties. Armed with policy briefs on a wide array of IBEW priorities, and workers' rights and safety more broadly, visitors explained how various bills would help their members or hurt them.

Among many issues, they urged support for the PRO Act to make it harder for employers to derail union organizing drives and argued against the Developing America's Workforce Act, which would erode apprenticeship standards. Pictured below, an IBEW delegation from California meets with Sen. Adam Schiff. Subjects included reviving federal energy tax credits and resuming infrastructure and clean energy projects canceled by the Trump administration. ■



CIRCUITS

Ontario Member Wins Awards for Promoting, Diversifying Electrical Trades

Stephanie McLean has been sharing her experiences in the construction industry as a woman of color and was recently awarded for it — twice.

“Stephanie is widely seen as someone who represents the trade and Local 804 with pride and integrity,” Kitchener, Ontario, Local 804 Business Manager Derek Brooks said. “Her successes demonstrate the diversity of talent in our local by creating a more welcoming environment for future members.”



Local 804 member Stephanie McLean is racking up awards for her work promoting and diversifying the trades.

McLean has been an IBEW member since 2019, initially with Toronto Local 353 before joining Local 804 in 2023. Spurred by a friend to check out the trades, she started researching her options, and one name rose to the top.

“I started learning about non-union electrical jobs versus unionized electrical work,” McLean said. “In short, I found the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers to be the top union in Ontario.”

McLean credits her IBEW brothers and sisters with helping her through the challenging times, as well as celebrating her successes.

“The support, unity and commitment shown by fellow members has demonstrated what solidarity truly looks like, and it’s reminded me why the IBEW remains such a powerful organization,” she said.

McLean has had a lot to celebrate recently. She participated in a panel discussion on skilled women in the trades hosted by 100 Accomplished Black Canadian Women, or 100ABC-Women, in early October.

“The event was amazing,” McLean said. “We were all sisters in solidarity, sharing our journeys and stories.”

McLean was also one of the winners in the “2025 Canada’s Most Powerful Women: Top 100 Awards” in the skilled-trades category. The award recognizes women’s leadership, innovation and impact in transforming their organizations and communities across Canada. It’s also more than just recognition, McLean said. It’s about sparking important conversations around lead-

ership and inclusion.

“It means a great deal to be recognized with this award, especially as the only woman of color among the winners in the skilled-trades category,” she said. “It’s a reminder that anything is possible with commitment and determination.”

One of the many ways McLean is helping to transform the trades is through social media.

“I use my platform to share my experiences as a woman in the trades, highlight the stories of other women, and promote opportunities within the industry,” she said. “It’s also a way for me to help people connect with one another, build community and encourage more women to explore careers in the trades.”

McLean has also attended IBEW Canada events, including the Women’s Caucus and the All Canada Progress Meeting.

“I felt genuinely inspired by these opportunities, both about my own path within the IBEW and about the strength and dedication of the membership as a whole,” she said. “Attending those meetings reinforced my belief that meaningful involvement in the IBEW can happen.”

For McLean, meaningful involvement occurs beyond just the jobsite.

“I like the educational opportunities that are available to members. I like how you can get involved with various committees and social activities,” she said. “And I love the fact that, since I’ve joined the union, there’s been a pension growing and yearly benefits avail-



“It means a great deal to be recognized with this award, especially as the only woman of color among the winners in the skilled-trades category. It’s a reminder that anything is possible with commitment and determination.”

— Stephanie McLean, Kitchener, Ontario, Local 804 member

able for me and my family.”

McLean’s advice to women of color is wisdom that anyone who’s having a tough time could benefit from:

“Stay focused. The short-term challenges are worth the long-term rewards. Build a support network early,

and lean on it when you need to,” she said. “Seek out a mentor as soon as you can. Guidance from someone who understands the industry is invaluable. And never let anyone dissuade you. You belong in the trades, and your strength will carry you through.” ■

Putting the Sparkle in Indy’s Holidays

For the 63rd year, Indianapolis Local 481 apprentices and journeymen donated their time on a November Saturday to turn the city’s Soldiers and Sailors Monument into the holiday season’s Circle of Lights.

The 315 volunteers also included eager youngsters and other family members, who helped carry 52 strings of lights that drape the 284-foot memorial. Earlier, some 40 of the local’s retired wiremen checked each of the nearly 5,000 bulbs to ensure they were good to go, a project they tackle every October.

Community members packed the area Nov. 28 as the Downtown Indy Alliance flipped the switch, thanking Local 481 for making the spectacular display possible. The monument will remain lit through Jan. 16, after which IBEW crews will remove the lights and pack them away until the 2026 holidays. ■



TRANSITIONS

APPOINTED

Joseph P. Calabro



Joseph “Joe” Calabro, the longest-serving member of the International Executive Council, has been appointed

chair, effective Jan. 1.

“It’s a huge honor to be appointed to this position,” said Calabro, who is vacating his role as IEC representative for the First District, one that he’s held for the last 20 years. “We’re a very select few to do so throughout the IBEW’s history. I couldn’t be more humbled and grateful.”

Brother Calabro, who also serves as business manager of Newark, N.J., Local 1158, assumed the chair role left by Chris Erikson, business manager of New York Local 3, who retired Jan. 1.

“Brother Erikson served as chair with great distinction,” Calabro said. “These are pretty big shoes to fill.”

Calabro, who has served on the council under three international presidents, said he has a different approach to leadership. Where Erikson commands a room when he speaks, Calabro is more low-key.

“Erikson loves the podium, and the podium loves him,” Calabro said. “My strengths are different. But one thing we have in common is our love of the IBEW. That never wavers.”

Calabro said his leadership style is collaborative, and he’ll look to his fellow IEC officeholders for their input.

The nine-member IEC is the judicial body of the IBEW, responsible for enforcing the union’s constitution. It can also recommend amendments to the constitution. All nine members must be current business managers, and along with the chair, they represent eight geographical districts.

The IEC is an eclectic group, Calabro said, comprising members from all over the U.S. and Canada. Where one member looks out his window and sees mountains, another sees skyscrapers.

“There are a lot of viewpoints on the council,” Calabro said. “But regardless of where we came from, what we all share is our dedication to the IBEW membership. And whatever we decide, we all come out of the room as one.”

IEC members never forget how consequential their roles are for the rank and file, Calabro stressed.

“Our decisions affect a lot of lives, and we take that seriously,” he said.

International President Kenneth W. Cooper is the third president Calabro has worked with during his two decades on the council.

“It’s an honor and a privilege to serve under President Cooper and International Secretary-Treasurer Noble,” he said. “I couldn’t be more grateful for the opportunity.”

Fellow IEC member Donald Finn,

who was appointed secretary of the council in December, said he expects Calabro to lead by collaborating on the issues and landing on one that the Council members will unanimously support.

“Joe is a quiet leader in his own right, and he’s said that he’ll rely on the council to come up with the best solution for the membership,” said Finn, who represents the Fifth District on the IEC and serves as business manager of Chicago Local 134. “He’ll have an open-door policy where we can come in and share our views and think outside the box.”

As business manager of Local 1158, Calabro grew the membership from 1,800 to almost 3,500. And in addition to serving on many area labor organizations, including the executive board of the New Jersey AFL-CIO, he helped establish the Child Safe Program in Essex County in northeastern New Jersey. The program tells children in need of help that they can go to any county facility or vehicle displaying the “Child Safe” sign.

The New Jersey native has been recognized for his work in the community, receiving a Distinguished Service Award in 1998 and the Italian Tribune’s Columbus Day Humanitarian Award in 2002.

“It’s a huge honor to be appointed to this position. We’re a very select few to do so throughout the IBEW’s history.”

— Joe Calabro, IEC chair

“Joe has served on the IEC for decades and has been a valued adviser and friend during my time both as international secretary-treasurer and international president. He’s filling big shoes with Chris’ departure, but I’m confident in his abilities and, more importantly, in his commitment and passion for the IBEW and its members,” Cooper said.

Calabro’s accolades extend to his hobby of speedboat racing. Among other awards, he was the recipient of the 1986 Boat Racing Throttleman of the Year and the 1990 Racer of the Year.

Calabro, who was 29 when he became business manager of Local 1158 in 1993, came up through the ranks alongside Liz Shuler, a member of Portland, Ore., Local 125 and president of the AFL-CIO.

“Neither one of us ever thought that we’d end up where we did,” said Calabro, who attended Rutgers University. “It’s incredible to think about where we came from and how it all led to this moment.”

On behalf of the officers and staff, we congratulate Brother Calabro on his appointment and wish him the very best in his new role. ■

APPOINTED

Daniel P. Cosner



Folsom, N.J., Local 351 Business Manager Daniel P. Cosner, a second-generation IBEW member who has been a tireless

union activist for more than 30 years, has been appointed by International President Kenneth W. Cooper as the International Executive Council’s First District representative, effective Jan. 1.

Cosner fills the vacancy created when his predecessor, Newark, N.J., Local 1157 Business Manager Joseph Calabro, became the IEC’s chair following the retirement of New York City Local 3 Business Manager Christopher Erikson.

Born and raised in Gloucester City, N.J., Cosner had always intended to follow his father, Ray, into the Brotherhood.

“I’ve got to thank my dad for getting me rolling,” Cosner said. “He was able to provide for us, and my mom was able to stay home with me.”

“Dad was also friendly enough with the local’s leadership to get me on as a helper after high school,” he said, adding that Ray, a member for 63 years and counting, is still enjoying the retirement he was able to take at 55 thanks to his IBEW membership. “He said, ‘If you like it, we’ll let you apply to the apprenticeship.’”

Cosner liked it, and the following year, he was admitted into an apprenticeship with Camden Local 439. (The local merged in 1994 with Atlantic City Local 211 and Vineland Local 592, which resulted in the charter of Local 351.)

“The work was good back then,” said Cosner, who topped out as a journeyman inside wireman in 1992. “I loved working with the tools, I got on some big jobs, and I met a lot of people.”

He was also an active IBEW member, helping with his local’s annual picnic for members and the children’s Christmas party, as well as playing on the local’s softball team. “But I kept wanting to push further, to be more active and have more to say,” Cosner said.

He recalled one local meeting where the discussion grew heated. “Somebody from the floor said to the business manager, ‘I don’t understand what you’re telling me, and I don’t agree with it,’” Cosner said. “Then, one of the executive board guys, a rank-and-file guy, stood up and defended the business manager.”

