

# USW@Work

A Publication of the United Steelworkers

A Powerful Voice for Workers



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**"I KNOW WHAT THE LABOR MOVEMENT DOES. IT BRINGS THE MARGINALIZED IN FROM THE MARGINS. IT BRINGS RESPECT TO THE DISRESPECTED. IT LETS PEOPLE COME TOGETHER AND COLLECTIVELY BARGAIN FOR THEIR OWN FUTURE. AND IT LETS A POOR KID FROM THE SOUTH SIDE OF CHICAGO RISE UP TO BECOME THE HIGHEST RANKING AFRICAN-AMERICAN OFFICER IN THE HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN LABOR MOVEMENT."**

FORMER INTERNATIONAL VICE PRESIDENT FRED REDMOND, FOLLOWING HIS ELECTION AS AFL-CIO SECRETARY-TREASURER, JUNE 12, 2022

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Pamela Muldrew of Local 1327 works as a lab technician at the Domtar paper and pulp mill in Ashdown, Ark. Photo by Steve Dietz.

**04**

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## We Need More Debate

Any person running for a political office should be required to debate. If they do not want to, they should be disqualified. Debating is one of the cornerstones of our democracy. With no debate, our country will fall into autocracy and a dictatorship. That's where it looks like it is going. So, please, all of you writers, write about debating to save our democracy. God bless our country.

*Fred Robertson  
North Ridgeville, Ohio*

## Buy American-made Goods

I am not a fan of Joe Biden, but his "Buy American" and infrastructure plans look good on paper.

My question is this: How can we buy American when approximately 80 percent of what we purchase is made in other countries?

There is no such thing as an American-made car. It may be assembled here, but if you remove all the parts that are made elsewhere you can't start it, let alone drive it.

As for rebuilding our bridges that dearly need it, where is the structural steel going to come from?

If they keep sending our money overseas, how are they going to pay for the infrastructure when they can't even repay the money they "borrowed" from Social Security years ago?

*Roger Dukes  
Local 1010, Retired  
Hammond, Ind.*

## Steelworkers Lead on Infrastructure, Trade

Over the course of the last few years, we have seen a great turnaround in the steel industry and our communities. The mills are hiring. Companies are enjoying high prices and historic

profits, and we Steelworkers are leading the way.

Our union has been leading the fight for infrastructure investment and more responsible trade policies for decades, and we should be proud that our hard work on these issues has been effective. Now, thanks to federal infrastructure investments and vigilance against illegally and unfairly traded foreign products, the industry is more stable and our jobs, wages and benefits are more secure than they have been for years.

In the meantime, repairing our crumbling roads and bridges and expanding our airports will bring its own long-term benefits for individuals and businesses who use them every day. However, our continued success depends on continuing to hold public servants accountable at every level of government and continuing our fight for a level playing field for all American workers.

*Sherman Crowder  
Local 979  
Cleveland*

## Elections Have Consequences

I retired from ArcelorMittal (now Cleveland-Cliffs) in 2005. Back then, the political climate wasn't as hot as it is in this present day.

I have to say, I can't believe the mindset of some of our union brothers and sisters, some, that are still working, and some that hold union positions that have gotten on and stayed on "The Trump Train."

Actually, I can't believe the shift of the aforementioned to the Republican Party. Remember, especially in Indiana, back in 2011, what good ol' Mitch Daniels did for collective bargaining for public employee unions. He left them open to turning state jobs over to private contractors. How soon people forget.

Fast forward to the present day. Would anyone bother reading about how Trump stiffed union contractors on his failed Atlantic City casinos? Wake up people, the Republican Party, including Trump, would snuff out unions right now if they could. The proof is in the pudding – from what was done during the Mitch Daniels days, as well as the present day with Indiana becoming a "right-to-work" state. Who do you think made that happen? It was Indiana's Republican-controlled government.

As it stands, John Q. Public, when hired in a union environment, can now choose whether they want to belong to said union, and – guess what – can reap the same benefits as the union worker, acquiring union representation. Back in my day, we would call those people "scabs." And, don't forget the toll road lease by good ol' Mitch. It's a 75-year lease, for \$3.8 billion, while also sacrificing many state jobs. Toll road workers were then moved around throughout the state in jobs that were "contracted out" earlier in the other good ol' Mitch move to turn state jobs over to contractors.

I think the current climate of the constant boasting of "fake news," and saying that the press is the "enemy of the people" is actually the culprit in the "dumbing down" of America.

Union members and people holding union positions should walk the walk. Remember, elections have consequences!

*Lori (Lovison) O'Kelly  
Local 6787, Retired  
Leesburg, Fla.*

## 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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SUPPLY  
AMERICA  
#USWMADE #USWVOICES

# FIRST-CLASS PAPER WORKERS

USW Members at Arkansas Factory  
Keep Supply Chain Moving

Calep Walker  
Donald Walker

Donald Walker retired as a member of Local 1327 at the Domtar paper and pulp mill in Ashdown, Ark., in 2020, taking with him 47 years of experience and a desire to spend more time with his family.

Just two years later, his union siblings and Domtar management needed

to call upon that knowledge again as they worked to bring one of the mill's machines back online. Walker obliged, returning to the mill in a part-time capacity.

"I take pride in my job, and I want to see the Ashdown mill succeed," Walker said about his interrupted retirement

and latest effort to make sure the facility continues to efficiently produce top-quality USW-made paper products. "It's all about the young people coming up. If we don't help them, who will?"

One of those young people happens to be Walker's son, Calep, who followed in his father's footsteps at Domtar in





Mike  
Linville

Trevor  
Stevens

“It’s all about the young people coming up. If we don’t help them, who will?”

Donald Walker, Local 1327

Patrick  
Montgomery

2019 after a stint working overseas.

“I’m trying to fill his shoes,” the younger Walker said.

Donald Walker said that without the good-paying union jobs at the mill, his family and hundreds of others in the area would struggle.

“If that machine goes down,” he

said, gesturing toward his work station, “Ashdown goes down.”

### Community Pride

The dedication to hard work and community solidarity that Walker demonstrated with his return to work also runs deep for many other members of

the three USW units in Ashdown.

Local 1327 Vice President Jennifer Beard works in the Domtar laboratory, testing water samples each day to ensure that the mill remains in compliance with environmental regulations. She said that the USW membership and the company share a desire to make sure

that the mill, which opened in 1968, is sustainable so that it thrives for future generations of Ashdown workers.

“Whatever happens, we’re going to be there for them,” she said of her USW siblings and families in Ashdown. “Our mill keeps money flowing in this community.”

The fact that the mill is the largest employer in the county, and that the USW-represented jobs there are the best in the region, keeps that economic ripple effect going strong far beyond the plant gates, Beard said.

“These are some of the best jobs anywhere in the area,” Beard said, crediting the 53-year history of the union at the facility and its productive relationship with Domtar management. The workers at the Ashdown mill organized into the United Papermakers and Paperworkers union in 1969, not long after the mill opened its doors. Through mergers, that union became part of PACE and then, in 2005, the USW.

Across three units – the production workers of Local 1327, the maintenance workers of Local 1329, and the clerical workers of Local 1329C – the USW represents about 600 people at the Domtar mill. Those units also participate, as part of the Domtar Council, in monthly conference calls with other USW locals representing about 2,000 workers at eight other locations.

### **Putting Safety First**

Despite anti-union laws like right-to-work (for less) in Arkansas, less than 20 workers choose to shirk their responsibility to pay dues to the USW. That unity is evident in the close-knit working relationship that union members built in Ashdown and the way they look out for each other on and off the job.

