

# USW@Work

A Publication of the United Steelworkers

A Powerful Voice for Workers



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**"WE NEED TO BRING JOBS BACK TO THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA. WE NEED TO MAKE SURE WE'RE BUILDING MATERIALS, COMPONENTS, PRODUCTS AND STEEL RIGHT HERE IN AMERICA."**

U.S. SECRETARY OF LABOR MARTY WALSH, AUG. 16, 2021, IN CHESTERTON, IND., THE FIRST STOP ON THE USW'S "WE SUPPLY AMERICA" TOUR

CURRENT



**USW TELLS NATION: 'WE SUPPLY AMERICA'**

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Photo by Steve Dietz.

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## Fighting to Save Line 5

I've been glad to see the news in recent editions of *USW@Work* about the workers in Ohio who are fighting so hard to preserve the Line 5 pipeline that supplies so much of the Midwest with its utility needs.

While I definitely understand the concerns that some people have about these types of projects, the truth is that there would be some concerns, possibly much bigger ones, no matter how we transport oil and gas from one place to another. When we do it using other means like trains and tanker trucks, the possibility of leaks and accidents in those cases is higher, as is the wear and tear on our roads. In many ways, Line 5 is the alternative we have right now that makes the most sense to meet our needs.

Not only that, but we can't just forget about the jobs. There are more than 300 USW members at the Toledo Refining Company alone who rely on that pipeline to supply them with what they need to do their work. That's 300 families who have to put food on the table, pay for doctor bills, send their kids to school and, someday, we hope, have a healthy retirement. We can't just turn our backs on those workers and expect something else to fill that void. Too often, that ends up leaving workers who have to take two or three other jobs to replace the one good job that they lost. Or maybe even worse, they end up having to uproot their families and leave a whole community behind. We've seen way too much of that.

I hope Gov. Whitmer in Michigan makes the right decision and reverses course to allow Line 5 to continue. Too many good people's futures depend on it.

*Joe Sauerwein  
Local 912, Toledo, Ohio*

## Workers Deserve a Voice

It's been a long time since everyday American workers had a reason to be excited about what was happening in Washington, D.C. It seems like for so long the Wall Street lobbyists and big money-makers were the ones calling the shots.

But now I think maybe the tables are turning. One of the recent issues of the USW magazine said that about two-thirds of American workers would join a union if they had a chance. Even half that many people would mean a huge change in the power structure in this country.

Too many times, workers want a union, or even try to organize one, only to be intimidated, bullied and eventually pushed aside by the companies they work for. The big companies in this country – the Walmarts, the Amazons – they are famous for doing everything in their power (which is a lot) to keep unions out.

It's about time workers turn the tables. Passing the PRO (Protecting the Right to Organize) Act would be the best thing we could do in years to give workers the voice they want and that they deserve. It's already passed the House - now we just need the Senate to follow suit. President Biden already said he was ready to sign it. The PRO Act would make it much harder for big companies to keep unions out just by spending a lot of money, and it would give workers the power they need to make unions the rule, rather than the exception. It would finally give workers a real voice.

So many companies like to spend money to keep unions away. I say, why not let that money go to the workers instead, in the form of wage increases, pensions and good health care plans? Call your Senators, tell them to pass the PRO Act and give workers the chance to join the unions they want and deserve.

*Clint Blake  
Local 13-434, El Dorado, Ark.*

## Let's Put America to Work

I have to say, even as a retired Steelworker, I was so proud to see my fellow union members traveling around the country this summer making the case for a big infrastructure program.

It seems like for the past five years or so, every week in Washington was "Infrastructure Week," but Congress and the president never got around to actually agreeing on anything. They just liked to talk and tweet about it.

Now we have a plan on the table that will do what we need – rebuild our country and put people back to work doing the jobs that need to be done. Steelworkers will end up doing a lot of that work, and we in the union should be out there supporting it, whether we are active, retired or otherwise.

As part of this plan, it is crucial that our union workers and their families purchase products made in America by 100 percent American labor.

That's why the Steelworkers' bus tour this past summer was so important – union members got out into their communities to talk about all the ways we make this country better, and we need to keep doing it. Let's get to work!

*Walter Danna  
Avella, Pa., SOAR Chapter 8-5  
Retiree, Local 2911, Weirton Steel Co.*

## STAY CONNECTED

We welcome correspondence from USW members, retirees and their families. Letters should be short and to the point. We reserve the right to edit for length. You can reach us via email at [editor@usw.org](mailto:editor@usw.org) or by mail at 60 Blvd. of the Allies, Pittsburgh, PA 15222.



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# IRON RANGE PROUD

MINNESOTA'S MINERS  
ARE THE BACKBONE OF  
THE REGION'S ECONOMY

**W**hen he was a child, Ryan Elkington would play and swim in the woods and waterways between the towns of Eveleth and Virginia, Minn. Now, as a member of Local 6860, he's a part of the USW work force that mines that same location for the iron ore that fuels the American steel industry.

"This used to be my playground," Elkington said, gesturing toward the area along U.S. Highway 53 that is home to the Cleveland-Cliffs United Taconite mine. "Thirty years later, I was a part of digging it up." Someday, that same piece of earth – which today is filled with the valuable minerals that give northeastern Minnesota's Iron Range its name – may again become a playground for Elkington's grandchildren or great-grandchildren.

Decades from now, when the open-pit mine is no longer of use, it is expected to naturally fill with fresh water and become another of the many reservoirs in the Land of 10,000 Lakes.



“There is a very good balance here,” Elkington said, “between the environment and getting the job done.”

## Infrastructure Push

The job of mining ore has been the driving force for an economy that has supported tens of thousands of workers and families on the Iron Range for generations. And it’s one that the members of Local 6860 and thousands of other miners in the area hope can continue for generations to come.

“It’s a way of life here,” Elkington said.

One way to ensure that way of life – iron ore mining, and its end product, steel – both have a bright future is to invest heavily in rebuilding the nation’s crumbling infrastructure, said Local 6860 President Jamie Winger.

“Everything starts with steel,” Winger said. “I don’t think we could afford not to do it.”

Winger’s stand on federal infrastructure spending is in lock-step with that of the USW, which earlier this year launched a nationwide campaign, called “We Supply America,” to ensure a robust, comprehensive infrastructure plan that would rejuvenate American manufacturing and support tens of thousands of union jobs for decades into the future.

That effort paid off when President Biden signed the \$1.2 trillion Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act on Nov. 15.

Investments like those in the new law are particularly important for the residents of the Iron Range, where the strength of the mining industry is synonymous with the region’s economic well-being.

When asked what people on the range do if they don’t work in mining, one visitor to a local coffee shop summed it up very simply - “We sell stuff to miners.”

Local 6860 Vice President Ryan Denzel echoed that sentiment.

“Everybody in this range has something to do with mining,” he said, noting that he and his neighbors make a point of eating at local diners and coffee shops and shopping at locally owned stores whenever possible.

“This infrastructure plan will keep us going. That will mean a lot to us on the range,” Denzel said. “Everything that moves America is based on iron.”

## History of Mining

For surveyor Greg O’Malley, who has worked at the Cleveland-Cliffs mine for 14 years, the solidarity of the USW membership has helped both to strengthen the industry and to provide a higher quality of life for families throughout the region by ensuring good wages and benefits.

“The more people stick together, the stronger we are here,” O’Malley said.

The residents of northeastern Minnesota have understood for a long time that mining is the lifeblood of their communities. Many of the small towns in the area were developed by companies that owned mines nearby. The mines funded schools, hospitals, parks, libraries and other public assets that in turn attracted workers to the facilities and communities.

While most of the mining in the state takes place in the northeastern region, the industry still provides benefits to the entire population through the Minnesota Permanent School Fund.

The system, created in 1858, directs royalties paid by mining companies and other companies that utilize state-controlled natural resources into a fund to provide a long-term source of financing for Minnesota’s school system. During the 2020-21 school year, the fund provided \$37 million to educational facilities throughout the state.

Mining is such a part of the fabric of Minnesota, in fact, that the residents of Hibbing, founded in 1893,



Ryan Elkington

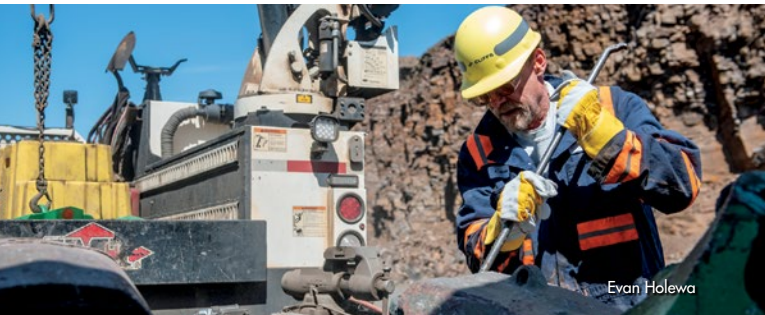
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AMERICA

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“It’s awesome to be the first step in steel, to be a little piece of the puzzle. We absolutely are living the American Dream.”

Wendy Erickson





once moved their entire town two miles south, brick by brick, in the early 1920s after ore was discovered under their feet. The move affected more than 20 businesses and 180 homes.

“Minnesota has always been a global leader in responsible mining,” said District 11 Director Emil Ramirez. “Mining supports our communities, and the people here are committed to doing it in such a way that it is sustainable, so that we can protect our natural resources as we continue to grow our economy for the next generation.”

### Economic Jump-Start

The kind of economic ripple effect that mining has in northeastern Minnesota can be replicated in industrial communities across the country as a result of the new infrastructure plan, Winger said.

“It’s important that we start supplying ourselves,” he said. “There is no reason that our money should go anywhere else.”

This August, the USW held a nationwide week of action in support of the “We Supply America” program, which included a bus tour of six USW locals and resulted in thousands of phone calls, emails and postcards from USW members urging lawmakers to act quickly to put Americans to work rebuilding the nation.

The first stop on the bus tour, in

northwest Indiana, included an appearance by Lourenco Goncalves, Cleveland-Cliffs’ chairman, president and CEO, who credited the strong unions at his facilities for ensuring the kind of hard work and continuity that results in quality products.

Goncalves said he was proud of the hard-working union members at his company and proud to be an advocate, alongside them, for robust infrastructure investment.

“We are the United States of America,” he said. “United, as in union.”

Goncalves has won praise from the USW leaders at his mines, steel plants and other facilities for his efforts to strategically grow and strengthen Cleveland-Cliffs as a company while showing respect for workers and their communities.

Last year, Cleveland-Cliffs, founded in 1847, acquired AK Steel and most of the assets of ArcelorMittal USA to become the largest USW employer in the industry, and the largest flat-rolled steel and iron ore pellet producer in North America.

“They are the real deal,” said Local 2911 President Mark Glyptis, who represents workers at the Cleveland-Cliffs tin plate facility in Weirton, W.Va. “The opportunities we have ahead are the best we’ve had in decades.”