“He wasn’t just sucking up. He was expressing himself. I thought that was so cool,” Cosner said. “I wanted to be the guy like that, working with the tools but having the guts to stand up at a meeting and say, ‘Wait a minute.’ That had a lot of impact.”

Cosner told then-Local 351 President Fred Richmond that the episode got him thinking about running for the local’s executive board. Richmond counseled Cosner to start small and aim instead for

a spot on the examining board.

Grateful for Richmond’s advice, Cosner still chose to go for the executive board. Although he lost by nine votes, Cosner was shortly afterward appointed to the board to fill a vacancy.

He was elected to the executive board in 1998 and became its chairman three years later. Meanwhile, his desire to advocate for his IBEW brothers and sisters continued to grow.

“He’s always fighting for the members,” said Jersey City, N.J., Local 164 Business Manager Dan Gumble. “He’s truly a man of integrity. We’re lucky to have Dan here in New Jersey and to work alongside him,” Gumble said.

“[Dan’s] a class act — just a giving person. He loves his family, and he loves his local.”

— Trenton, N.J., Local 269 Business Manager Steve Aldrich

In 2001, then-Business Manager Ed Gant hired Cosner as a Local 351 business agent and, in 2010, appointed him assistant business manager. When Gant retired in 2016, Cosner felt prepared by Gant to accept the appointment to replace him.

Last summer, Cosner celebrated his fourth uncontested election as business manager of the 2,000-member local.

“It’s a busy job,” said Cosner, who also has been president of the Southern New Jersey Building Trades Council since 2013. “We’ve been very fortunate with work since I first became business manager, and it looks like that’s going to continue.”

Many of Local 351’s members work at one of New Jersey’s nuclear power stations, build and maintain casinos in Atlantic City, or staff oil and gas refineries along the Delaware River.

“When I started with the IBEW, the refineries were our thing, while the nukes would keep us going during times of lower employment,” Cosner said. “When the refineries slowed up, we had casino work.”

He said this diversity of work prospects has been fortunate for the local. “We still have a lot of open farmland, and we’ve been fortunate with solar work in our area, too,” he said. “We’ve been able to manage the ups and downs.”

Trenton, N.J., Local 269 Business Manager Steve Aldrich has known Cosner for more than 30 years.

“Dan is the man,” said Aldrich, who worked the tools with Cosner at a Bally’s casino in Atlantic City. “He’s a class act — just a giving person. He loves his family, and he loves his local.”

Cosner credits the local’s staff, led by President Charles Della Vecchi, with the enthusiastic attendance of members and their families at an annual picnic weekend in Wildwood. “We’ve made that such a family affair,” Cosner said.

“All weekend long, all you see is IBEW 351 shirts everywhere,” he said.

Since the 1994 merger, “we have developed Local 351 into this institution that really looks out for each other,” he said.

Cosner said he’s grateful for the support of his fiancée, Amy, and his middle-school-age daughter and son.

“I’ve brought them up in the IBEW world, and they know what it’s about,” he said. “They help out with the picnics; they give out shirts. They are IBEW through and through.”

Cosner said he was humbled and excited to be asked to join the IEC. “It’s the highest judicial body within the IBEW,” he said. “When President Cooper asked me if I was interested, I didn’t hesitate a second.”

Gumble called Cosner’s selection “a great pick.”

“He’s an asset to this union as a business manager, and now to be on the IEC, we couldn’t ask for a better person for the job,” he said.

“He’s a true gentleman,” Aldrich added. “He’s going to be nothing but helpful on the IEC. This was a smart decision.”

Cosner said he is grateful for this opportunity.

“I thank God for everything I’ve gotten from the IBEW,” he said. “I believe in it so much. We’ve got to keep it rolling.”

Please join the Brotherhood in wishing Brother Cosner the best of luck in his new role. ■

RETIRED

Julie A. Cosenza



Third District International Representative Julie Cosenza, a dedicated unionist whose empathy and leadership have

left lasting impressions on her fellow members, has retired from the IBEW.

A native of Buffalo, N.Y., Cosenza joined the union in 1989 when she was hired by National Fuel, a gas utility serving 800,000 customers in New York and Pennsylvania.

“When I started, I was part of the bargaining unit. It wasn’t an option,” she said. “What I did have a choice with was how much I got involved.”

Buffalo Local 2199 represents National Fuel’s technical and office workers in New York. Early on, Cosenza became a regular fixture at the local’s meetings.

“I wanted to be part of the collective bargaining process because it affects your whole family,” she said.

Cosenza credits former Local 2199 Business Manager Bill McMahon for helping in her activism journey.

“I admired and respected Bill,” she said. “He was very inclusive and had me come to meetings with the company.”

Cosenza soon became a steward and joined the local's negotiating and steering committees. She also helped represent Local 2199 within the New York State Association of Electrical Workers.

In 2000, Cosenza became Local 2199's vice president. Ten years later, when McMahon retired, she was elected his successor.

"Behind every IBEW sister is a brother — or brothers — who's supportive," Cosenza said. "When I became business manager, I had tremendous support from [Third District International Representative] Mike Flanagan. We worked very closely together."

"She makes people feel valued, like you're her favorite person. ... She really helped us get stronger contracts."

— Buffalo, N.Y. Local 2199 Business Manager Colleen Ballacchino

Colleen Ballacchino, Local 2199's current business manager, said Cosenza has a gift.

"She makes people feel valued, like you're her favorite person," said Ballacchino, who initially resisted becoming involved with the IBEW.

"I had every excuse in the book not to," she said. "Julie goes, 'You can't let somebody else determine your future.'"

Cosenza led by example, Ballacchino said: "Julie was a force in negotiations. She really helped us get stronger contracts."

In 2012, then-Third District International Vice President Don Siegel tapped Cosenza to work on his staff as an international representative.

"To say that I was surprised would be an understatement," said Cosenza, who was especially grateful for encouragement she received early on from Siegel, who retired in 2017, and his successor, Mike Welsh, who retired in 2022.

"I met so many members and officers in the local unions who I still call friends," Cosenza said, "and I worked with the most incredible international reps in the Third District."

One of those was Jenn Duck, who joined the district's staff in 2019, a few months before the COVID-19 lockdowns.

"Julie helped me manage that," Duck said. "I come from outside construction, and Julie was super helpful with her work on the utility side."

International Representative Kris Anderson joined the Third District's staff in 2017, assisting utility locals alongside Cosenza and working with her on such things as the district's quarterly utility workshops.

"Julie is the epitome of a genuine person who understands the value of small gestures of kindness. She would take it upon herself to collect any

unopened toiletries from workshop attendees and deliver them to a local homeless or women's shelter as a contribution from the IBEW," Anderson said. "This small act meant so much to these groups, and it truly embodied the kind-hearted person that she is."

Cosenza also served on the Third District's Women's Committee, and she represented the IBEW on the Interunion Gas Conference Steering Committee and the Utility Labor Council. Additionally, she was a trustee with the Buffalo Central Labor Council and was treasurer for the Western New York Coalition of Labor Union Women.

"I'm a pretty positive person, so I try to find even in the darkest spots a little bit of light," Cosenza said.

One of those moments of light, she recalled, followed a meeting where a member was disciplined. "She told me I was the only person who believed her and stuck up for her," Cosenza said. "People like her made me keep going, and I'm grateful for that," she said.

Cosenza took classes at Cornell University's School of Industrial and Labor Relations, the United Association of Labor Education and the Labor Arbitration Institute. Through the United Way, she also became certified in adult mental health first aid.

"Julie was big on making sure that those of us on staff take care of each other," Duck said.

Before he was appointed in November as international vice president for the Third District, Frank Muia worked with Cosenza as an international representative.

"One of the things you learn when you first meet Julie is that she's extremely compassionate and cares about the IBEW," Muia said. "She did a phenomenal job servicing her local unions."

In retirement, Cosenza and her husband, Joe, plan to spend time with their three children and five grandchildren.

"Believe it or not, I love spending time with my husband," she said with a laugh. "Being on the road as much as I was, I couldn't have done it without Joe's support."

The couple recently bought a recreational vehicle and plan to take road trips with their two golden retrievers. "We're working on getting them certified as therapy dogs to work with the elderly or those going through cancer treatments," she said.

At home, Cosenza assists her fellow parishioners at Queen of Heaven Roman Catholic Church with funeral planning. She describes gardening as her "biggest passion," and she notes that she and her husband are avid, season-ticket-holding Buffalo Bills fans.

"I thank God every day for the IBEW and the opportunities it has provided me," Cosenza said. "It always had my back, it kept me and my family safe during COVID, and it provided us all with a better life."

One valuable lesson Cosenza learned from the IBEW was that she "didn't have to be the loudest voice in the room to make an impact," she said.

"Truth and facts speak volumes," she said. "The IBEW taught me to stand up for what's right, even when it's uncomfortable, and to advocate for myself."

Muia called Cosenza's retirement "bittersweet."

"Julie always wanted to make sure things were done properly," he said. "She was just a pleasure to work with."

Please join the entire IBEW membership in wishing Sister Cosenza a long and happy retirement. ■

DECEASED

Richard Gessler



Retired Sixth District International Representative Richard "Rick" Gessler, a leader in the Telecommunications

branch for more than three decades, died on Oct. 28. He was 73.

"Rick always meant what he said and didn't back down," said Downers Grove, Ill., Local 21 Business Manager Paul Wright, a longtime friend who considered Gessler a mentor. "You could debate things with him, but one of his favorite go-tos was 'Read the book.' That meant the [IBEW] constitution, the collective bargaining agreement or whatever you were debating."

"He did his homework and was very deliberate in that way and was never afraid," Wright added. "He wasn't out there to insult you, but he wasn't out there to appease you, either."

A native of Evanston, Ill., Brother Gessler joined Downers Grove Local 336 when he was hired as a telephone installer by Illinois Bell in 1971.

He served as chief steward from 1989 to 1992, business representative from 1992 to 2000 and Local 21's assistant business manager and vice president from 2000-2005. Local 336 and four other Illinois telecommunications locals were amalgamated into Local 21 in 1998.

Gessler encouraged Wright to become a steward after Wright, a mechanic for Ameritech, narrowly avoided serious injury during an accident on the job in 1991.