Working in an environment with enormous machines, massive rolls of paper and constantly moving parts poses potential dangers, but electrician Michael Strasner said that the USW and the company collaborate to build comprehensive health and safety systems.

“That is our number one priority,” Strasner said of the USW commitment to eliminating potential workplace hazards. “It’s emphasized every day.”

That’s been particularly true through the COVID-19 pandemic, he said, pointing out that, because the Domtar

plant was deemed an essential workplace, the members never stayed home during the coronavirus shutdowns.

“It was tough at times,” said Local 1329 President Mike Kilgore. Still, he said, the USW worked with the company to make sure that those who were exposed to COVID and had to quarantine were able to do so without risking the loss of a paycheck.

All the while, the workers in Ashdown continued to show up each day to produce the essential goods that kept vital supply chains stocked, particularly the absorbent fluff that goes into items like toilet paper, paper towels, diapers and other personal care products.

### **Proud Work Force**

The members in Ashdown are proud of their contributions to maintaining the nation’s supply chain of vital goods, and of their efforts to keep the mill – and the region’s economy – running even at the most difficult times.

“The Ashdown mill is one of the country’s premier pulp and paper facilities,” said International Vice President Leeann Foster, a second-generation paperworker who oversees USW bargaining in the industry. “The members at Domtar should be very proud of their hard work and solidarity that has allowed them to become leaders in the industry.”

Jennifer Houser, a 38-year employee, and Sheila Wheeler, who has worked at the mill in a variety of roles over 31 years, agreed that key to Ashdown’s success over that time has been that union leaders and members of management are responsive to each other’s concerns.

“You don’t always agree, but you have to have an open mind and listen. If you don’t do that, the company’s going to go in the hole,” Wheeler said. “It really takes both sides coming together and working together.”

A good example of that teamwork came in 2018 when Domtar, in the midst of a companywide restructuring, approached the unions at Ashdown about the need to cut spending at the facility by \$2.5 million. Local 1327 President Kevin Kesterson said the company initially proposed cutting 17 jobs in the woodyard.

“That would have been a disaster,” USW member David Hibbs said. “The

employees showed a lot of resilience.”

Instead of simply eliminating jobs, a committee of workers, including Hibbs, studied the operation from top to bottom, identifying areas where the company could save significant amounts of money without harming workers.

“We just changed the way we did business,” Hibbs said, explaining that, as a result of a series of small changes, the Ashdown work force was able to achieve the savings the company sought with the elimination of only six jobs, all of which came through attrition and early-retirement incentives.

Not only did they avoid layoffs, but the workers eventually received hourly wage increases as a result of the cost-cutting effort, Kesterson said.

### **The ‘Timber Basket’**

In addition to teamwork, another reason for the mill’s long-term success is geography. Ashdown and its surrounding area, where the southwest corner of Arkansas meets Texas, Louisiana and Oklahoma, is at the heart of what Local 1329 Vice President Patrick Montgomery calls “the timber basket,” which offers tremendous natural resources for pulp and paper companies.

Arkansas has 19 million acres of forest, where loblolly pine trees are plentiful. That unique timber provides a particularly soft wood, Montgomery said, making it perfect for the absorbent fluff that workers create in Ashdown.

Besides the workers at the Domtar mill, the USW also represents papermakers at the Graphic Packaging mill in nearby Texarkana, as well as at a nearby paper warehouse. In addition, there are at least five other USW-represented paper facilities in Arkansas, and several others not far away in Louisiana and Oklahoma.

The Ashdown mill alone brings in between 400 and 500 log trucks each day, which carry a total of 9,000 to 11,000 tons of wood, from which the workers create Domtar’s extensive lineup of products.

As part of Domtar’s dedication to sustainability, “for each tree they take, they plant new trees,” Beard said.

The workers grind the wood into a pulp mixture that contains a large amount of water. Using massive machines, they squeeze the water from the





Jennifer Beard



Eugene Crenshaw

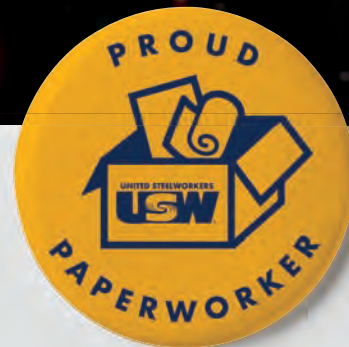
Kevin Kesterson







Michael Straszner



**“The USW mills in this area offer workers a chance to support families, to build communities, and to retire with dignity.”**

District 13 Director Larry Burchfield

pulp and gradually dry it out and form it into sheets. As the process continues, those sheets are adjusted for size, thickness and smoothness, depending on what the final product is destined to become. Rolls of finished paper are then either shipped directly to customers or converted into other products like office and printer paper.

At top capacity, the factory churns out more than 900 reams of paper per minute.

From the wood to the warehouse, workers are at the forefront, making sure machines run smoothly and that the final products meet Domtar’s quality-control standards.

As reams of office paper roll off the converter lines, USW members like Michael Martin conduct periodic audits to inspect the sheets for defects like wrinkles or discoloration, and then make the necessary adjustments.

“The quality of our paper determines the longevity of this mill,” Martin said.

In the end, the longevity of the mill means job security for USW members and economic security for their families and neighbors, Kesterson said.

### The Next Generation

Eugene Crenshaw has worked at the mill for 52 years and served for 20 years as a union guard, and he has no plans to retire. As he looks to the future, he said, the most important task facing the members in Ashdown is to keep strengthening the USW’s solidarity so that the good jobs at Domtar are still there for the next generation of workers.

“This mill has made me what I am,” Crenshaw said.

In order for that to continue for decades to come, members must make sure that workers coming behind them understand all of the benefits that the union has fought for and won over the years, he said.

Educating and mentoring the next generation of paperworkers is a mission that Kesterson, Kilgore and other USW leaders in Ashdown are embracing.

“We can’t do anything without our members,” Kilgore said. “They are the future of this mill.”

With that future in mind, Beard is working with the state labor federation to develop outreach programs to educate local school children about the careers they can build in the paper industry and

in other manufacturing jobs.

“The USW mills in this area offer workers a chance to support families, to build communities, and to retire with dignity,” said District 13 Director Larry Burchfield. “That is all possible because of the strength and solidarity of the union membership.”

The local USW hall, which the three units share, is decorated with photos, plaques and other memorabilia from the union’s earliest days. Each summer, the union workers and their families gather for a picnic to build solidarity and community spirit. The members also gather at the hall for regular charity drives to raise money for a host of local causes. And, in its most recent agreement with Domtar, Beard said, the USW was able to win contract language that established a labor-management diversity committee.

All of those initiatives are intended to ensure that the mill, and its good USW jobs, are there to support the people of Ashdown for years to come.

“There’s no other place around that offers this kind of quality of life,” Houser said. “That’s the union difference.”



# NEW CONTRACT AT PCA MILLS

Members of 10 USW local unions voted this summer to ratify a new contract covering workers at Packaging Corporation of America (PCA) mills in seven states.

The six-year agreement raises wages by more than 19.5 percent over the term of the contract and includes only gains for USW members, despite management's initial proposals for concessions.

"Maintaining solidarity through bargaining can be challenging with 10 local unions, especially when you're facing off against such a large company," said International Vice President Leeann Foster, who oversees bargaining for USW paper workers. "But the members at PCA should be proud of the way they stuck together, kept their solidarity going with regular communication, and ultimately won a strong contract."

PCA is one of the largest manufacturers of packaging products in the United States. The USW represents about 2,000 workers at all seven of PCA's U.S. mills, where they produce containerboard, paper and other related products.