### Focus on Safety

In addition to expanding those

opportunities, Cleveland-Cliffs and the USW work closely together on the vital issue of health and safety. For the members of Local 6860 in Minnesota, that is one of the most important issues the union faces day in and day out.

“Safety is just everywhere here. It affects me all the time in my job,” said Elkington, a co-chair of the local’s grievance committee, who spends his work days preparing blast sites at the Cleveland-Cliffs mine. That is among the first steps workers must take toward removing iron ore from the earth, and it’s a process that requires precise attention to detail.

The hierarchy of controls is essential, especially so in an industry involving huge rock formations, massive machines and constantly moving parts.

The iron ore mining process at United Taconite begins in an enormous pit where workers extract chunks of rock with huge excavators and load them onto hauling trucks the size of small houses.

The workers then transport those rocks to be crushed into smaller pieces which are fed to a nearby processing plant, where the ore is milled into a powder-like consistency. Machines use recycled water and large magnets to separate the ore from unwanted material and form marble-sized pieces known as pellets.

Those pieces are then transported to mills where they are melted in blast furnaces as part of the steelmaking process.





Cleveland-Cliffs' eight operating blast furnaces are among the lower greenhouse gas-intensive integrated steel operations in the world, due in large part to the use of environmentally friendly iron ore pellets produced in the United States.

"It's sophisticated," Winger said of the mining and pellet-making process, "and yet simple."

Elkington, whose father also was a miner and whose grandfather died many years ago in an accident at another mine, said he is proud of his family's legacy as producers of the building blocks of the steel industry.

His father worked in the mines for 33 years, and his grandfather's tragedy, Elkington said, resulted in "policies that are still in use today" to keep workers in the mining industry safe from the hazards that cause harm.

### Environmental Legacy

Another legacy that the workers at United Taconite are committed to maintaining is the natural beauty of their surroundings. They understand that they must strike a balance between economic and environmental interests to ensure that their industry has a bright future.

"If you are truly an environmentalist, then mining has to be done in the United States," said Winger, noting that U.S. environmental and safety regulations are the strongest in the world,

and that importing materials from other countries would be more expensive and potentially dangerous. "I don't think we can afford not to do it here."

Electrician Joe Mason agreed.

"The U.S. is a leader in being a steward for the environment," he said.

### Community Partners

The pride that the residents of the Iron Range feel about the region's mining legacy, as well as their desire to protect their environment, stretches far beyond the edges of the mine and the walls of the plant.

For Elkington, there is a feeling of satisfaction in being a "building block" for the steel industry. When he sees a bridge or a building under construction, he said, he often wonders if the steel was produced using iron ore from the United Taconite mine.

"I'm constantly thinking, 'Was that our pellets? Did I have a hand in that?'" he said, noting the number of additional projects that will require steel as a result of the Biden administration's rebuilding plan. "The infrastructure plan is vital for us."

The workers at United Taconite have seen over the decades what a strong steel industry does for their workplace, while also experiencing the struggles that come with industry downturns.

About five years ago, the company was forced to lay workers off during one of those periods. Elkington was

one of the members who found himself temporarily out of a job.

"It was tough," said Elkington, who went to welding school while he was on layoff. "We didn't know if we would be coming back."

The USW's mine workers weren't the only ones facing uncertainty at that time. Towns throughout the Iron Range feel the sting when the industry struggles.

"It's a big part of our economy," agreed Wendy Erickson, who is married to Elkington and who also works at the United Taconite mine. "There are a lot of spinoff jobs."

Even residents who don't work in the industry are proud of the role mining plays in their lives, said Local 6860 member Brian Zarn.

"It is a source of pride," said Zarn. "What we produce here is important, to national security, to infrastructure, to the entire country. This is the beginning of it all."

### Next Generation

Through that ripple effect, the USW has provided residents of the Iron Range with a good life for generations, Erickson said, and the new infrastructure plan will help to ensure that life can continue for generations into the future.

"It's awesome to be the first step in steel, to be a little piece of the puzzle," she said. "We absolutely are living the American Dream."





# WORKERS WIN *on* INFRASTRUCTURE

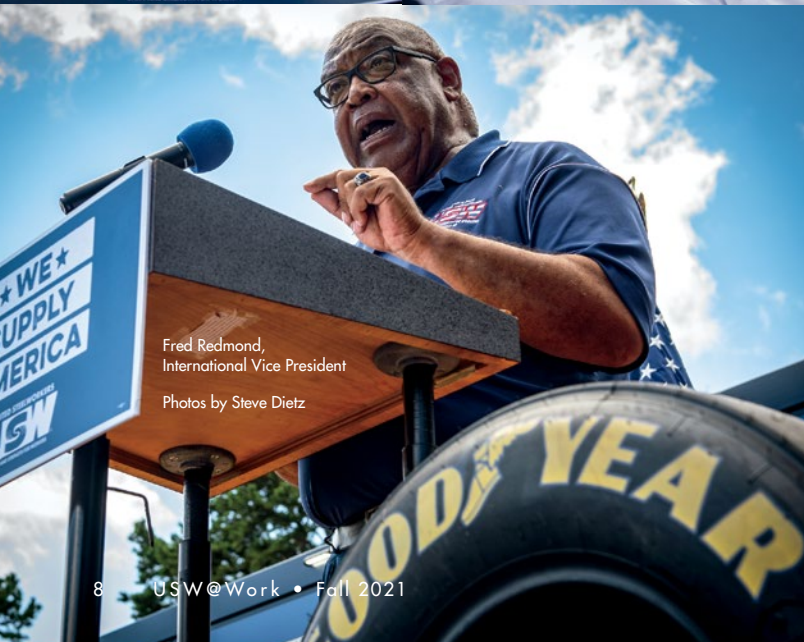
'WE SUPPLY AMERICA' TOUR CELEBRATES CONTRIBUTIONS OF USW MEMBERS



Tom Conway,  
International President



Roxanne Brown,  
International Vice President



Fred Redmond,  
International Vice President

Photos by Steve Dietz





Thousands of USW members across the United States spoke with one voice this August during the union's "We Supply America" week of action, capped off with a seven-stop bus tour of USW locals and workplaces that covered more than 2,200 miles.

The bus tour was the culmination of years of work by USW members to fight for major investments in the nation's infrastructure, a campaign that ultimately resulted in a tremendous victory for workers when President Biden signed the \$1.2 trillion Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act on Nov. 15.

"It was an amazing journey," International Vice President Roxanne Brown said as she closed out the final "We Supply America" event outside the union's headquarters in Pittsburgh on Aug. 20. "I have been filled to the brim with pride for our members and the work that we do."

The dignity and importance of that work was evident at each point along the tour, which included stops in Chesterton, Ind., Newark, Ohio, Weirton, W.Va., Danville, Va., Wilmington, N.C., and Washington, D.C. Along the way, international officers, elected officials and employers joined rank-and-file union workers in calling for infrastructure investments and touting the countless ways USW members are prepared to advance that work.

"We are so proud to be connected to our union siblings in this way," Local 8888 Recording Secretary Ashley Seabrook said as she reminded the crowd in Danville about the hundreds of union-made products that the 10,000 members of her local use every day while building Navy ships and nuclear submarines at Newport News Shipbuilding in Virginia.

## USW-Made Products

Those products are the tip of the iceberg when it comes to what USW members do to keep supply chains stocked, keep Americans safe and keep the nation's economic engines running.

"Everything that we make and everything that we do contributes to our infrastructure in some way," Brown told members who braved heavy rain to rally outside the Holophane facility in Newark, Ohio, where members of Local 525 produce light fixtures for roads and walkways.

As much as the tour was a celebration of USW members and their work, it also was a call to action, and one that ultimately proved to be a huge success.

In Newark, Local 525 President Steve Bishoff, along with Local 9110 President Mike Bliss, Local 1237 President Mike Noll, District 1 Director Donnie Blatt, and International Vice President Dave McCall, called on USW members across the country to urge Congress to vote "yes" on the infrastructure bill.



The timing for the week of action, International President Tom Conway said, was "perfect." Just before the USW bus tour hit the road, 19 Republicans joined Democrats in the U.S. Senate to pass the infrastructure legislation. That shifted the debate to the U.S. House, which approved the bill a few months later with a similarly bipartisan vote.

USW members deserve credit for keeping the pressure on lawmakers to get the job done, USW leaders said.

"This is about you," Blatt told workers in Ohio, noting that all workers will benefit from the economic ripple effects of such a large-scale investment.

## The Cost of Inaction

Calling out critics who claimed the \$1.2 trillion price tag of the bill was too high, McCall said the cost of inaction would have been higher. American taxpayers and working families, he said, have been losing billions of dollars each year due to sub-par roads, bridges, ports, railways, water pipes, electrical delivery and other systems.

Drivers pay an extra \$500 per year in vehicle maintenance as a result of

poor-quality roads; leaking water pipes lead to the loss of 6 billion gallons of fresh water each day; and the nation's electrical grid regularly wastes nearly 10 percent of its power.

The nation's infrastructure is in such poor condition, McCall said, that the American Society of Civil Engineers graded it a C-minus on the group's most recent "report card."

"We've fallen behind," McCall said. "This is about creating a better life, not just for us and our families, but for our children and our grandchildren."

## Human Infrastructure

Besides improving the nation's transportation, communication and utility systems, the infrastructure plan will create millions of new jobs and provide years of security for existing workers.

Upgrading the nation's physical infrastructure is only the beginning of what must be done, said International Vice President Fred Redmond. The nation also must invest heavily in the "human infrastructure" of health care, child care, education, environmental preservation and job training, he said.

A second package of legislation to provide trillions in funding for those priorities is equally as important as the physical infrastructure bill, Redmond said.

"This isn't just about our jobs as Steelworkers," he told the Danville crowd. "This is about the future of our country."

USW members are a part of that future in every industry and every sector of the economy, he said. Employers know that, too, and many took part in "We Supply America" events, including Cleveland-Cliffs, U.S. Steel, Corning, Elliot Group, Instant Brands, All-Clad and Alex E. Paris Contracting.

In Chesterton, Cliffs CEO Lourenco Goncalves said the infrastructure plan gives the United States a chance to correct some poor decisions from the past two decades that have harmed the nation's manufacturing base and led to unfair trading practices around the world.

"We lost our way," Goncalves said, in particular pointing to the decision in 2001 to admit China into the World Trade Organization. "China copied our playbook, but we are taking that playbook back."

## Promoting Job Growth

For Pete Morton, president of Local 831L at the Goodyear plant in Danville, the infrastructure act offers a chance

to grow the work force at his plant and strengthen the economy in his community while ensuring job security for the next generation of tire makers.

“This is an investment in the American worker,” Morton said.

As the USW bus tour rolled along in late summer, the fate of the infrastructure bill was still uncertain. That’s why, at each stop, USW Rapid Response activists collected stacks of postcards signed by USW members urging their representatives to support the legislation. Members delivered the cards, as well as joint labor-management letters, to elected officials to demonstrate widespread, bipartisan support for the bill.

The success of that ongoing effort after several years of inaction in Washington was a victory for every member of the USW, Conway said.