The respect Gessler had from Local 336's membership was evident from the start, even though he never served as business manager, Wright said. He remembers one moment involving Ameritech, a forerunner to AT&T. The company wanted to fire an IBEW-represented employee who had recently returned from sick leave and was just a few months from being eligible for his 30-year pension.

Gessler put the word out about what was happening. The following Monday, nearly all 770 Local 336 members that were part of the Ameritech bargaining unit didn't show up for work.

The situation was resolved to the

satisfaction of the affected employee and local by noon that day, Wright said.

"Both sides (labor and management) had a keen respect for him because he could do things like that," said Wright, who also serves as chairman of the T-3 AT&T System Council.

Gessler moved to the Sixth District office in 2005, where he serviced locals in broadcasting and railroad in addition to telecommunications.

Retired Sixth District International Vice President David Ruhmkorff, whose background was in construction, said Gessler made his transition to the district staff much easier. Ruhmkorff became an international representative himself in 1994 before serving as international vice president from 2015-22.

"Rick was a true trade unionist," Ruhmkorff said.

"We partnered very well during steward training in the newly formed Local 21," he added. "He had a lot of respect from the membership and added a lot of credibility for me. When he spoke, you could tell people really listened to what he had to say. Our friendship just blossomed from there."

Ruhmkorff said Gessler always pushed back against the notion that telecommunications was a dying industry. Instead, it was continually changing due to technology. IBEW members must be doing the work brought about by that change.

"He wasn't out there to insult you, but he wasn't out to appease you either."

— Downers Grove, Ill., Local 21 Business Manager Paul Wright

"That's what Rick helped me understand," Ruhmkorff said. "It [the work] may be done by something else, but it's our work. We were able to claim that."

Gessler retired in 2015. In addition to his meticulous work ethic, he was almost as well known for his love of cars. He was an auto racing fan and was constantly working on some kind of motor — whether it was in a car, boat or tractor.

He died due to complications from an autoimmune disease he battled for many years. He is survived by his wife, Mary, his high school sweetheart; two children; and four grandchildren.

He was a graduate of Roosevelt University's Labor Education Center, which later became part of DePaul University. Wright and several other Local 21 leaders have followed his lead and graduated from the program.

"He's what the union should be," Wright said. "Fight for someone who needs someone to fight for them. Just a rock-solid guy."

The officers and staff salute Brother Gessler's service to the Brotherhood and send their condolences to his family and friends during this difficult time. ■



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IBEW Hour Power



ElectricTV

LOCAL LINES

Helping Hands

L.U. 1 (as,c,ees,ei,em,es,et,fm,i,mt,rts,s,se,spa,st,ws&ptc), ST. LOUIS, MO — Happy New Year, brothers and sisters. I hope you were blessed this holiday season to be of service to your family and community. Between the coat drives, Shop With a Cop, the government shutdown and the machinists’ strike at Boeing St. Louis, our members met the challenge of donating time, money, clothes and nonperishable food items to help those in need.

Some of our retirees donated their time to upgrade the Black Madonna Shrine in Pacific, Mo., proving that the drive to be of service doesn’t end with retirement.

Local 1 is also donating time to solicit public support for an initiative to repeal the partisan, gerrymandered congressional map that our Legislature enacted. They bent the knee to Washington, D.C., instead of following the state redistricting process, where districts are adjusted to reflect population shifts every 10 years after the release of new census data.

Fingers crossed that the new year brings a brighter future to the IBEW and the labor movement.

Kyle Hunter, P.S.

SSG Ratifies Three-Year Contract

L.U. 15 (u), DOWNERS GROVE, IL — On Oct. 8, all available System Services Group members gathered to review the proposed updates to the collective bargaining agreement. Following six months of negotiations, Senior Assistant Business Manager Mike Freeman led the meeting, walking members through the details of the negotiated changes. After the presentation, 67 members cast their votes and, with a 95% yes vote, ratified a new three-year contract.



Local 1 retirees Dave Cooper, Steve Pivinski, Larry Palazzolo, Ron Embry, Matt Lampe, Dan Kelly, Jim Schario and Bob Muckler helping out at the Black Madonna Shrine.

The negotiating committee also included Senior Assistant Business Manager Jim Collins and Business Representatives Lisa Sims and Mike Keating. Local 15 President Chris Riser would like to thank all involved in the negotiations and said, “We are a strong and united local, and we will win contracts that support the hard-working, middle-class members of Local 15!”

This strong vote of support reflects members’ confidence in the contract improvements and the continued commitment to ensure fair wages, benefits and working conditions. Local 15 SSG members stood united throughout the negotiations to ensure that the best possible contract was achieved.

Brad Gritt, Bus. Rep.

Local 47 at the 2025 Kansas City Lineman’s Rodeo

L.U. 47 (lctt,mo,o,u&uow), DIAMOND BAR, CA — Greetings, brothers and sisters. Business Manager/Financial Secretary Colin Lavin and our local congratulate the Sturgeon Electric team for taking first place overall and first in the journeyman contractor division of the 2025 Kansas City Lineman’s Rodeo!

- Southern California Edison — The first meeting with the newly organized senior specialist vegetation management group was Sept. 26. Three Barstow journeymen received reinstatement and back pay. In the discharge of Catalina Plant mechanic Justin Hernandez, the parties reached an agreement prior to arbitration with the grievant electing to take a cash settlement of \$95,000. Still awaiting the decision from Arbitrator Katherine Harris in the discharge of Tehachapi e-crew foreman Erik Kross. Awaiting the decision in the discharge of Manuel Guerrero from Arbitrator Ken Perea.
- Bear Valley — Bargaining continues.



Congratulations to Local 47 and Sturgeon Electric’s team for taking first overall and first in the journeyman contractor division! From left, Paul Salgado, Business Manager Colin Lavin, Enoc Verdin, Daniel Jameson, Joe Maynes, Steve Lekvold and Raul Guardado.

- City of Riverside — Members ratified both supervisory and utility contracts.
- City of Orange — Members at the Water Department and Public Works Department turned down last, best and final offer.
- Trabuco Canyon Water District — Negotiations continue.
- Irvine Ranch Water District — Approved a new five-year agreement.

We are sad to report the deaths of Ruben Briones Sr., Vladimir Lemus and Mark Walker. Our condolences and prayers are with their loved ones.

Work safe and buy union!

Mitch Smith, P.S.

Carl Edwards, Raymond Eller, Susan Gibson, Doug Glosser, Lloyd Hurst, Wanda Lowery, Mark Master-son, Jacob McMillan, Doug O’Neill, Glenn Payne, Edward Ruhrop Sr., Michael Schowalter, John H. Smith, Scott Soberg, David Staff, Howard Staffy and Robert Wolfe. Continue to keep these members’ families in your thoughts.

Happy New Year! We wish you all health, happiness and prosperity in 2026.

Karlene Knisley, Bus. Rep.

Local 71 Moves to New Office, Marks Major Milestone

L.U. 71 (lctt,o&rtb), COLUMBUS, OH — After 17 years in Grove City, our local has moved into a larger, more modern facility at 2280 Citygate Drive. The local’s former home at 3403 Farm Bank Way served our members well since 2008, when membership stood at just under 1,000. But with membership now exceeding 3,300, the need for a larger and more advanced space became clear.

Vice President Dirk Dozer and Business Representative Jake Hostetler led the effort to find the

Verizon to Acquire Frontier

L.U. 51 (catv,lctt,o,ptc,rtb,t,u&uow), SPRINGFIELD, IL — The purchase of Frontier by Verizon Communications is expected to be complete in the first quarter of 2026. The deal’s closing is subject to regulatory approvals, which are ongoing, though the companies have received approval from the Federal Communications Commission and several state public utilities commissions.

Transmission work is picking up. MISO 2.1 projects will be awarded and grow over the next few months. Our line clearance tree-trimming work is still strong.

As of this writing, members we lost in 2025 include Lana Bender, Jan Blank, Steve Blazaitis, Larry Boughton, Michael Brice, Fred Brown, Susan Coldon, Marsha Cooper,



Local 71’s new office at 2280 Citygate Drive, Columbus, Ohio.

Submitting Local Lines Articles

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

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

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

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.

ideal location to meet the local's growing needs. The new facility offers 7,600 square feet of space, with plans for a major expansion that will increase the total footprint to more than 30,000 square feet.

Local 71 took ownership of the new building earlier this summer. After some remodeling and upgrading, done entirely by Columbus-area union trades, the local officially opened its new doors Oct. 10.

Groundbreaking for the planned addition is expected in the spring, with completion anticipated later this year. The expansion will include a dedicated meeting hall, training facilities and merchandise storage, with space to host member events and gatherings. The new facility will also feature solar-powered electricity, EV charging stations and other state-of-the-art technological advancements to increase efficiency, sustainability and long-term savings.

"This project is about our membership," said Business Manager Todd Kessler. "Being centrally located in the heart of Ohio, where Local 71 represents workers across much of the state, ensures this new facility will serve our members well for years to come."

The move represents more than just a change of address. It's a testament to the growth, innovation and future of Local 71.

James Roessner, R.S.



International President Kenneth W. Cooper speaking at the September Local 99 meeting.

Making History at Local 99

L.U. 99 (govt&i), PROVIDENCE, RI — September was an eventful, historic month for Providence's IBEW local. Fourth-year apprentice Sidney Jablonski had the privilege of introducing AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler at the Tradeswomen Build Nations conference in front of an audience of 6,000 attendees.

Before the monthly meeting Sept. 22, a federal judge ruled that construction on the Revolution Wind project could resume just three hours after Thomas Kilday, a fourth-year apprentice from Local 99, spoke at the hearing. This project had been halted by a stop-work order in August when the job was nearly 80% complete. The project is intended to supply clean power to Rhode Island and Connecticut and work resumed that same week. For more about this project, read the October Electrical Worker cover story, "Buried at Sea."

International President Kenneth W. Cooper, Second District International Vice President Michael P. Monahan and other international representatives were present for the Sept. 22 union meeting. This was the first time in Local 99's history that an international president visited the union hall and attended a meeting. There were 27 apprentices sworn in who had the privilege of being personally congratulated by International President Cooper himself.

Sidney Jablonski, P.S.

Local 103's Fall Highlights

L.U. 103 (cs,i&ptc), BOSTON, MA — On Oct. 28, our local proudly swore in 220 new apprentices and construction wiremen, marking a significant milestone for the union and the future of skilled labor. This ceremony brought together not only the new members but also their friends and family to celebrate the start of their careers.

