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IBEW News

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**FROM TRACK TO STADIUM,
BROADCAST MEMBERS BRING YOU
THE BIGGEST MOMENTS**

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The Super Bowl. The Daytona 500. The Final Four. The Masters. The World Series. If you're lucky, maybe once in your life you go there in person and see an event like this for yourself.

But most of us, most of the time, see it through someone else's eyes and hear it through someone else's ears.

For at least 85 years, at the most important sporting events, those eyes are IBEW cameramen and those ears are IBEW audio techs.

This month, we are highlighting some of the stories of the people who are always there and allow us to be there, too.

"I am extremely grateful for the work every member of the IBEW does. We keep the light and heat on, build hospitals, keep our telecommunication system up and running. What our news and sports broadcast members do is just as critical, and we are without question the coolest branch of the IBEW," said Broadcast and Telecommunications Director Robert Prunn. "For millions and



millions of people, some of their happiest moments and best memories are from games where every sound and image is the product of our hands."

The Broadcast Department has three national agreements with CBS, Fox Sports and PGA Tour Entertainment and a fourth national unit — organized this winter — that is in negotiations for its first contract.

Washington, D.C., Local 1200; New York Local 1212; Hollywood, Calif., Local 45; and Chicago Local 1220 are signatory to all three national agreements. A fifth broadcast local, St. Louis Local 4, is signatory to Fox Sports and PGA Tour Entertainment.

But there are 59 other locals with the broadcast classification in their charter, and the IBEW

has 231 other non-national contracts at local television, radio and streaming services, handling everything from local TV news to "The Late Show."

The 2025 Super Bowl was the most-watched broadcast in television history. Nearly 130 million people watched in the U.S. alone.

It was Fox Sports' year to air the game, so it was IBEW members who made it happen.

They join a lineage that stretches back at least to 1932, when St. Louis Local 1 hired Thomas McLean as its radio worker organizer.

Over the last year, we've spoken to broadcast members working some of the most-watched sporting events about being there — at the World Series, the Indy 500, the NFC Championship and more.

We spoke to some of the best camera operators in the world, and we spoke to temporary "utilities," who have a normal job but on the weekend will run behind the cameras, "paging" — or corralling — cables. See some of their stories on pages 4 and 5.

BROADCAST SPORTS continued on page 4

FROM THE OFFICERS

Seizing the Moment



Kenneth W. Cooper
International President

Every day seems to bring changing and contradictory economic news. But for the IBEW, the most important economic indicator isn't the Dow Jones Industrial Average. It's work on the ground. And as we will talk about at this month's Construction and Maintenance conference, right now there is plenty to go around.

Across North America, we're seeing a surge of new construction investments. Customers are looking to spend more than \$2 trillion on nearly 20,000 projects.

Utilities are looking to spend \$1.4 trillion on the grid over the next five years, planning to expand power capacity and add additional battery storage.

And even as the Trump administration canceled renewable projects and pulled back funding from the Inflation Reduction Act, the industry continues to take an all-of-the-above approach to energy — investing in solar, wind, natural gas and nuclear, as well as clean coal — to meet growing customer demand.

For the energy industry, "all of the above" isn't about politics. It's about common sense: tapping every available resource and investing in the most advanced energy technologies are how the United States and Canada can maintain their economic edge.

And AI continues to fuel a data center boom, which is creating IBEW work across the continent while forging partnerships with major tech firms like Google and Microsoft to support our training programs to help them meet their workforce demands.

Not every jurisdiction is seeing this level of work. But demand is hotter than ever in many others, and we need to make sure we're pursuing every opportunity.

Since becoming international president, I have been saying the IBEW's No. 1 challenge is to target and staff these projects. This moment is a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity to build back market share to levels not seen in five decades.

And that means organizing harder than ever. Last year, we organized more than 27,000 workers — the IBEW's best year since 1969. And we're doing even better this year.

Right now, we have more journeyman wiremen, linemen and apprentices than at any time in IBEW history. But meeting this moment means we have to keep breaking records, because we can't do the work without the workers.

That's why I have worked to develop new organizing and growth tools to help each district and local meet their targets.

These include four-year apprenticeships, which get workers on the jobsite faster than ever; the 12,000-hour rule, which gives us the ability to organize every worker in the electrical industry; and organizing plans for every district.

If someone is doing electrical work, then they belong in the IBEW. Period.

That's the only way to ensure that we've got the workforce needed to fill jobs and grow market share.

Because if we're not doing the work, you'd better believe the nonunion competition is.

The labor movement in the United States and Canada is on the move, and the IBEW is leading the way.

Let's seize this moment and continue to organize as we power a brighter future for every working person. ■

A Growing Movement

The labor movement is growing, sisters and brothers, and the IBEW is helping to lead the way.

That's according to new data released in February by the Bureau of Labor Statistics, which showed 463,000 new workers represented by union contracts in 2025.

The growth brings the percentage of wage and salary workers in the U.S. who belong to a union to 11.2%, the highest it's been in 16 years.

Now, I don't have to tell you that 11.2% is still way too low. At the IBEW, we're working hard to do our part, organizing new members faster than we have in half a century.

There's an enormous amount of work out there for IBEW members, but there's also an enormous appetite for the stability and protection of a union contract.

Nearly 70% of Americans support unions, and more than 50 million workers say they're ready to join one.

But we know what they're up against.

Labor laws protect workers only when they're enforced, and enforcement under this administration is nearly nonexistent. You can read more about that on page 6.

Union busters are emboldened to unleash vicious, often illegal, tactics to stop organizing movements in their tracks, because they know they have a National Labor Relations Board that will look the other way or — worse — back their underhanded tactics with new federal policy.

OSHA inspections and wage-and-hours enforcement actions are down dramatically under this administration.

State right-to-work laws continue to diminish union power by splitting groups of workers into members and non-members, pitting them against one another instead of uniting them against the corporations determined to pay them less.

Still, workers are responding by finding ways to form or join unions all over the U.S.

In fact, nearly half of all union growth came from states in the South, fueled by young workers who refuse to be deterred by their states' long and sometimes tortured history with union labor.

Even workers in the much-maligned public sector, who show up to do their jobs every day despite being regularly used as political punching bags, have seen the value in union membership. They're joining in droves to help combat near constant attacks on their contracts, their right to organize and even their very existence.

Working people aren't stupid, despite what the billionaire class might think. When they feel attacked, taken advantage of, priced out of their hopes and dreams, they respond by organizing and fighting back.

That fight is fueling our movement's growth, and the IBEW stands ready to fight right alongside all working families. ■



Paul A. Noble
International Secretary-Treasurer

My IBEW STORY

Richard Douglas, retired journeyman wireman/foreman
Washington, D.C., Local 26



“I graduated high school in 1972 in a small, blue-collar neighborhood where many of my neighbors were tradespeople working in the Washington, D.C., metro area. I chose to attend junior college and pursue studies in music. After all, it was the '70s!

Many of my good friends went straight into the trades after graduating high school. Local 26 was their choice, and they were happy with the

training, wages, benefits and brotherhood. After spending a couple of years at college, I realized that being an electrical apprentice was the better choice for me, too.

Over time, I did go back and finish my undergraduate degree in environmental management, and then I got my MBA. As part of my learning path, I took advantage of the journeyman classes the JATC offered and obtained electrical licenses in the tri-state area.

I had many good fortunes in my career, starting with the support of the union community, and I quickly moved from the residential to the commercial apprentice classification. I was mentored by many talented journeymen who kept me safe and taught me what it meant to be a union electrician.

After completing my apprenticeship, I spent the next 14 years as a fourth-year instructor while working full time as a journeyman and foreman. In the Washington metro area, contractors had an advantage, keeping people working while construction slowed around the country. There was always work because the federal government was there.

People in general don't appreciate that tradespeople show up every day, in every type of weather, working until the job is finished. As a Washington Building Congress Craftsman Awards judge, I witnessed the extraordinary talent our brothers and sisters have shown in overcoming obstacles in the field.

As a craftsman judge, I was able to get into places that the general public doesn't get to see. At the Kennedy Center, I remember an HVAC upgrade where tradespeople had to figure out how to distribute hot and cold water throughout the building while isolating all the vibration so it wouldn't resonate throughout the building. These weren't engineers. They were skilled craftsmen that knew how to do their work and overcome problems that came their way.

My biggest takeaway from judging a project was the pride and enthusiasm exhibited from the team who installed the work.

In another instance, I talked to a superintendent of a data center who had handled an enormous amount of work that had to be done on the rooftop. He said everyone was doubtful that he could get the work done, but he'd hired every crane within 100 miles to come out and lift all the equipment up onto the buildings over one weekend, and he got it done. It's this type of everyday problem-solving that demonstrates how to get 10 pounds of work into a five-pound bag.

Now that I am at the end of my career, what I remember most is the camaraderie, respect and pride of my brothers and sisters in their work. We need to stay the course as we have a president who is stripping us of our rights and doesn't believe in making our country stronger through alternative energy and acknowledging the contribution of the unions.

We can't underestimate the power of having representation for our wages, health and welfare benefits. Stay strong, look to the future, and support the unions.”

Share your story at ibew.org/MyIBEWStory





Tennessee Local Keeping Members at Home With Modular Jobs

Prefab Work in Climate-Controlled 'Construction Worker's Dream'



Credit: All photos by Shawn Whitehead, Rosendin.

Members of Nashville, Tenn., Local 429 were pleased when Modular Power Solutions told the local last year that it needed to add 400 IBEW electricians to help staff its new prefabrication facility in Mount Juliet.

They were ecstatic, though, when the company recently asked for 1,000 more.

"It's hard to overstate what a big deal this is," said Local 429 Business Manager Jeremy Butler. "It's one of the most exciting things that's happened for us in this local in a while."

At the 12½-acre MPS facility east of Nashville, scores of Local 429 members have already been hard at work building the plug-and-play components used in eastern U.S. data center and cell tower customers.

Locals in Tennessee and the other states in the IBEW's Tenth District, which also covers Arkansas and the Carolinas, have been gearing up to meet the growing demand for such components over the last several years. This has been spurred by a forward-thinking prefab agreement negotiated between 17 of the district's inside construction locals and the NECA chapters in the district.

"A project like this one was something we'd been chasing for a long time," said Tenth District International Vice President Brent Hall. "We saw the writing on the wall, how prefab was going to take off. We had to get ahead of it or we would be in trouble."

Hall said the current agreement, which runs through 2028, aims to grow the IBEW's membership and market share by encouraging employers not only to establish prefab facilities in the Tenth District but also to use what those facilities make on projects throughout the district.

"What we're getting with MPS was the reason we did the agreement. It's really starting to pay off," said Hall, who

retired April 1. (See story on Page 12.)

Rosendin Holdings, which owns MPS, is staffing the Mount Juliet facility through its Rosendin Electric subsidiary, an IBEW signatory.

"They're probably the Number 1 electrical customer in central Tennessee," said IBEW project leader Jeff "Moose" Henley, a third-generation Local 429 member.

Indeed, Tenth District International Representative Quentin Tanner noted that Rosendin has partnered with the IBEW on several other major projects in the district. Working with Hall and former Local 429 Business Manager Joel Brauchi, Tanner helped persuade MPS to set up shop in Mount Juliet.

"Joel and I traveled to Texas to tour facilities where they had ongoing work," Tanner said. "From there, we worked with the local and the contractor to decide how to make the prefab agreement work best for everyone."

At Mount Juliet, IBEW members are making a variety of components for use in high-profile, billion-dollar data centers, including transformers, voltage switches and electrical enclosures called "skids."

"We're building skids for one project that's going all across the country," said Henley, who recently transferred to Mount Juliet after a five-year stint with a Rosendin-managed data center project in Gallatin, Tenn. "They're for super-quick pop-up data centers under tents."

Henley, a Local 429 member since 1988, marveled at how quickly demand for prefab components from Mount Juliet has grown in his short time there.

"When I first started, it was, 'We've got three to five years of work,'" Henley said. "Now they're saying it's 10 years — and who knows what it's going to be a year from now, after all these projects keep rolling out."

Local 429's leaders have a multi-faceted strategy for handling the

staffing challenges to meet MPS's needs.

"There already are a lot of apprentices there, and there'll be more, plus a lot of CW/CEs," said Local 429 Vice President Laura Looch. "And you have to have journeyman wiremen to oversee all of that."

Strengthening efforts to organize the region's nonunion electrical workers will continue to be crucial, said Butler, who was elected business manager last July.

"The IBEW has had a mission from the very beginning to organize everyone in," he said. "The only way to get it done is one step at a time."

Looch said that Local 429's full-time inside construction organizers, Jeff Phillips and Bill Romero, are busily reaching out to qualified electricians throughout central Tennessee and that the International Office has pledged to assist the local with organizing as needed.

The steady, years-long work outlook at MPS also should help entice travelers to return home to Local 429, Looch said.

"In the past, we were kind of a

suitcase local — a lot of our people traveled," she said. "Some of them are only happy when they're on the road, but some really want to spend time back at their own house."

Perhaps just as enticing as the work, Hall said, is the workplace: a massive, climate-controlled building he described as "a construction worker's dream."

"You're not out in the weather, it's the same job every day, you have real bathrooms as well as a cafeteria," he said. "It's like working in a factory."

Tanner added that as MPS ramps up production in this building, Rosendin is buying another nearby to help handle future expansion needs.

To handle the training for a massive influx of prefab workers, Looch said, Rosendin recently hired Nashville Electrical JATC director Bobby Emery, a former Local 429 business manager, along with NEJATC Assistant Director Stephen Hall.

Henley said that quality, IBEW-based training is helping new hands adjust to this kind of work. "We have hires who are brand new to the trade

Electrical work can feel more like factory work at Modular Power Systems' facility in central Tennessee, where Nashville, Tenn., Local 429 needs hundreds of new members.

and now they're able to terminate a PTX," he said. "As they get more involved in the project, we'll welcome them to learn other, different things in the building."