“There is no other union that has as much at stake as we do in this fight,” he said. “We are on the cusp of turning America around.”

## Many Years of Effort

The USW’s “We Supply America” effort, launched in March, was meant to call attention to the nation’s infrastructure needs and push for those needs to be met by Steelworkers. As a result of that work, the new law includes provisions to ensure that the materials used to rebuild the nation are made in America by union workers.

Because of those “Buy American” provisions, the initiative will create a ripple of economic growth that will continue for years to come, International Secretary-Treasurer John Shinn told the crowd of Local 1025 members at Corning’s optical fiber facility in Wilmington.

“Union jobs built this country and will do so again,” Shinn said.

The products that Local 1025 members Cheryl McMillan, Monica Pankey, Renee Nixon and others make at Corning are an essential part of extending broadband internet access to every American family.

“We keep everyone connected,” Pankey said.

That connectivity has never been more important than it was over the past 20 months, with more workers staying home and more students engaging in remote learning, Nixon said. The pandemic shined a light on the need for every American to have equal access to

high-speed internet, she said.

Local 1025 President Donnetta Williams said that, with \$65 billion in the infrastructure law earmarked for expansion of broadband, some of the new jobs that will come as a result will be in her 320-member local.

“We stand ready to supply America,” Williams pledged to cheers from the audience during the stop in Wilmington, where the crowd included North Carolina Gov. Roy Cooper.

Three months later, Williams led off President Biden’s bill-signing ceremony by delivering welcoming remarks at the White House.

## White House Priority

The infrastructure package is central to the Biden administration’s “Build Back Better” agenda to create jobs and help Americans recover from the COVID-19 pandemic. Economists with Moody’s Analytics estimated that the plan would create at least 2.7 million more jobs over 10 years than the economy would generate without such a plan.

Putting Americans back to work with good-paying, family-supporting union jobs was at the top of the president’s agenda from day one, U.S. Secretary of Labor Marty Walsh told the crowd in Chesterton, the first stop on the tour.

“We have an opportunity like never before,” Walsh said. “President Biden wants to win the future for the United States of America.”

It would have been “a crime” if lawmakers had failed to deliver on the infrastructure plan, said Mark Lash, president of Local 1066, which represents members at U.S. Steel’s Gary Works.

The nearly 5,000 Steelworkers represented by Lash and Local 6787 President Pete Trinidad at the Cleveland Cliffs mill in nearby Burns Harbor are looking forward to the economic shot in the arm that the infrastructure plan will supply to their Northwest Indiana towns.

“These jobs are the lifeblood of this community,” Lash said.

That statement is true for USW members in communities across the nation – whether they make steel, paper or tires, or whether they teach college students, mine iron ore or care for patients in a nursing home, Redmond said.

“Our children and our grandchildren are going to judge us by how we respond in this moment,” Redmond said.

**PRESIDENT BIDEN  
SIGNED THE  
\$1.2 TRILLION  
INFRASTRUCTURE  
INVESTMENT AND  
JOBS ACT ON NOV. 15.  
THE PLAN INCLUDES  
THE FOLLOWING  
PROVISIONS →**

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\*TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE USW'S  
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# PITT FACULTY WINS

## 3,300 MEMBERS ENDURE AGGRESSIVE ANTI-UNION CAMPAIGN, VOTE TO JOIN USW

Thousands of University of Pittsburgh faculty members are getting ready to bargain their first union contract with the school's administration after voting by a more than 2-to-1 ratio to become members of the USW.

The vote, held from late August through mid-October, was a success despite an aggressive anti-union effort

that stretched the campaign out for several years and cost the university administration more than \$2 million.

"This result has been a long time coming, but it was worth the wait," said Tyler Bickford, an associate professor in the university's English department. "It's a good feeling to know that we as faculty members have finally achieved what all

workers deserve – a voice in the decision-making process that affects our lives on the job."

### 'A Better Institution'

The faculty members at the school, commonly known as Pitt, said that the results of the mail-in vote, despite several legal challenges from the administration, proved that the workers were committed to improving the university through collective action.

"Simply put, this will make Pitt a better institution," Bickford said. "The result will be greater security for workers, better educational outcomes for students, and increased transparency

across the university."

Now that the successful vote is behind them, the members turn their attention to electing a bargaining committee, surveying the membership on their priorities, and sitting down with the administration to bargain a first contract.

Melinda Ciccocioppo, a lecturer in the university's psychology department who served on the USW organizing committee, said that the faculty mem-





bers' fight for fair wages and improved working conditions will mean a better environment for everyone at Pitt, including students and staff.

"Students can count on trusted professors to be there from one semester to the next," she said, "and to be able to provide them with the support they need in their academic journeys."

### Aggressive Campaign

The Pitt faculty's unionization effort, launched

publicly in 2016, initially met with staunch opposition from the university administration. Financial records showed that, over the past five years, the administration paid more than \$2.1 million to Philadelphia "union avoidance" law firm Ballard Spahr to halt faculty unionization efforts, as well as to prevent a concurrent effort by Pitt graduate student workers to join the USW.

In the spring of 2020, a Pennsylvania Labor Relations Board (PLRB) official ruled that the administration had "artificially inflated" its list of potential union members in an attempt to

prevent the organizing effort. This April the PLRB settled on the size of the bargaining unit, and the election was scheduled.

"Throughout this process, we have wanted nothing more than what all higher education workers deserve – a voice in the decisions that affect our lives and those of our students," Ciccocioppo said.

### Growing Segment

The 3,300 faculty members at Pitt join a growing academic segment of the USW. Adjunct instructors at Western Pennsylvania's Point Park and Robert Morris universities also became members

of the USW in recent years. In addition, the USW has represented more than 7,000 administrative and technical workers at the University of Toronto since 1998.

"Every USW member should be proud of these workers and the effort they put in to achieve this victory," said International President Tom Conway. "This vote was successful because these workers know that this decision will make the university a better place for the entire community."



Photo by Steve Dietz





**USW PARTNERS WITH WIND ENERGY DEVELOPER TO REVIVE SPARROWS POINT SITE**

The USW this August announced a partnership with renewable energy company US Wind to transform part of the former Sparrows Point steel mill near Baltimore into a manufacturing facility to support the offshore wind energy industry.

“The loss of the Sparrows Point steel mill, which once employed thousands of workers, was a huge blow to the Baltimore community and to U.S. manufacturing as a whole,” said International President Tom Conway. “Now, we have a chance to create the jobs of the future right here on this historic site.”

**Site of Historic Mill**

Conway’s remarks followed a kick-off event celebrating the new project



**“Bringing USW jobs back to Sparrows Point is a victory for the workers in this region and for American manufacturing.”**

*John Shinn, International Secretary-Treasurer*



at the Sparrows Point site, once home to one of the world’s largest steel mills, which produced material used in the construction of the Golden Gate and George Washington bridges and was a vital part of the U.S. war efforts during World War I and World War II.

Bethlehem Steel, which ran the Sparrows Point mill for most of the 20th century, once employed more than 30,000 workers at the facility. Following years

of uncertainty and a series of ownership changes, the mill closed in 2012.

“It’s fitting that this site, which has been such a major part of this nation’s industrial history, will now also become a significant part of its future,” said International Secretary-Treasurer John Shinn. “Bringing USW jobs back to Sparrows Point is a victory for the workers in this region and for American manufacturing.”





Photos by Steve Dietz  
Renderings by U.S. Wind

US Wind said it planned initially to invest \$77 million, and ultimately a total of \$150 million, to develop the site, where it will produce foundations for offshore wind turbines. The new steel fabrication facility will be known as Sparrows Point Steel.

The project is expected to support 3,500 construction jobs and, once it is fully operational, the facility is expected

Wind will not oppose workers' rights to unionize and collectively bargain.

"Together, we can ensure that these jobs are good, union jobs that will again support families across this region," Conway said.

Conway said that the USW and US Wind have a number of goals in common, including creating high-quality manufacturing jobs and ensuring that

to support more than 500 permanent jobs.

### Good, Union Jobs

As part of the agreement with US Wind, the USW will work with the company to recruit and train local workers, ensuring that the surrounding community shares in the economic benefits of the project. The USW also reached a neutrality agreement with the company, meaning that US

the United States has strong domestic supply chains for emerging energy industries.

"It's vitally important that the jobs we create in the future are jobs that can support families and communities, with strong benefits and secure retirements," he said.

US Wind expects the first phase of its project to create enough energy to power about 80,000 homes by 2025. The second phase of the offshore wind project, called Momentum Wind, will include up to 82 turbines and will be Maryland's most ambitious clean energy project. In total, the development will eventually generate enough electricity to power more than 500,000 homes.

"Developing Momentum Wind and Sparrows Point Steel at full capacity will give Maryland the opportunity to bring steel back to Baltimore," said Jeff Grybowski, US Wind CEO, "and become the epicenter of offshore wind manufacturing."

Maryland Gov. Larry Hogan said that the project would help to make Maryland a leader in the growing alternative energy industry.


"The State of Maryland is proud to support this transformative and game-changing partnership," Hogan said. "Offshore wind presents a once-in-a-generation opportunity to expand and diversify our economy and our energy portfolio. Maryland is proud to continue to be an example of strong environmental leadership."

### Hallowed Ground

Jim Strong, assistant to District 8 Director Ernest R. "Billy" Thompson, said it was fitting that the new project would be built on the site of one of the most storied steel manufacturing facilities in the world.

"Sparrows Point has always been hallowed ground for me and my fellow Steelworkers," said Strong. "We're thrilled to be a part of US Wind's visionary plans to bring steel back to Baltimore. ... US Wind is committed to supporting thousands of family-sustaining union jobs and we couldn't be happier to be partnering with them on this new venture."





# OIL WORKERS — SET — BARGAINING AGENDA

Agreement Covering  
30,000 Members Set  
to Expire in February

USW oil workers met virtually this August and set an ambitious agenda for their upcoming round of bargaining, which is set to begin in January 2022.

Members in the oil and petrochemical industry held their National Oil Bargaining Program (NOBP) conference Aug. 9 through 13 and voted to include wages, health care, severance language, investment in decarbonization and other proposals in the 2022 NOBP policy, which outlines the union's goals for the next pattern agreement covering more than 30,000 USW members at about 200 locations.

"The past couple of years have been some of the most challenging workers in the oil industry have faced, from a deadly pandemic, declining demand, supply chain issues, work stoppages and other challenges," said International President Tom Conway. "Still, USW members across the industry continued to show up and deliver each day, and they deserve a fair labor agreement that recognizes those contributions."

The USW's current three-year agreement with the oil industry expires at 12:01 a.m. on Feb. 1, 2022. Marathon will lead negotiations with the USW and set the bargaining pattern for the rest of the industry.

"We expect that this will be a difficult round of negotiations, given the struggles the industry and its workers have faced over the past few years," said Mike Smith, NOBP chair.

"We will work together in solidarity until we have an agreement that provides fair wages and benefits and safer working conditions for our hard-working USW siblings."