The agreement covers members of Locals 9923 and 9-00978 in Counce, Tenn.; Locals 1226 and 13-00725 in Deridder, La.; Local 12585 in Filer City, Mich.; Local 159 in International Falls, Minn.; Locals 361 and 1083 in Jackson, Ala.; Local 2-00248 in Tomahawk, Wis.; and Local 646 in Valdosta, Ga.

In addition to the across-the-board wage increases, the agreement continues members' existing quality health care coverage, increases retirement contributions, improves sick and accident and long-term disability coverage, and

provides for domestic violence leave. The contract also makes significant improvements to vacation.

The USW bargaining committee also was able to make advancements in the language governing plant health and safety, including full-time safety representatives at each mill and a PCA-USW labor-management safety committee with union representatives from each location.

The USW bargaining committee also is in the process of negotiating a new contract covering about 1,750 workers at 25 PCA box plants in Arizona, Florida, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, New York, North Carolina, Ohio, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia, Washington and Wisconsin. Those negotiations were ongoing as *USW@Work* went to press.

## NEW CONTRACT LOCATIONS:

LOCAL 9923	COUNCE, TENN.
LOCAL 9-00978	COUNCE, TENN.
LOCAL 1226	DERIDDER, LA.
LOCAL 13-00725	DERIDDER, LA.
LOCAL 12585	FILER CITY, MICH.
LOCAL 159	INTERNATIONAL FALLS, MINN.
LOCAL 361	JACKSON, ALA.
LOCAL 1083	JACKSON, ALA.
LOCAL 2-00248	TOMAHAWK, WIS.
LOCAL 646	VALDOSTA, GA.



# BAY

## Bus Drivers Defeat Outsourcing Plan Small Michigan Local Rallies Community, Saves Union Jobs

**S**chool bus drivers who are members of a small but mighty Michigan unit of the USW soundly defeated an effort to outsource their jobs and bust their union.

This spring, the Bay City Public Schools notified USW Local 7380, which represents the district's 26 bus drivers, that it would be exploring the possibility of privatizing transportation services and contracting out their work to a for-profit company.

That idea did not sit well with the unionized drivers, many of whom had long records of service and built close relationships with families and children in the community.

"I really enjoy my job. I enjoy my children. They're sort of like extended family to us," said Joni Meyer, president of her Local 7380 unit and, at 34 years

of service, is the district's second-most-senior driver. "We treat them like family and they treat us like family."

Parents of the 8,100 students in the district shared that sentiment, and many of them ultimately joined the USW member drivers in their successful effort to convince the district's board of education to abandon the outsourcing plan.

"I trust these drivers. They're part of our backbone," Bay City parent Kristin McDonell said. "It means a lot to them to be contributing to their community in this way."

### Community Campaign

Following the district's announcement that it was exploring privatization options, parents like McDonell, elected officials and others in the community rallied around the drivers and demanded

that the board of education reconsider.

Meyer and her USW siblings circulated petitions, held informational pickets and rallied outside of every school board meeting in an effort to preserve their jobs and the dependable bus transportation they provide to the families of Bay City.

The drivers, they said, were more than just friendly and familiar faces for children in the mornings and afternoons. They help to make the trips to and from school go smoothly and safely for the more than 8,100 students in the area.

Meyer and her co-workers put in as many as 150 miles during their work days, which, because of split shifts, begin at 5 a.m. and end 12 hours later. They navigate 35-foot, 14-ton buses over winding roads through treacherous weather, safely delivering what Meyer



# CITY

calls “precious cargo” to schools, sporting events and activities.

The drivers, McDonnell said, “invest their whole heart in the job.”

“Outsourcing usually does not end very well,” she said. “It’s a rocky road.”

## Outsourcing Trend

Still, Bay City is far from the only district that has considered outsourcing school transportation or making major changes to other vital public services.

In the wake of the COVID-19 pandemic, districts nationwide have struggled to recruit and retain drivers. The shortage has led some districts to close schools or cut services. Others called in the National Guard for help, put teachers behind the wheel or paid parents to transport their own kids. Bus companies contracted by one Maryland school district missed more than 3,000 trips this past school year, leaving hundreds of students and parents in the lurch.

In Washington state, the transportation commission recently approved a \$198,000 settlement with a school bus contractor that racked up 396 violations,



**“ I trust these drivers. They’re part of our backbone. It means a lot to them to be contributing to their community in this way.”**

Kristin McDonnell, Bay City parent

including failure to screen drivers for drugs, while officials in other parts of the country have contended with contract drivers who drank alcohol on the job and left a child behind at a bus garage at the end of the run.

## Unanimous Vote

Ultimately USW members and their supporters were successful in making the case that putting children in the care of contractors rather than unionized school employees wasn’t worth whatever small amount of money the district might potentially save in the long run.

The Bay City school board voted unanimously on May 9 to keep the district’s unionized staff of bus drivers in place.

The vote was met with hugs and celebrations in the crowd of bus drivers and local families.

“The best decision for our families, our kids, our school system, our community, has been made here tonight,” said bus driver and USW unit Vice President Jennifer Irmen.

Bay City Schools Superintendent Stephen Bigelow credited the community’s activism with changing the minds of school directors.

“There’s certainly power in numbers,” Bigelow said. “I think it definitely had an impact on the board.”

# AFTER 80 YEARS, STILL STRONGER TOGETHER

## USW Marks Eight Decades Leading the Fight for Better Lives for Workers

**B**y 1942, members of the Steelworkers Organizing Committee had struggled for six years to lay the foundation for a new labor organization that would act as a powerful collective voice to fight for better lives for hundreds of thousands of workers across North America.

Philip Murray, immigrant, coal miner and labor activist, helped to lead that organizing drive, envisioning an alliance that would speak on behalf of every iron and steel worker in the United States and Canada, one that would challenge the status quo and lift up workers and their families – “not today, but down, down, down through the years to come.”

Murray’s vision became a reality, but neither he nor the 1,700 delegates who elected him the first president of the USW could have imagined what the institution they founded would look like 80 years later.

### Proud History

“The members of this union have a lot of history to celebrate and a lot to be proud of,” said International President Tom Conway. “Even though much has changed since our early days, one thing has not – we are still leading the fight for our fellow workers, for our families, and for our communities, and we always will.”

Through relentless organizing, strategic mergers and alliances, and amid evolving demographics, the USW transformed itself in the years since May 22, 1942, when the delegates to the union’s first convention in Cleveland represented workers in the iron and steel industry.

Today, in addition to those producing iron, steel, aluminum and other metals, the union counts tire builders, paper workers, chemical producers, glass and mold makers, teachers, doctors, nurses, attorneys, arborists, police officers, bus drivers, city planners, grocery clerks, and countless other workers among its ranks.

“As our union has grown more diverse, we have only grown stronger,” said International Vice President David McCall. “We embrace and celebrate our differences, knowing that we all have at least one important thing in common – we are all workers. This is everybody’s union.”

While the USW has evolved through new organizing and mergers, its core values and day-to-day purpose have been

remarkably consistent. The USW constitution, which members ratified eight decades ago, promised that the organization would “advance and safeguard the economic security and social welfare of workers.”

Through bargaining for better wages and benefits, advocating for safe and healthy workplaces, fighting for fair trade rules, and securing stable retirement plans, the USW set standards not just for its members, but for entire communities across the United States and Canada.

### Decades of Change

Over the years, those fights also took union members from their own bargaining tables to the halls of government, where they lobbied for the adoption of standards like family and medical leave, higher minimum wages and equal pay, and for the establishment of programs like Medicare and institutions like the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). As their power grew, USW members also regularly fought off attacks from employers and right-wing politicians who sought to diminish it.