The IBEW stands ready to meet MPS's staffing challenges head-on, Tanner said. "It's going to be a monumental task to meet the demand, but we're going to do it."

Butler predicts an ultimate win-win-win outcome for his fully employed, 2,400-member local, whose numerous other projects include work on a new stadium for the Tennessee Titans football team.

"With most construction projects, you work yourself out of a job," he said. "MPS is going to be around for a while, and I think it's going to be good for Rosendin, good for our workers and good for the union as a whole." ■



Apprentices, former travelers and electricians newly organized into Local 429 will all be needed to help these Modular Power Systems workers fully staff the company's modern, 12½-acre facility in Mount Juliet.



From Track to Stadium, Broadcast Members Bring You the Biggest Moments

▼ *Continued from page 1*

Behind the Broadcast

Broadly speaking, sports broadcast crews are a mix of techs and utilities.

Techs are the broadcast specialists. They have years of training and often decades of experience. IBEW brothers and sisters operate the cameras, the microphones and the editing software.

Other techs may have skills more familiar to our construction members. This is the army that swoops in with tons of equipment and wires and cables a temporary broadcast location the size of a stadium.

“Every Super Bowl, every World Series, every Masters — millions of people see the game, but nobody sees the hands that brought it to them. That’s the mark of our members’ skill. When the work is perfect, it’s invisible,” said Broadcast International Representative Neil Ambrosio.

“There is no algorithm that frames a walk-off home run. There is no software that knows when to hold on a quarterback’s face after a fourth-quarter interception, or how far to push the roar of the crowd after a game winning basket before pulling it back so you hear the call,” he added. “That instinct, built over thousands of games and decades of experience, belongs to our members. It’s what makes them elite in their craft.”

Within each category, there are sub-specialties. There are operators for robotic cameras; handheld sideline cameras; and Chapman carts, the motorized elevated camera carts that drive up and down the sidelines.

“The relationship we have with CBS, the PGA and Fox Sports, it rolls right into the contracts we are able to negotiate and the respect the members get on the job. It’s our job to make sure that our members are rewarded at the level their work deserves,” Prunn said. “Everything we have, everything in the contracts, everything in the length and strength of these relationships, is built on their exceptional skill,” he said.

Working beside and supporting the techs are the utilities, a catch-all term for the people who do whatever else needs to be done.

“Utilities do anything from running behind the cameraman paging cables at NFL games to holding monitors for on-track commentators to anything we need,” said Broadcast International Representative Vinny Butler.

When crewing utilities for a game broadcast, the IBEW looks locally. Prunn and Butler are happy to have more locals get involved to assist broadcast locals, particularly in new locations.

To increase the pool of potential utilities, each year Butler runs utility trainings at non-broadcast locals.

“If the local hasn’t done it before, I will come out with a CBS or Fox Sports production representative and an experienced utility and run a training. You will learn how to be a utility,” Butler said.

The training familiarizes people with the tasks they might be asked to do, where to stand, and how to recognize and handle the different kinds of the miles of cables — fiber, audio and coaxial — that make the broadcast possible.

“For our techs — the camera, sound and graphics operators — being at these big events is cool, but they are there because they are the best in the world and this is their job,” Prunn said. “The utility position is the front door into this industry. Your IBEW membership puts you in pit row at Daytona or walking the course with Scottie Scheffler — and if you want to build that into a career behind the camera, the path is right in front of you.” ■

“I love my job. When you take a picture and post it and you’re at the Super Bowl or the World Series, people write, ‘I wish I had your job.’

I’ve worked postseason baseball, the All-Star Game, the Final Four, a lot of golf in the summertime. A little football, too.

This year is my first Indy 500, and I was very excited. Me being into cars, it’s a thrill for me. This is one of the biggest places in the world you can watch a race or any sporting event. The place is huge: 2½-mile track and 250,000 people, and we have sets all around the stadium: the Snakepit, Turn 1, the podium and the Pagoda. It’s a challenge, and you adjust and adjust.

But it’s got good days and bad days. It sucks getting up at 4 a.m., hustling all day in the heat. It looks easy when I just post the picture, but man, it took a lot of skill to get here. It’s hard. We lose a lot of people who can’t take life on the road, but I wouldn’t change it. Hopefully I can keep leveling up.”

CHASE NORMAN

Washington, D.C.,
Local 1200



MARIO ZECCA

New York Local 1212

“I’ve been doing this for 33 years, and I started at the bottom, getting hot dogs and water for the guys.

To be honest with you, for 4½ hours on Sundays, this is the best job on the planet. I mean, I can’t imagine doing anything else.

I grew up watching these games every weekend. I would stay in front of the TV from 1 to 7 every Sunday. I watched every football game I could possibly watch, and now I am out here doing it.

They trust me to get shots that ... well, I won’t say no one else will get. I am looking for things no one else is looking for. I don’t have an assignment on the show. My assignment is the best picture. I don’t follow every play. If a guy fumbles the ball and ... I see that guy on the sideline, between every snap I will get on a shot of that guy on the bench to see his face, to see the emotion of what is going on within him.

That’s my job, to get the emotional shot.”



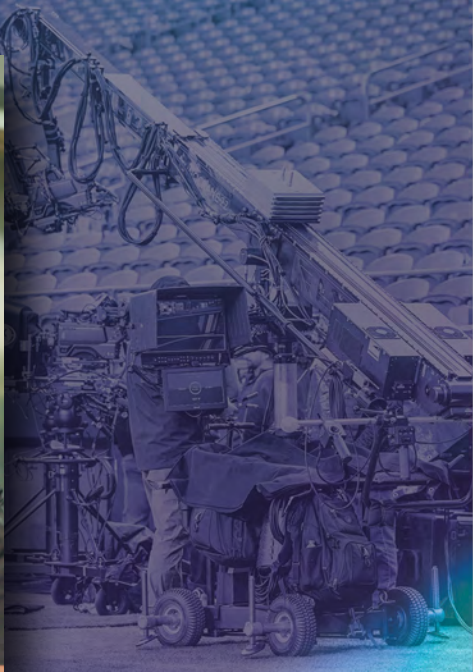
“Utilities have always been the backbone and the grease that make these shows work.

Leading up to the Indy 500 and before coming to Indiana, we had many weeks of online meetings with members of the track, the network, coming up with plans and ways to execute the plans.

We are the first on site to unload, prepare gear and run cables throughout the entire venue. My role is to facilitate the needs of the multiple studios, tech-wise, personnel-wise. Anything.”

LOU DERMILIO

New York
Local 1212



ELDON WHEELER

Indianapolis
Local 481

“I’m a utility on a part-time basis. The IBEW brings on local people, and you help Fox Sports however you can. At Indy, I walked with a commentator down by the racetrack holding a ‘jerk’ camera and a monitor for them to watch the race.

I don’t think people realize when they are watching an event on TV, especially an event of the size of the Indy 500, just the kind of coordination and equipment it takes. You can only imagine how many hours of manpower it will take to unplug this! You have cameras at every corner. Wires, cables. It’s something to behold watching it all come down. I’ve broken down NFL games. But this? You have a 2½-mile oval. It’s mind-boggling how many people it will take.”but I wouldn’t change it. Hopefully I can keep leveling up.”



BIG GAME, BIG CREW



Just like the athletes on the field, the best of the best cover the biggest events, and the biggest events get the largest crews.

For regular season, for example, the NFL ranks their games A to D.

An A game has the network’s top team of announcers, such as Tom Brady on a Fox Sports broadcast. It’s the game with playoff implications or big rivalries.

An A game will have a crew of 60 to 90 people, including utilities.

Meanwhile, a D game is likely mostly watched by fans of the teams and fantasy football players. That needs a crew of only 40 plus nine utilities.

But on the really big days, the numbers can be huge.

- ★ The **Daytona 500** has a **150-member crew**.
- ★ The **Masters** will use **250 to 300 people** for more than a week.
- ★ The **NCAA Division I Men’s Basketball Tournament** this year has at least **150 people** spread across all locations, leading up to **300 for the Final Four** in Indianapolis.

★ And the big daddy, the **Super Bowl**, will use at least **400 IBEW members** the next time CBS or Fox Sports hosts it in three years, Butler said. IBEW members crew all the shows around the event, including the studio pregame and postgame and halftime.

“This is my fourth or fifth World Series, and when you first do it, you do get that butterfly feeling before you go out. We have thousands of people that are actually here, millions more watching on TV. So, it’s kind of exciting to be right out there with the top athletes, the top cameramen, producers and directors. And I feel really happy and excited to be part of it.

A lot of times when you are not above the line, it’s easy to say ‘I’m just a utility’ or ‘I’m just a runner,’ but I believe that every job is equally important. There is an art and a science to everything that happens. A lot of people don’t realize how much happens, from pulling a cable to directing. So for me, where I come in, I do whatever it takes. It could be running thousands and thousands of feet of cable or hauling equipment around, holding lights or just ... waiting.

It’s cool to be so close to the action. I feel blessed to be part of that.”

JEN FRYE

New York
Local 1212



Trump Administration's Labor Law Enforcement All but Disappeared in 2025

Davis-Bacon Penalties Down 94% vs. Biden Years

Federal worker protection cases and penalties collapsed in the first year of the Trump administration, part of a greater project that is killing regulations that protect workers and then failing to punish companies that violate the laws that remain.

Between 2009 and 2024, the number of cases brought by the Wage and Hour Division of the Department of Labor and the Occupational Safety and Health Administration held steady at about 375 per month.

In the first nine months of the second Trump administration, wage violation cases plummeted by 98%, to only nine cases a month.

And as cases nearly disappeared, penalties assessed to violators plunged.

These details come from the Department of Labor's own statistics and were compiled in a report, "Worker Protections in Freefall," prepared by the nonprofit Good Jobs First.

"This was not a miraculous change of heart in the American managerial class that stealing our wages and damaging our bodies is wrong," said Government Affairs Director Dean Warsh. "Bad things don't stop happening when the sheriff quits. That's what they did. They closed their eyes and left the American worker to the wolves."

The physical and financial injuries the Wage and Hour Division should be on the lookout for are some of the most devastating crimes committed against working people.

Financially, at least \$19 billion is stolen from American workers every year by their employers, according to a 2019 study from the Economic Policy Institute.

That vastly exceeds all other kinds of theft — larceny, muggings, car thefts — combined.

Physically, out of a workforce of 165 million people, there are more than 3 million workplace-related injuries or deaths each year.

OSHA and the Wage and Hour Division were created to protect all workers from abuses that were simply common business practices in the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Knee-capping law enforcement invites a return of those dark days, Warsh said.

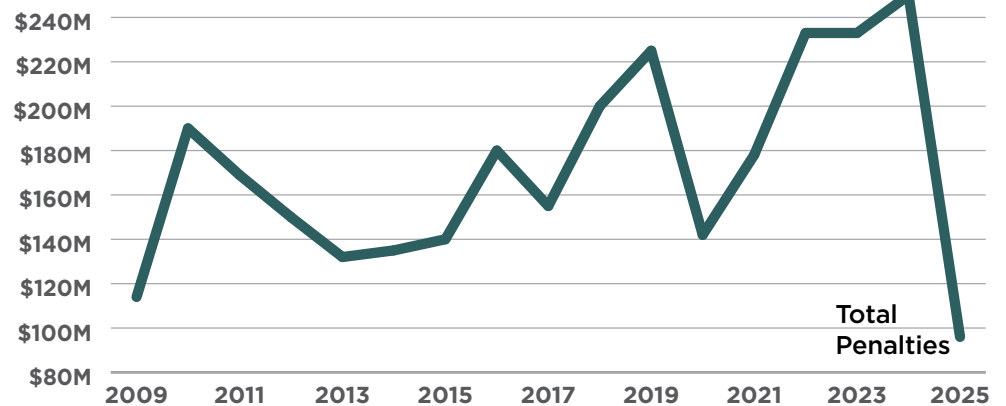
"The incidence of these attacks on working people hasn't dropped. Only the penalties have fallen," Warsh said. "The chance of getting caught was already too low. Since Trump's second inauguration, it's fallen to just about zero."

Some of the starkest collapses were in the areas of most interest to the IBEW's construction members. One of the union's critical tools to organize work is ensuring that the Department of Labor has accurate prevailing wage data.

Each year, business managers and international representatives spend hundreds of hours collecting and passing on wage information to the DOL to set wage standards for federal and federally funded construction projects covered by the Davis-Bacon Act.

The law was designed to keep publicly funded projects out of the hands of contractors that build low bids on underpaid, low-skilled and exploited workers. If a contractor can't win by lowballing labor costs, it has to compete on the quality of the work, and that's why the IBEW wins so many Davis-Bacon projects.

Occupational Safety and Health Administration Penalties since 2009



Penalty amounts for all years are from January through September (in constant dollars).

Source: Good Jobs First analysis of Department of Labor data

Wage and Hour Division's Average Monthly Penalty Totals by Presidential Term

Presidential Term	Average Monthly Penalties (in constant dollars)	Percent Decrease Under Trump 2.0
Obama	\$26,779,393	-95%
Trump 1.0	\$18,951,765	-93%
Biden	\$20,720,583	-94%
Trump 2.0	\$1,321,678	NA

At least \$19 billion is stolen from workers' wages each year, but penalties in the first year of Donald Trump's new administration have collapsed.

Source: Good Jobs First analysis of Department of Labor data

"Contractors that violate the Davis-Bacon Act are going to be the worst actors in our industry. They not only rip off their own workers, but they rip off the taxpaying public, pocket the premium for public projects and then lie about it," said International President Kenneth W. Cooper.

According to the Wage and Hour Division's statistics, the average penalties in the Obama administration for Davis-Bacon violations were about \$27 million per year. In the first Trump administration, penalties averaged about \$19 million. Under President Joe Biden, they averaged about \$21 million.