Marathon, the largest U.S. oil refiner, this year is replacing Shell after that company led negotiations with the union for more than 20 years. Although the USW's most recent national agreement with Shell, reached in 2019, raised wages by 11 percent over three years, the previous round of bargaining led to a bitter six-week strike.

In 2015, about 7,000 USW members at 15 oil and petrochemical plants initiated an unfair labor practice strike, which lasted six weeks, largely in response to the industry's refusal to meaningfully address safety issues, including staffing levels and worker fatigue.

In addition to negotiating a new national pattern agreement, each local will address individual plant-specific issues during bargaining, and company councils will work together to address issues that affect their companies across all locations.

One goal that emerged from the last round of oil bargaining included building solidarity from the ground up by strengthening the USW's company councils and improving communication across the industry.

"Our solidarity will be the key to reaching the agreement workers deserve," Smith said.





## LOCKED-OUT MEMBERS REJECT EXXONMOBIL CONTRACT OFFER

In a tremendous show of solidarity, hundreds of USW members at ExxonMobil's refinery in Beaumont, Texas, voted overwhelmingly in October to reject a sub-par contract offer from the company.

The "no" vote on the take-it-or-leave-it contract proposal pushed by the company meant that more than 650 members of Local 13-243 remained on the picket line established after ExxonMobil locked them out of their jobs on May 1.

The unfair labor practice

(ULP) lockout followed months of tense negotiations, beginning in January, in which the company demanded numerous major contract language changes that would have dismantled USW members' safety, job security and seniority.

Following ExxonMobil's similarly unreasonable offer this fall, the USW reiterated its commitment to bargaining in good faith toward a fair and equitable agreement.

The union also called on management to end the lockout

immediately, stop breaking the law and negotiate in good faith.

Meanwhile, members were preparing to vote on a company-led union decertification effort as *USW@Work* went to press.

Members pointed out that they were always willing to continue working as negotiations took place, and that the company had the power to end the lockout any time.

"The company wanted us to feel this hardship so that they could control us," said USW member David Prejean.

## MINERS RESCUED AFTER THREE-DAY ORDEAL

Thirty-nine mine workers, including 30 members of Local 6500, emerged safely after being trapped for three days in the Totten mine outside of Sudbury, Ontario.

The workers became stuck underground at the site, about 250 miles north of Toronto, on Sept. 26 after an incident damaged the mine's lift system. With help from several local rescue teams, all 39 workers made it out alive and in good health.

"We are immensely grateful for the tireless work of the rescue crews who helped bring everyone up safely," said Local 6500 President Nick Larochelle.

Some of the trapped workers ultimately had to climb 4,000 feet to make it out. Others who were unable to climb were lifted out with ropes.

Larochelle said that because the Sudbury region has such a long history with the mining industry, the rescue workers who responded were trained, experienced and prepared for the task.

"We have some of the best rescue crews in the entire world – workers who voluntarily train on an ongoing basis, in case an emergency like this ever happens," Larochelle said. "Our union and the entire Sudbury community thank them for their service."

Rescue workers made four trips per shift and carried heavy packs to make sure that the trapped miners had the supplies they needed to make it through the ordeal.

"Unions have made important advances in mining safety over decades, which is part of why miners found safety underground and were able to

be brought to the surface safely," said District 6 Director Marty Warren.

The mine, operated by Vale, employs about 200 workers and has produced copper, nickel and other precious metals since it opened in 2014. The company said it would investigate the incident in an effort to prevent something similar from happening in the future.

"When something like this happens, our heart stops for a moment – not just in Sudbury but in mining communities across the country and around the world," Warren said. "Mining is much safer than it once was. This work builds entire northern communities, but miners take a great deal of risk every time they go underground. We must never forget that."





# RICHARD TRUMKA

INSPIRATIONAL LABOR LEADER  
(1949-2021)

**R**ichard Trumka, a third-generation coal miner from rural Western Pennsylvania who rose through the ranks of the United Mine Workers to lead the largest labor federation in the United States, died suddenly of a heart attack on Aug. 5 after 12 years as president of the AFL-CIO.

Trumka, who was 72, made frequent appearances on behalf of Steelworkers, including at officer installations, international conventions and the annual Labor Day parade in Pittsburgh, where he regularly marched alongside hundreds of rank-and-file members.

The AFL-CIO, formed in 1955, is a coalition of 56 unions, including the USW, representing nearly 12.5 million members.

USW International President Tom Conway called Trumka's unexpected passing "an immeasurable loss."

"Rich's was always one of the loudest voices in calling for not only fair wages and working conditions but

also for an economic system in which all workers have a seat at the table," Conway said. "Rich dedicated his life to advocating for justice and equality for working families the world over."

## **Working-Class Roots**

That dedication took Trumka from the coal mines of tiny Nemaquin, Pa., to an office in Washington, D.C., just steps away from the White House. Yet even while he held the most prominent post in the U.S. labor movement, Trumka never lost his blue-collar touch.

"I've always considered the Steelworkers my union, just as I do the Mine Workers," Trumka said in a rousing address at the 2017 USW convention. "There's never been a more important time for workers to assert our collective power."

Throughout his tenure at the AFL-CIO, which also included 14 years as the federation's secretary-treasurer, Trumka joined the USW in fighting for workers' rights, higher wages, afford-

able health care, secure retirements and safer workplaces. But it was his relentless push for fair trade that formed a lasting bond with Steelworkers.

## **A Level Playing Field**

In particular, Trumka led the way in defeating the Trans-Pacific Partnership, and in ensuring that the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA), the pact that replaced the failed NAFTA deal, contained strict provisions to protect jobs, workers' rights and the environment.

"We don't need NAFTA to be tinkered with. We need it to be completely replaced," Trumka said at the time. "Corporate trade deals have torn our country apart for too long. Working people want a new direction."

After the Trump administration submitted a watered-down, Wall Street-driven replacement, Trumka led the way as thousands of union members from across the country flooded Congress with letters and calls demanding a better deal.





That effort was successful. Democrats insisted on reworking key parts of the USMCA to make sure that it would be a significant improvement.

“The members of our union, the labor movement and working families across the country will feel the sting of Rich’s loss,” Conway said. “We will honor his legacy by continuing his fight.”

In addition to fair trade, Trumka was a fierce advocate for manufacturing and Buy American policies, and he focused heavily during his tenure on educating union members about those and other important issues.

Trumka also emphasized organizing, and consistently advocated on behalf of all workers, union and non-union.

“The future is ours to shape, if only we dare to try,” Trumka said. “It all starts with solidarity. Solidarity is the most powerful force in the world.”

Though often soft spoken, Trumka became known for his fiery speeches

and inspiring oratory. He won election as president of the Mine Workers at 33 as a reform candidate and led the organization through several difficult labor disputes that strengthened his union and raised his national profile.

Trumka also was an unflinching advocate for civil and human rights, leading the Mine Workers’ campaign to dismantle apartheid in South Africa and dedicating the AFL-CIO to fighting for the rights of immigrant workers and LGBTQ+ workers.

### **Friends Pay Tribute**

As they learned of Trumka’s passing, labor leaders, political allies and friends around the world paid tribute. President Joe Biden called Trumka an “old friend” and said the AFL-CIO leader was never afraid to speak truth to power, even when that power was held by friends whom he helped to elect.

“He was a fierce and forceful champion for the dignity of the American worker,” Biden said. “I will miss him,

as will the countless workers whose lives he made better.”

Following Trumka’s death, the AFL-CIO executive council elected Liz Shuler to serve out the remainder of Trumka’s term and chose USW International Vice President Fred Redmond to complete Shuler’s term as AFL-CIO secretary-treasurer. Shuler, a longtime activist in the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers, had served as the federation’s top financial officer since 2009.

Shuler vowed to continue to build on Trumka’s legacy.

“I am humbled, honored and ready to guide this federation forward,” Shuler said. “This is a moment for us to lead societal transformations — to leverage our power to bring women and people of color from the margins to the center — at work, in our unions and in our economy.”



**U**SW International Vice President Fred Redmond became part of the most diverse leadership team in the history of the AFL-CIO in August when the labor federation's executive council elected him as its secretary-treasurer.

Redmond will serve out the term of former secretary-treasurer Liz Shuler, who was elected president following the unexpected passing of the late AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka, who died suddenly Aug. 5.

Shuler, Redmond and AFL-CIO Executive Vice President Tefere Gebre are the first woman, person of color and immigrant to hold their respective offices in the organization's 66-year history.

### **Right Team, Right Time**

Redmond said he was looking forward to working with Shuler, Gebre and others to advance the causes of social and economic justice.

"This is the right team at the right time to help bring about the economic and social justice America is hungry for," he said. "Today, too many families are still waiting for that kind of change as the very fabric of America verges on disintegration after decades of inequality, dismantled workers' rights, attacks on voting rights and neglected investment in our families and communities."

Redmond, a USW member since 1973, has served as international vice

president for human affairs since 2006. Following his election to the AFL-CIO post, he pledged to build "a modern labor movement that gives every working person access to a good-paying union job." while also fighting to defend voting rights and pushing for a modernized, union-made infrastructure.

### **Liz Shuler - Lifelong Activist**

Shuler, an activist in the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW), joined forces with Trumka in 2009 to become the youngest woman ever on the AFL-CIO executive council.

"I believe in my bones the labor movement is the single greatest organized force for progress," Shuler said.

Gebre fled war-torn Ethiopia, was granted refugee status and arrived in California alone at the age of 15. He became a member of the International Brotherhood of Teamsters in college and served as the director of the Orange County Labor Federation before joining the AFL-CIO leadership in 2013.

### **An Early Education**

Redmond, who earlier this year was elected as president of the Trade Union Confederation of the Americas, said he learned about union power at an early age.

"My three brothers and I grew up poor. We lived on food stamps. We shopped at Goodwill," said Redmond, noting that when his father got a union

job at an aluminum mill outside of Chicago, "nearly overnight, we had more security, opportunity and prosperity."

Redmond's fellow USW officers expressed pride and excitement at his new role.

"Fred is a decades-long union activist with a proven commitment to both negotiating good contracts and advancing civil and human rights, including through his recent work as chair of the AFL-CIO Task Force on Racial Justice," said USW International President Tom Conway. "We are deeply grateful to Fred for assuming this role, even as he continues his work with the USW."

Not long after his election, Redmond spent his first Labor Day as an AFL-CIO leader in Arizona, speaking at the First Institutional Baptist Church in Phoenix about the intersection of labor and faith, and joining labor leaders at the Arizona AFL-CIO headquarters to discuss strategies to pass new laws, like the PRO Act, to advance workers' rights. Redmond concluded the day by attending a reception at the White House with President Joe Biden, Secretary of Labor Marty Walsh, and Shuler.

Redmond said American workers are hungry for a better life, and that union organizing is the way to reach that goal.

"We have a huge opportunity in front of us," he said. "And we're going to take it. I promise you that."