As multinational corporations began to dominate the economic landscape, strategic alliances with other unions around the world helped the USW strengthen its position at home and expand its influence abroad. Through that work, growing numbers of members who work for global corporations are able to directly challenge the world’s most powerful employers by calling upon the strength and solidarity of their union siblings around the world.

Today, the USW is the largest and most influential manufacturing union in the United States, with 800,000 active and retired members in every industry and every region of the country. The United Steelworkers union has provided generations of American and Canadian families with good jobs, quality benefits and secure retirements.

As USW members look to the future, the union is pushing forward with the mission that began with its founding in 1942 – striving every day to organize new members into the movement, fighting for higher wages and better benefits at the bargaining table, and seeking economic justice for working families across the world.





## HERE ARE SOME OF THE MOST SIGNIFICANT EVENTS IN THE HISTORY OF THE USW:

### **JULY 5, 1935:**

U.S. President Franklin Delano Roosevelt signs the National Labor Relations Act, guaranteeing the right of private-sector workers to form unions.

### **JUNE 17, 1936:**

The Committee for Industrial Organization creates the Steel Workers Organizing Committee (SWOC), with the goal of uniting all workers in the steel industry into one union.

### **MARCH 7, 1937:**

SWOC signs its first contract, with Carnegie-Illinois Steel, for \$5-a-day wages and benefits.

### **MAY 1937:**

The “Little Steel Strike,” involving 80,000 workers at 30 mills, results in violent attacks on workers but leads to unionization at Bethlehem, J&L, National and elsewhere. On May 30, police kill 10 unarmed demonstrators in Chicago in what becomes known as the Memorial Day Massacre.



### **MAY 22, 1942:**

Delegates to the SWOC convention at the Cleveland Public Hall create the United Steelworkers of America (USWA) and elect SWOC Chair Philip Murray as the union’s first president.

### **JUNE 30, 1942:**

The Amalgamated Association of Iron, Steel & Tin Workers merges with the USWA.

### **JUNE 30, 1944:**

Aluminum Workers of America merge with USWA.

### **OCT. 31, 1949:**

Steelworkers win the first company-funded pension plan in their contract with Bethlehem Steel.

### **NOVEMBER 1952:**

Philip Murray dies of a heart attack. David J. McDonald, who had been USWA secretary-treasurer, becomes the union’s second president.

### **JULY 1956:**

Four-week “Big Steel Strike” results in victory for union members, leading to wage and benefit increases, unemployment benefits and layoff rights.



### **JULY 15, 1959:**

Record 116-day steel industry strike shuts down almost every mill in the United States and results in the first-ever automatic cost-of-living wage increases, as well as improved health and retirement benefits.

### **JULY 31, 1961:**

Steelworkers join other trade unionists to help create Canada’s New Democratic Party (NDP).

### **JULY 1, 1962:**

NDP government in Saskatchewan enacts the Medical Insurance Act, the beginning of universal health care in Canada.



## **BEA LUMPKIN**

Lumpkin, 104, has been a union organizer and activist since she was a teenager. She and her husband, Frank, helped to establish the “Save Our Jobs” committee and fought to restore retirement benefits for workers during the steel crisis in the 1980s. Lumpkin remains active with Southeast Chicago SOAR Chapter 31-9, which keeps the memory of the 1937 Memorial Day Massacre alive by sharing the history in Chicago area schools.

### **ON LIFE AS AN ORGANIZER:**

“Thanks to my long life and SOAR activism after retirement, I can claim about 85 years of union activism. In 1937, on summer vacation, I became a CIO organizer for the laundry workers in the Bronx. In just a few weeks, we brought 20,000 laundry workers into the union. Organizing was so successful and so exciting that I took a year and a half off college to work with the laundry workers.”

### **ON THE FUTURE OF LABOR:**

“Now, like in 1937, millions want to join a union. But we must pass the PRO Act, which does more than guarantee the right to join a union. It also guarantees a first-year contract, through arbitration if need be.”





## ANDY MIKLOS

Miklos served as president of Local 1557 from 2003-2009. He started work at U.S. Steel's Clairton Works in 1974 and retired in 2018. He has been active in politics throughout his life and has served several terms as a member of the borough council in his hometown of Elizabeth Borough, Pa.

### ON THE LESSONS OF THE PAST:

“After NAFTA, and then after China PNTR, we watched a lot of factories go down. There were a lot of good jobs that we were unable to keep here. The labor movement struggled, but we worked hard to save those jobs. One thing I’ve learned is this – if you’re a worker, you have to elect people who support you. You would have never had OSHA if you didn’t have elected officials who supported it. You wouldn’t have Social Security, you wouldn’t have right-to-know laws. You have to elect the people who are going to help you get there. Look at their actions, not their words.”

### ON THE NEXT GENERATION:

“I think of the union almost every day. It was like my second love. But there comes a time when you have to entrust it to other people, and you hope that you’ve guided them along. That’s what they did for me.”

### FEB. 6, 1965:

I.W. Abel becomes the third president of the USWA.

### JUNE 30, 1967:

International Union of Mine, Mill and Smelter Workers merges with USWA.

### DECEMBER 1970:

Following heavy lobbying by USWA members, the Occupational Safety and Health Act becomes law, creating the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) and the National Institute for Occupational Safety and Health (NIOSH).



### APRIL 1974:

Consent decree leads to greater racial and gender equality in steel facilities.

### SEPT. 2, 1974:

President Gerald Ford signs the USWA-backed Employee Retiree Income Security Act (ERISA) into law, establishing minimum standards for pension plans.

### FEB. 8, 1977:

Lloyd McBride becomes the fourth president of the USWA. McBride’s tenure is marked by an industry crisis that leads to offshoring jobs and plant closings.

### DECEMBER 1978:

The “Battle of Newport News” begins, resulting in an 82-day strike,

the ousting of the company union, and a first contract for 14,000 shipbuilders of Local 8888 in Virginia.

### NOV. 17, 1983:

Lynn Williams becomes the fifth president of the USWA following the death of Lloyd McBride. Williams is the first Canadian to lead an international AFL-CIO union.



### 1985:

USWA creates Steelworkers Humanity Fund as a registered Canadian charitable organization that directs members’ donations to emergency relief, educational programs and other causes.

### MAY 23, 1985:

Delegates to the USWA convention vote unanimously to establish the Steelworkers Organization of Active Retirees (SOAR).

### OCT. 31, 1985:

Upholsterers International Union merges with the USWA.

### SEPTEMBER 1989:

OSHA issues the first lockout/tagout standards, protecting nearly 40 million industrial workers.

### JUNE 29, 1992:

Members of Local 5668 at West Virginia’s Ravenswood Aluminum Co. march back to work in unity after a successful international campaign results in a new contract, ending a 20-month lockout.





**AUGUST 1992:**

Delegates to the USWA convention pass the first Women of Steel resolution, making gender equality and women's issues a central part of the union's agenda.

**JAN. 5, 1993:**

Basic Steel Industry Conference adopts "New Directions" bargaining policy, leading to agreements with major steel companies including employment security, increased worker involvement and board representation.

**NOV. 23, 1993:**

George Becker becomes sixth president of the USWA.

**JULY 1, 1995:**

In a special United Rubber Workers' convention, delegates vote to merge their 98,000-member union with the USWA.

**OCT. 18, 1995:**

The 1,700 Steelworkers at WCI Steel in Warren, Ohio, win agreement after a seven-week strike.

**FEBRUARY 1996:**

Union begins training local union members to mobilize as part of the Rapid Response grassroots political action program.