In 2025, they were only about \$1.3 million, which was down 95% from the Obama average, 94% from Biden and 93% from Trump's first administration.

The Trump administration's abandonment of working people is even worse than it looks because the starting point was already far too low. The DOL has been vastly underfunded and understaffed for decades.

The U.S. workforce has grown from about 107 million in 1980 to nearly 170 million in 2024, yet the DOL budget shrank in that time from \$119 billion to \$54.3 billion in real dollars.

The result is a cripplingly small force looking out for the interests of American workers. OSHA has one inspector for every 70,000 workers, while the Wage and Hour Division has one inspector for every 270,000.

Staffing for wage-and-hours enforcement is at the lowest level since the office was created, at only 611.

And it's about to get worse.

OSHA is slated to lose 12% of its already depleted inspection workforce, according to the Good Jobs First report, and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health, the workplace safety research agency that provides guidelines for OSHA, is facing an 80% cut in funding.

But reducing oversight, even this dramatically, is only half the story, said Construction and Maintenance Director Matt Paules.

"They are also slashing the laws that protect us from bad employers. They never hid it. They published a playbook — Project 2025. They are just doing what they said they would to kneecap labor protections," he said.

Since his inauguration, President Donald Trump's DOL has repealed at least 60 worker protections, including

stopping enforcing rules against misclassification of independent contractors, ending the practice of seeking liquidated damages — remedies beyond back wages — for harmed workers and waiving civil penalties for employers who self-report wage violations.

It also stopped fining companies for delayed or incomplete wage payments and revoked a rule that increased the prevailing wage floor for federal contractors.

One of the most consequential changes for construction workers was expanding the definition of "small employers" that qualify for lower penalty rates to include businesses with up to 25 employees.

Although the pace has slowed somewhat, Warsh said, the Trump administration has plans to weaken worker protections further.

Proposed changes include removing construction lighting safety requirements, as well as narrowing respirator guidelines for asbestos and eliminating mandatory medical evaluations for workers who use respirators while working with asbestos or other carcinogens.

Of particular concern, he said, is a proposal to change the General Duty Clause, a catch-all provision for safety

standards, to exclude activities that are "inseparable" from the work.

The change would limit the DOL's ability to cite employers for injuries in industries where injuries are "part of the job." At first, this would mostly mean entertainment and sports, but that's not the ultimate aim, Paules said.

"The big prize would be expanding beyond these industries to any so-called high-risk profession, and that's us square in the bomb sight," he said. "There will always be contractors who throw up their hands and say danger is just 'a part of our work.' What they mean is they would rather sacrifice a worker than a dollar of profit."

Finally, the DOL has proposed ending coordinated enforcement activities between the Wage and Hour Division and OSHA. In past administrations, the DOL discovered that companies that stole workers' wages were more likely to put their workers' safety at risk. Combining investigations made every scarce investigator more efficient.

"Workers will be cheated more, get hurt and die more. There will be fewer protections, fewer inspectors, and the ones that are left will be less effective," Paules said. ■

Business Manager Educates Senators on Trump's Attack on Power Projects

In a hearing room in Washington, a business manager from New Mexico explained to nearly a dozen senators how killing energy generation projects is sending utility bills through the roof while freezing out union workers.

Albuquerque, N.M., Local 611's Alfonso "Fonze" Martinez testified Jan. 29 as part of a Senate Energy and Natural Resources Committee roundtable on rising energy costs.

Of particular concern to Martinez is the more than 500 generation projects that have been stalled or killed by the Trump administration since it took office in 2025.

"Already, my local union has seen the Kit Carson battery storage project in Taos canceled by this administration's Department of Energy, putting over 60 of my members out of work, as well as millions of dollars for the PNM virtual power plant project being frozen for purely political reasons," he said. "I'm left asking, 'For what? What are we killing these projects for?'"

"Killing new generation won't stop the big energy users from growing."

—Local 611 Business Manager Alfonso "Fonze" Martinez

For Martinez, the real damage isn't just the lost new generation. It's the loss of the labor protections that were built into the Inflation Reduction Act and then repealed by the president. Renewables projects are still being built. They are just going nonunion.

"With the president's 'big, beautiful bill' rolling back clean energy tax credits and with the Trump administration canceling hundreds of billions in energy projects, the opportunities in these sectors will dry up for union members," he said.

Martinez was joined in the roundtable by a small-town mayor from New York; the owner of a Maine heat pump installation company; energy efficiency advocates; and Patrick Crowley, president of the Rhode Island AFL-CIO.

While other people focused on the cost of power, Crowley, like Martinez, spoke for the lost jobs, specifically about the present and future jobs killed in the president's inexplicable war on offshore wind.

President Donald Trump's most recent effort to kill the Providence, R.I., Local 99 project Revolution Wind was once again defeated in court, but Crowley said the prolonged uncertainty is killing an industry and raising utility bills for customers.



Albuquerque, N.M., Local 611 Business Manager Alfonso "Fonze" Martinez (far right) testified before a packed Senate hearing about the jobs lost when the Trump administration killed hundreds of generation projects.

"Trump put a 'closed for business' sign on the Northeast coast," Crowley said. "These developers have opportunities in other parts of the world. By sowing confusion, it will force them to look elsewhere. That leaves us

out in the cold."

Martinez accepted that, like most of the IBEW, unemployment right now is low. But, he said, business managers don't have the luxury of thinking that tomorrow will look just like today.

"What this means for our local, on top of putting folks directly out of work, is that a steady pipeline of highly skilled workers can't be built without project certainty," he said.

For Crowley, renewables generation

offers an answer to one of the hardest questions faced by anyone recruiting new people into the trades.

"To have a job from January 1 to December 31 is a luxury. This is not common in our industry, especially in New England, where winter shutdowns are frequent. The renewable energy sector was providing long-term job stability," Crowley said.

Proposals from the panel included requirements that data centers source energy by funding a massive, nationwide expansion of grid enhancements, mass residential solar, batteries and efficiency, siting reforms, time-of-day pricing, and virtual power plants.

What none suggested was continuing a policy where every generation project has to be approved personally by Interior Secretary Doug Burgum and where the richest companies in the world bid against working families for power.

"Killing new generation won't stop the big energy users from growing. And we don't want to stop growth," Martinez said. "We want to build to meet that new demand. But if we don't build more generation, the data centers have the money to pay higher rates. We won't. Our neighbors won't." ■

New NLRB Attacking Historic Gains for Workers Under Biden-Era Board

After 10 months without a quorum at the National Labor Relations Board, a new 2-1 pro-employer majority has its eye out for cases they can use to undo precedents set by the previous board during four years of historic progress for workers and unions.

High on the board's hit list are the 2023 Cemex decision, which makes it harder for employers to interfere with organizing drives, and a 2024 ruling that banned captive-audience meetings. The pair of rulings stripped union-busting bosses of some of their most potent weapons.

But the backpedaling at the NLRB isn't limited to board decisions. Policy memos issued by the general counsel's office are also attacking workers' rights, largely by revoking the bold directives of Biden-era General Counsel Jennifer Abruzzo.

Her reforms were driven by the founding mission of the 1935 National Labor Relations Act: that the federal government must protect the rights of workers to organize and bargain collectively, and even encourage the growth of unions. The NLRB was established to enforce the law and penalize violators.

Instead, labor movement observers see a corporate ethos taking hold, delaying or denying justice for wronged workers, squeezing the agency's bone-dry budget and demoralizing the shrinking NLRB staff. Several longtime employees described as much in a December 2025 article in the Guardian, which agreed to conceal their identities.

"Employees just want to do our jobs and be treated with respect," one said. "But from day one, this administration has crippled the agency and treated us as



Created 90 years ago to enforce federally protected worker and union rights, the NLRB had been waning for decades until the aggressive pro-worker reforms of the Biden-era board. But its progress is being wiped out by the new board's corporate agenda.

enemies." The same person said staff is "disgusted" by the damage they're witnessing firsthand.

For example, a massive backlog of cases piled up until Senate confirmation of two Trump nominees in January. Hearings and votes were suspended for most of 2025, a situation created when the president illegally fired Biden appointee Gwynne Wilcox from the board with more than three years left in her term. An unprecedented move by any White House, her removal ultimately was upheld by the U.S. Supreme Court.

Not all problems are new. For years, the budget-starved and understaffed agency has struggled to investigate and remedy all unfair labor practice claims, annually pleading with Congress for more money.

Yet the board's new leadership asked for \$14 million less than the \$299 million allocated last year. It also has eliminated another 100 jobs, reducing staff that handles cases to its lowest point in 17 years.

International President Kenneth W. Cooper is accustomed to pendulum swings at the NLRB depending on which party wins the White House, as well as congressional action and federal lawsuits. Of recent note, a case filed by some of the nation's best-known corporations challenges the board's very existence.

"The NLRB's ability to protect and enforce our rights as workers and union members has been under attack since the 1940s, so we've got a lot of practice fighting back," Cooper said. "But what we're witnessing now is a different type of threat: a deliberate pattern of neglect and hostility from inside the board itself." ■

NORTH OF 49° | AU NORD DU 49° PARALLÈLE

B.C. Local Earns Another Traffic Control Triumph

Vancouver, British Columbia, Local 258 scored a big organizing win when a group of traffic controllers on Vancouver Island recently voted to accept IBEW representation.

That means the addition of about 75 new members employed by Domcor Traffic Control International when Local 258 officials finalize a first contract with the company. The local continues its work in recent years to organize traffic controllers across the province and provide them an improved work environment with higher wages.

“We’re going to change their lives because they’re now going to have a collectively bargained agreement,” said Dayna Gill, a former Local 258 assistant business manager who worked as a traffic controller and is now the First District’s lead organizer in western Canada. “Their safety, the number of hours they work, the PPE they need to do the job, that all will be in writing in the contract.”

In a sense, the move seems logical because it involves BC Hydro.

Local 258, an outside construction and utility local, has long had a partnership with the company and represents linemen and other bargaining units there.

But the traffic control workers are employed by Domcor, a private company contracted to handle those duties by BC Hydro that has resisted voluntary recognition efforts in the past.

“We had done a top-down approach to organizing it for years, where we engaged in talking with the company,” Local 258 Business Manager Cody Gatzke said. “It always ended up falling apart, and nothing ever materialized.”

So Gatzke and others changed their tactics. Gill and Local 258 organizer Dean Kotaras visited Vancouver Island last fall, where the employees signed digital support cards requesting IBEW representation.

The cards were recognized by the BC Labour Relations Board, the provincial body that oversees relations between management and workers in unionized industries. That earned the employees IBEW representation, and bargaining will begin soon.

Local 258 represents about 800 traffic control employees across the province, and it has negotiated a master agreement that covers all of them, no matter what company or government entity they work for. Gatzke said it is unclear whether Domcor will accept that agreement or insist on negotiating one for its own employees.

Safety regulations protecting utility and skilled construction workers near roads and byways have been strengthened in British Columbia in recent years. That’s led to more

companies getting involved in providing traffic controllers — which, in turn, has led to Local 258 having more organizing opportunities, Gatzke said.

“We identified it as a pretty large market, and it’s only grown over the years as the regulations have changed,” he said.

Adding the traffic control workers has allowed Local 258 and the IBEW in Canada to diversify its membership. They are overwhelmingly women, although Gill said more men are getting into the work.

“It’s not just a job,” said Gill, who added that Local 258 would like to organize another 221 traffic control workers employed by Domcor in the province. “It can be a really great career.”

Gill and Gatzke also saluted the work of Kotaras, who was working one of his first campaigns since joining the Local 258 staff as an organizer.

“It really was a team effort,” Gill said.

First District International Vice President Russ Shewchuk said Local 258’s work serves an example for all IBEW locals in Canada on how to grow their membership.

“I salute Local 258 for staying persistent and finding a new way to approach this opportunity,” Shewchuk said. “This is a great example of what we can accomplish when we work together and remain focused on improving the lives of workers. We look forward to continued growth in this sector.” ■



Domcor traffic control employees assist IBEW members from BC Hydro during work on Vancouver Island. The Domcor employees voted to become members of Vancouver Local 258. At left is Domcor traffic control employee Vanessa Cobbs.



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 local gagne une autre unité dans la signalisation routière

La section locale 258 à Vancouver en Colombie-Britannique a remporté une victoire de syndicalisation importante avec le vote récent d’un groupe de signaleuse routière et signaleur routier sur l’île de Vancouver pour être représenté par la FIOE.

Dès que les dirigeants du local 258 auront signé une première convention collective avec l’entreprise, il s’agira de l’ajout d’environ 75 nouveaux membres employés par Domcor Traffic Control International. Depuis plusieurs années, la section locale s’engage à syndiquer cette main-d’œuvre pour leur garantir de meilleures conditions de travail et des salaires plus avantageux.

« Nous allons changer leur vie, car ils vont maintenant avoir une convention collective », déclare Dayna Gill, ancienne assistante gérante d’affaires du local 258 qui travaillait comme signaleuse routière et maintenant occupe le poste de principale organisatrice syndicale au Premier District dans l’Ouest canadien. « Leur sécurité, le nombre d’heures travaillé, l’ÉPI qu’ils ont besoin pour faire le travail, tout sera par écrit dans la convention collective. »

On peut considérer cette démarche comme logique puisqu’elle touche BC Hydro.

Le 258 est un local qui représente les monteuses et monteurs de lignes et les membres des services publics, il

collabore avec l’entreprise depuis longtemps et représente les monteuses de lignes et d’autres unités de négociation de celle-ci.

Toutefois, les signaleurs routiers sont employés par Domcor, une entreprise privée liée par contrat à BC Hydro pour assumer ces responsabilités, qui par le passé, s’est opposée aux efforts de reconnaissance volontaire.