# **FRED REDMOND**

**MAKES HISTORY AS  
AFL-CIO SECRETARY-TREASURER**





# NEW AGREEMENT — FOR — KAISER WORKERS

## TENTATIVE CONTRACT WITH HEALTH CARE GIANT MAKES GAINS ON STAFFING, WAGES



Members of Local 7600 who work at Kaiser Permanente facilities in California were preparing to vote on a tentative agreement for a new four-year contract with the health care giant as *USW@Work* went to press.

The two sides reached the agreement a few weeks after members voted overwhelmingly to authorize the union to call a strike while bargaining stalled. The strike was set to begin on Nov. 15, but the two sides announced the new agreement on Nov. 13.

Local union leaders were preparing for membership meetings and ratification votes on the new contract to take place in the coming weeks.

“The past 20 months of the pandemic have been tough, and we made deep, personal sacrifices so we could keep helping our patients and our communities,” Local 7600 President Michael Barnett said. “We’ve more than earned a fair contract that reflects our contributions to Kaiser Permanente’s continuing success.”

### ‘Stretched Thin’

The tentative agreement makes important progress in narrowing the wage gap between Kaiser’s Inland Empire work force and other area workers doing the same jobs, Barnett said.

Members also were successful in defeating a proposed two-tier wage scale and in making significant gains on staffing, racial justice, and other important issues.

This fall, as bargaining entered its sixth month, members expressed frustration at Kaiser’s concessionary demands in the midst of a new wave of the COVID-19 pandemic. Those demands, members said, would have made already critical staffing shortages even worse.

“We’re stretched thin,” Barnett said in October as members prepared to conduct the strike vote. “We’ve pulled together to make sure that shifts are covered and our patients are well cared for, sometimes at the expense of our own health and security. But we need management to take safe staffing seriously, and we need them to prioritize our community as much as we do.”

### Wage Justice

Members also were frustrated that Kaiser continued to put forward sub-par wage proposals, particularly with the company’s plan to reduce wages for new hires and its initial refusal to address the subject of wage justice, even as Kaiser was holding \$44.5 billion in reserves.

Prior to the highly publicized strike vote, workers used that frustration to escalate their contract fight with a series of solidarity actions that raised awareness and built strength for the campaign.

Norberto Gomez, vice president of Local 7600, said the company’s concessionary demands were “disrespectful and an outrage to health care workers everywhere.”

“Everybody deserves a living wage,” Gomez said.

In the end, the strength and solidarity

of USW members and other Kaiser workers helped to beat back those proposals and achieve a fair and equitable contract.

On the issue of wage justice, members achieved a unique agreement stipulating that Kaiser will allocate a total of 3 percent of its payroll over the next two years to permanently address wage rate differences for workers in job classifications that have historically been paid less than Southern California wages.

“These hard-working USW members, and all health care workers across the country, have been true heroes before and throughout this pandemic,” said District 12 Director Gaylan Prescott. “The solidarity that Local 7600 and their fellow union members at Kaiser displayed throughout this fight should be an inspiration to workers everywhere.”

### Worker Alliance

Local 7600 represents workers at 72 Kaiser Permanente locations in Southern California in a wide range of job classes, from respiratory care practitioners to surgical technicians, engineers, pharmacy technicians and assistants, licensed vocational nurses, dietary aides, environmental service workers, medical assistants, appointment clerks, phlebotomists, and more.

Those members are among the more than 50,000 workers who are part of the Alliance of Health Care Unions and who work in nearly every geographic area where Kaiser Permanente has a presence.



# A DECADE OF ACTIVISM

## BLACK LABOR WEEK CELEBRATES 10<sup>TH</sup> YEAR

**D**ozens of USW members from across the country traveled to Gary, Ind., in September to celebrate the 10th annual Black Labor Week.

The event, created by Ephrin “E.J.” Jenkins, a member of Local 1014 at U.S. Steel’s Gary Works, celebrates the historic bond between the labor movement and underserved communities, and provides union members with a chance to give back to those communities through community service.

Jenkins said he looks forward to hosting activists from across all communities, particularly those from outside the immediate area who are less familiar with the struggles Gary-area residents have faced due to white flight, attacks on the local education system, poverty and other issues.

“We’ve faced some challenges this year because of COVID-19, which our community knows too well,” said Jenkins, who also serves as District 7 Next Generation sub-coordinator. “We need each other now like never before, and I’m glad we were able to connect and show solidarity at such a trying time.”

This year, members participated in a voter registration event, volunteered at a home for veterans, held a clothing and shoe drive, provided breakfast for community members, and led an educational outreach program to teach local school children about labor issues. The week also included movie nights, social hours, and workshops that touched on issues such as combating racism, mass incar-

ceration and gun violence.

“This week helps bridge that gap and opens a lot of people’s eyes,” Jenkins said.

A Black women’s empowerment seminar featured Torre “Tor” White and Sheria Smith of the American Federation of Government Employees, actress Bern Nadette Stanis, known for the 1970s TV program “Good Times,” Renaye Manley of the Service Employees International Union, Erica Clemmons-Dean of United for Respect, and Cheri Carter of the AFL-CIO.

Alonzo Scott, USW key staff for the paper sector, also led a Black men’s panel discussion.

Carter said that events like Black Labor Week are an important part of educating young people about the labor movement and about other ways they can get involved in helping their communities.

“For so many young Black girls and Black boys, they need to see Black people out in front,” Carter said. “I stand on the shoulders of giants, and I am appreciative of all those who came before me.”

The discussions that activists from across the country have with each other are among the most important parts of the week, Jenkins said.

“Having tough, courageous conversations is a necessary part of social justice and community work,” Jenkins said. “If we aren’t talking to each other, then we won’t move forward.”

Those discussions are vital to maintaining the natural connections between the work of the labor movement and that of the social justice and

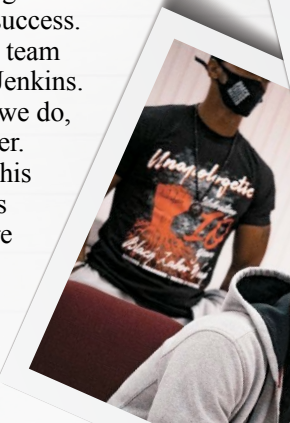
civil rights movements, Jenkins said.

“Black Labor Week is the pathway to total inclusion within the labor movement,” he said. “This week allows us to not only reflect, but put labor in the position to create change to the systemic problems in communities of color.”

The week concluded with a civil rights awards program, which recognized activists who provided extraordinary service to their communities. Honorees included Local 12-775 member Herm Santana, who serves on the Black Labor Week organizing committee.

Jenkins credited the hard work of the entire Black Labor Week organizing committee for making sure the event was a success.

“This is a team effort,” said Jenkins. “Everything we do, we do together. That’s what this week and this movement are all about.”





# USW CARES MULTIPLYING GOOD

**PROGRAM HONORS STEELWORKERS WHO MAKE DIFFERENCES IN THEIR COMMUNITIES**

The USW Cares program honors Steelworkers who make a difference in their communities with USW Cares Jefferson Awards. Through the union’s partnership with Multiplying Good (formerly the Jefferson Awards Foundation), the country’s longest-standing and most prestigious organization dedicated to honoring public service, the USW Cares program celebrates members who carry out extraordinary acts of service in communities across the United States and Canada.

The union chose USW Cares Jefferson Award winners from each district, USW staff, and SOAR. USW Jefferson Awards include a \$500 donation to a charity of the winner’s choice. The highest-scoring winner is the Champion Volunteer and receives \$1,000 for the charity of their choice. The USW will honor all of the union’s 2021 Jefferson Awards recipients with an online ceremony in December.



## **2021 CHAMPION OF COMMUNITY SERVICE: SABRINA LIU, USW STAFF**

Sabrina Liu, a longtime activist and USW staff member, is the union’s Champion of Community Service for 2021. Liu and a group of fellow activists founded the Pittsburgh chapter of the Asian Pacific American Labor Alliance (APALA) in early 2019 after years of advocacy. Liu has worked tirelessly alongside a small but mighty group of volunteers to forge strong relationships with other

community organizations and provide assistance to immigrants and underserved communities. In 2020, she helped increase census responses, turned out voters in crucial states, educated workers in precarious situations about their rights, and organized efforts to distribute financial assistance during the pandemic. Liu’s work is a true manifestation of the USW values of unity and strength for workers.

### **DISTRICT 1: ROBERT FORD, LOCAL 2L**

Robert Ford of Local Union 2L is the founder of Forever R Children, a nonprofit organization dedicated to providing essentials and support to children in Akron, Ohio. Forever R Children is Robert Ford and it goes where he goes. “It doesn’t have a home,” Ford said. “I go wherever the need is.” Kenmore School District loves Forever R Children so much that the district gave Ford an office in the middle school to be a mentor and resource for kids, and now there is an in-school food pantry. Ford is always looking for opportunities to help more people and is now exploring ways to aid veterans.



### **DISTRICT 2: PETER R. HEIKKILA, LOCAL 4950**

Peter R. Heikkila of Local 4950 in Ishpeming, Mich., has led and participated in community service work for more than 20 years, starting with his service in the U.S. Navy, where he volunteered for Liberty Ship maintenance with students and was an Adopt-a-Sailor volunteer. He has been an HCMC Toys-For-Toddlers coordinator for the past 18 years and has distributed more than \$100,000 worth of toys to hospitalized children. He has been the “Can-a-Thon” coordinator for Locals 4950 and 4974 for the past 12 years and, thanks to him, food banks in Marquette County, Mich., continue to be stocked.





### **DISTRICT 3: LAURA DRENNAN, LOCAL 7619**

Laura Drennan is a member of Local 7619 and works at the Highland Valley Copper Mine in British Columbia, Canada. She's made significant contributions that have improved the lives of workers at the mine, and she extends her activism to the community by preparing and sharing healthy meals for people struggling with health issues and by volunteering at community events, barbecues and fundraisers. Over the years, Drennan has helped raise millions of dollars through the annual United Way campaign, encouraging Steelworkers to donate with funds matched by their employer. These essential funds have helped nonprofit and community organizations and charities throughout Kamloops and the surrounding area.



### **DISTRICT 4: MAYRA RIVERA, LOCAL 8198**

Mayra Rivera has been president and Women of Steel coordinator for Local 8198, which represents municipal employees in Ponce, Puerto Rico, since 2014. In 2013, when a working day reduction affected more than 1,500 employees and their families, she organized protests, gained media attention and eventually sought justice in court. When Hurricane Maria devastated Puerto Rico in 2017, she created a community alliance to bring supplies, support and hazard education to residents. Since participating in Tony Mazzocchi Center (TMC) training in Puerto Rico in 2018, Rivera has continued the work of TMC, traveling across southern Puerto Rico providing hazard relief and education.



### **DISTRICT 5: DENIS GRENIER, LOCAL 9996**

Denis Grenier of Local 9996 is the founder and president of Cancer Fermont, which has given more than \$800,000 directly to people fighting cancer. Cancer Fermont does not raise money for research, but to help people with cancer during and after their treatments by paying for plane tickets for treatments and appointments, covering expenses such as taxi rides, meals and parking, and paying for wigs, massage therapy and snow removal at patients' homes. Cancer Fermont raises funds through community events, including country music nights, an annual crab dinner and a half marathon.