On Nov. 9, a beautiful fall day, 1,500 members of Local 103 and their families gathered at Gillette Stadium for an unforgettable experience. Hundreds ran across the six-time Super Bowl champions' home field, throwing footballs, all gearing up for the New England Patriots to take on the Tampa Bay Buccaneers, the air filled with excitement.

This gathering underscored the importance of family within the IBEW community. With loved ones by their side, Local 103 members were able to relax and connect with one another outside their work environments. It was a perfect opportunity to strengthen bonds, share stories and enjoy the company of fellow union members. And to top it off, the Patriots won!

James Fleming, P.S.

Local 125, Klickitat PUD Commit to Code of Excellence

L.U. 125 (lctt,o,t,u&ptc), PORTLAND, OR — In early 2025, our local and Klickitat Public Utility District made a commitment during collective bargaining based on the Code of Excellence and uniquely tailored to the values of both parties. What made this partnership exceptional was that it was born out of the ashes of a difficult and stressful relationship that had not served anyone well. The leadership of the county PUD and Local 125 knew something had to change, so we committed to building our relationship and regained trust in each other. The vision focused not on what work gets done but how work gets done.

With that in mind, the parties built commitment declarations around key values and set about training every employee and commissioner at Klickitat PUD. It's a choice we have committed to together to ensure that everyone has a terrific place to work. Klickitat PUD and Local 125's ability to look beyond our differences, realize the importance of working together and build a stronger relationship is refreshing in our industry. The outcome of our commitment will benefit IBEW members, employees and the communities served by Klickitat PUD.

Travis Eri, B.M./F.S.



Local 125 and Klickitat Public Utility District.

Help Received for Local 141 Flood Victims

L.U. 141 (ees,i,o&u), WHEELING, WV — Greetings, brothers and sisters. Work remains a bit slow in our local, with 46 members on Book 1. We anticipate a few projects to kick off in early to mid-2026 that should get us well into Book 2.

Local 141 would like to extend its gratitude to the IBEW Unity Fund, which helped our members and their families get back into their homes through generous donations after devastating flash flooding hit several neighborhoods in June. This fund, along with other donations of money, materials and many hours of labor have helped our affected members rebuild their homes and their lives.

Our local is saddened to report the passing of retired members E. George Miller and Harry V. Yahn III in October 2025. These brothers will be dearly missed.

Kurt "Bug" Reed, P.S.



Local 237 participates in the third annual Russ Quarantello Memorial Golf Tournament.

Celebrating Russ Quarantello

L.U. 237 (i), NIAGARA FALLS, NY — Merry Christmas and Happy New Year, brothers and sisters!

The work outlook within our jurisdiction is strong and should remain so throughout the winter. With large projects such as Amazon and the Lake Mariner Data Center, we've relied on travelers to fill calls. Local 237 would like to thank all those brothers and sisters helping us to staff these jobs and others.

Local 237 hosted a special event, the third annual Russ Quarantello Memorial Golf

Tournament, last summer. Russ was a longtime member, former business manager, loving father and exemplary union brother who epitomized giving the shirt off your back when others are in need.

The event took place July 20 at Hyde Park Golf Course in Niagara Falls, raising \$12,000 for the Local 237 Sick Committee. None of this would have been possible without Dianne, Annina, Chris and the rest of the Quarantello family, who worked tirelessly to organize the event. Local 237 would like to express much gratitude to them, the donors and participants, Hyde Park Golf Course, and all of the volunteers.

The 2026 Local 237 dinner dance will be at Antonio's Banquet Hall on Saturday, Feb. 28. Be sure to get your tickets ahead of time, and as always, call the hall for additional information.

Have a safe and prosperous new year.

Brandon Lum, P.S.



Local 269's Brother Mike Wright receives the Knights of Labor Award from Mercer County Labor Council President Michelle Liebtig.

Michael Wright Receives Labor Award

L.U. 269 (i&o), TRENTON, NJ — This fall did not result in any significant snowfall in our area. However, there was a flurry of activity in and around our union hall.

At the October meeting, the newly minted journeymen and -women of the class of 2025 were sworn in in front of the membership. We wish them the best as they move forward in their lives and their careers.

In the November election, the get-out-the-vote effort cranked up and produced outstanding results: Labor-friendly candidates won crucial seats across New Jersey, including the new governor-elect, Mikie Sherrill, and a pickup of five Assembly seats at the state Capitol. Congratulations to all who worked so hard in helping New Jersey choose democracy over despotism!

Finally, we would like to congratulate our own Brother Michael Wright for receiving the annual Knights of Labor Award presented by the Mercer County Central Labor Council at its yearly dinner. Mike, an executive board and Labor Council member, was recognized for his hard work, dedication and unwavering commitment to the labor movement. One would be hard-pressed to find a more deserving recipient.

Brian Jacoppo, P.S.

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LOCAL LINES



Local 309's 70-year member Arlen Juergens and Business Manager Chris Hankins.

Events, Service Connect Local 309 Members With Community

L.U. 309 (i,lctt,mo,mt,o,rt,spa&u), COLLINSVILLE, IL — RENEW hosted its first mouse-races fundraiser this year, kicking off an exciting calendar of events. Local 309 proudly sponsored a NASCAR team at the World Wide Technology Raceway and hosted the sixth annual Union Sportsmen's Alliance dinner and our local's annual 50-year dinner, where we honored 70-year member Arlen Juergens.

Families enjoyed the annual breakfast-with-Santa event, bringing joy to the youngest members of our union. Late in the year, our Labor-Management Cooperation Committee partnered with the Make-A-Wish Foundation to build a house for the charity. Local 309 remains committed to its members and the community.

In the summer, Local 309 settled the inside contract with a 20% raise over four years and the communications contract with a 16% raise over three years. On the legislative front, the IBEW in Illinois is still fighting to end the moratorium on new nuclear power, including support for small modular reactors at data centers. We also successfully lobbied for stronger project labor agreement requirements on community solar projects.

Looking ahead, the work outlook remains strong. With projects on the horizon, we expect to double 2022's hours in 2025 and see positive conditions for the next 12 to 18 months.

Carlos S. Perez, A.B.M.

Local 313 Attends Vocational School Open Houses

L.U. 313 (i&spa), WILMINGTON, DE — In November, our local represented the IBEW at open houses for New Castle County vocational students at Delcastle, Hodgson and St. Georges technical high schools. Thank you to Brothers Joe Borgia, Pat Dembkowski, Brandon Kirilin, Eddie Lesniczak, Sean Lewis, Matt Mullins, David Rholetter and Joe Woerner for volunteering at the open houses where they once went to high school.



Brother Chris Panico's classroom at Delcastle Technical High School, which hosted Local 313 for an open house.

Also, a special thanks to Delcastle electrical trades instructor Chris Panico and his students for hosting our members in his classroom. They spoke to multiple parents and upcoming students about Local 313's apprenticeship opportunities.

David Rholetter, P.S.

Changes on the Horizon

L.U. 343 (i,spa&st), LE SUEUR, MN — Happy New Year, brothers and sisters! May the 2026 work picture be as plentiful and profitable as 2025. Rumors of data centers and utility-scale solar sites and the fact that the Mayo Clinic is investing billions of dollars in its Minnesota and other locations are reason enough to be optimistic.

And while rumors don't put money in our pockets, a good contract will. When the hall asks you for input or involvement, do your part and take positive action to improve our wages, benefits and working conditions. Stay updated and informed as the negotiation planning progresses.

As some see the sun setting on their careers, it becomes evident how much the trade has changed. Tools, work methods, materials and job expectations continue to evolve. Terms like "check pool," "want book," "wiggy," "plumb bob," "hot box" and "contractor-supplied 12-inch 32 TPI hack-saw blade" are foreign to most under 30.

How we perform our craft as union wiremen may change. What doesn't change is providing eight hours' work for eight hours' pay in a journeyman-like manner. Brother Matt Goretzki's simple advice to his sons before their first job rings true to all new workers: "Show up, shut up and keep up."

Buy Made in USA for 2026.

Tom Small, P.S.

Stronger Together at Local 357

L.U. 357 (c,i,mt&se), LAS VEGAS, NV — When the weather finally begins to cool in Las Vegas, activities at Local 357 really ramp up!

This year, we kicked things off at the end of July with our first-ever IGNITE Knowledge workshop, where members participated in interactive games and discussions focused on leadership and professional growth.

In September, we took part in the Pahrump Fall Festival Parade for the first time. With the theme "Out of This World," our group proudly leaned into the Area-15 spirit, bringing energy, creativity and IBEW pride to the community.

October was filled with activity, which is no surprise because it's one of the best times of year to be outside. We held our annual picnic, one of our largest gatherings, at Floyd Lamb Park, bringing members and families together for a day of food, connection and fun. We also participated in the College of Southern Nevada's Construction Career Day, where students explored hands-on

electrical activities and learned about apprenticeship opportunities. And of course, we hosted a festive Halloween party, complete with costumes and trick-or-treating.

Then, we wrapped up the fall in November with our 24th annual Gary Pitts Golf Tournament, benefiting the Children's Foundation of Las Vegas.

These events are successful because of the members who make them happen — we are stronger together, in every season.

Julie-Ann Peebles, P.S.



During the IGNITE Knowledge Workshop, Local 357 members Lee Richey and Eugene Catanzaro teamed up to build a safe egg-drop container, one working without the use of his hands, the other without sight.

Local 379 Shows Up Big at Veterans Day Parade

L.U. 379 (i,o,rtb&lctt), CHARLOTTE, NC — Greetings from the Queen City! In a state with low market share, we may be hamstrung, but we persevere. Our Veterans Committee worked hard to coordinate our participation in the Charlotte Veterans Day Parade for the second straight year.

Veterans Committee President Brian Kauer was proud to have doubled our attendance at the parade and hopes to see participation grow in future years. Brian comes from San Jose, Calif., Local 332 and experienced a culture shift in a new city where people didn't know much about the union. Under his leadership, the Local 379 Veterans Committee is working to change that while helping our veteran community.

Thank you to all who have served. We are forever indebted for your service to our country.

Melissa Reyes, P.S.



Local 379 veterans participating in the Charlotte Veterans Day Parade.