**MAY 31, 1996:**

Contracts with Alcoa and Reynolds bring the USWA's "New Directions" bargaining principles to the aluminum industry.

**NOV. 4, 1996:**

Capping a worldwide struggle of more than two years, union workers win a settlement with Bridgestone/Firestone covering 6,000 members at seven factories.

**DEC. 17, 1996:**

Aluminum, Brick & Glass Workers vote to merge with the USWA.

**MAY 8, 1997:**

Contract with Goodyear Tire & Rubber Co. follows an 18-day strike and establishes new standards for the industry.

**AUG. 1, 1997:**

Ten-month strike against Wheeling-Pittsburgh Steel ends with agreement guaranteeing pensions for 4,500 Steelworkers.

**NOV. 7, 1997:**

USW members lead successful effort to defeat "Fast Track" trade legislation.



**SEPT. 10, 1998:**

Stand Up for Steel coalition of domestic steel companies and the USWA launches nationwide public awareness campaign about the dangers of illegal imports.

**SEPT. 18, 1999:**

Longest illegal lockout in U.S. labor history ends when an arbitrator orders a new contract at five Kaiser Aluminum plants.

**NOV. 28, 1999:**

Massive Steelworker participation in the "Battle of Seattle" helps to establish labor-environmental alliance.

**JAN. 11, 2000:**

More than 4,000 administrative and technical support staff at the University of Toronto ratify their first contract as members of Local 1998.

**JUNE 2000:**

Steelworker activists hit Canada's Parliament Hill with intensive lobbying to change Canada's criminal code to hold corporate executives accountable for workplace deaths.

**JAN. 23, 2001:**

USWA Basic Steel Industry Conference unanimously calls for federal action to prevent the collapse of the steel industry as illegal imports push steel prices to record lows.

**FEB. 28, 2001:**

George Becker retires. Leo W. Gerard becomes the seventh president of the USWA.

**FEB. 28, 2002:**

More than 30,000 Steelworkers and supporters march in Washington, D.C., demanding decisive federal action to end unfair trade.

**APRIL 10, 2002:**

Leaders from 21 unions who represent workers at International Paper Co. facilities around the world establish a global union network.

**FEB. 18, 2003:**

Steelworkers overwhelmingly ratify a six-year agreement with International Steel Group, Inc., establishing a new pattern in basic steel, and facilitating consolidation of the industry.

**JUNE 3, 2003:**

The American Flint Glass Workers Union merges with the USWA.

**NOVEMBER 2003:**

USWA campaign results in passage of the Westray Law, changing Canada's Criminal Code to hold corporate executives accountable for worker deaths.

**MARCH 2004:**

Members approve settlement, including more than \$100 million in back pay, ending a seven-year lockout at Oregon Steel Mill, the longest labor dispute in the union's history.

**MARCH 29, 2004:**

Paper workers hold first National Paper Bargaining Conference.

**SEPT. 1, 2004:**

Members of the Industrial, Wood and Allied Workers (IWA Canada) vote to merge their 50,000-member organization with the USWA, creating the largest private-sector union in Canada.

**2005:**

The Tony Mazzocchi Center is established to provide health, safety and environmental training and educational opportunities for workers.

**FEBRUARY 2005:**

The USWA forms strategic alliances with the Australian Workers' Union and the Construction, Forestry, Mining and Energy Union of Australia.

**APRIL 13, 2005:**

The USW signs strategic alliances with the National Union of Mining, Steel and Allied Workers of Mexico and CNM-CUT, the largest metalworkers' union in Brazil.

**APRIL 14, 2005:**

The USWA merges with the Paper, Allied-Industrial, Chemical and Energy Workers (PACE) International Union to form the largest industrial union in North America, the USW.

**JUNE 7, 2006:**

The USW and Sierra Club form BlueGreen Alliance to pursue joint public policy goals of good jobs and a clean environment. A number of other unions and environmental organizations soon join the alliance.

**APRIL 2007:**

The USW and major industrial employers found the nonprofit Alliance for American Manufacturing.

**JUNE 2008:**

USW and Unite the Union of Great Britain and Ireland form a new trans-Atlantic labor organization called Workers Uniting, which includes 3 million workers.

**JULY 2, 2008:**

Carol Landry becomes International Vice President and the first woman on the USW Executive Board.

**SEPTEMBER 2009:**

USW trade petition results in duties on imported tires and saves 31,000 jobs.

**SEPT. 23, 2009:**

USW calls on G-20 leaders to address the global economic crisis at world summit in Pittsburgh.

**AUGUST 2011:**

Delegates to the USW Constitutional Convention pass the union's first "Next Generation" resolution.

**AUG. 2, 2011:**

Members at the Honeywell International uranium processing plant in Metropolis, Ill., reach a contract settlement, ending a 13-month lockout.

**JAN. 31, 2012:**

USW reaches agreement with the oil industry on a three-year National Oil Bargaining pattern settlement that includes ground-breaking health and safety improvements.

**FEB. 27, 2012:**

International campaign helps members at Cooper Tire & Rubber Co.'s Findlay, Ohio, plant end a three-month lockout.

**MAY 4, 2012:**

Former International Vice President Leon Lynch, the first African American to serve as vice president of a major labor union and a lifelong advocate for social justice, dies at 76.

**JUNE 2012:**

USW joins labor unions around the world in founding IndustriALL, a new global union federation representing 50 million workers in 140 countries.



### **JANUARY 2013:**

Fifteen years of struggle pay off when hospital workers at Kentucky River Medical Center in Jackson, Ky., reach their first contract with Tennessee-based health care giant Community Health Systems.

### **SEPTEMBER 2013:**

USW's Health, Safety and Environment department announces the development of a comprehensive, union-based safety and health program that focuses on finding and preventing hazards.

### **JAN. 14, 2014:**

Obama administration challenges China's refusal to comply with a World Trade Organization ruling against China's imposition of duties on high-tech American steel made by USW members.

### **JUNE 25, 2014:**

USW International President Leo W. Gerard testifies before the Senate Finance Committee on the devastating effects of unfair trade.

### **MARCH 12, 2015:**

The USW reaches a tentative agreement with Shell, ending the largest oil industry work stoppage in 35 years. Nearly 7,000 workers at 12 refineries and three related facilities stopped work over health and safety, staffing and other concerns.

### **AUG. 21, 2015:**

The USW settlement with Freight-Car America Inc. over the company's unlawful termination of retiree medical and life insurance benefits results in \$31 million fund to provide benefits for 650 retirees.

### **FEB. 1, 2016:**

USW files trade case seeking relief from millions of dumped and subsidized Chinese-made truck and bus tires.

### **FEB. 9, 2016:**

USW joins four U.S. paper companies in winning huge anti-dumping and countervailing duties on Chinese and Indonesian uncoated paper.

### **MARCH 1, 2016:**

Members in six states ratify contract with ATI to end illegal six-month lockout.

### **JUNE 22, 2016:**

Steelworkers win duties on illegally subsidized and dumped cold-rolled steel flat products from seven countries, including China.

### **SEPT. 1, 2016:**

The Glass, Molders, Pottery, Plastics & Allied Workers International Union (GMP) merges with the USW.



### **JANUARY 2017:**

USW members make 1,500 visits and thousands of phone calls, and send 350,000 postcards to Capitol Hill in a successful campaign to defeat the Trans-Pacific Partnership.

### **APRIL 2017:**

Pressure from the USW results in a U.S. Commerce Department Section 232 investigation into the national security impact of unfairly traded steel and aluminum.