### **DISTRICT 6: LOCAL 9329**

Local 9329 is a health care local in Ontario. Members not only went to work in a long-term care home throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, but made time to sit with lonely patients isolated from loved ones, supporting them through illness and death. Members covered shifts and gave up breaks and lunches to help senior patients connect with their families on their personal electronic devices. Members endured two serious COVID-19 outbreaks in the home. They went above and beyond to show how much they cared for residents, coming to work early and staying late to make sure no patients passed away alone, while supporting each other through their own illnesses and losses of family members.



### **DISTRICT 7: ARVELLA GREENLAW, LOCAL 6787**

Arvella Greenlaw of Local 6787 spends her free time organizing and leading multiple community service projects. She collects donations and raises funds to provide hygiene products to a local women's shelter and school supplies to children in need. She provided Easter baskets with school supplies to children at home during the pandemic. She brings the community and her local Women of Steel committee together each year to collect and donate holiday gifts for an "Angel Tree" program. She is a member of several community organizations through which she assists with domestic violence and sexual assault awareness seminars, and she volunteers for USW Rapid Response and voter registration drives.



### **DISTRICT 8: ERION DALTON, LOCAL 1449**

Erion Dalton of Local 1449 raises funds, collects donations and volunteers to help feed children in need and the elderly. She helped her local food pantry purchase a new refrigerator, and has organized four fundraisers during the COVID-19 pandemic. She organized volunteers to provide lunches for children who would have received lunches at school, but who were out of school during the pandemic. She organized a canned food drive for elderly members of her community and helped gather new toys and clothes for kids at a home for abused or neglected children. Peggy Bryant, who nominated Dalton, said: "We are proud to have Erion as a co-worker. She is very civic minded and has a very beautiful soul."





### **DISTRICT 9: BRYEN BALLARD, LOCAL 1561**

William “Bryen” Ballard of Local 1561 built the nonprofit organization Sportsmen Givin’ Back, which helps to provide outdoors opportunities to wounded warriors and seriously ill children. Sportsmen Givin’ Back also mentors young adults and has raised more than \$300,000 for local charities in the Pace, Fla., community. The organization has conducted more than 50 hunting and fishing trips, and its annual fundraising banquets have supported more than 30 local charities. “Bryen has devoted his life to this effort and it shows. His smile becomes larger when he describes the joy it brings to these individuals and charitable organizations,” said Bryen’s nominator and union brother, Karl Krisman.



### **DISTRICT 10: LUANN MURRAY, LOCAL 247**

LuAnn Murray of Local 247 spends countless hours doing volunteer work with the Pine Creek Volunteer Fire and Rescue Department and continues her public service with bridge-naming dedications in honor of fallen soldiers and law-enforcement officers. She is the committee chairperson of Brookville’s Hometown Hero banner program, which honors veterans who were born or lived in the Brookville Area School District. She provides hours of service to the Laurel Festival every year to bring her community together. She has been an avid union advocate during her 20-plus years of service with Berry Plastics in Brookville, Pa.



### **DISTRICT 11: DAN JACKSON, LOCAL 560**

Dan Jackson of Local 560 is known for building activism in his union and in his community, through Toys for Tots, sitting on multiple labor councils across the state, and keeping teens safe on prom night by hosting games and safe entertainment. He lifts up fellow union members, encourages union engagement, and teaches others how to use their voices. He raises funds to provide holiday gifts to children and awards cash prizes for post-prom games to get money to seniors for gas and college books. “It is hard to put a price or value in the amount of spirit and passion he has helped to lift,” says his nominator and friend, Tas Starks.



### **DISTRICT 12: LOCAL 8599 CHILD WELFARE AND ATTENDANCE LIAISONS AND WOMEN OF STEEL COMMITTEE**

The Local 8599 Child Welfare and Attendance liaisons and Women of Steel Committee both provide tremendous service to their community. Members Connie Arambro, Lydia Wibert and David Matuguina are District Liaisons at Fontana Unified School District. They worked throughout the pandemic to provide resources to families - shopping and making home deliveries, providing supplies for kids learning at home, and finding help for families in need of utility assistance and other aid. The Local 8599 Women of Steel Committee raises funds for cancer research through the Relay for Life and for the Ronald McDonald House through bus trips to local casinos. Their annual “Sock-tober” sock drive provides thousands of pairs of socks for families in need.



### **DISTRICT 13: DISTRICT 13 COUNCIL**

The District 13 Council is a product of the merger of OCAW and PACE with the USW. It consists of rank-and-file members from every local in District 13. The council organized hurricane relief efforts after Hurricanes Harvey and Irma and distributed aid from its own charitable fund, matching contributions from the USW International Charitable Fund. Following the hurricanes, council members cooked and served hot meals and distributed supplies including water, paper towels, cleaning products and toilet paper to Louisiana local unions. The council members consistently travel to support members during labor disputes throughout the district.



### **SOAR: JOEL BUCHANAN**

Joel Buchanan has been a dues-paying USW member for 51 years. Following his retirement in 2013, he was appointed to the International SOAR Executive Board, where he still serves today. He is vice president of SOAR Chapter 38-3, serves on the Colorado AFL-CIO Executive Board, and was appointed by the governor to the Colorado Workforce Development Council and the Skilled Worker Outreach and Key Training Grant Review Committee. He has organized SOAR’s annual Christmas Sock Drive for the past three years, raised hundreds of dollars for miners on strike in Idaho, and led multiple fights to save jobs and support members on picket lines.





# TRADE WATCH

## LEADERS AIM TO KEEP STEEL THRIVING

U.S.-EU REACH ARRANGEMENT ON MODIFIED 232 TARIFFS

International President Tom Conway joined Congressional Steel Caucus leaders and industry executives this fall in calling for the continuation of trade measures, like the Section 232 tariffs, to ensure that the steel industry can continue to thrive for years to come.

“We have an opportunity to reset things and keep them right, but we have to move carefully,” Conway said during the industry roundtable Sept. 30. “We have the industry on solid footing and we need to keep it that way.”

### National Security Issue

The 25 percent tariffs on steel imports, along with 10 percent duties on aluminum, were imposed in 2018 under Section 232 of the Trade Expansion Act as a means to protect U.S. national security.

Conway said the need for such measures still exists.

“The premise of the 232s – protecting national security – that’s not temporary,” he said. “That doesn’t fade away. We are not going to sacrifice a core industry on the table of trade.”

Scott Paul, president of the Alliance for American Manufacturing, moderated the roundtable discussion, which also included Caucus Co-Chairs U.S. Rep. Conor Lamb of Pennsylvania and U.S. Rep. Frank Mrvan of Indiana, and Vice Chairs U.S. Rep. Rick Crawford of Arkansas and U.S. Rep. Mike Bost of Illinois, along with several executives from U.S. steelmakers.

### New EU Arrangement

About a month after the roundtable event, in late October, U.S. and EU negotiators announced an interim arrangement to maintain but modify Section 232 measures on steel and aluminum imports from the EU. Imports above a certain threshold, set lower than the

level of EU imports in 2017 and 2018, would still be subject to the 25 percent duties. In addition, all imports must be produced, commonly known as “melted-and-poured,” within the EU.

The new arrangement, Conway said, would create a framework to ensure that domestic industries would remain competitive and able to meet security and infrastructure needs, while also ensuring that China could not try to use EU nations as a “backdoor” to the United States.

“It will also provide a much-needed opportunity to address the non-market predatory practices of China and other countries that have distorted global markets,” Conway said. “Through this arrangement, the Biden administration closed a gaping loophole through which imports that are often carbon intensive and from countries still subject to the original 232 measures reach the United States.”

### No Avenue for China

Closing that loophole addressed a concern about China raised by several congressional and industry leaders during the roundtable.

“We can’t give China any new avenues through Europe,” said Bost, a Republican who represents the region around U.S. Steel’s Granite City Works. “The tariffs play a critical role in leveling the playing field for American steelworkers and companies.”

As long as that global playing field remains level, U.S. workers and manufacturers can continue to thrive. But they can’t be expected to constantly fight an uphill battle, said Lourenco Goncalves, president and CEO of Cleveland Cliffs, the largest USW employer in the industry.

“We are in a position of strength. We have a vibrant industry,” he said. “We don’t need subsidies; we only need to keep a level playing field.”

### EPI Sees Positive Effects

Earlier this year, the Economic Policy Institute (EPI) released a study that found that the Section 232 tariffs had the desired results and should remain in place.

“Steel output, employment, capital investment and financial performance all improved,” under the measures, the EPI found.

In addition to providing good, community-supporting jobs, the U.S. steel industry also is among the most environmentally friendly in the world, which contributes to the fight against climate change, said Richard Fruehauf, senior vice president and chief strategy and sustainability officer for U.S. Steel.

“There is a global race on to decarbonize steel,” and developing those technologies is going to be the next step. “In North America, we already are ahead, but we have to accelerate.”

### Infrastructure Push

Now that the president has signed his infrastructure program into law, the industry can’t afford to lose ground to foreign competitors at such a critical time, Millet said.

“The single biggest thing that Americans can do to reduce our carbon footprint is to buy American,” he said. “We are the cleanest industry in the world.”

The U.S. market will almost always require some imports, Conway said, but U.S. companies and consumers should always utilize American suppliers first.

“We need to keep our capacity going and use excess via imports if we need it,” Conway said. “This is not complicated.”





## PROPOSAL WOULD STRENGTHEN **BUY AMERICAN RULES**

**T**he USW applauded a Biden administration proposal earlier this year to significantly increase Buy American requirements for federal government projects.

The proposed rule change, from the White House Office of Management and Budget (OMB), came in response to President Biden's Jan. 25th executive order requiring the executive branch to "maximize the use of goods, products, and materials produced in, and services offered in, the United States."

The rule, which would be the biggest update to Buy American requirements since the 1950s, directs government contractors subject to the Buy American Act to gradually modify their supply chains in order to increase their use of domestic content from the current 55 percent threshold to 60 percent, then to 65 percent by 2024 and, ultimately, to 75 percent by 2029. The shift in rules will also comply with existing trade agreements, which will permit Canadian production to be included.

"It's vitally important that as the federal government spends taxpayer dollars, those funds go toward giving these workers the opportunity to continue manufacturing high-quality products and supporting good, community-sustaining jobs now and into the future," International President Tom Conway said. "Workers across every facet of

our economy, including hundreds of thousands of USW members, are ready and willing to help our nation meet its needs."

The planned rule changes, according to the White House, are part of a wider strategy to revitalize critical U.S. industries, alleviate supply chain issues that were exposed throughout the COVID-19 pandemic, and support good, family-sustaining jobs throughout the U.S. economy.

"As this pandemic has made clear," President Biden said in signing his Buy American order, "we can never again rely on a foreign country that doesn't share our interest to protect our people in a national emergency."

The OMB announcement of the Buy American rule changes, made late this summer, "demonstrates a serious commitment to revitalizing our nation's manufacturing base, rebuilding our supply chains and ensuring a steady path forward for our domestic industries," Conway said.