Changes Afoot at Local 429

L.U. 429 (em,i,lctt,o,ptc,rtb&u), NASHVILLE, TN — Our hall is now represented by Business Manager Jeremy Butler, President Mark Poole, Vice President Laura Looch and Treasurer Brentin Nichols. Our new recording secretary is Sam Moseley. Needless to say, changes are afoot.

We are launching a new monthly magazine for our members called The Henry Miller. We encourage all our members to contribute their thoughts, ideas and artwork to the magazine. We are sending out direct texts and emails to our membership to keep them informed of what is happening with this project.

Additionally, we are exploring avenues to help apprentices with book costs and increasing member participation in local events, meetings and volunteer opportunities.

At the time of this writing, we are planning a food drive for those hit the hardest with interruptions to SNAP benefits.

We remain concerned about and are actively resisting the push to privatize the TVA, which is a critical employer for the IBEW and other unions.

We are excited about Modular Power Systems and its future impact on our local. MPS, in Mount Juliet, needs more than 400 workers and is slated to run full speed ahead for at least 10 years. Rosendin Holdings owns MPS, and Rosendin Electric is the subcontractor.

Finally, Local 429 wishes all IBEW brothers and sisters a wonderful holiday season!

Laura Looch, P.S.

'Please Just Stay'

L.U. 449 (catv,em,i,o,rtb,rt,spa,u&mt), POCATELLO, ID — September is Suicide Prevention Month. "Please Just Stay" is an initiative founded in Pocatello by the Coroner Torey Danner and a mother who lost her child to suicide.

We should remember that every day is Suicide Prevention Day, and we should be checking on one another's mental health every day. If you see something that is concerning, please say something. Start a conversation, and if there is a crisis, help your brother or sister. Be the light in the darkness for those who are suffering.

Talking with a therapist does not make you weak. It takes great courage to talk to someone and say, "I need help."

I want to thank Local 449 and Business Manager Clay Hinning for allowing me to put up the "Please Just Stay" sign in front of our building. I feel strongly about this movement as a survivor of suicide loss. I want us all to remember that tomorrow needs everyone. We all have something to contribute. There is hope in the darkness. We all need to look after one another.

If anyone is in crisis, #988 will help you. You can speak to trained volunteers who can help and give you resources in your community.

Brandie Weaver, Office Manager



Local 449 supports suicide awareness and prevention and the "Please Just Stay" initiative with signage at the union hall.

HAVE YOU MOVED?
Notify us of an address change

ibew.org/change-of-address or call 202-728-6225



Local 483, in partnership with Northwest Line JATC and Clover Park Technical College, celebrated the groundbreaking for the VOLTA North Campus pole yard.

VOLTA Groundbreaking in Tacoma

L.U. 483 (catv,lctt,o&u), TACOMA, WA — Our local, in partnership with the Northwest Line JATC and Clover Park Technical College, recently celebrated the groundbreaking for the VOLTA North Campus pole yard.

Bringing the NW Line JATC VOLTA linemen pre-apprenticeship to the Tacoma area represents more than a year of effort by all parties involved. This campus will provide three classes per year of roughly 30 students. In recognition of the new campus, Local 483's executive board has established a scholarship to cover the cost of tuition and tools for a local candidate, enabling a person of financial need to start their journey in the trades.

We would like to thank Lakeview Light & Power for providing workers and equipment to help in the groundbreaking ceremony.

Byron Allen, B.M.

Local 601 at the RENEW/NextGen Conference

L.U. 601 (i&rtb), CHAMPAIGN-URBANA, IL — The biennial International RENEW/NextGen Conference was held once again, this time in Portland, Ore. Local 601's RENEW Committee participated with more than 550 members forging a path as the next generation of electrical workers. We even met our former business manager turned international representative, Jarrett Clem, at the event. See the December Electrical Worker cover story for more on the conference and the work that RENEW and NextGen do.

In presentations and workshops, RENEW members learned about everything that makes our locals tick and what we can do to make them better. Our adversaries and our strengths were laid out to show who is on the side of labor and who is not.

One of the best moments of the conference was being invited into the home of hosting Local 48. Its RENEW Committee threw a "RENEW-bilee" at its newly remodeled hall, filled with food,

drinks, coin swapping and swag purchases.

Every RENEW and NextGen member has dreamed of having an event with such attendance in our own halls. It served as an inspiration to us all, and we hope that the next hosting local's RENEW or NextGen committee will be able to share its story on the main stage. We can't wait until 2027 for the next one!

At the time of this writing we have 39 on Book 1 and 16 on Book 2. We have slowed down a little bit, but calls continue to come in. Signing the out-of-work lists requires you to sign in person or a fax/email from your home local.

Luther Baker, P.S.

Local 617 Spotlights 2025

L.U. 617 (c,i,mo&st), SAN MATEO, CA — Happy New Year! I would like to thank the membership, officers and staff for volunteering, attending, participating and getting involved in all of Local 617's 2025 events. Reflecting on the last year, we are grateful for the festivities and celebrations that strengthened our community, highlighted the power of solidarity, and proved that unionism has a positive impact on and off the jobsite.

Our calendar was busy as families participated in offshore fishing charters, day-at-the-range clay shooting, motorcycle club rides, benefits fairs, veterans' events, EWMC days of service, the 51st annual local summer picnic, Halloween haunted hall, Harvest Fall Festival, ALS Walk and Ride, golf and softball tournaments, T-shirt art contest, EWMC poker and bowling tournaments, union nights at various sporting events, Local 617 Retirees' Club luncheons, health and wellness challenges, and the children's holiday party and train display.

A huge shoutout to the Local 617 Journeyman Wiremen Motorcycle Cub, which raised over \$53,000 for the Pediatric Brain Tumor Foundation during the 2025 Northern California Ride for Kids campaign. The Local 617 JWMC is the top contributor in the nation, and we couldn't be more proud.

We rolled out a new benefit administered by Trust & Will, an online will-based and trust-based

estate planning platform that will help our families secure their legacies and ensure that their wishes are respected. We are also happy to announce the continuation of our health and wellness program, which provides extra support and tools for our members and their families to live happily and healthfully.

Looking forward to the new year and new ways to support our brothers and sisters.

Scott Wein, B.M./F.S.

Local 915 Outreach, Historic Contract Win, Special Election

L.U. 915 (i&mt), TAMPA, FL — In August, our local's Women's Committee held the first Power Through Connections outreach event, aimed at showing young women that a valuable career and path to the middle class can be found in the trades and the IBEW. The event successfully introduced participants to opportunities in our union.

A few weeks later, RENEW members spent a Saturday afternoon volunteering at the Dancing Goat, a local charity and goat farm. Our members tackled much-needed repairs that the owner was not able to make herself. Both events exemplified how Local 915 members continue to get out into the community and build meaningful relationships with our neighbors. These efforts strengthen our union's visibility and demonstrate the skills our members bring to every job.

In September, Local 915 ratified a new three-year contract that sets a high water mark for our local. The agreement delivers annual raises of 4.75%, 4.5% and 4.5%. Additionally, water treatment work will now be compensated at our full industrial scale.

This means journeymen working at water treatment plants will receive the largest raise in the history of our local. The negotiating team, led by Business Manager Randall King, included Barnett Barrett, Jonathan Fielder, Zach Gazzana, Fernando Mondragon, Brian Nathan and Steve Sutton.

Finally, a special election will be held to fill the vacancy in Florida State Senate District 14. The only candidate is Local 915 member Brian Nathan. If you live in Senate District 14, please verify that you are registered to vote. If you plan to vote by mail, ensure that your ballot request has been submitted. This is an opportunity to elect a union brother who understands our issues.

Brian Nathan, A.B.M.

Won't You Take Me Down to IBEW Avenue!

L.U. 1205 (em,govt,i,u&ptc), GAINESVILLE, FL — Happy New Year to all brothers and sisters of the IBEW!

Local 1205 has much to celebrate as we mark our 85th anniversary. The city of Gainesville has designated Northwest 25th Avenue, next to the hall, as IBEW Avenue. This honor was made possible through the leadership of our president, Brother James Ingle, and his campaign for city commissioner. It's proof that when union members step up, we can make meaningful change. Consider getting involved in local office to see what is possible.

This past year, we also put several out-of-work apprentices back on the job by involving them in upgrades at the hall. They installed outdoor power for a future pole barn, cleaned the roof, power-washed the grill/smoker and upgraded the oven. Investing in our space and our members was another great way to celebrate our anniversary. Thanks to all apprentices involved!

To kick off the new year, Local 1205 is sending delegates to the Working Families Lobby Corps in Tallahassee to represent labor as the legislative session begins. The fight for workers' rights is ongoing, and so is our commitment to the cause.

In brotherhood, everyone wins.

Nicholas Mangoni, P.S.

96% of Local 1347 Trained in PAL

L.U. 1347 (ees,em,u&ptc), CINCINNATI, OH — Nothing feels better than local union leadership recognizing the dedication and commitment of our members.

We're proud to share that 96% of our members successfully completed PAL — Politics, Activism & Livelihood — training, an outstanding accomplishment worth celebrating. During our recent union meeting, we took time to honor this achievement and share the evening with those who made it possible.

When asked why they were proud of this milestone, one member shared: "Because we were asked by our business manager to complete it, and we wanted to reach a high completion level — not for a trophy or recognition, but because it was something requested of us, and we got it done."

Local 1347 continues to grow — not only in numbers, but in education, participation and unity.

Andrew Kirk, B.M.



Local 1347 reaches 96% for PAL training.

Get Involved; Understand the Facts

L.U. 1579 (i&o), AUGUSTA, GA — Brothers and sisters, I hope you all are enjoying a happy and prosperous new year. Work around the country remains bountiful for the time being. Things in Augusta, however, are pretty much status quo, and with the long government shutdown, we were hit pretty hard at Savannah River Site with layoffs and possible furloughs.

I hope you all think very hard about which politicians to support, and I can only hope you are picking labor-friendly candidates. Our members need to remember those politicians who still received a paycheck while you and your brothers and sisters were shut out. Most of them are the same who habitually vote against your very existence. Get involved, and understand the facts. Our way of life is being threatened daily.

"True ignorance is not the absence of knowledge, but the refusal to acquire it." — Karl Popper

Mike Greene, Pres.