« Pendant des années, nous avons adopté une approche descendante pour la syndiquer en dialoguant avec l’entreprise », formule le gérant d’affaires du local 258, Cody Gatzke. « Ça finissait toujours par tomber à l’eau et peu de chose se concrétisait. »

M. Gatzke et les autres ont donc changé leurs tactiques. À l’occasion de la visite de Mme Gill et de l’organisateur syndical Dean Koratas du local 258 sur l’île de Vancouver l’automne dernier, les employés ont signé des cartes d’accréditation électronique pour obtenir la représentation syndicale de la FIOE.

Les cartes ont été reconnues par le BC Labour Relations Board (commission des relations du travail de la Colombie-Britannique), l’organisme provincial qui encadre les liens entre la direction et la main-d’œuvre dans les industries syndiquées, ce qui a permis à la main-d’œuvre d’avoir accès à la représentation de la FIOE et les négociations commenceront sous peu.

Le local 258 représente environ 800 signaleurs routiers dans la province et une convention collective cadre a été négociée qui les couvre tous, indépendamment du type d’employeur, qu’il soit privé ou gouvernemental. M. Gatzke se demande si Domcor va accepter cette convention collective ou si l’entreprise va insister d’en négocier une pour ses propres employés.

Ces dernières années, la Colombie-Britannique a renforcé sa réglementation en matière de sécurité pour mieux protéger la main-d’œuvre des services publics et de celle spécialisée dans la construction. Cette situation a incité davantage d’entreprises à offrir des services de signalisation routière, qui en retour a offert plus d’occasions de syndicalisation au local 258, mentionne M. Gatzke.

« Nous avons constaté que ce marché était assez vaste qui ne fait que s’élargir au fil des ans avec le changement de la réglementation », dit-il.

La section locale 258 et la FIOE au Canada ont permis de diversifier leurs membres grâce à l’ajout des signaleurs routiers. La plupart sont des femmes, mais Mme Gill mentionne que l’on

compte de plus en plus d’hommes.

« Il ne s’agit pas juste d’un emploi », formule Mme Gill, qui souligne entre autres que le local 258 souhaite en syndiquer 211 autres au service de Domcor dans la province. « C’est une carrière qui peut vraiment être enrichissante. »

Mme Gill et M. Gatzke ont félicité le travail de M. Koratas, qui participait à l’une de ses premières campagnes de syndicalisation depuis son entrée à titre d’organisateur syndical au local 258.

« C’était réellement un travail d’équipe », exprime Mme Gill.

Le vice-président international du Premier District, Russ Shewchuk, a dit que le travail du local 258 s’agit d’un exemple à toutes les sections locales au Canada pour augmenter le nombre de ses membres.

« Je félicite la persévérance du local 258 et d’avoir trouvé une nouvelle manière pour aborder cette occasion », affirme M. Shewchuk. « Il s’agit d’un excellent exemple quand nous travaillons ensemble et restons concentrés pour améliorer la vie des travailleuses et travailleurs. Nous avons hâte de poursuivre notre croissance dans ce secteur. » ■

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.

GROUND^{ED} IN HISTORY

'That They Should Be Organized There Is No Doubt'

How the Earliest Sisters Helped Shape the IBEW

Mary Honzik couldn't have imagined her present-day IBEW sisters, women who string high-voltage power lines, wire complex construction projects, even serve as foremen supervising their union brothers on work sites.

But it's easy to imagine the pride she'd feel, realizing what generations of barrier-breaking women had accomplished in the 130 years since she broke one herself.

"Mrs. Mary Honzik of St. Louis," per *The Electrical Worker's* report, was hired in 1896 as the IBEW's first woman organizer, doubling what had been a one-man shop. It was a historic first among all unions that still exist today, few of which, if any, had paid organizers at all in the 1890s.

Determined to seize on opportunities in the rapidly expanding electrical industry, IBEW officers understood that volunteer organizers were no longer enough. Electrical manufacturing plants were growing in number and size, creating thousands of new jobs producing switches, meters, transformers, insulated copper wires, light bulbs and every other kind of component.

As demand soared, so did the number of women on the factory floor. For manufacturers, it was a win-win: They valued women for their dexterity on assembly lines and didn't have to pay them as much as men.

A Milestone in Cleveland

Within a year of hiring Honzik, the IBEW had another first to celebrate — an all-woman local, led by the first women to serve as officers. Organized by Local 38 in Cleveland, Local 80 represented 21 women at Walker Manufacturing Co., which produced streetcar and electrical equipment.

The *Electrical Worker* hailed it as the only independent company of its kind at a time when large manufacturers were racing to swallow up smaller ones. Walker, the paper stated, "is bearing the brunt of the battle against this powerful combination of electrical interests — this attempted monopoly of a great hold of industrial effort."

But it couldn't fend off the giants for long. As



Cleveland Local 80 represented women working at Walker Manufacturing Co.



A photo of delegates to the Fifth IBEW Convention, held in Pittsburgh in 1897, includes Mary Honzik in the front row. In 1892, Sister Honzik was one of the first six women to join the IBEW and four years later became the first woman to be a paid IBEW organizer.



the paper's October 1898 edition reported:

"The Walker Manufacturing Co. (has) been absorbed by the Westinghouse Co. of Pittsburgh. Well, the Walker Co. was a straight union shop from start to finish, all branches of work being thoroughly organized. It was one of the most strict union shops in Cleveland."

While it spelled the end of Local 80, the mettle of the IBEW's earliest women proved that they belonged. They'd found champions among their brothers, men who knew that sisters would make the Brotherhood stronger.

Thomas Wheeler, press secretary and later grand president of Local 38, advocated as much in a May 1897 submission to *The Electrical Worker*:

"There is another subject I would like to see discussed in the 'Worker,' and a very important one it is, especially to those employed in the manufacturing business, and that is the organizing of the girls who work at the electrical business. It is a well-known fact that a large part of the work done in the electric manufacturing establishments is done by girls. They take the place of men, do the work of men, and for less pay. Now, what are you going to do about it? That they should be organized there is no doubt, but how and in what form is it to be? ... I would like to hear from some locals upon this point. Chicago, Detroit and Buffalo, what do you think about it? Wake up and let us know."

Wheeler didn't reveal how close his local was to the history-making win at Walker, which came within weeks of his published plea. An editorial in *The Electrical Worker* made the announcement:

"Only one new Union to report for the month of May, which appears in our directory as No. 80, but if our readers stop to closely read what follows they will notice quite a difference in the names of the officers from those

Famously, 8,000 of them walked off the job in April 1919 demanding better wages and working conditions. Their five-day strike ended with a \$4-a-week raise and collective bargaining rights.

Victory was harder to come by in the early electrical industry, where Westinghouse and a handful of other union-busting manufacturers dominated the market. Even so, other locals were inspired by the win at Walker.

'They Would Make a Fine Union'

William Birch, press secretary of Schenectady, N.Y., Local 70, had an enthusiastic — if chauvinistic — reply to his counterpart at the Cleveland local:

"Our brother from No. 38 desires to know why the girls in the electrical factories are not more thoroughly organized. I think the real cause in

our city is that they are expecting to get married every day, and do not think it worth their while to become members of an organization. ... We have in Schenectady, NY about 500 girls who work at the electrical business. They would make a fine Union of electrical workers. Don't you think so, Bro. Press Secretary of No. 38?"

Local 80 hung on until Westinghouse declared the plant an open shop in March 1899. Though its life was short, the local had thrived, doubling to 43 members and embracing

the spirit of sisterhood.

In his back-and-forth with Birch, Wheeler described it joyfully:

My heart aches for Bro. Birch of No. 70. Just think of 500 girls and not an organization of female electrical workers in Schenectady! But just say to those 500 girls that in Cleveland the electric girls have an organization with a membership of about forty. They have one of the best halls in the city, have a piano, and after they are through with the business of the evening, they roll back the carpet and have a waltz or two. The brothers from No. 38 expect to visit them, and so, combining pleasure with business, they are sure to make success of their union. Now, you go tell those 500 girls to form a Local, brace up and be independent, and they will never regret it." ■

*"Hurrah for No. 80, and its lady members doughty,
Who dare combine in Union against a foreman gouty;
We wish there were more like you,
to join our 'lectric workers,
And help along the labor
cause we don't want any shirkers.
Hurrah again we shout hurrah, with all our royal might,
To our sisters fair, with shining hair, and
eyes like electric light.
May your life be long, your Union strong and
never a job you cannot fix.
Is the greeting we send from loyal linemen
of Erie, Local No. 56."*

The brothers of Erie, Pa., Local 56 showed their support for IBEW women with a poem published in the July 1897 edition of *The Electrical Worker*.

in any of the 79 preceding unions. No. 80 marks an epoch in the history of the electrical workers, as this is the first union of female electrical workers ever organized. The union started with 21 charter members, and fifteen at the next meeting, and is good for several hundred members."

It had been five years since delegates to the union's Second Convention in 1892 passed a resolution stating that "any electrical worker" may be eligible for membership. Without specifying "women" in the text, it was a somewhat begrudged welcome. But it was enough. That year, six telephone operators, including Honzik, became the first woman members.

Known as "Hello Girls," telephone operators made up the vast majority of IBEW women for decades, originally organized into existing telecom locals across the country. But in 1912, the union chartered its second all-woman local, or sub-local as it was categorized, an arm of Boston Local 103 representing operators at New England Telegraph & Telephone.

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.



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SPOTLIGHT ON SAFETY

New California Law Requires Defibrillators at Utility Worksites

With an assist from Diamond Bar Local 47 and Vacaville Local 1245, the Justin Kropp Safety Act is now law in California, protecting lineworkers from the kind of accident that took the life of the bill's namesake.

Kropp, a traveler out of Phoenix Local 266 who was working in the jurisdiction of Local 47, was fatally electrocuted in 2018. He was working at a site in the Mojave Desert when an error occurred involving an unlicensed crane operator who shifted the bucket Kropp was in and threw him forward. Kropp was working more than 75 feet above ground at the time.

The lines Kropp struck had been powered down, but they still had induced voltage. When Kropp hit them, it sent his heart into arrhythmia. The accident itself didn't kill him, but the lack of access to emergency response made saving his life impossible. Had an automated external defibrillator, or AED, been available on site, Kropp's life would have been saved, Joseph Brent, the Kropp family's attorney, told The Signal, a local publication.

The law, which went into effect Jan. 1, requires each utility, independent contractor or subcontractor of the utility to have an AED available at every worksite where electrical utility workers are working on transmission or distribution lines of 601 volts or more.

"We mourn the loss of Brother Kropp and his tragic end. The work we do is inherently dangerous, but that doesn't soften the blow you get from losing a union brother or sister," Local 47 Business Manager Colin Lavin said. "We support any means of making our jobsites safer, and this bill is a simple yet incredibly effective way to do that. With this law, lineworkers, and the public, can get home safe to their families at night."

Some utilities and contractors have been providing AEDs already, Lavin said, but the Justin Kropp Safety Act's requirements increase safety standards throughout the industry.

"This bill enhances utility workforce safety measures by requiring it through a law, so now there's no choice," he said.



"Now they have to provide the safety devices."

According to a Senate analysis of the bill, an average of 19.2 linemen per 100,000 are killed on the job every year nationwide, twice the fatality rate of police officers and firefighters. The main risk to lineworkers who have been electrocuted is sudden death due to cardiac arrhythmia, or irregular heart rhythms. Out-of-hospital cardiac arrest results in an 8% to 10% survival rate. The survival rate of out-of-hospital cardiac arrest, however, increases to 50% to 74% when an AED device is available and immediate defibrillation is performed.

The bill passed unanimously, a rare occurrence.

"The Justin Kropp Safety Act passed easily and with unanimous bipartisan support because it makes plain sense to protect electrical workers from death and electrocution," said Ninth District International Representative Gretchen Newsom.

The California State Association of Electrical Workers and the Coalition of California Utility Employees, both IBEW-affiliated bodies, were on record in support of the legislation.

"Electrical lineworkers and utility employees perform inherently dangerous tasks, often in remote or high-risk environments," a joint statement from the two groups said. "Sudden cardiac arrest can be a tragic consequence of electrical exposure, strenuous activity or unforeseen medical emergencies. The presence of an AED at these worksites

"The work we do is inherently dangerous, but that doesn't soften the blow you get from losing a union brother or sister."

— Local 47 Business Manager Colin Lavin

can mean the difference between life and death. By ensuring that public utilities and their contractors comply with established safety standards and protocols for AED accessibility, this bill will provide essential protections for workers and the public alike."

Assemblywoman Pilar Schiavo, who authored the bill, spoke at a news conference about her personal connection to the issue.

"As the daughter of an electrician, hearing stories around the dinner table, it's not if but when you could get electrocuted," she said. "This is such important equipment to make sure that we have at all these kinds of worksites, where it's

even more dangerous to do that work. And now we have a law that will make sure that not only are they available, but that the employees, that the contractors, that the subcontractors, are all trained to make sure that they know how to operate it."

Justin Kropp's father, Barry, also spoke at the event.

"It's a big deal," he said. "For those who don't understand the industry, when you start things someplace in a state as big as California, it's likely that maybe, over time, it could become a nationally recognized standard. And that's where we want to try to go with this down the road." ■

CIRCUITS

Want Up to \$32,000 for School? Apply for Founders' Scholarship

For any IBEW member who's considering higher education, the IBEW Founders' Scholarship can help get you there.

"The scholarship was created with the goal of furthering our members' education in the electrical industry, which helps both the member and the union," said Research Director Jim Voye, whose department administers the scholarship.

"It's a recognition of the IBEW's commitment to fostering well-rounded members who want to challenge themselves and give back to the IBEW as well as the broader labor movement," he said.

The deadline to apply for this year's round of funding is May 1, though applications are accepted year-round.