### **MAY 20, 2017:**

Lengthy USW campaign pays off when OSHA issues final rules protecting workers from beryllium exposure.

### **SEPTEMBER 2017:**

The USW's Dow North American Labor Council and Dupont Councils merge in response to the mega-merger between Dow Chemical and Dupont.

### **JAN. 4, 2018:**

USW achieves longstanding safety goal when court rejects challenges and allows new OSHA silica standards to take effect.

### **AUG. 28, 2018:**

The USW welcomes Napoleón Gómez Urrutia, president and general secretary of Mexican metalworkers' union Los Mineros, with which the USW has a strategic alliance, back to Mexico after more than 12 years of exile.



## **DESIRAE BEATTY**

Beatty is a certified nursing assistant and one of the newest members of the USW, after she and hundreds of her co-workers at four Kane Community Living Centers in Pennsylvania voted – unanimously – in January to join the union. Those 500 workers are now part of the growing USW health care sector that includes more than 50,000 workers across North America.

### **ON SHOWING UNION SOLIDARITY:**

“The USW helped us with a day of action, giving us uniform scrub tops to wear on the day we voted for the USW to be our union. It showed our management team that we were united and that we were sticking together. It also showed us what we could accomplish when we stick together.”

### **ON BEING PART OF A DIVERSE UNION:**

“We have the Women of Steel, which I feel is very empowering for women who are out there helping in organizing and bargaining, willing to put themselves out there for the cause of seeing fair contracts. The USW is constantly taking inclusive action, making sure African Americans are recognized for their accomplishments, and making sure the LGBTQ+ community is included and welcomed.”



**JULY 15, 2019:**

Leo W. Gerard retires. Tom Conway becomes the eighth USW president.



**JUNE 16, 2020:**

NLRB issues sweeping complaint against ASARCO for the company’s failure to bargain in good faith with the USW and seven other unions.

**MARCH 2021:**

President Biden announces his plan to rebuild the nation’s crumbling infrastructure during a visit to Pittsburgh. USW launches “We Supply America” campaign in support of the initiative.

**AUGUST 2021:**

The USW mourns the loss of AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka. In reorganization, the AFL-CIO Executive Council names USW International Vice President Fred Redmond as the coalition’s new secretary-treasurer.

**OCT. 19, 2021:**

Overcoming a relentless anti-union campaign, 3,300 faculty members at the University of Pittsburgh vote by a 2-to-1 margin to become members of the USW.



**SEPT. 19, 2019:**

USW members ratify first new contract with Alcoa after it is split into two companies.

**DEC. 10, 2019:**

USW supports the new United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement after Democrats in Congress revise the NAFTA replacement to add protections for workers’ rights and the environment.

**DECEMBER 2019:**

USW launches “Your Union, Your Voice” campaign of member surveys and town hall meetings to gather input on workplace and political issues.

**MARCH 2020:**

USW calls Families First Coronavirus Response Act a good “first step” in protecting Americans from the effects of COVID-19, but says workers and families will need much more support.

**NOV. 15, 2021:**

With USW members in attendance at the White House, President Joe Biden signs the \$1.2 trillion Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act into law.

**FEBRUARY 2022:**

USW condemns Russian invasion of Ukraine, calls for a ban on Russian oil imports, and begins mobilizing aid for workers and families affected by the violence.



**LEO W. GERARD**

Gerard, a native of Sudbury, Ontario, began his career as a member of Local 6500 and went on to serve as Canadian National Director, International Secretary-Treasurer and International President. Gerard served for 18 years as the USW’s president, retiring in 2019 after growing the union through organizing, mergers and strategic alliances.

**ON HIS USW LEGACY:**

“One of the things that I’m most proud of is the team that I left behind. The officers and members did magnificent work through the pandemic and other challenges. That collective strength kept the union together and saw us through some very difficult times. In the Steelworkers union, we say ‘we,’ not ‘I.’ And, to me, that has been the key to success in our union. It’s all about what we did together.”

**ON GROWING THE MOVEMENT:**

“The AFL-CIO’s new leadership team wants to organize one million new members a year. We need to bring the labor movement together and grow the movement the way we did in the 1940s, ’50s, ’60s. We have a diversified membership – everything from higher education to health care to new manufacturing technologies. The economy is growing in different ways, and we need to position ourselves for growth in new sectors while maintaining our momentum in our traditional manufacturing sectors.”





# Ravenswood's Lessons Remain

## Steelworkers Mark 30th Anniversary of Momentous Victory in W.Va.

On June 29, 1992, members of Local 5668 marched, in unison, back to work at West Virginia's Ravenswood Aluminum Co. after being locked out of their jobs for more than a year and a half.

This June, International President Tom Conway led a delegation of USW officials from the headquarters, district and local levels as hundreds of workers, retirees and community allies celebrated the 30th anniversary of that moment, which continues to provide lessons in perseverance and solidarity.

"It was probably the most solidarity that you could ever see," said Marge Flanigan, whose late husband worked at the factory and who helped to organize the 30th anniversary event along with Local 5668 President Ed Barnette.

Flanigan was instrumental in creating the Women's Support Group, which became known as 'The Heartbeat of 5668' and helped raise funds and keep spirits up through the nearly two-year ordeal.

Local 5668 members waged a grueling struggle for survival – for union workers and their community – starting at midnight on Halloween night in 1990. The company's new owners, led by fugitive billionaire Marc Rich, kicked the union workers out and brought in scabs by the hundreds.

The company hired paramilitary-style security, erected massive barbed-wire fencing and did everything in its power to make life difficult for the locked-out work force.

"As the workers marched out of the plant, the scabs were already walking in," Flanigan said. "The company definitely knew this was coming."

The company, seeking massive cost cuts, was determined to bust the union. But the workers had other ideas.

"The workers had built their whole lives around this company," Barnette said. "From buying property and building homes to starting families and raising children."

The union collected funds to make sure bills were paid, meals were made available, and children had toys at the holidays. "One day longer" became the USW's rallying cry.

While helping local families keep their footing, Local 5668, with assistance from the USW headquarters in Pittsburgh, also mounted an international campaign to save workers' jobs by putting pressure on the company's new owners, a

global conglomerate with operations in 40 countries.

The leader of the company, Rich, was living in Switzerland to escape indictment for racketeering, tax evasion and other charges in the United States.

USW members traveled to Washington, D.C., and across the globe, enlisting the help of other international labor organizations, corporations and political leaders, to keep the pressure on the company. Members organized boycotts and held demonstrations across the country.

"Our voices were being heard around the world," Flanigan said.

Meanwhile, in Ravenswood, union members were pouring into town by the busload to lend financial and moral support to the locked-out workers. Rallies drew crowds of thousands and gained national news coverage.

The USW also sought relief through the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), charging that the company's actions were illegal and that management should be forced to fire the replacements and rehire the locked-out work force with back pay.

Under mounting pressure on all fronts, the company reopened negotiations in the spring of 1992 and eventually agreed in June of that year to dismiss the scabs and bring Local 5668 members back to work.

In the decades since, the lessons of the Ravenswood lockout have only grown in significance. Through the struggle, USW members and other unions found a new way to confront multinational corporations – joining forces with their own international allies and mounting campaigns from local union halls to the halls of international governments. The USW built a global network of allies who have helped workers confront unscrupulous employers across the world for the past 30 years.

"The struggle for labor rights has always been an international campaign," said Conway. "Ravenswood taught us that we have to think of these fights in a different way."

As Local 5668 President Barnette said, "It was not just a single event or person that won the battle." Leaders from the local to the district to the international level all pitched in to help turn the tide.