From left, Local 601 RENEW President Luther Baker, RENEW Recording Secretary Caleb Smith, International Representative Jarrett Clem, RENEW member-at-large Jacob McGee, RENEW Vice President Wyatt Jones and Assistant Business Manager Jordan Mueller at the International RENEW/NextGen Conference.

In Memoriam

LocalSurname	Date of Death	LocalSurname	Date of Death	LocalSurname	Date of Death	LocalSurname	Date of Death	LocalSurname	Date of Death	LocalSurname	Date of Death
1 Boese, R. W.	9/19/25	58 Petterson, T. J.	5/30/25	252 Moffitt, N. T.	4/5/25	424 Springler, R. D.	9/9/25	613 Hallmark, A. A.	5/29/25	1141 Gilleland, R. K.	9/28/25
1 Dintleman, R. J.	8/27/25	66 McClanahan, J. F.	8/17/25	269 Krapf, L. R.	10/15/25	424 Walton, P. J.	9/21/25	617 Fuata, D. A.	10/31/24	1141 Wells, R. W.	10/5/25
1 Fowler, P. D.	8/15/25	68 Greenmyer, A.	5/15/25	275 Kilgore, A. C.	9/25/25	424 White, J. A.	6/10/25	640 Griffin, J. L.	10/15/24	1186 Chibana, B. R.	8/27/25
1 Freihoff, C. A.	10/25/25	73 Colley, L. N.	7/1/25	280 Hamilton, K. W.	10/10/25	424 Zasada, L. S.	4/24/23	654 Tart, T. C.	9/14/25	1186 Goda, T. M.	7/26/24
1 Howard, D. H.	10/10/25	73 Wells, R. A.	5/9/25	291 Cabral, C. L.	8/11/25	428 Elrod, J. D.	9/28/25	659 Earl, L. J.	6/12/25	1186 Oskins, J. E.	10/22/24
1 Whitney, A. T.	9/2/24	77 Erga, M.	6/12/25	292 Domke, E. R.	10/13/25	429 Burton, F. L.	9/1/25	659 Lindbloom, W. E.	7/19/25	1205 Wegner, R. H.	10/16/25
3 Aguilar, P. F.	9/5/25	77 Street, S. J.	10/9/25	292 Jacobson, W. L.	8/29/25	429 Logan, M. T.	12/28/24	659 Watson, R.	10/18/25	1245 George, R. A.	5/6/25
3 Andersen, W. G.	12/22/24	77 Young, T. L.	9/22/25	292 Labandz, R. J.	8/26/25	429 Rogers, A. I.	10/8/25	666 Kimble, C. K.	10/8/25	1249 Blackman, R. D.	10/2/25
3 Bellask, D. N.	10/22/25	81 Bideganeta, V. J.	10/5/25	292 Phaneuf, D. R.	9/12/25	440 Clarici, G. L.	2/16/25	666 Meek, J. A.	8/6/25	1249 Winterhalt, J. J.	11/11/22
3 Berman, R. J.	10/24/25	82 Copley, T. E.	10/5/25	294 Wilson, R. G.	8/18/25	441 Blackburn, W. E.	8/8/25	673 Frye, D. G.	9/21/25	1253 Dauphinee, P. P.	9/12/25
3 Corniffe, H. M.	8/31/25	82 Holdeman, J. B.	7/30/25	295 Holladay, S. L.	10/8/25	443 Shell, J. T.	10/17/25	684 Quezada, A.	9/20/25	1253 Smith, T. K.	5/20/23
3 Cutler, G.	10/13/25	82 Powell, P.	10/10/25	301 Oliver, E. F.	9/6/25	456 Billy, C. A.	9/11/25	697 Reuter, C. J.	9/4/25	1289 Sliwinski, T.	10/16/25
3 Faraci, R. A.	10/27/22	84 Bartlett, M. L.	9/30/25	302 Hastings, J. H.	9/15/25	465 Kovack, K. P.	8/5/25	700 Wright, J. W.	10/13/25	1316 Davis, A. D.	10/10/25
3 Francis, C. C.	8/21/25	86 Quataert, P. E.	5/4/25	302 Jackman, R. D.	7/23/25	474 Malone, K. L.	9/23/25	701 Smid, H. A.	10/6/25	1393 Gardiner, R. W.	8/2/25
3 Gibbs, S. A.	1/26/24	96 Durkin, W. P.	9/1/25	307 Keiling, F. A.	10/27/25	477 Correale, A. B.	6/11/25	701 Sommerfeld, M. A.	8/18/25	1426 Aubuchon, J. C.	3/24/25
3 Hannon, J. J.	7/31/22	96 Rice, J. A.	8/17/25	307 Shoup, J. R.	9/19/25	479 Gouthier, W. N.	10/8/25	702 Johnson, Z. Q.	10/19/25	1426 Gylten, D. E.	9/26/25
3 Ioannides, J.	7/2/25	98 Distefano, R. C.	9/21/25	309 Pruit, L. A.	10/3/25	479 Lowe, D. G.	9/3/25	712 Zreliak, A. G.	10/8/25	1547 Ohnemus, I. J.	10/20/21
3 Kilpatrick, T. A.	10/5/25	98 Dorn, C. M.	9/27/25	313 George, D. L.	10/20/25	479 Sparks, J. D.	5/30/25	714 Geltel, L. J.	7/31/25	1687 Fawcett, J. W.	10/22/25
3 Moore, R. P.	10/14/25	98 Jagla, W. J.	10/8/25	313 Miller, P. H.	10/16/25	480 Baldwin, R. D.	9/12/25	716 Campsen, G. E.	10/4/25	1928 Penny, R. R.	9/28/25
3 Olsen, P. F.	10/6/25	98 Reedinger, J. D.	9/22/25	322 Holcomb, E.	10/13/25	480 King, H. C.	7/5/25	716 Carlson, M. J.	5/19/25	1988 Young, R. H.	6/5/24
3 Schmidt, R. V.	8/23/25	98 Scheetz, R. D.	9/18/25	340 Martin, T. A.	7/7/25	481 Gendron, M. L.	10/11/25	716 Miller, M. F.	10/11/25	2330 Cleary, K. J.	10/5/25
3 Senzatimore, J. A.	9/28/25	98 Tonuci, A. G.	10/11/25	340 Paschke, C. E.	7/10/25	490 Larocque, G. W.	10/17/25	716 Vargas, A. J.	9/27/25	2330 Oake, A. J.	8/31/25
3 Sutton, M. J.	9/2/25	102 Petrignani, C. A.	10/17/25	347 Holloway, W. L.	9/17/25	499 Smith, W. J.	9/23/25	716 Yanez, D. F.	8/1/25	I.O. (5) Kronenwetter, D. C.	7/24/25
3 Vezza, E.	10/14/25	103 McLaughlin, J. J.	10/14/25	347 Steinke, J. D.	10/31/25	505 Betts, J. R.	8/4/24	728 Bell, P.	9/28/25	I.O. (5) Malecki, P. J.	7/6/25
3 Yatzyshyn, G. J.	10/15/25	103 Shine, R. F.	10/8/25	349 Gulledge, H. S.	5/13/25	505 Smith, B. J.	6/6/25	728 O'Brien, M. W.	4/15/25	I.O. (8) Beckmann, K. B.	10/13/25
3 Yurgel, M.	10/11/25	105 Cullen, A. B.	8/27/25	349 Jackson, B. W.	9/12/25	508 Nipper, J. R.	10/7/25	743 Bohrman, J. R.	9/29/25	I.O. (12) Guarienti, R.	9/28/25
5 Bell, B. T.	6/23/25	105 Pietron, M.	9/24/25	351 Garwood, E. F.	4/15/25	520 Moore, J. W.	9/3/25	756 Gibbs, S. E.	10/28/25	I.O. (12) Thompson, K. F.	9/12/25
5 Karpan, P. M.	9/23/25	110 Armstrong, V. J.	7/11/25	351 Hunt, G. M.	10/8/25	531 Ryan, S. R.	9/1/25	760 Goans, H. E.	9/4/25	I.O. (46) Lane, J. A.	8/15/25
5 Stockberger, D. E.	12/22/24	110 Blank, J. B.	6/8/25	351 Mc Connell, R. R.	10/19/25	540 Houmard, R. A.	10/8/25	760 Madgett, D. W.	10/15/25	I.O. (134) Hansen, I. J.	10/13/25
6 Luo, X.	8/15/25	111 Luttrell, C. C.	10/11/25	353 Garrett, R. N.	10/1/25	553 Fontana, M. A.	10/6/25	760 Storey, J. W.	10/27/25	I.O. (163) Smith, R. G.	10/19/25
8 Caldwell, K. D.	7/12/25	112 Bainter, G. W.	3/5/25	353 Jurkovic, E.	10/2/25	567 Dufour, L. R.	7/5/25	768 McCaskill, K. W.	9/25/25	I.O. (340) Heatherly, B. R.	6/29/25
9 Shipley, J. R.	10/16/25	112 Kerr, G. A.	10/20/25	353 Kask, E. B.	10/9/25	568 Brissette, M.	1/28/25	776 Conlon, P. J.	8/26/25	I.O. (575) Hurless, G. A.	10/6/25
11 Adkins, C. J.	7/23/25	124 Brucker, S. M.	7/18/25	353 Kyte, L. E.	10/8/25	568 Melancon, R.	10/26/25	776 DeLoach, K. M.	9/18/25	I.O. (799) Stidham, L. D.	9/25/25
11 Blanchard, P. J.	8/21/25	124 Clark, R. D.	5/8/25	353 Mather, S.	9/4/25	569 Brandon, J. R.	9/13/25	804 Steinman, J. L.	10/12/25	I.O. (1066) Wingard, J. W.	8/21/25
11 Fyke, S. T.	9/30/25	125 Jarrell, B. O.	12/12/24	353 Pavlakos, P.	7/19/25	569 Jones, E. L.	10/6/25	852 Horn, L. D.	10/7/25	I.O. (1191) Wilson, M. H.	3/22/25
11 Litvinoff, R. E.	9/6/25	125 Pruitt, A.	1/31/25	354 Elkins, J. W.	10/15/25	569 Kozachenko, K. A.	9/16/25	852 Ross, R. M.	11/4/25	Pens. (I.O) Brandt, L. W.	8/4/25
11 Loera, F.	10/20/25	130 Moran, M. P.	8/31/25	354 Moss, D.	10/22/25	570 Schmitt, J. P.	9/17/25	855 Duncan, G. S.	9/29/25	Pens. (I.O) Cook, E. L.	12/9/24
13 Rappenecker, D. A.	4/4/24	134 Addyman, J. R.	4/7/22	357 Makarewicz, W. G.	8/18/25	573 Keeling, W. G.	10/5/23	855 Gilmore, R. L.	7/25/25	Pens. (I.O) Loffredo, S. P.	10/4/25
16 Sampson, J. L.	11/6/25	134 Berlin, T. H.	7/10/25	357 Santos, R. E.	10/2/25	586 Johnston, E. J.	10/17/25	861 Cron, R. E.	8/9/25	Pens. (I.O) Long, R. R.	10/5/25
16 Snooks, G. L.	8/7/25	134 Braun, W. J.	7/3/25	369 Christian, M. R.	9/18/25	586 Lamarre, G.	9/10/25	876 Johnson, W. H.	9/25/25	Pens. (I.O) Morehouse, C. M.	11/2/23
16 Underwood, J. W.	11/2/25	134 Brock, R. E.	10/20/25	369 Doty, C. A.	9/17/25	586 Mercier, P. G.	11/8/25	876 Rantanen, J. A.	10/20/25	Pens. (I.O) Oldham, B. L.	12/24/24
17 Begley, M. L.	8/28/25	134 Carlson, W. E.	7/2/25	369 Kinney, T. I.	4/6/25	595 Evans, M.	7/8/21	903 Marthaler, W. C.	10/5/25	Pens. (I.O) Raymond, H. R.	19/20/25
18 Lewis, E. R.	6/10/25	134 Cooper, D.	10/7/25	369 Sweat, M. L.	8/9/25	595 Harrison, W. D.	9/19/25	915 Vadnais, J. R.	8/30/25	Pens. (I.O) Rosone, R. J.	10/3/25
20 Gargis, T. E.	8/25/25	134 Dorans, E. M.	9/26/25	387 Martin, R. V.	4/3/25	595 Hatten, H.	10/5/25	932 Jolley, D. E.	9/15/25	Pens. (I.O) Sauve, P. S.	10/3/25
20 Schroeder, J. L.	9/20/25	134 Elliott, R. F.	10/1/25	400 Rodriguez, J. J.	8/19/25	595 Risso, N. D.	7/31/23	953 Kohlmeyer, L. L.	10/8/25		
22 Miller, D. H.	10/13/25	134 Gregoria, J. D.	10/13/25	401 Vestbie, N. M.	9/8/25	596 Smith, B. L.	9/29/25	958 Varner, C. N.	10/7/25		
22 Schneiderwind, J. R.	9/16/25	134 Jaeger, J. F.	10/25/25	405 Hager, D. K.	3/21/25	602 Bryant, B. B.	8/30/25	972 Nau, C. F.	10/4/25		
22 Watson, N. E.	12/2/24	134 Lichte, M. G.	10/13/25	413 Romero, P. J.	1/5/25	611 Turner, G. R.	12/6/24	993 Hollett, T.	5/29/25		
22 Wilson, K. E.	9/24/25	134 Nallen, J.	2/21/25	424 Abrams, M. D.	8/7/25	613 Burns, F. D.	10/5/25	995 Tomes, R. F.	11/23/23		
25 Pagliaro, J.	10/5/25	134 Nuernberg, W.	9/12/25	424 Costello, W. J.	9/27/25	613 Driver, R. C.	10/27/25	1105 Combess, T.	10/3/25		
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25 Spilberg, C. M.	7/7/25	134 Parker, K. J.	10/10/25								
26 Little, J. H.	9/15/25	134 Quick, W. C.	9/30/25								
26 Ward, J. M.	8/31/25	134 Skowron, R. M.	9/26/25								
34 Vogel, G. R.	9/26/25	134 Stine, W. J.	10/23/25								
38 McCarthy, A. A.	10/8/25	136 Geisen, J. R.	9/27/25								
38 Peluso, C. J.	9/29/25	139 Wheeler, D. L.	9/14/25								
38 Schanda, K. G.	10/5/25	145 Sloan, J. W.	7/29/25								
41 Borowicz, C. P.	10/25/25	146 Wisner, D. W.	9/24/25								
41 Peters, C. N.	5/11/25	153 Hall, T.	9/27/25								
41 Stumpf, J. R.	10/10/25	158 Horcher, G. T.	10/9/25								
42 Parks, D. H.	10/9/25	159 Statz, D. D.	9/16/25								
43 Collins, H. L.	9/16/25	164 Johnson, N. J.	11/5/25								
46 Gursli, R.	8/18/25	164 Lutkins, R. D.	10/24/25								
48 Cowan, E. D.	10/11/25	164 Scialabbo, F. J.	10/14/25								
48 Elsenbaumer, J. T.	9/6/23	175 Hunt, B. A.	10/13/25								
48 Emmons, G. D.	10/1/25	175 Mason, C. E.	10/25/25								
48 Fairchild, M. H.	10/4/25	175 Middlebrooks, B. C.	10/15/25								
48 Mathews, R. D.	8/14/25	175 White, H. R.	9/17/25								
48 Morgan, M. I.	9/6/25	176 Charvat, J. M.	9/5/25								
48 Petty, G. L.	5/7/25	176 Martin, D. T.	10/7/25								
48 Rigert, E. H.	10/17/25	177 Blair, G. L.	9/14/25								
48 Warren, T. M.	4/23/25	177 Burdges, J. F.	8/4/25								
48 Watts, S. A.	5/12/24	177 Fowler, L. P.	10/8/25								
51 Dyott, J. E.	6/27/23	180 Carriker, R. D.	9/4/25								
57 Crockett, R. D.	4/17/25	180 Gainer, J. O.	6/8/23								
57 Littleford, M. K.	8/20/25	194 Lubberts, A. C.	7/16/25								
57 MacNeil, W. J.	7/5/25	212 Gerke, C. A.	9/23/25								
57 Savage, G. R.	12/3/24	212 Glardon, R. W.	10/18/25								
58 Beaupre, L.	10/8/25	212 Huffman, P. A.	9/25/25								
58 Gebauer, K. R.	10/11/25	223 Higgins, B. L.	10/4/25								
58 Kottfica, G. A.	9/5/25	229 Reese, G. L.	4/7/25								
58 Machleit, E.	9/30/25	233 Faulkner, A. L.	10/14/25								
58 Oakes, R. T.	2/19/25	238 Monteith, G. M.	1/17/24								
58 Perry, J. A.	9/16/25	245 Woodward, J. D.	8/30/25								