Winners of the award receive up to \$200 per semester credit hour or \$134 per trimester credit hour. They can attend any accredited college or university toward an associate, bachelor's or postgraduate degree in a field that will help further the electrical industry. The maximum distribution is \$24,000 per person over up to eight years. Members in both the United States and Canada are eligible.

Those interested in applying need to have three letters of recommendation, one of which must come from the business manager of the applicant's local. The scholarship requirement also includes a 250- to 500-word essay titled "How I Will Use My Founders' Scholarship to Benefit the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers and the Electrical Industry."

The scholarship, which is for working members only, was established at the 28th International Convention held in 1966 as a way to honor the IBEW's 75th anniversary.

Previous scholarship winners have used their funding for an array of courses, including electrical engineering, labor and employment relations, occupational safety and health, and law school. ■



Barry Kropp, father of Jason Kropp, spoke at the press event that included members of Diamond Bar, Calif., Local 47.

For more information and a complete list of application requirements, go to ibew.org/FoundersScholarship or scan the QR code.



ORGANIZING WIRE

Indianapolis Local Organizes Public Defenders

When lawyers are involved in union matters, it's usually to support or oppose the workers' quest for representation. But for Indianapolis Local 481, the attorneys were the ones organizing for better wages and working conditions — and bumping up against the same anti-union management tactics that often occur when workers try to organize.

And they won.

"Management couldn't wrap their heads around the idea that white-collar workers need a union, too," Local 481

Business Manager Jeff Wheeler said. "But those workers voted overwhelmingly to join a union, proving that everyone should have a seat at the table when it comes to having a voice on the job."

The bargaining unit comprises about 260 employees at the Marion County Public Defenders Agency, including lawyers, social workers, paralegals and administrative staff. And despite the unusual makeup of the workers,

they were fighting for the same issues as any other worker: better wages and working conditions.

Nationwide, more and more attorneys are organizing, Local 481 Business Representative Lance Bradbury said, noting that a number of unions are taking them in. In this case, the public defenders chose the IBEW because of its reputation as a strong and successful union.

"They met with a lot of different unions but eventually decided to work with us," Bradbury said. "The IBEW is regarded as the most respected and active in the community, and they knew they could get a good contract because the IBEW is more powerful."

In this case, the lawyers were fighting for higher wages for the support staff. "They weren't concerned about themselves. It was about their co-workers," Wheeler said.

The attorneys got a small wage increase, but a larger raise went to the staff. It was something the lawyers were passionate about, Bradbury said.

"As a longtime, diehard union guy, that was great to see," he said.

More than 70% of employees signed cards, and the city and county recognized them, but getting a first contract wasn't nearly as easy.

Wheeler and Bradbury noted that the mayor and city council are largely made up of Democrats. "We were surprised at the pushback," Wheeler said. "It created a very strange dynamic."

With negotiations stalled, the workers got together and held rallies



"Management couldn't wrap their heads around the idea that white-collar workers need a union, too."

— Local 481 Business Manager Jeff Wheeler

Marion County public defenders who spearheaded the organizing campaign wanted to improve the pay and working conditions of staffers in their offices.

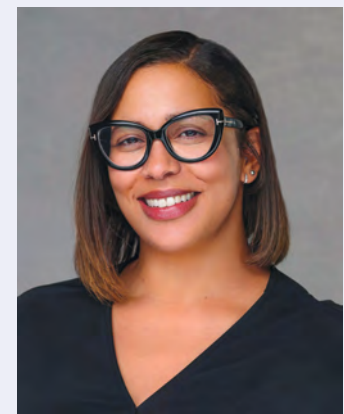
outside the agency's building. Wearing matching shirts, they got on the horn during their lunch break and made sure they could be heard outside the windows where their bosses were.

"It was pretty cool to see them, lawyers and social workers alike," Bradbury said. "A lot of people want a union but aren't willing to put in the work. This group put in the work."

It paid off. The contract was ratified in October, two years after the organizing drive began.

Wheeler and Bradbury credited the successful outcome to the workers' solidarity and dedication throughout the campaign. It was so successful, in fact, that employees who had quit were coming back because of the contract.

"The support staff won a life-changing amount of money," Bradbury said. "Now they can afford to buy a house and have retirement security. That's all any worker wants, regardless of their profession." ■



Recent Founders' Scholarship winners (clockwise from top left): Brittany Winston, Kristin Renskers, Filmon Ali and Onurkan Karabulut.

The roughly 260 employees at the Marion County Public Defenders Agency encompass a wide spectrum of occupations, from lawyers and social workers to paralegals and administrative staff.

TRANSITIONS

APPOINTED

Curtis Sharpe



Curtis Sharpe, a longtime union activist who helped instill the IBEW's Code of Excellence in thousands of Tennessee Valley Authority workers, has been appointed by International President Kenneth W. Cooper to serve

as international vice president for the Tenth District.

Sharpe's appointment, effective April 1, fills the unexpired term of retiring International Vice President Brent Hall. (See story in box.)

"I've got big boots to fill, but I'm looking forward to it," said Sharpe, a member of Chattanooga, Tenn., Local 721.

A native of South Pittsburg, Tenn., Sharpe studied theater and speech at the University of Tennessee-Chattanooga, where he learned carpentry while working in the theater department's set shop. He spent a few years afterward in an apprenticeship with a pipe organ builder.

"Curtis is a really good problem solver. He's a thinker. He's going to do a good job. He's all IBEW."

— Retired Tenth District International Vice President Brent Hall

"I enjoy working with my hands. I always have," he said.

In 1993, Sharpe — by then a 25-year-old father of two young children — shifted his career plans and accepted a Local 721-represented coal operations job with the Widows Creek generating plant in neighboring Alabama.

"I've always had an interest in the IBEW," Sharpe said. He noted that his uncle Bill, a former business manager of New Johnsonville, Tenn., Local 1749, had worked with Jerry Duncan, one of Sharpe's

international representative predecessors and a former Local 1749 business manager himself.

The now-decommissioned Widows Creek plant was part of the Tennessee Valley Authority, the sprawling, government-owned corporation that brought electricity and flood control to the seven states served by the Tennessee River and its tributaries. The IBEW has represented workers at the TVA since the agency's founding in 1933.

"When I hired into TVA, I had a union referral from Jerry, and that helped me get involved," said Sharpe, who quickly became active with Local 721 as a job steward. "Having that history of unionism, making sure that people are represented and treated fairly in the workplace, was always import-

ant for me."

Sharpe steadily rose through the TVA's ranks, eventually becoming a senior operator with the agency's Raccoon Mountain pumped-storage facility in 2004. Three years later, he was elected Local 721's vice president, an office he held until his 2011 election as president.

"Curtis was always including me in a lot of stuff so I could learn," said Local 721 Business Manager David Williams, who served for several years as Sharpe's vice president.

Williams recalled being asked to accompany Sharpe on a trip to Little Rock, Ark., to learn more about arbitration.

"He's very knowledgeable," said the business

manager, adding that he and Sharpe remain friends outside of work. "We hang out a lot, go different places, and play some golf every now and then."

In 2018, then-International President Lonnie R. Stephenson announced a major partnership with the TVA to bring the IBEW's Code of Excellence to the entire organization. The Code aims to forge among workers and managers alike a commitment to its SPARQ values: safety, professionalism, accountability, relationships and quality.

"IVP Hall asked me if I would be interested in leading the union's side of the Code of Excellence group," said Sharpe, who eagerly agreed. Soon, he was identifying trainers who would help him conduct Code classes for the organization's

RETIRED

Brent E. Hall



Tenth District International Vice President Brent E. Hall, who followed in his father's footsteps in becoming a leader in the U.S. labor movement, retired effective April 1.

The move caps a 41-year IBEW career, including the last 10 as vice president, that began when he was hired as a groundman by Memphis Light, Gas and Water and became a member of Memphis, Tenn., Local 1288 in 1985.

International President Kenneth W. Cooper praised Hall for keeping the IBEW strong in some of the most anti-union areas of the country, noting that Tenth District membership has grown steadily throughout his tenure. It includes Arkansas, Tennessee, North Carolina and South Carolina.

"I always was confident the Brotherhood was well served in the Tenth District because of Brent and his outstanding staff," Cooper said. "He's become a close friend who has always looked out for the interests of our members in a very proactive way. I thank him for his service and congratulate him on a well-earned retirement."

Hall was born and raised in Memphis, where his father, Luther, moved as a 14-year-old from rural Mississippi. Luther Hall later worked as a city bus driver and rose to be an international vice president of the Amalgamated Transit Union.

"He told me that union politics are brutal, but just always do the right thing," Hall said. "If you can go to your grave with integrity, you've had a successful life."

The younger Hall did not envision himself as a leader at first. He completed his lineman apprenticeship and later became a line foreman for MLGW. The idea of working in an office held no interest.

"I thought I'd retire a lineman," he said. "It was a challenge, and it was exciting work. Not many people can do it or even want to do it."

"The bonds you build with the guys you work with, they're like family. Every time you climb into a bucket or go up a pole, you have to trust your life with them, and they have to trust their lives with you."

He continued to work in the field after being elected to Local 1288's executive board in 1989 and as its president in 1995.

In 2002, he was appointed a Tenth District international representative. Hall said he suspects he got the job because then-International Vice President Carl Lansden saw he was a leader in a movement in the late 1990s that successfully persuaded the Memphis City Council to vote against a proposed sale of MLGW to a private company.

The move to the district staff ended his working in the field, but he wasn't stuck behind a desk, either. He was assigned to service nine Tennessee locals across nearly every branch of the IBEW.

"He wasn't going to sit around and wait on things to happen. He was going to make things happen."

— Tenth District International Vice President Curtis Sharpe

"I became well-rounded," he said. "I think that helped me when I became vice president. I understood everyone's type of work."

Hall remained a service rep until he was appointed international vice president in 2015. The things he's most proud of during his tenure include:

- 25% growth in membership in the Tenth District since 2016.
- The chartering of Chattanooga, Tenn., Local 911, which represents nuclear security officers employed by the Tennessee Valley Authority, a longtime IBEW partner.
- The introduction of the IBEW's Code of Excellence at the TVA. The program ensures the highest standard of safety, professionalism and quality in the electrical industry while strengthening ties between labor and management. The move has drastically cut the number of grievances pending by the IBEW against the TVA, where management often talks about how it positively changed the work culture there, Hall said.

- The ongoing construction of a SELCAT outdoor training facility near Nashville. It is the first facility of its kind in the Tenth District for SELCAT, an IBEW outside training partner, and Hall will remain on its board in retirement.
- Signing on three contractors in the last six months as IBEW signatories in the Carolinas, which traditionally have the lowest union density in the U.S.

"I'm very proud of our locals and business managers there," Hall said. "They are scrappers. They've come from nothing, and they're moving up."

He was replaced by Tenth District International Representative Curtis Sharpe, a former Chattanooga Local 721 business manager. Sharpe said his predecessor was always willing to try new things to add new members in the district.

"He's a doer," Sharpe said of Hall. "He's hands-on, and he gets out there. He wasn't going to sit around and wait on things to happen. He was going to make things happen."

"I've learned a lot watching him and his proactive way of doing business," Sharpe added. "Seeing that and understanding that sometimes we need a push. He did that in a very effective way."

Hall said he wasn't comfortable seeking reelection at the upcoming International Convention in September knowing he was unlikely to finish the term. He also wants to spend more time with family, including his 90-year-old mother, who recently entered an assisted-living facility.

Thus, the decision to retire now.

Hall and his wife, Teresa, have two children and three grandchildren. Son Collin is a journeyman wireman and former Nashville Local 316 business manager.

He is an avid boater and plans to spend more time on the lakes near the family home in Lebanon, Tenn. He also said Teresa has "a laundry list of places to visit that are not the site of IBEW conferences."

Hall said he is especially thankful to his wife, a registered nurse who made many sacrifices throughout his career. He also retires with fond memories of his father, who died in 2014.

"I think he would be proud," Hall said. "I'm positive I would not have gotten involved in the union if I had not been around him and saw the changes it made in people's lives. My dad served his membership and worked hard."

The officers and staff thank Brother Hall for his many years of service and wish him and his loved ones a happy retirement. ■

Go
Green

Get your
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WORKER** delivered
each month *via email*.

It's convenient & helps cut
down on paper waste. Go to
ibew.org/gogreen and
sign up today!



5,000 workers, including members of six other labor unions.

"I think in one year, Curtis put about 30,000 miles on a vehicle, traveling the valley and changing TVA culture," said Will Trumm, the agency's chief administrative officer and Sharpe's management counterpart. "Curtis spoke for every union across the TVA, not just the IBEW."

The pair have known each other since Sharpe's days at Raccoon Mountain. "Curtis is a man of his word," Trumm said. "He's a strategic thinker, a business partner, and he sees the big picture."

Thanks in large part to cooperation from the TVA's managers, Sharpe said, the Code of Excellence rollout was completed in five months, and regular Code training has taken place ever since.

"It was probably the highlight of my time at TVA," Sharpe said. "I think the Code has had some great effects, in safety, in relationships and in the quality of work. We moved our relationship forward, and we continue to benefit from that today."

In 2019, Stephenson appointed Sharpe to be an international representative for the Tenth District, which spans Arkansas, Tennessee and the Carolinas. Among Sharpe's responsibilities in his new role was working with International Representative Charles Rains to service the more than a dozen IBEW locals that represent the union's members covered by the general agreement with the TVA.

Sharpe said one highlight of his time in the district office was when the IBEW successfully organized the TVA's nuclear security officers and chartered Chattanooga Local 911 in 2020.

"There's a lot of external pressures on the TVA and on unions in general right now," said Sharpe, who still serves on the agency's Code of Excellence Core Committee and its Health and Safety Committee. "But focusing on how we work together day-to-day and ensuring that we do things as best and as safely as possible keeps us from being distracted by those forces."