The gradual increase in content requirements was intended to give contractors

time to adjust to the new rules.

"This is a bold, forward-looking action," Conway said. "The USW looks forward to continuing our work with the administration as together we look to secure our nation's manufacturing capacity and promote widespread economic security."

## **USW APPLAUDS NEW U.S. DIRECTION ON CHINA**

**T**he USW praised the Biden administration's approach to trade relations with China this fall after U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) Katherine Tai delivered a speech promising to "use all available tools" to make sure China lives up to its agreements and to defend U.S. workers from policies and practices that threaten their jobs.

"The USW welcomes the Biden administration's plan for addressing our nation's trade relationship with China," International President Tom Conway said. "We must have a steady approach to confronting the Chinese government's predatory and protectionist policies rather than the often erratic and limited approach of the Trump administration."

In her Oct. 4 remarks, Tai pointed to China's "non-market" practices that undercut U.S. workers and industries,

practices that include providing unfair government subsidies to manufacturers; illegally selling, or "dumping," imports at below the cost of production; and manipulating currency values to make U.S. products more expensive and Chinese exports cheaper.

"We continue to have serious concerns," Tai said. "For too long, China's lack of adherence to global trading norms has undercut the prosperity of Americans and others around the world."

Conway said he welcomed the news that the Biden administration would maintain existing tariffs on Chinese goods, and said that the administration's focus on steel demonstrates how critical that industry is to the nation's well-being.

"A sound plan for addressing our trade relationship with China will enable us to invest in America's future and build back better," he said. "We welcome the vision expressed in Tai's speech and look forward to working with the administration as it moves forward with this approach."





## USW LEADER ADDRESSES USMCA WORKER PROTECTIONS



**U**SW International Affairs Director Ben Davis testified at a hearing this summer to address worker protections that unions and their allies in Congress fought to include in the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA).

The Senate Finance Committee hearing marked one year after the full implementation of the USMCA, the agreement that replaced the disastrous North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA).

In particular, Davis noted the significance of the agreement's "rapid response" labor enforcement mechanism, developed by U.S. Sens. Sherrod Brown of Ohio and Ron Wyden of Oregon, as a critical tool in holding Mexico accountable for enforcing its new labor laws and ultimately improving wages and working conditions across North America.

"It's a big improvement," said Davis, who serves as the chair of the Independent Mexico Labor Expert Board, established by Congress to monitor USMCA implementation.

Still, even with the new worker protections, there continues to be a shortage of data from Mexico, a situation that must improve before the board can determine the true effectiveness of the agreement. "That is a concern," Davis said.

The rapid response enforcement mechanism has been employed twice since the USMCA took effect in July 2020 – once with a petition that the AFL-CIO filed to protect workers at Tridonex's Matamoros plant, and again with a U.S. Trade Representative-initiated filing regarding violations of workers' rights at a General Motors plant in Silao in northern Mexico.

Strong use of that tool is part of what Davis described as "the first steps" toward the Biden administration's stated goal of a "worker-centered" trade policy," but the longtime USW leader made it clear that much more work needed to be done, especially when addressing U.S. trade policy

outside of North America.

"When we get into countries that have non-market economies, countries that are hurting American workers, dumping steel and aluminum into our markets," Davis said, "we are going to have to have a lot more enforcement."

In both Mexican plants where complaints were addressed, the workers, like many others in that nation, are represented by company-aligned "protection unions" under which they have no real voice.

Until that system is replaced with widespread access to democratic unions, Davis said, corporations will continue to exploit workers in Mexico and pit them against their U.S. and Canadian counterparts.

Davis stressed urgency in making this transition and recommended that at least \$30 million annually of USMCA-appropriated funds be devoted to worker organizing and union capacity building in Mexico.

"Without a fundamental shift from protection unions like the ones at GM and Tridonex towards democratic labor organizations," he said, "no amount of government oversight will result in a trade union movement that can organize and bargain for higher wages for Mexican workers to address the structural inequality in the USMCA region that drives both migration and loss of good manufacturing jobs."

Brown, the Ohio Democrat and longtime USW ally, said that the labor protections in the USMCA should be considered the bare minimum and that until workers in Mexico have full labor rights, the deal should be considered a work in progress.

"When corporations are held accountable for treating workers fairly, regardless of where those workers are located," Brown said, "companies no longer have an incentive to move jobs abroad, thereby protecting workers on both sides of the border."

Joining Davis in testifying at the hearing were Allan Huttema, chairman of the Northwest Dairy Association, Dr. Michelle McMurry-Heath, president and CEO of the Biotechnology Innovation Organization, and Beth Lowell, deputy vice president of U.S. Campaigns for Oceana USA, an international organization dedicated to ocean conservation.

## USW JOINS STEELMAKERS IN CHALLENGING OCTG IMPORTS

**T**he USW joined several steelmakers on Oct. 6 in filing antidumping and countervailing duty petitions with the U.S. Department of Commerce, seeking relief from imports of oil country tubular goods (OCTG) from four nations.

The antidumping (AD) petitions allege that OCTG imports from Argentina, Mexico and Russia are being sold in the United States below their fair market value in a bid to undercut U.S. suppliers. The countervailing duty (CVD) petitions contend that Korea and Russia are providing unfair government subsidies to OCTG manufacturers.

"The global steel industry has long been plagued by illegal trade practices that undercut U.S. market share, profits and ultimately jobs, and USW members and their communities are often among those who are hurt most when bad actors seek to exploit the American market," said International President Tom Conway. "These measures allow American workers to focus on making high-quality products without having to worry that they might be the next victims of a broken trade system."

U.S. Steel, Borusan Mannesmann Pipe, PTC Liberty Tubulars and Welded Tube USA joined the USW in seeking duties on OCTG imports, which include steel pipe, oil well casing and tubing and coupling stock used primarily in the oil and gas industry.

The Commerce Department will investigate the allegations to determine to what extent the imports are harming the U.S. industry. The department is scheduled to release preliminary determinations for CVD this December and its decision on AD duties by March 2022. Final determinations are expected in the spring.



## WOMEN OF STEEL SHARE STORIES WITH STUDENTS

Tawnya Gustafson ran for vice president of USW Local 2660 in Minnesota to prove to her daughters that women could do and be anything.

Gustafson became the first woman to ever serve as vice president of the U.S. Steel taconite mining local, and decided to take those efforts a step further, organizing a “Women in the Workforce” event in September for students at her daughter’s school.

“It’s always been a male-dominated environment here,” Gustafson said. “Women just traditionally have not worked in the mine.”

Gustafson and other Women of Steel have worked to change that, with the school event as a part of that effort.

“We Can Do It! The Sky’s the Limit” was the theme for the inaugural program, co-sponsored by Hibbing Community College, that offered an opportunity for women in traditionally male-dominated jobs to share stories with young women at Hibbing High School.

USW District 11 also assisted the local with planning the event, with Assistant to the Director Cathy Drummond sharing her career story as part of the panel.

“I started in a more traditional role for women in health care, then moved into a union position at the Steelworkers,” said Drummond. “I never envisioned being where I am now and being able to speak on behalf of women in labor. It was an empowering day.”

Local 1938 Women of Steel Chair Kori Meskill also shared her experience as a millwright in the maintenance department at U.S. Steel Minntac.

“If we touched one young woman’s life to inspire her to follow her passion, it was worth it,” Gustafson said.



## PORT ARTHUR LOCAL GAINS NEW MOTIVA UNIT

Local 13-423 welcomed 13 terminal operators from the Motiva terminal in Port Neches, Texas, when they unanimously voted to join the USW.

Negotiations for a first contract began in August. The new members are working to establish a structured pay scale, secure their current benefits package in the new agreement, get a successorship clause, and gain job protection by limiting the ability to contract out their work.

“We have reached tentative agreements on some of the basic items, but we are still working through the majority of the language for benefits and wages,” said committee Chairman Austin Sangster.

Sangster said that he and his coworkers decided to join the USW because they felt they needed job security and comparable wages and benefits. In addition, he said there were some operational changes that were not in workers’ favor, and they felt more changes were coming.

“We needed someone in our corner, and that is what the USW does,” Sangster said.



## USW MOURNS LOSS OF FORMER DIRECTOR BREAUX

USW members mourned the loss of former District 13 Director John Michael “Mickey” Breaux, who passed away unexpectedly Aug. 20. He was 75.

“Mickey was one of a kind,” District 13 Director Ruben Garza said of his predecessor. “We broke bread at my house with my family. Even though we disagreed sometimes, I believe there was always a mutual respect between us. I wish Mickey peace in heaven, and I pray for his family. He will be missed.”

A graduate of Thomas Jefferson High School in 1964, Breaux attended Lamar University and served in the U.S. Army. He worked as an hourly safety representative at the Fina (now TotalEnergies) refinery in Port Arthur, Texas.

As a member of Oil, Chemical and Atomic Workers International Union (OCAW) Local 4-23, Breaux chaired the workman’s committee and participated in contract negotiations.

In 1993, Breaux became a staff representative and continued in that role following the merger of OCAW with the United Paperworkers International Union in January 1999, which formed the Paper, Allied-Industrial, Chemical and Energy Workers International Union (PACE).

One of his most significant achievements was the settlement of the five-year Crown Central Petroleum lockout through many late-night negotiations and close work with former OCAW President Bob Wages. Breaux put together the final deal that settled the lockout.

After leaving his staff position, Breaux became the Rapid Response coordinator for District 13 when PACE merged with the Steelworkers union in April 2005. In 2006, then-International President Leo W. Gerard appointed him District 13 director. Breaux retired in 2014.

“Mickey was a dedicated trade unionist,” said International President Tom Conway. “He worked tirelessly on behalf of working people. Our USW family will miss him.”



**UNITED STEELWORKERS**  
**Rapid Response**  
**Legislative and Policy**  
**CONFERENCE**

## RAPID RESPONSE & LEGISLATIVE CONFERENCE POSTPONED

The 2021 USW Rapid Response, Legislative and Policy Conference, originally scheduled to take place in early November in Washington, D.C., has been postponed due to the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic.

The conference traditionally draws hundreds of activists from across the United States to participate in panel discussions, workshops and in-person lobbying efforts on Capitol Hill.

The conference instead will be held virtually, and refunds will be paid to members who had already registered for the in-person event. Participants should keep an eye out on the USW website, [usw.org](http://usw.org), and social media channels @steelworkers for information on the virtual event as it becomes available.

## ASARCO TRIAL POSTPONED AS NEW CHARGE IS FILED

The National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) trial against ASARCO, originally scheduled to begin on Oct. 19, was postponed after the NLRB General Counsel directed NLRB regional directors to submit certain matters to the NLRB's Division of Advice.

The Regional Director submitted the case against ASARCO to the Division of Advice to review a question concerning the scope of the bargaining order remedy meant to address the company's alleged unlawful refusal to bargain and the implementation of the company's "last, best and final" contract offer.

The case will proceed after the Region receives notification from the Division of Advice.