IBEW POCKET KNIFE \$30.00
3.13" satin polished, 1045 stainless steel blade with 4.5" wooden handle. Folding liner lock with nylon washers and pocket clip. Features laser engraved fist and bolts along with IBEW Initials.



THERMO LINED JACKET \$130.00
12-ounce, 100% ring-spun cotton brown duck with 100% polyester thermal lining. Attached thermal lined hood with adjustable drawstring. Two large front pockets and two inside pockets. IBEW initials with fist and lightning bolts embroidered on left chest.



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

www.ibewmerchandise.com

This list shows members for whom PBF death claims were approved in November 2025. ■

GROUND^{ED} IN HISTORY

'The Union Who Fought for Democracy'

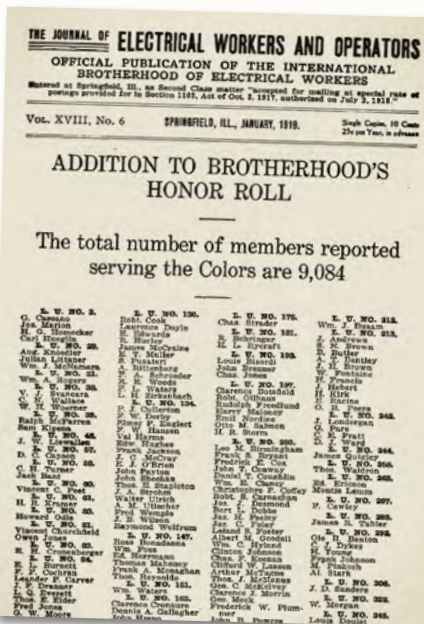
In November, the IBEW introduced the Veterans Challenge Coin, not only as a way to honor our members who served in the military but also to strengthen camaraderie among veterans. To get yours, scan the QR code alongside this article.

This tradition has deep roots in IBEW history. Over a century ago, a similar coin was made for our members serving in World War I.

In 1918, the IBEW began publishing an Honor Roll in every issue of *The Electrical Worker* listing members from Canada and the United States who went overseas to fight. The lists were grouped by local union and compiled from honorary withdrawal cards that were issued to enlisted members. According to the lists, approximately 9,000 IBEW members, or 10% of the membership at the time, served in World War I.

Hoping to honor these members with something more than a card, Dayton, Ohio, Local 82 created an Honor Coin, details of which were announced in a full-page ad in the October 1918 issue of *The Electrical Worker*. It read: "Our boys are now getting into the thick of the fight, and many will be killed, wounded and made prisoners. This coin will go a long way to keep up the spirit of our Brothers and be a constant reminder of the boys in the Local back home who have not forgotten [them]."

The coin featured an eagle on the front and the IBEW seal on the back along with space for inscribing a member's name and local. The coins were offered in bronze or with a silver finish and were priced at \$1 apiece, with cheaper rates available if purchased in bulk. The ad recommended that a hole be drilled at the top of the coin so it could



The Electrical Worker started publishing an Honor Roll in every issue to recognize IBEW members who served in World War I.

be worn as a necklace. In the days before dog tags, this would provide identification in case of an accident or death.

The ad concluded: "Our members and their relatives will no doubt keep these coins for many years, passing them from generation to generation, keeping the IBEW in the minds of the people as the union who fought for democracy."

There is no record of how many coins were distributed. But, incredibly, one of them was

VETERANS:
SCAN THE QR
CODE to have
the new Veterans
Challenge Coin
sent to you free of charge.



unearthed in November 2025 in Tacoma, Wash. While searching an old dump site for vintage glass bottles, Connor Wiley from Local 302 of the International Union of Operating Engineers stumbled upon an IBEW Honor Coin buried in the mud.

"I've been hunting old relics for six years now and this was the first coin of any interest I've found," Wiley said. "I posted it on a subreddit for the IBEW, and it got over 40,000 views. As a fellow union member, finding this coin meant a ton to me." As a token of his appreciation for that history, Wiley donated the coin to Tacoma Local 76.