Sharpe lives in his hometown of South Pittsburg, about a half-hour drive west of Chattanooga. His wife, Shannon Pickering, works in political campaigns. His son, Jacob, lives in Washington, while his daughter, Trenna, and her wife, Alice, live in London.

The kids' distance from southeast Tennessee is not a problem for Sharpe and his wife. "We like to travel," he said, "and that gives us an opportunity to go places — when we have the time."

Sharpe also likes music and going to shows, and he still uses his woodworking experience on home improvement projects.

"We live in a house built in 1930," he said. "We completely gutted it and built a modern addition."

Sharpe's father and mother — 92 and 83, respectively — live across the street. "One of my other hobbies is spending with them when I can and making sure everything's good and they're doing well," he said.

As Sharpe assumes the office of international vice president, he hopes to follow the example set by Hall.

"Something that I've admired about Brent is his willingness to try something new to make the IBEW better," Sharp said. "He continued to grow the district. A big thing for me has been learning what it takes to do that."

Sharpe also is proud of his friendship with Hall. "Sometimes it's just about being there and not needing something, just hanging out," he said.

Hall said Sharpe's background as a TVA coal plant operator will serve him well in his new position.

"My experience is operators tend to be very detail-oriented," Hall said. "You have to be. You're controlling some expensive equipment.

"Curtis is a really good problem solver. He's a thinker," Hall added. "He's going to do a good job. He's all IBEW."

Williams agreed. "Curtis will think of the members first," he said. "Everything he does will be for them."

Sharpe also will continue to fight for what's right, Trumm said. "I work with 17 different union leaders," he said. "There's no one in the labor field that I respect more than Curtis Sharpe."

Please join the Brotherhood in wishing Brother Sharpe success in his new role. ■

RETIRED Alan Cutler



After 25 years with the IBEW, Seventh District International Representative Alan Cutler retired on Feb. 1.

"It's bittersweet to retire and leave behind work that has been fulfilling and challenging," Cutler

said. "But it's time to pass the torch and let the next generation step up."

Brother Cutler was initiated into Fairfield, Texas, Local 2337 in 2001, then later transferred to Arlington Local 220 when his unit at the Comanche Peak Nuclear Power Plant moved there. From the moment he was initiated, he got involved in the IBEW. He served as chief negotiator from 2001 to 2008, chief steward from 2006 to 2009, president from 2008 to 2009, then business manager from 2009 to 2016. He was appointed international representative in 2017.

Serving as business manager brought with it a challenging schedule but also rewarding and successful achievements, Cutler said. Not only did he help secure a host of first contracts, but membership doubled during his time at the helm.

When it came time to run for business manager, Cutler discussed it with his wife, Diane, and

they determined that their kids were old enough for him to be away from home more and that it seemed like the best next move.

"I really found my calling," he said of his decision to run to lead Local 220. "It seemed like I was following a natural progression."

Cutler's progression began in 1993 when he took a job at TU Electric as a nuclear chemical technician. Despite other areas of the company having union recognition, his did not, so he started organizing his unit and became a spokesperson for the campaign.

It took until 1999 for the employees to vote on joining Local 2337 and until 2001 to get their first contract, but they succeeded in the end, and Cutler kept up his union involvement.

"That was the first moment in my career that made me feel proud to be a union member," Cutler said. "I could look at what we achieved and say, 'I played a part in that.'"

Raised in western Pennsylvania, Cutler attended college at Washington University in St. Louis and the University of California San Diego. With his specialization in chemistry, he took a job after graduation at the San Onofre Nuclear Power Plant in California as a chemical technician, a role that was then represented by the United Auto Workers.

"I remember when I got my first paycheck as a union member. I thought to myself, 'I have a real job now,'" Cutler recalled. "I haven't stopped smiling since."

Local 220 Business Manager Joshua Worthey met Cutler around 2019 during contract negotiations for members at the Comanche plant. The process took years, and tempers were starting to flare.

"Alan was our service rep during those negotiations. He brought a certain sense of both seriousness and levity to every interaction," Worthey said. "He did everything he could to make sure folks got a fair shake at what they wanted."

Worthey remarked that Cutler believed in the union and its ability to adapt, grow and change.

"Alan saw a lot in the Brotherhood and believed in it more than I think most of our leadership did," Worthey said. "He believed that if we always kept the actual mission of making this a better world as our center, pushed away our

internal politics and truly worked for the betterment of the IBEW, we would be unstoppable."

Worthey noted that Cutler, whose son, Alan Torres, is a member of San Antonio Local 60, was the first elected business manager of Local 220, which was chartered in 2008. Worthey is only the third and has leaned on Cutler for advice.

"It's bittersweet to retire and leave behind work that has been fulfilling and challenging. But it's time to pass the torch and let the next generation step up."

— Retired Seventh District International Representative Alan Cutler

"He knew the struggle of trying to figure it all out," Worthey said. "He always maintained a firm position on things and would remind me to pull my head out of my butt when I was being bull-headed and when to savor the few minutes of peace we could find. Over the years, to me, he became more than just our service rep. He was my mentor, my friend, my confidant and my brother."

Cutler said he'll miss being "part of the tide that lifts all boats," as well as solving problems and helping members. But for this next chapter, Cutler plans to travel and spend more time with his family in retirement. Even so, he's not stepping away completely. He also plans to stay active in his community.

On behalf of the membership, staff and officers, we thank Brother Cutler for his years of service and wish him all the best for a long retirement. ■

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LOCAL LINES

Winter Happenings at Local 16

L.U. 16 (i), EVANSVILLE, IN — The 32nd annual Ritzzy’s Fantasy of Lights was again highly successful, with this year’s attendance at nearly 13,000 vehicles, raising \$239,980 to cover the cost of thousands of Easterseals Rehabilitation Center therapy sessions. Since its inception, more than \$4.9 million has been raised for children and adults in need of Easterseals’ life-altering programs. Special thanks are due the many JATC students and instructors who helped throughout the week to insure that everything went as smoothly as possible.

In mid-January, roughly 350 IBEW members and honored guests attended the 2026 winter gala. Everyone enjoyed a full dinner buffet, refreshments and the opportunity to catch up with some of the best people in the world. Thanks to each person on the entertainment committee. Once again, you did an excellent job!

After many months of difficult, protracted and often contentious negotiations, the residential wiremen of Local 16 were finally able to secure a fair and equitable agreement. The contract, which covers approximately 40 residential journeymen and apprentices, will provide a 5.6% raise for each of the 3 years it covers. Much appreciation to the negotiating team for bringing this bargaining to a successful conclusion.

Donald P. Beavin, P.S.

Local 24’s Strength in Numbers

L.U. 24 (es,i&spa), BALTIMORE, MD — This year marks a milestone for Local 24 as we’ve surpassed 3,000 active members for the first time in our local’s history. This growth reflects the willingness of our members to organize, to show up, and to welcome new brothers and sisters with open arms.

Rapid growth brings real challenges. Bringing more than 1,000 new electricians into our union requires patience, education and a shared commitment to what it means to be a member. It

means passing along standards, expectations and pride in our craft to people who are new to the IBEW. That work is not always easy, but it is necessary, and it is work our membership has embraced.

We are proud of how our members have stepped up to meet the moment. Because of their efforts, we have continued to deliver the skilled, reliable workforce our signatory contractors depend on. That stability allows our contractors to continue bidding work to secure future opportunities for our members.

Reaching 3,000 members is an achievement. Sustaining our culture while we grow is our responsibility. Local 24 will continue to do both.

Live Better/Work Union!

Mike McHale, B.M.

Local 26 Events in ’26

L.U. 26 (ees,em,es,govt,i&mt), WASHINGTON, DC — Here are a few key dates in 2026 for upcoming events at our local:

- Spring Pension Seminar — Saturday, April 4
- Financial Awareness Seminar — Saturday, May 2
- D.A.D.’s Day Golf Outing — Monday, June 2
- JATC Graduation — Saturday, June 6

Our RENEW group held a chess tournament in January and a meet-and-greet game night in March.

Additionally, our EWMC group attended the 2026 Electrical Workers Minority Caucus National Leadership Conference in Seattle in January.

Best wishes to the following retirees: Brian Becker, Michael Cagemi, Michael Callow, Raymond Cooper, Rodolfo Cruz, Michael Della Volla, Matthew Difiore, Gary Edminster, Robert Gough, Randall Jenkins, Todd Jones, John Kutzfara, Daniel Lane, Sterling Leon, Michael Lusk, Eliseo Martinez, Craig McCoy, Stephen Probey, John Shelley, Scott Shinn, William Slocombe and Ronald Sudduth Sr.

The following members have passed away since our last article: James Carroll, Charles Flagge III, Lynnard Geddis, Curtis Hite, Paul Hockenberry, Bradley Ice, Jerome Kasulaitis, Leo McKeever, Marvin Neese and Ronez Proctor.

Christopher M. Cash, B.M.



Day of Service volunteers at the Local 46 union hall.

Resist, Rise, Organize!

L.U. 46 (as,c,cs,em,es,et,i,mar,mo,mt,rtb,rts&st), SEATTLE, WA — The Electrical Workers Minority Caucus National Leadership Conference recently concluded in Seattle, leaving nearly 900 delegates energized and inspired. Often described by attendees as a “love conference,” the event was more than a professional seminar; it was a powerful celebration of IBEW family.

A central highlight was the annual Day of Service, where hundreds of members volunteered across the city at food banks and schools. This tradition allows delegates to give back while building deep bonds of brotherhood and sisterhood. The joy of collective action was palpable, with members reporting a profound sense of accomplishment and heart full of satisfaction from serving the local community.

The spirit of inclusion continued through dynamic plenary sessions and interactive workshops. From mentoring the next generation of RENEW leaders to tackling critical issues like mental health and parliamentary procedure, the environment was one of constant networking and mutual support. “You will never go to a conference and not have someone to talk to,” noted the founding members, reflecting the welcoming atmosphere that defines the EWMC.

The festivities culminated in a gala and

awards dinner, where delegates celebrated milestones, including the presentation of the Edwin Lopez Award. The week ended on a high note, with many delegates staying to participate in Seattle’s annual MLK Day March and Celebration.

Participants left Seattle with new skills, a renewed sense of belonging and the union difference, ready to bring that infectious positive energy to their home locals.

Seamus Anglin, R.S.

Local 66 Honors Life-Saving Heroism of Members

L.U. 66 (o,t&u), HOUSTON, TX — Our local recently had the honor of recognizing several members for extraordinary acts of courage, professionalism and teamwork that resulted in the saving of lives.

The heroic actions occurred Dec. 11, 2024, when Local 66 members responded without hesitation during a medical emergency involving a fellow worker. Their calm, decisive actions and adherence to safety training played a direct role in saving lives.

The International Office approved Life Saving Awards in November 2025, reflecting the seriousness of the actions taken and the high standard required for this recognition. The members who



Local 66 members, union leadership and company representatives gather following a ceremony recognizing life-saving actions that exemplify the highest standards of safety, training and brotherhood.



Local 24’s swearing-in ceremony.

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/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	(u) Utility	(tm) Transportation Manufacturing
(ei) Electrical Inspection	(mo) Maintenance & Operation	(uow) Utility Office Workers	(ws) Warehouse and Supply
(em) Electrical Manufacturing	(mow) Manufacturing Office Workers		
(es) Electric Signs	(mar) Marine		

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

received awards are Reynolds Blunt, Christopher Fiata, Kerry Kelly, Alejandro Martinez, Trenton Marullo and Dustin Moszkowicz. Additional members who assisted during the incident were acknowledged with Certificates of Recognition: Matthew Derrick, Guy Earnest, Andre Harris, Michael Landrum, Taylor Parker, Kyle Psencik and Stephen Walleck.

Local 66 took the lead in coordinating the recognition and ensuring that the actions were formally acknowledged at both international and local levels. Ed Allen, business manager for Local 66, presented the awards on behalf of the union and coordinated the recognition efforts. Rick Schwartz, business representative for Local 66, played a key role by submitting the award documentation to the International Office, nominating the members and participating in the ceremony.

The awards were presented during a monthly safety meeting hosted by CenterPoint Energy, making the recognition both meaningful and unexpected. The person whose life was saved was present, underscoring the lasting impact of the members' actions.

This recognition marks an historic first for Local 66, and a permanent plaque will be displayed in the union hall.

Kim Kaufmann, P.S.



Jack and Donna Cox playing Santa and Mrs. Claus at the Local 68 holiday gathering.

Happenings in Mile-High Denver

L.U. 68 (j), DENVER, CO — Spring is here, and seasonal happenings are developing locally. The annual Christmas party was a big success. Approximately 240 kids (and a few adults) sat on Santa's lap, telling him whether they were good or bad and what they wanted for Christmas. Thank you to all volunteers and all the families who joined us to make the party a joyous event.

Local 68 had its first Veterans Committee meeting Jan. 28 with 13 members in attendance. Be on the lookout for future dates of committee meetings — let's get more veterans involved within our local.

We have also been very active with legislation matters here in Colorado, being on the forefront of supporting bills and politicians that reinforce the labor movement. This is an endless fight, one that we will continue for our brothers and sisters.

As I write this article, we are gearing up for the annual Wireman's Brotherhood Fund bowling tournament in February. This is always a huge turnout and fun for all ages.

To all my brothers and sisters, work safe and stay warm.

Debbie Tikka, Pres.



Congratulations to Bob Keller of Local 82!

Local 82 Pin Ceremony and Hall of Fame Induction

L.U. 82 (em,i,mt&rtb), DAYTON, OH — On Aug. 8, 2025, our local hosted its annual pin ceremony, presenting the Charles Toon scholarship winners for apprentices and the Hall of Fame induction. It was a wonderful evening with great food and friends. Congratulations to all the pin recipients and scholarship winners!