"Most of all," he said, "it was the undying grit and determination of the rank-and-file members refusing to give up and to trust and remain loyal, not only to their union, but to each other."

Members of four USW locals who work at Arconic aluminum facilities voted in June to ratify a new master contract that includes significant wage increases and bonuses.

The agreement, which covers about 3,400 members, provides for wage increases of more than 20 percent over the four-year contract term, along with signing bonuses totaling \$4,000.

“This contract was the result of a lot of hard work by the bargaining team, and by all the members at Arconic, who supported the committee in every way that was asked of them,” said District 11 Director Emil Ramirez, who chaired the union’s negotiating team. “The solidarity of the membership was the key to winning a strong agreement.”

The new agreement covers members of Local 105 in Davenport, Iowa; Local 309 in Alcoa, Tenn.; Local 115 in Lafayette, Ind.; and Local 420A in Massena, N.Y.

### Member Priorities

In addition to making gains on wages, the agreement maintains quality, affordable health care benefits and a se-

cure retirement plan, which were among the top priorities that members identified in the surveys they completed before negotiations got under way this April.

Member solidarity events, including sticker days, T-shirt days, plant gate rallies, and appearances by the USW “bat light” helped keep the pressure on the company to settle a fair agreement with its work force.

Besides economic gains, Ramirez said, the agreement makes a number of language improvements, particularly in the area of protecting workers’ safety and health.

“Making sure our workplaces are safe - that is the cornerstone of this union,” Ramirez said.

The contract also strengthens sick and accident pay and adds Martin Luther King Jr. Day as an additional paid holiday.

### Strong Strike Vote

Initially, the USW bargaining committee reported little progress in negotiations, as the company resisted the union’s proposals for wage increases and contract improvements in recognition of the workers’ sacrifices and hard

work through the COVID-19 pandemic.

In mid-May, as bargaining stalled, members voted overwhelmingly to authorize a strike, if necessary. Not long after that public display of solidarity, the two sides reached a tentative agreement.

“They deemed us ‘essential’ so we could keep working during the pandemic. We want to be paid like essential workers,” Local 105 Guard Lee Shaffer said following the strike vote. “We’ll do whatever it takes to get a fair contract.”

Arconic, based in Pittsburgh, was created in 2016 when Alcoa split into two companies. One, a smelting and refining company, retained the Alcoa name, while the other, a downstream products division, became known as Arconic.

The new agreement took effect May 16, 2022, and runs through May 15, 2026.

The USW’s master agreement with Alcoa, which covers 1,600 production and maintenance workers at four U.S. facilities, expires on May 15, 2023. That contract covers members of Local 104 in Warrick, Ind., Local 420A in Massena, N.Y., Local 4370 in Point Comfort, Texas, and Local 310A in Wenatchee, Wash.







Players in the United States Football League (USFL) voted this spring in favor of union representation after the USW filed a petition in coordination with the United Football Players Association (UFPA).

Following the election, conducted by the National Labor Relations Board, the USW will represent about 378 USFL players in the eight-team league, which began play in April with the backing of broadcast partner Fox Sports.

International President Tom Conway said the USW was proud to stand with players to ensure they are treated fairly by the league.

“Pay, hours and working conditions are areas where a union can make a difference,” Conway said. “Giving players a strong collective voice will ensure more security for individuals, their earnings and their jobs.”

UFPA President Kenneth Farrow, who played six seasons of professional football, said that the power of a union will make a huge impact for players who often face uncertainty due to injuries, poor facilities and bankrupt employers.

“Every worker deserves the opportunity to bargain for better pay, benefits and working conditions as part of a union,” Farrow said. “Players can guarantee a stronger voice in determining their own futures by bargaining as part of a collective.”

While the current league owns the trademarks and logos of the previous USFL, which operated for three seasons in the mid-1980s, it shares no other relationship with that effort.

UFPA Vice President Nick Temple, who played seven seasons in multiple football leagues, said that players are standing together and forming a union to address and improve working conditions.

“Like all workers, professional athletes deserve to be treated with dignity and respect on the job by their employers,” Temple said. “The USW has empowered generations of workers to fight for fairness, so we are prepared to bring the top concerns of the players to the table.”

Founded in 2020, the UFPA includes players with experience in the National Football League, Arena League of American Football, XFL, Canadian Football League and others.

## FOOTBALL PLAYERS SAY ‘UNION YES’

USW SUPPORTS EFFORT TO  
GAIN REPRESENTATION IN USFL

UFPA is one of several steps into the world of sports that the USW has taken in recent years. In 2019, the USW formed a strategic alliance with the Canadian Football League Players’ Association (CFLPA) and promised to continue building unity between the two organizations. Through that alliance, the USW committed to providing help and resources to the CFLPA, including education, government relations advice and bargaining and campaign support.

This spring, the USW backed CFLPA members when they were forced to go on strike as they sought a new collective agreement with the CFL.

“The United Steelworkers union pledges any and all support for the CFL Players’ Association to win this strike,” Canadian National Director Marty Warren said at the outset of the strike. “We applaud their courage and determination to give players a voice and respect for the work that they do.”

That strike, only the second in the league’s history, ended after four days with a new seven-year contract.

### College Players

The USW has also partnered with college athletes to fight for better treatment. The union has been a vocal proponent of the National College Players Association (NCPA), a group of current and former college athletes who have been fighting for fair treatment and players’ rights since 2001. The USW has provided fundraising and legal support to the organization.

The NCPA, with the USW’s support, has been successful in gaining significant reforms in college athletics, including greater oversight and transparency, extended health coverage for injured players, more secure scholarships, an end to deceptive recruiting practices, and compensation for the use of player names and likenesses.

Formally affiliated earlier this year, the USW and UFPA are fighting together for better treatment for professional athletes in the USFL, as well as the XFL and other potential leagues who are not covered by contracts like those in the NFL Players’ Association.

The partnership with the



USW members across the United States showed their solidarity with the LGBTQ+ community this June at Pride Month events, lending their voices to building a more inclusive labor movement and society.

From California to Cleveland, Chicago to Pittsburgh, members made it clear that part of a union's duty is to ensure safe and fair workplaces for all.

In Ohio, Local 9187 President Andrew Reed and Treasurer Jacqui Bell mobilized members to support the first-ever Pride Month event sponsored in Stark County. The local served on the planning committee of the Stark-PRIDE Festival, which included live music, vendors, food, and more.

The USW's District 1, which includes the state of Ohio, will also be sponsoring the Akron Pride Festival on Saturday, August 27.

Reed said it is important for local unions to sponsor LGBTQ+ events and similar campaigns.

"You never know who in your membership needs to see that support," Reed said.

Reed and several fellow members of Local 9187, who work at Stark County Job and Family Services, handed out educational materials and colorful swag from their table at the all-day event. The local's union logo also flashed on a big

screen every few minutes for all of Canton to see.


On an international level, the union publicly recommitted itself to fighting for equality for the most marginalized workers. International Vice President Kevin Mapp, who leads the USW's civil and human rights efforts, called specifically for health care to be recognized as a basic human right and said no American should be denied safe, accessible, life-affirming treatment.

"We must honor our duty to bargain good contracts that solidify benefits for all members, and to prioritize health and safety in the workplace," Mapp said. "We must also speak out boldly against any acts of hate or terrorism, and we must stand up for all our union siblings, as our union, and the entire labor movement, knows that an injury to one is an injury to all."

At the close of Pride Month on June 30, the USW LGBTQ+ Advisory Committee also hosted a virtual panel discussion called "Stories of Pride," in which participants heard stories from

LGBTQ+ identifying members and shared information about furthering the USW's mission of diversity and inclusivity.