"Being able to connect to this era of history is very personal for me," said Clint Bryson, business manager of Local 76. "My great-grandfather served in France during World War I and lost both his legs. His son, my grandfather, really had to step up for his family. He was the first to become an IBEW member, which completely changed our family's history and opportunities. My father, brother and I are all Local 76 inside wiremen."

As for the coin, Bryson is planning to display it at the hall once it has been restored. "We have plans to display more of our historical items, and the coin will certainly be a part of that. We're thinking of making a frame that can be rotated so both sides can be seen, along with a nice copy of the 1918 article."

Unfortunately, the line on the coin for the member's name is left blank, so we'll never know who it was meant for. According to the Honor Lists printed in *The Electrical Worker*, there were 12 men from Local 76 who fought overseas in this war: Oscar E. Anderson, L.T. Collier, Oney Cross, Gus Eide, Jos. E. Harvlee, C.C. Humphrey, Fred Johnson, Merle Leedy, C.C. Snyder, Fred C. Stevens, John Sullivan and Ed Williamson.

In any case, the coin's recovery and restoration will bring a renewed sense of appreciation to the members of Local 76 and a reminder that the IBEW has always honored brothers and sisters who serve. For the good of the union, and for the good of our two great nations. ■



International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers

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

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HOW TO REACH US

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.

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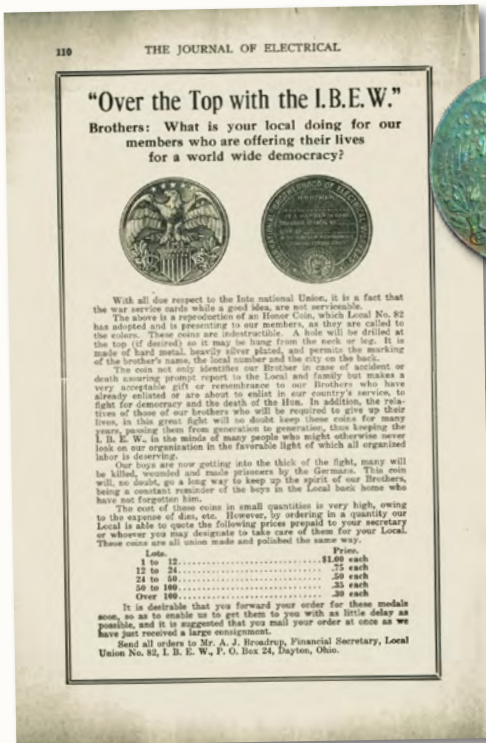
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The above World War I honor coin was found in a dump in Tacoma, Wash., and donated to Tacoma Local 76. At left is an ad for the coin, which locals could buy for members who served.

Visit ibew.org/our-history-museum for more on how to support the IBEW's preservation of its history. Have an idea for this feature? Send it to Curtis_Bateman@ibew.org.

WHO WE ARE

Newcomers, Incumbents Bring IBEW Voices to Local and State Offices

The tidal wave of pro-worker victories in U.S. elections last November and earlier included the IBEW's own first-time candidates and seasoned officeholders winning races for town councils, school boards, utility boards and more, including two Assembly seats in New Jersey. "I'm so proud of our members' public service, which is critical to our fight for IBEW jobs and values," International President Kenneth W. Cooper said, pointing out that thousands more offices are up for grabs in the U.S. and Canada in 2026. "We'd love to see some of your names on those ballots. But you can still make a huge difference by supporting and voting for pro-union candidates." Below, meet three of the IBEW's 2025 winners.

Stephen Nowicki

Buffalo, N.Y., Local 41 | Town Council, Cheektowaga, N.Y.

With a repaving project stalled on his own road and public works decaying all over town, Stephen Nowicki decided to stop complaining to elected leaders and run for office himself.

On Nov. 4, the journeyman wireman was part of a worker-friendly sweep in the Buffalo suburb of Cheektowaga, ousting incumbent Town Council members who were dragging their feet on urgent, job-creating projects.

"They were going in circles, spinning their wheels," Nowicki said. "I started voicing my opinion, telling them that there are things we have to get done."

Then he realized that his financial security as an IBEW member gave him the opportunity to do more than attend council meetings.

"I finally got to a good spot in my life," said Nowicki, 29, who joined Local 41 a year after high school. "I had a house. I had a dog. I got married. We don't have debt. Everything kind of fell into place, and that freed me to get involved in local politics. And I thought I'd do a good job at it."

Last spring, he filed to run for one of four council seats on November's ballot in Cheektowaga, population 90,000. In August, he began knocking on doors, putting his building trades expertise front and center.

"I had so much fun on the campaign trail," he said. "The council's failure to act on infrastructure made it so easy. All of it goes back to the 1950s and '60s. Everything needs improvement."

"The biggest thing I sold people on was: 'Look at how expensive it is to fix things in your home. Have you ever seen a project get cheaper the longer you wait? Apply that to our roads and our sewers.'"

Nowicki believes he can be fiscally prudent as a councilman while also advocating for union labor — not only the long-term benefits of top-quality construction but savings at the front end from well-managed union jobsites.

He credits his win in large part to Local 41's support, from volunteers to PAC donations. Business Manager Greg



Inglut said it "was all Stephen," citing his energetic campaign and how thoroughly he prepared to run.

"We couldn't be more excited," Inglut said. "We spend a lot of time with politicians attempting to educate them about what's important to us and what our values are. Stephen knows our values and lives them."

Nowicki urges IBEW members interested in public office to "go for it" and not worry too much about the details.

"The rest of the stuff, like financing, you can find along the way," he said. "Your friends, your family, your union, they want to see you succeed. They'll be there to support you, and new people will reach out. If you have it in your heart where you believe you can make change for the better, that's really all you need." ■

Naomi Hewitt

Anchorage, Alaska, Local 1547 | Fairbanks School Board

Naomi Hewitt's values took root in a union household in southern Illinois and were nourished by a superb public education.

Those influences converged last year as she ran for and won a seat on the Fairbanks North Star Borough School Board, which covers more than 7,000 square miles in central Alaska.

The daughter of a mine worker and granddaughter of a West Frankfurt, Ill., Local 702 power plant worker, Hewitt didn't immediately follow them into the trades. Instead, she earned a forestry degree and moved to Alaska.

Five years later, a friend in statewide Local 1547 nudged her into an apprenticeship. "He didn't just get me into the IBEW. He pushed me to come to meetings and be involved," said Hewitt, now a business representative.

In spring 2025, with a 3-year-old son and mounting concerns about education in Alaska, Hewitt attended her state's AFL-CIO labor candidate school. Flush with inspiration, a nuts-and-bolts

toolkit and her local's enthusiastic support, she was ready to run.

"Being active in the IBEW, I'd helped with a lot of campaigns, phone banking and knocking doors. But I'd never done it this way, never so personally," Hewitt said.

She talked to voters about defined-benefit pensions to attract and keep the kind of teachers she'd had, strengthening pre-apprenticeship and technical programs in Alaska's trade-heavy interior, and fallout from short-sighted board decisions.

"About a year ago, they voted to outsource the nighttime custodial staff," Hewitt said. "Instead of 75 good, union jobs, there are now fewer people doing more work for fewer benefits."

She is a staunch advocate for retirement security, an issue the Legislature is revisiting 20 years after replacing guaranteed public pensions with 401(k) plans.

"Alaska's the only state in the union that doesn't have pensions for our public servants," she said. "Being



IBEW, you absolutely know the value of that. I saw it with my own grandpa."

Hewitt's school board service began shortly after her victory in October, when Alaska holds local elections. She said labor had lots to celebrate, with past or present union members also winning Fairbanks City Council and Borough Assembly seats.

Their success brings a powerful worker-friendly voice to the region's public policies and practices. "Either you sit in the back seat and watch things happen or you get in the driver's seat and steer the bus," Hewitt said. ■

Ritch Kurtenbach

Waterloo, Iowa, Local 288 | Black Hawk County Board of Supervisors

From salting nonunion jobsites to bargaining contracts and lobbying politicians, Ritch Kurtenbach knows a thing or two about persuading people.

Today, those skills are helping him fight for workers and good, union jobs as a member of the Black Hawk County Board of Supervisors in northeastern Iowa.

A past business manager and organizer at Waterloo Local 288, Kurtenbach proudly touted his union bona fides in a special-election race last January.

His campaign website stated,

high up: "Ritch emphasizes his practical and hands-on perspective, shaped by his 45 years as an IBEW member and 28 years as a labor leader."

He applauds all pro-union candidates but distinguishes them from union members themselves who run for office.

"We have a lot of good Democrats who support labor and working families," Kurtenbach said. "But they don't know the intricate details when it comes to things like misclassification of workers and other union and worker-rights issues."

The son of an IBEW wireman, Kurtenbach began his apprenticeship during the recession and farm crisis of the early 1980s.

"It was the worst time I could have started a construction career," he said. Two years into his training, he was unemployed for nine months. He hit the road, working as an electrician and welder on everything from Texas high rises to a Florida movie studio to nuclear plants in multiple states.

Decades later, he sees potential for a small nuclear plant in his region's clean energy future, part of his broad push for investing in quality union-built projects.

"In 28 years as a union rep, I tried to educate the public sector — school boards, city councils — that union jobs



make sense, that union quality is good public policy and that's in the better interests of taxpayers," he said.

Toward that end, he wants the county to require contractors to attest to manpower, labor law violations and other specifics via a post-bid questionnaire. Businesses deemed unreliable could be rejected no matter how low their bid.

Kurtenbach likens his mission on the board to his covert days on non-union worksites.

"I believe in the IBEW so much that sometimes you've got to go to those places where people are against you in order to educate them," he said. "In organizing, you have to do something on the inside to make things flourish. The same is true in politics." ■

715 and Counting...

The IBEW knows of 715 members and retirees in elected and appointed offices across the United States, some of them holding multiple positions. We know there are more. If you're an officeholder or know of a brother or sister who is, please let us know by scanning the QR code or emailing governmentaffairs@ibew.org.



BY THE NUMBERS:

1 member, U.S. House of Representatives	113 city and town councilors/aldermen
38 state legislators	35 mayors
121 county legislators	58 school board members
519 appointees to councils, boards and commissions	