In addition, the USW has filed a new unfair labor practice (ULP) charge against ASARCO over the company's announced terminations of previously laid-off workers. The company limited the duration of recall rights when it implemented terms and conditions of employment to 12 months, while the expired contract agreement preserves them for 36 months.

The USW and six other unions, representing more than 1,800 workers at ASARCO facilities in Arizona and Texas, launched a ULP strike against the copper producer in October 2019. Last summer, the unions ended the ULP strike and made an unconditional offer to return to work.

ASARCO is a subsidiary of the multi-billion-dollar Mexico City-based mining conglomerate Grupo Mexico.

## WORKERS AT ST. CROIX CHIPPING JOIN USW

Three dozen workers at St. Croix Chipping in Baileyville, Maine, ratified their first contract this summer to officially become members of the USW.

After a mutual parent company purchased the chip mill, the local union president of an adjoining facility, Shawn Howland, along with District 4 staff, seized the opportunity to organize the neighboring workers.

St. Croix Chipping was formed in August 2020 when International Grand Investment Corporation (IGIC), purchased Price Fibers (formerly Fulghum Fibres). IGIC owns two other USW-represented sites that have related operations on the same piece of land along the St. Croix River – Woodland Pulp (Local 27) and St. Croix Tissue (Local 9546).

IGIC's strategic acquisition of the state-of-the-art chip mill turned the three sister operations in Baileyville into a complete, integrated mill system; wood is harvested from the Maine forest by St. Croix Chipping, chips are then sent off to be pulped via a belt system directly connected to Woodland Pulp. About a third of the pulp produced is later used by St. Croix Tissue to supply two commercial and retail toilet paper and towel tissue machines.

Due to the productive relationship the USW has had with IGIC, the company made a call to the USW after acquiring the chip mill and offered neutrality.

## WORKERS APPROVE CONTRACT TO END STRIKE AT ARCELORMITTAL SHELBY

About 500 members of USW Local 3057 won contract improvements after an 11-day unfair labor practice strike against ArcelorMittal at the company's seamless tube plant in Shelby, Ohio.

After management walked away from the table and ended negotiations abruptly on Oct. 31, union members had no other choice than to fight for dignity and respect. The strike lasted until Nov. 11, when the local voted to ratify a new agreement.

The four-year agreement provides guaranteed time off after workers endured years of mandatory overtime. The contract also reduces the cost of health care for workers while improving wages and pensions.

USW District 1 Director Donnie Blatt credited the solidarity of the membership and the hard work of the bargaining committee.

"When we stand together in the name of fairness and justice, our goals are always within reach," Blatt said. "When we choose unity over division, we cannot be defeated."

The Shelby plant was not sold to Cleveland Cliffs when it acquired many of ArcelorMittal's other facilities in late 2020.







## USW URGES REVISION OF RISK MANAGEMENT PROGRAM

In comments submitted to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), the USW called for the strengthening of the Risk Management Plan (RMP) rule.

“USW chemical workers are essential to preventing and responding to chemical release incidents,” said USW International Secretary-Treasurer John Shinn, who heads the union’s chemical sector.

“That’s why it’s important that the Risk Management Plan rule have strict regulatory protections in place to safeguard workers, the community and the planet from releases of hazardous chemicals into the air that can cause deaths, injuries, property and environmental damage, and force people to evacuate or shelter-in-place,” Shinn said.

Under the RMP rule, facilities that use or store certain dangerous chemicals in specific amounts must develop a risk management plan that identifies what can happen if there is a release of these hazardous substances, what steps the facility is taking to prevent such incidents and what emergency response procedures are in place should an incident occur.

President Biden issued an executive order in January that mandated a review of the EPA’s RMP rule. The agency conducted virtual listening sessions earlier this summer and solicited comments from the public regarding the changes made since the Trump administration gutted the 2017 Chemical Disaster Rule and implemented its final RMP reconsideration rule in 2019.

Since the 2019 final rule, a number of catastrophic incidents and near misses occurred, including two at USW-represented facilities: the June 21, 2019, explosion near storage of hydrofluoric acid at the Philadelphia Energy Solutions refinery in Philadelphia, and the Nov. 27, 2019, explosion and fire at the TPC Group chemical facility in Port Neches, Texas.

“These disasters are preventable,” the USW wrote in its comments. “EPA has the authority, and an obligation, to issue a strengthened Chemical Disaster Rule that truly protects workers and communities.”

## MEMBERS IN NEGOTIATIONS AT UNION’S LARGEST LOCAL

Members of Local 8888 at Newport News Shipbuilding, the USW’s largest local, were continuing negotiations on a new contract as *USW@Work* went to press, after members voted to reject a contract proposal in mid-November.

This summer and fall, as the Nov. 14 expiration of the current agreement approached, members held a series of solidarity actions to draw public attention to their contract fight, including a September barbecue attended by more than 1,000 people. Members also held sticker days and t-shirt days, as well as sign and leaflet events at plant gates.

“Negotiations in Newport News are always a challenge, and especially this year, given the ongoing pandemic and

uncertain environment in Washington,” said International Vice President Fred Redmond, who chairs the union’s bargaining committee. “The solidarity of our members has always been our strength in the past, and I expect that will hold true once again.”

Local 8888 represents about 10,000 workers at the shipyard, where Steelworkers employed by Huntington Ingalls Industries build nuclear-powered submarines and aircraft carriers for the U.S. Navy.

The members of Local 8888, which remains a major economic force in the region with significant public support, celebrated the 40th anniversary of their local in 2018.

## MEMBERS ON STRIKE AT SPECIAL METALS IN W.VA.

About 450 members of Local 40 in Huntington, W.Va., have been on the picket line since launching an unfair labor practice strike against their employer, Special Metals, on Oct. 1.

The members decided to take action following the company’s continued demands for deep concessions, including proposals that would increase health care costs and erode safety, seniority rights and vacation. The union’s previous contract with the metal component manufacturer expired on Sept. 30.

“These union members are dedicated, hard-working and highly skilled,” said District 8 Director Ernest R. “Billy” Thompson. “They deserve a fair contract that recognizes the contributions they’ve made to this company. Unfortunately, Special Metals is too focused on the bottom line to treat them with the respect they deserve.”

As *USW@Work* went to press, the company was attempting to continue operating the facility with scabs and had not agreed to hold any new bargaining sessions until mid-December.



## Have You Moved?

Notify your local union financial secretary, or clip out this form with your old address label and send your new address to:

USW Membership Department,  
60 Blvd. of the Allies, Pittsburgh, PA 15222

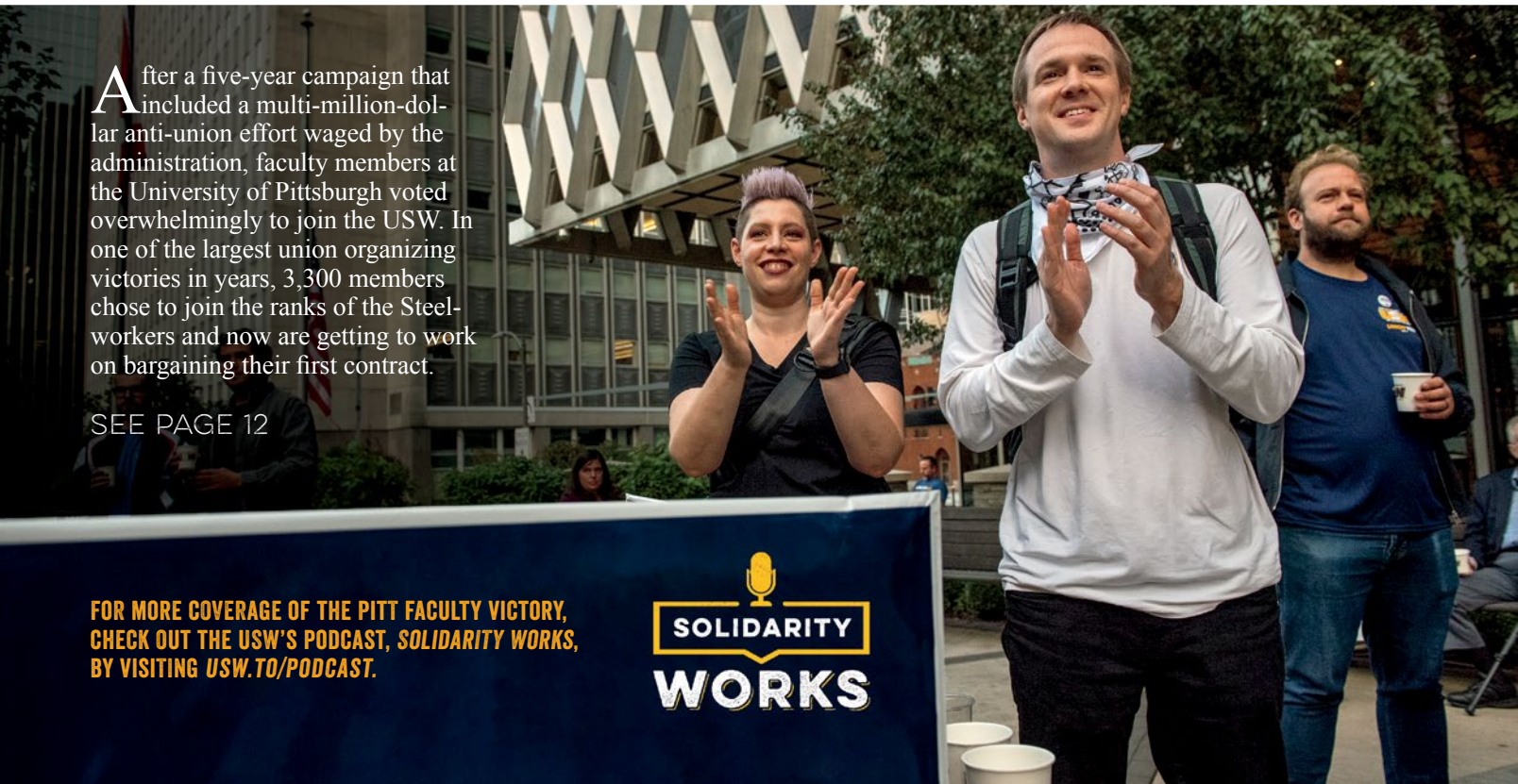
Name \_\_\_\_\_

New Address \_\_\_\_\_

City \_\_\_\_\_

State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_

You may also email the information to [membership@usw.org](mailto:membership@usw.org)



After a five-year campaign that included a multi-million-dollar anti-union effort waged by the administration, faculty members at the University of Pittsburgh voted overwhelmingly to join the USW. In one of the largest union organizing victories in years, 3,300 members chose to join the ranks of the Steelworkers and now are getting to work on bargaining their first contract.

SEE PAGE 12

FOR MORE COVERAGE OF THE PITT FACULTY VICTORY, CHECK OUT THE USW'S PODCAST, *SOLIDARITY WORKS*, BY VISITING [USW.TO/PODCAST](http://USW.TO/PODCAST).