I would like to congratulate Bob Keller on his induction into the Local 82 Hall of Fame. Bob's involvement with Local 82 started in 1977, and he has always had a special talent and passion for teaching. Bob taught at the Greene County Career Center for 22 years and the Local 82 JATC for 21 years. I cannot think of a more deserving member, and I was lucky to have him as a teacher and mentor.

Chris Toon, Pres.

Join Local 104 for the 20th Annual Rodeo

L.U. 104 (lctt,o,u&ptc), BOSTON, MA — To all the brothers and sisters, friends, and families of Local 104: It's that time of year again! We are excited to invite you to the 20th annual Local 104 Rodeo, a milestone event May 16 at the beautiful Kimball Farm in Westford, Mass.

Come out and cheer for all the talented participants as they compete for a chance to represent Local 104 at the International Lineman's Rodeo in Kansas City, Mo. The top six journeyman linemen and top three apprentices from Local 104 will earn the honor of showcasing their skills on the national stage.

This is more than just a competition; it's a celebration of the hard work, dedication and camaraderie that make Local 104 special. Be part of the excitement, reconnect with friends, and make memories with family.

We look forward to seeing you and your loved ones at Kimball Farm. Do not miss this unforgettable day!

Hugh Boyd, A.B.M.



Mick VanNatta, Local 104's northeast apprenticeship coordinator, will be on hand at the Local 104 Rodeo at Kimball Farm to explain the rules and ensure a fun, fair event for everyone.

Shame on Port KC

L.U. 124 (ees,em,i,mar,rts,se,spa,t&ptc), KANSAS CITY, MO — The IBEW came out in full force during the Kansas City mayor's State of the City address. More than 200 Local 124 members, along with other Building Trades members, came to protest the Kansas City Port Authority and its CEO, Jon Stephens.

The Port Authority is governed by an unelected seven-member board, which appoints a CEO to oversee day-to-day operations. The mayor of Kansas City appoints all board members. The Port Authority has played a significant role in many of Kansas City's major developments, including data centers, CPKC Stadium, Berkley Riverfront and the Hunt Midwest Business Center.

Generally, the IBEW has no issue with economic development, but the Port Authority has abused its power for too long. For decades, the Port Authority has awarded incentives without prevailing wage or community benefits agreements. Ralph Oropeza, business manager of the Greater Kansas City Building and Construction Trades Council and a Local 124 retiree, has patiently negotiated with Stephens to enact pro-workforce policies.

A final warning was issued to Stephens before the January meeting to enact prevailing wage and apprenticeship standards for port projects. Demands were not met, and labor made sure its voice was heard!

Wade Kiefer, Bus. Rep.

Metra Projects Help Local 134 Turn Momentum Into Growth

L.U. 134 (catv,em,govt,i,mt,rtb,rts,spa&t), CHICAGO, IL — In November 2025, the board of directors of the Metra rail system approved the operating budget for 2026, which included a capital investment of \$59.1 million in signals, electrical and communications. Local 134 represents approximately 400 Metra workers throughout Chicagoland and surrounding counties.

IBEW Metra members work in multiple departments, including communications, engineering, mechanical and substation. The Metra Communications Department will be responsible for a portion of the approved capital project for 2026. The assignment will involve replacing fiber optic cables that run from Metra downtown and throughout all routes to the end of their lines.

These upgrades will improve communication lines between train engineers and dispatchers. The Communications Department also works directly with phone, radio and PA announcements.



New Local 134 members of the Metra Engineering Department: (from left) Arturo Perez, Patrick Stanik, David Valenzuela, Elizabeth Davis, Omarr Robinson and Danielle Pawlak.

This year's work will also include capital projects dedicated to electrical infrastructure and enhancing power systems that support train movement, particularly on electric lines.

Metra recently hired new Local 134 members in their apprenticeship program, which will provide training for work in their Mechanical Department. These apprentices will work on the train's electrical components and will be instrumental in providing dependable service for customers by completing safety inspections and making repairs on train cars.

Local 134 congratulates Metra on its 2025 HIRE Vets Medallion Award. This award from the U.S. Department of Labor recognizes Metra for successfully hiring and retaining veterans.

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

2026 Brings Strong Work Outlook, Growth to Lake County, Ill.

L.U. 150 (es,i,rts&spa), WAUKEGAN, IL — Spring is here, and summer work is right around the corner. For Local 150, that means school upgrades, a new casino and data center projects already underway or set to break ground soon. We expect to stay busy and anticipate solid employment opportunities this year, including work for our traveling sisters and brothers. We appreciate the help, solidarity and professionalism you bring to every job.

Please mark a couple of important dates on your calendar. First, attend the May 6 general meeting, where we will hold an allocation vote for the \$5 increase to the inside wireman package. Your voice matters! This increase will bring the total inside package to \$108.85. Second, the Local 150 family picnic is scheduled for Aug. 8, where we look forward to spending the day with our members and their families.

Last month's Illinois spring election is a reminder of the importance of staying informed and engaged. Take the time to learn where political candidates stand on issues that affect working families here in Lake County. Workers' rights do not enforce themselves; they require continued support from elected officials who stand with labor. Do your homework, stay involved, and make sure your voice is heard at the ballot box this November!

Sisters and brothers, stay safe out there and always look out for one another.

Aaron M. Rendon, P.S./R.S.

LOCAL LINES

Bright Future for Tri-County Electrical JATC

L.U. 234 (i&mt), CASTROVILLE, CA — We are thrilled to announce that the Tri-County Electrical JATC has officially purchased the land for our training center. This milestone marks a new chapter of stability and growth for Local 234's inside apprenticeship program.

As part of this transition, the former Local 234 office has been transitioned into the new JATC main office. Owning the facility means the JATC can focus on investing deeply in our labs and classrooms and the future of our apprentices.

This achievement was the result of incredible teamwork. We want to thank committee members Matt Furrer, Andy Hartmann, Pete Marsiguerra and Linda Taylan. We owe a special thanks to NECA Chapter Manager Jerri Champlin and Local 234 Business Manager Jose Munoz for their leadership in taking this property sale across the finish line.

The future is bright for the Tri-County Electrical JATC. Let's get to work!

Andy Hartmann, Pres.

Safety First, Safety Always

L.U. 300 (govt,i,u,mo&lctt), MONTPELIER, VT — On May 25, 2025, Nick Leblanc, IBEW member and foreman lineworker for Morrisville Water and Light, risked his life to save another. On Jan. 28, in recognition of his heroic actions, the IBEW awarded Nick the most prestigious award in its arsenal, the IBEW Life Saving Award. This recognition bestows great credit upon Nick, his family, his fellow members and the IBEW. Thank you for your selfless service to humanity.

As members of the IBEW, we are the best-trained, most efficient and most safety-conscious workforce in our industries. Two of the primary objectives of the IBEW are to promote reasonable methods of work, which include safe work practices, and to cultivate feelings of friendship among those in our industry, which allows us to create a safe work environment for members to learn and be safe. You are all paid to be safe, first and foremost. Safety first, safety always — your families depend on it.

This article was written on Groundhog Day, and Punxsutawney Phil was unfortunately accurate with his prediction of six more weeks of winter. And as we do every year, we shake off Old Man Winter and welcome the spring. Local 300 officers wish you a safe and welcoming heat wave.

Jeffrey Wimetete, B.M./F.S.



Morrisville Water and Light Local 300 members celebrate with Nick Leblanc.



Local 340 members at the EWMC National Leadership Conference: (from left) Justin Hill, Troy Takara, Geary Silva, Vanesa Ruiz, Khalid Saleem and Erik Lopez.

Local 340's Brotherhood and Growth

L.U. 340 (i,rts&spa), SACRAMENTO, CA — As we enter another year, hopeful for growth for our members, I reflect on what the Brotherhood means to me. I have been given the opportunity to be the business manager over the past four elections, and I'm entering my 13th year in office.

We began our year with a few familiar events, such as our annual crab feed, put on by Local 340's softball team. This event demonstrates the power of brotherhood and camaraderie. Many attended, including community partners, to enjoy a night of food, family and fun.

We also recently held our new-member orientation, where we dive into the details of what our local offers its new members and the benefits that have helped so many families. This class invites members' spouses and significant others to attend so they can learn firsthand how our union can serve them.

Members of our EWMC committee attended the National Leadership Conference in Seattle, and one of our members, Justin Hill, spoke at the event. It was a proud moment for Local 340 to be represented and be part of something that fosters growth and excellence in our local.

Local 340 held two meetings, one special called and one allocation. These meetings gave our members a chance to participate in the local and have their voices heard. S&C Electric members collectively decided how they wanted their March increase to be allocated, while our full membership voted on language changes for our bylaws. Every member has the right to participate in determining where their future ventures go, and being a part of the IBEW has paved the way for our brothers and sisters and their families.

My hope is to continue to provide pathways for current and future members while leading in a positive direction.

Robert Ward, B.M./F.S.

Local 364's Hot Start to 2026

L.U. 364 (catv,ees,em,es,i,mt,rts&spa), ROCKFORD, IL — Our local hit the ground running this spring.

Work opportunities remain strong as Project Yukon in Belvidere has well over 150 electricians onsite. This and the multiple solar projects underway have started 2026 off right.

We had another successful outage at our Byron nuclear facility. Many thanks to all the traveling brothers and sisters who shared the work and completed this project.

As of this writing, Project Vector in DeKalb has a tentative site work start in April. Plan on more information coming as the next data center in Local 364 gets going.

Summer is construction season, which also includes all our safety work at all the schools in our jurisdiction, so we can expect even more work to be available for our members as 2026 keeps on rolling.

We have several member events coming soon, the first being our Safety Fest on June 13. This

event focuses on safety on the jobsite and is an opportunity for Local 364 to give back to first responders, which builds our community and gives our members the opportunity to meet with local police and fire department members.

Brad Williams, P.S.

Local 440 Has Room to Grow

L.U. 440 (i,rts&spa), RIVERSIDE, CA — It's been more than 30 years since the officers of our local wired and installed the 15-bolt-fist illuminated sign in front of our 1074 La Cadena address. This was our home for years, one that we shared with multiple crafts at the "Labor Temple" facility of the Inland Empire. In 2007, we were blessed to move to a larger facility just a couple of miles away, where we shared a large meeting room with our neighboring brothers and sisters of Local 47, at 1405 Spruce St., Suite G. This was an upgrade for sure, but still a shared facility.

Fast forward to 2025, and Local 440 members can proudly say that we now have our very own facility complete with our own meeting hall, plenty of parking and room to grow. At February's union meeting, the new illuminated signs shone bright for the first time.

From very humble beginnings to now, we have come a long way. Since I took the oath in November 1997, we have grown from approximately 500 members to more than 1,300. We have moved twice due to the growth in membership, and it has been a pleasure and a blessing to see it

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happen. The members of Local 440 voted to approve these changes, and they can stand proud knowing that we are leaving our local better than we found it.

I've always loved the quote "The true meaning of life is to plant trees under whose shade you do not expect to sit." In this case, a lot of us are enjoying the shade of this tree, but we still need to be mindful of the future, continuing to set up those yet to walk our path. Just like our founding fathers did.

Bernie Balland, P.S.



Local 440's newest facility, at 1605 Spruce St., Riverside, Calif.

Local 702 Celebrates Service, New Contract

L.U. 702 (as,c,catv,cs,em,es,et,govt,i,it,lctt,mo,mt,o,p,pet,ptc,rtb,rts,se,spa,st,t,u,uow&ws), WEST FRANKFORT, IL — Greetings, brothers and sisters. We want to congratulate five members who received their 55-year service pins in December: David Houseworth, Walter Jackson, David Smith, Ronald Waldron and David Walker.

The new contract for outside construction linemen went into effect Jan. 5. The four-year



Members of Local 702 receiving their 55-year pins: (from left) David Smith, David Houseworth, Walter Jackson, Ronald Waldron and David Walker.

agreement includes a 4.25% wage increase for each year for all classifications and up to 75 cents for any and all increases mandated by LINECO trustees during the term of the agreement.

The RENEW committee remains active, and members recently volunteered their time and talent to support the community by setting up the Candy Cane Lane holiday display in West Frankfort.

Jamie Hatfield, A.B.M.

Local 728 Innovates, Solves Problems in Real Time

L.U. 728 (em,i,rts&spa), FT. LAUDERDALE, FL — The IBEW continues to demonstrate leadership in innovation and renewable energy construction, and that's evident at the Costco Port St. Lucie solar project.

Lightning Electric, a Local 728 signatory, has been contracted to install a stand-alone, utility-independent microgrid system with more than 15 megawatts of solar power, large-scale battery storage and on-site generator support. This system will



Costco field leaders and Local 728 members: (from left) Charles Schieder, Ian Stearns, Chadwick Thomas and Robert Kramer.

serve a facility greater than 1.5 million square feet, with about 500,000 square feet as cold storage. Once complete, this Costco facility will operate with no connection to the local electrical utility — a remarkable milestone in South Florida and a showcase of union craftsmanship powering the future of resilient infrastructure.

The workforce bringing this project to life is made up of Local 728 journey-level wiremen, apprentices from the South Florida Electrical JATC and Lightning Electric's staff of proud IBEW members. Together, they are delivering the specialized skill and unwavering solidarity needed to meet a demanding construction schedule.

As with any complex renewable energy infrastructure, unforeseen challenges arise daily. Local 728 members — supported by Lightning Electric's project managers, foremen and safety professionals — have consistently delivered innovative, timely solutions to keep the project on track. Their ability to adapt, redesign and overcome technical hurdles is a testament to the strength of union training, the depth of the apprenticeship program and the experience that IBEW members bring to the field.

The Port St. Lucie Costco Distribution Center will stand as a flagship accomplishment for Local 728, the South Florida Electrical JATC and Lightning Electric. It will also serve as a powerful example of how union labor is leading the transition to renewable, resilient and technologically advanced electrical systems.

From large-scale photovoltaic installation and high-voltage battery integration to advanced controls, grounding, commissioning and emergency power coordination, the IBEW crews on site are demonstrating the very best of union electrical craftsmanship. Their work reflects both the technical excellence and the collaborative culture that define Local 728.

This landmark project highlights what happens when skilled union professionals are given the

opportunity to build the future: They deliver safe, high-quality, innovative work that raises industry standards and benefits the entire community.

Effie Cruz, P.S.

Local 1340 Lobbies at the AFL-CIO Legislative Session

L.U. 1340 (i&o), NEWPORT NEWS, VA — At the time of this writing, delegates from our local just returned from Richmond, where they participated in the annual Virginia AFL-CIO legislative session. Over 2,600 bills were proposed, all to be addressed in a 60-day session completed by March 14. Business Manager Jeff Rowe, Assistant Business Manager Jesse Robertson, Press Secretary Jim Avery and apprentice Nicholas Bowman spent Feb. 2 meeting with delegates and senators from our jurisdiction to urge support for issues to improve life for our members and working families in general.

Brother Jason Parker, a member of Local 1340, serves as president of the Virginia State Building and Construction Trades Council and worked on these efforts. At the afternoon Senate Commerce and Labor Committee meeting, several important bills were debated and voted on, including the right of public employees to decide whether they want union representation. This meeting began around 2 p.m. and lasted until 7:30, testing everyone's patience, but in the end our interests were supported. We are fortunate in this session to enjoy majority control of the House of Delegates and state Senate as well as the governorship, which we hope will allow most of our issues to be considered favorably.

We regret to report the passing of Brother Michael Bryan (Jan. 15), Sister Ronda Ennis (Jan. 28) and Brother Addison "Max" Goddard (Jan. 30).

Jim Avery, P.S.



IBEW Podcast

THE LINE: Leadership To Membership

“I think it's imperative that your leadership be able to communicate with the rank and file and let them know why we do what we do.”

— International Secretary-Treasurer Paul Noble

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December 2025 International Executive Council Meeting

Minutes and Report of The International Executive Council's Regular Meeting

The meeting of the International Executive Council was called to order at 8:30 am on December 10, 2025, in Washington, D.C. The members of the council in attendance were Chairman Erikson, Calabro, Antonellis, Hamilton, Cassidy, Finn, Cunningham, Chincio, and Griffith. IEC member elect and Cosner was present to observe. Minutes from the last meeting were approved.

International President Cooper

International President Kenneth W. Cooper met with the members of the International Executive Council to discuss a variety of matters affecting all branches of the Brotherhood.

International Secretary-Treasurer Noble

International Secretary-Treasurer Paul A. Noble presented financial reports covering the IBEW Pension Fund, the Unity Fund, and the Investment Portfolio of the Brotherhood, both in Canada and in the United States.

Legal Defense

General Counsel reporting on legal activity and bills, and payments for legal defense made from the General Fund were examined and approved in accordance with the requirements of Article X, Section 1 of the IBEW Constitution.

Financial Reports

The International Secretary-Treasurer's Report on the various funds of the Brotherhood was presented to the members of the International Executive Council, examined, approved, and filed.

Article XX and XXI Cases

The IBEW was involved in one case under Article XX. The IBEW Charged CWA with violating Article XX, Section 2 and 3 with respect to CWA's affiliate NABET-CWA Local Union 11. There were no cases under Article XXI.

Local Union Under International Office Supervision

The trusteeship of Local Union 1501 ended on December 2, 2025. Accordingly, there are no local unions currently under trusteeship.

IBEW Consolidated Balance Sheet/Income Statement ending September 30, 2025

Reviewed and Filed

IBEW Unity Fund Contributions ending September 30, 2025

Reviewed and Filed

IBEW Pension Benefit Fund Consolidated Statement of Net Assets ending September 30, 2025

Reviewed and Filed

Retirement of International Officers and International Representative

Dennis Affinati, International Vice President, IBEW Third District Effective — November 1, 2025

Myles Calvey, International Executive Council, IBEW Second District Effective — November 1, 2025

Tracy Prezeau, International Representative, Education Department, IBEW Ninth District Effective — November 1, 2025.

Jon Zillig, International Representative, Manufacturing Department, International Office Effective — November 1, 2025.

This regular scheduled meeting was adjourned on December 10, at 1:00p.m. the next regular meeting of the International Executive Council will commence on February 2, 2026, in Naples, Florida.

For the International Executive Council

Donald Finn, Secretary December 2025

The IEC acted on numerous applications under the IBEW pension fund. For a complete listing, consult www.ibew.org/iec-meeting-minutes.



International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers

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

EXECUTIVE OFFICERS	Fourth District Zachary T. Cassidy	Third District Frank Muia	THE ELECTRICAL WORKER
Kenneth W. Cooper International President	Fifth District Donald B. Finn	Fourth District Austin Keyser	Editor Kenneth W. Cooper
Paul A. Noble International Secretary-Treasurer	Sixth District Mark H. Cunningham	Fifth District Glenn Brannen	Matt Spence Tim Lawson Alex Hogan
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Third District William Hamilton		Tenth District Curtis Sharpe	
		Eleventh District Mark D. Hager	

NOTICE: 41st Convention Nominations for International Office

Article III, Section 1(a) of the *IBEW Constitution* requires that an individual who intends to be nominated as a candidate for International Office at the International Convention must submit a Notice of Intent to be Nominated on a form provided by the International Secretary-Treasurer.

The form provided by the International Secretary-Treasurer's office may be accessed either by: (i) sending a request for the form by mail to the International Secretary-Treasurer at 900 7th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20001, (ii) sending a request by email to IST@ibew.org; or (iii) accessing the form through the IBEW Convention website, which can be found by going to www.ibew.org. A request for the form by mail or e-mail to the International Secretary-Treasurer will be honored if received by the International Secretary-Treasurer prior to June 23, 2026. A link to the form will be available on the IBEW Convention website. Anyone intending to be nominated as a candidate for an International Officer position at the 41st IBEW International Convention must submit the form to the International Secretary-Treasurer by: (i) certified mail to International Secretary-Treasurer, IBEW, 900 7th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20001, or (ii) by email to IST@ibew.org

To be eligible to be nominated for International Office at the 41st Convention, the Notice of Intent to be Nominated Form must be completed in full by the member and received by the International Secretary-Treasurer no later than 9:00 a.m. Eastern Daylight Time on Tuesday, June 23, 2026.

In accordance with Article III, Section 2 of the *IBEW Constitution*, no one shall be eligible to be elected as an International Officer except a member having at least five (5) years continuous good standing in the IBEW immediately prior to nomination.

The nomination process will be completed at the International Convention. In accordance with Article III, Section 1 of the *IBEW Constitution*, International Officers shall be nominated and elected by duly elected delegates, and no one shall be eligible to be nominated at the International Convention who has not provided the required notice prior to the deadline. ■

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.

Send letters to:

Letters to the Editor, *The Electrical Worker*, 900 7th Street, NW, Washington, DC 20001

Or send by email to: media@ibew.org

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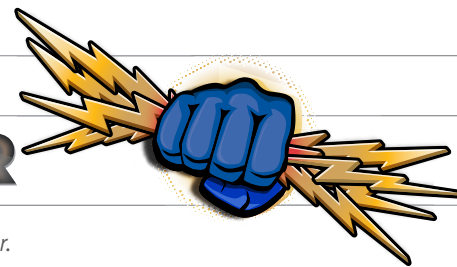
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WHO WE ARE: PROFILES IN POWER



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

San Francisco Member Looks Out for Workers as Airport Commissioner

Jose Fuentes Almanza had just started his San Francisco Local 6 apprenticeship 25 years ago when his father — a union-represented janitor — suddenly passed away.

Almanza had worked for Safeway stores in San Francisco for more than a decade, rising from checker and bagger to department manager, and had been a member of the United Food and Commercial Workers. He appreciated the power of a union supporting its members.

But he was still stunned and remains grateful to this day about what came next.

“It was my first year. I was not yet a member, but I was going to be all in,” said Almanza, now a Local 6 assistant business manager. “This was all I had at the time, so I went to work three days after my dad had passed.

“My journeyman came up to me and asked, ‘What are you doing here?’ I told him I can’t lose my job.”

Later that day, that journeyman returned with an envelope of cash that was more than Almanza would earn in one week. IBEW members and apprentices on the jobsite chipped in so he could take off and spend time with his family and loved ones.

“I broke down,” Almanza said. “He literally told me: ‘You need to go home and find out why you joined here. This is your Brotherhood. You go home and take care of your family.’”



Almanza is sworn in by Breed as a commissioner on the San Francisco International Airport Commission.

“That was a turning point,” Almanza said. “That’s when I got involved in the local.”

Did he ever. The first-generation American took on various roles and was eventually recognized far beyond Local 6. He’s served on the San Francisco International Airport Commission since 2022, giving him a voice in the operations of the 13th busiest airport in the United States and a transportation hub of the Bay Area.

“Jose is one of those guys that probably didn’t think he’d be where he’s at, but he’s risen to where



“The skill set he brings and the integrity he brings shines through to those paying attention.”

— San Francisco Local 6 Business Manager John Doherty on Assistant Business Manager Jose Fuentes Almanza, pictured with then-San Francisco Mayor London Breed in 2022.

he’s needed,” Local 6 Business Manager John Doherty said. “The skill set he brings and the integrity he brings shine through to those paying attention.

“That was true even when he was working out in the field,” Doherty added. “No matter what challenge is thrown at him, he’s grown into it. He takes over and owns it.”

The commission’s five members are appointed by the San Francisco mayor and serve four-year terms. It is the primary policy-making body for the airport.

Traditionally, one seat is reserved for a union representative — and that’s where Almanza comes in. Doherty recommended him when officials from the San Francisco Building & Construction Trades Council asked for a suggestion when the seat came open.

Then-Mayor London Breed later approved it, making him the first person of Latin American descent to serve on the commission since it was formed in 1970.

“He’s like every good labor leader,” Doherty said. “He’s a little humble, but he always finds a way to get the job done. So, I said to them that they should put him in.”

Almanza, 56, was born in San Francisco after his mother and father met there after moving from Mexico and El Salvador, respectively.

The family wasn’t rich, but his father’s pride in his work and the power of a union contract allowed them to live a more comfortable life than many of their neighbors in the Mission neighborhood.

“He instilled the work ethic in me,” Almanza said. “I’m fortunate in that sense.”

The son was hired by Safeway in 1987, just out of high school. The younger Almanza had a good relationship with his bosses, who recognized that work ethic, and he appreciated the support of the food workers union.

But even though he knew little about construction, he applied for Local 6’s apprenticeship and got in in 2000, on his second attempt.

Stories like that are common in Local 6, Doherty said. San Francisco is a highly diverse city with no one ethnic group holding a majority of the

population. Doherty himself is the son of Irish immigrants. Members of the local’s office staff include first-generation U.S. citizens and people whose parents came from Mexico and China.

“I felt like I was ready to do something else,” Almanza said. “It would not have been a bad thing if I had stayed [at Safeway], but here in San Francisco, the trades have always been strong.”

He built a reputation as an excellent craftsman working for signatory contractors such as Rosendin, Paganini and Design Electric, Doherty said. He was elected to Local 6’s examining board and later became a member of the inside wireman negotiating committee and its delegate to the Building Trades in 2012.

Those are just some of the many roles he’s had at the local, where he became a full-time staff member in 2014, having been appointed a business representative.

Still, he said it was “extremely humbling” when he learned he was joining the airport commission.

“Even more so when they did the swearing in,” Almanza said. “I knew I was the first-ever Latino. It was mentioned in everything written about it. The mayor was there. My wife and son were there.

“It was nerve-wracking but very uplifting. I’m proud of that.”

Almanza and his fellow board members approve contracts involving the airport, many of which involve construction. All inside workers there are covered by a project labor agreement. Local 6 and San Mateo, Calif., Local 617, another inside local, regularly have members on site.

“It benefits us because we represent people who work for the airport,” Doherty said, “and for Local 617, they are always building and rebuilding it, like you do in all good airports.

“He understands construction well, and he especially understands contracts and PLAs,” Doherty added. “If anyone says anything sideways, he knows what to say and how to argue about it.”

Almanza said looking out for workers’

interests is part of the job. But he noted that he’s responsible for setting policy for all aspects of the airport, and he’s enjoyed listening to and learning from fellow board members and the community.

“It’s an amazing place,” he said. “It’s such a world-renowned airport. When I travel, I check out everyone’s airport, seeing what they have compared to what we have.

“You can tell the way the economics are in San Francisco by how the airport is doing,” he added.

He encourages other IBEW members across North America who have a chance to serve their communities — whether it’s elected office, a local planning commission or any governmental body — to jump right in.

“You will always have the sense of pride that you did what you could to help your brothers and sisters,” Almanza said. “You represent so many more people than you know. You’ll be proud of the results, no matter what the concern is.”

Almanza now represents the Brotherhood on a stage he never thought possible while growing up, unsure what he wanted to do but having parents who showed him the power of hard work.

He now lives on the city’s west side with his wife, Janet, and 16-year-old son, Antonio. Sometimes he even gets a chuckle about what he’s doing. Almanza noted he serves on the airport’s arts steering committee, even though he doesn’t consider himself an art expert.

But the airport has a public museum, in addition to numerous displays throughout the terminals, and he marveled at the positive reaction travelers to the Bay Area during Super Bowl week in February gave it.

“I’m very blessed,” he said. “I don’t pretend I am the reason where I’m at. The union has supported me and my family throughout. It’s a lot more than a paycheck.

“It’s still a little humbling,” Almanza added. “It still feels a little weird when they address me as ‘Commissioner.’” ■

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