Members can learn more about the advisory committee and find resources on how they can better protect and empower LGBTQ+ workers at [www.usw.org/steelpride](http://www.usw.org/steelpride).



Check out the USW podcast, "Solidarity Works," to hear a conversation with activists from the Bayard Rustin Center for Social Justice about the life and legacy of the late labor and civil rights leader, who has often remained in the shadows of history. The episode also touches on their work with the LGBTQ+ community and how everyone can play a role in building a more inclusive, loving movement for all. Visit [usw.to/podcast](http://usw.to/podcast)

# SOLIDARITY ON DISPLAY AT PRIDE EVENTS





# EVERYBODY IN, NOBODY OUT

## Shuler, Redmond Elected to Lead AFL-CIO at Historic Convention



The 1,500 delegates and guests at the 29th AFL-CIO Convention, held in Philadelphia in June, witnessed a series of historic firsts.

Those included electing Liz Shuler as the first woman president of the federation and former USW International Vice President Fred Redmond as the first Black person as its secretary-treasurer.

International President Tom Conway, flanked by a group of 20 USW members, nominated Redmond for the position, noting his ability to “reach out to everyone, to see their value, to include them, to train them, to mentor them.”

“Our union couldn’t be prouder of Fred,” he added.

In accepting his new role, Redmond called his time at the USW “one of the greatest privileges of my career.”

“I know what the labor movement does,” Redmond said. “It brings the marginalized in from the margins. It brings respect to the disrespected. It lets people come together and collectively bargain for their own future.”

The priorities of inclusion and charting a path forward for all working people were front and center throughout the four-day event held under the theme “Building the Movement to Meet the Moment.”

The convention included workshops, panel discussions, and dozens of resolutions, and representatives attended from more than 50 national and international unions and more than 200 state and area labor federations and central labor councils.

“We need to reach out to today’s work force that has more women and people of color than ever before and

keep organizing in new and emerging industries,” said Redmond. “We have to keep fighting until every worker in this country has the chance to have a good union job. Everybody in, nobody out.”

### Meeting the Moment

It is especially important, Shuler said, that public funding for new technologies supports not just individual manufacturers but whole American-made supply chains that create even more union jobs.

USW International Vice President Roxanne Brown, who alongside Conway was also elected to a new four-year term on the AFL-CIO Executive Council at the convention, echoed this point in introducing a resolution on climate change and clean energy jobs.

“We’re demanding – not asking – that developers source their materials from manufacturers that are either surrounding the project or are U.S.-based.”

The resolution passed without opposition.

In introducing one of several resolutions geared at rebalancing the economy toward helping working families, Conway said the labor movement must also fight not only to keep Wall Street in check, but to ensure a vibrant domestic manufacturing sector through building out long-neglected supply chains and investing in the nation’s crumbling infrastructure.

“Working people are the true heart of the economy, and we should be treated that way,” Conway said.

President Joe Biden, who joined delegates in person on the third day of the convention, described his administration’s work to “create more good jobs using products made in America,”

making ‘Buy American’ a reality, not just a slogan.”

The \$1.2 trillion Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act that Biden signed last fall is already creating demand for American-made materials and will continue to support good, union jobs and healthy communities well into the future. “Not only is it an infrastructure week,” Biden said, “we’re aiming at an infrastructure decade.”

### Young Workers Rising

Throughout the convention, young workers shared their perspectives and experiences as they struggled to achieve a seat at the table in troublesome workplaces like Amazon.

In recommending adoption of the resolution on “renewing the promise with young workers,” Brown reminded delegates that young people “recognize that a union contract is the single best way to turn bad jobs into good ones.”

Through the resolution, delegates committed themselves to reinvigorating the AFL-CIO’s Young Worker Program, offering continued support to college athletes and graduate students in their organizing efforts, educating high schoolers about the benefits of collective bargaining and more.

The convention also marked the launch of the new AFL-CIO Sports Council to help athletes, like the players in the United States Football League who in June voted to join the USW, coordinate around areas of common concern.

“If there’s one team you don’t want to bet against,” Shuler said, “it’s the American labor movement.”





# Glass Workers Win New Contracts

**Three-year Agreements Cover 5,700 Members at Owens-Illinois, Ardagh**

**U**SW glassmakers at Owens-Illinois and Ardagh facilities ratified new three-year agreements this spring that cover a total of 5,700 workers at more than two dozen factories across the United States.

“Both companies came to the table with concessions, and in both cases, members fought back, refused to back down and, as a result, achieved significant gains,” said USW GMP Council Chair Claude Beaudin, who led the two bargaining committees. “Members showed their strength and solidarity like never before.”

The USW’s agreements with both glass companies, covering workers in the hot end (automatic machine department) and the cold end (production and maintenance departments) expired on March 31. In both cases, the terms and conditions of the expired contracts continued under a series of extensions until the new agreements were reached.

## Showing Solidarity

As bargaining progressed and the two companies continued to seek concessions, USW members exerted increasing pressure in the form of T-shirt and sticker solidarity days, plant gate rallies, and appearances by the USW “bat light,” which drew public attention and support for the protracted contract fights.

When workers’ frustrations reached their tipping point, it took one last show of strength to achieve a successful result. On the day before the end of the contract extension at Ardagh, workers took their personal tools home at night, a signal that they were prepared to initiate a work stoppage if one became necessary. That simple but powerful message helped to push the company toward a favorable settlement, Beaudin said.

At O-I, where workers’ tools are governed by somewhat different rules, members sought management’s permission to remove their tools and also alerted the company of their intent to end the rolling

48-hour contract extension.

“We went right down to the wire,” Beaudin said. “But the result was the same – the members did what it took to let the company know they were not going to accept anything less than what they had earned.”

## Strong Contracts

Ultimately, the two agreements provided for 4 percent wage increases each year, increases to retirement benefits, and continuation of the existing quality health care coverage. The contracts also included upgrades to sick and accident pay and dental benefits.

The Ardagh master agreement includes about 3,000 members of Local 226M in Burlington, Wis.; Locals 54M and 75M in Port Allegany, Pa.; Local 166M in Dolton, Ill.; Local 253M in Ruston, La.; Locals 96M and 121M in Dunkirk, Ind.; Local 239M in Sapulpa, Okla.; Local 222M in Henderson, N.C.; Local 193M in Wilson, N.C.; Locals





### New Ardagh Contract Locations:

- Local 226M Burlington, Wis.
- Local 54M Port Allegany, Pa.
- Local 75M Port Allegany, Pa.
- Local 166M Dolton, Ill.
- Local 253M Ruston, La.
- Local 96M Dunkirk, Ind.
- Local 121M Dunkirk, Ind.
- Local 239M Sapulpa, Okla.
- Local 222M Henderson, N.C.
- Local 193M Wilson, N.C.
- Local 50M Seattle, Wash.
- Local 87M Seattle, Wash.
- Local 254M Madera, Calif.
- Local 30M Pevely, Mo.
- Local 14M Winchester, Ind
- Local 65M Winchester, Ind

### New Owens-Illinois Contract Locations:

- Local 137M Los Angeles, Calif.
- Local 177M Tracy, Calif.
- Local 140M Streator, Ill.
- Local 3M Streator, Ill.
- Local 207M Lapel, Ind.
- Local 168M Winston-Salem, N.C.
- Local 105M Zanesville, Ohio
- Local 172M Zanesville, Ohio
- Local 178M Zanesville, Ohio
- Local 195M Muskogee, Okla.
- Local 112M Portland, Ore.
- Local 28M Brockway, Pa.
- Local 110M Crenshaw, Pa.
- Local 259M Waco, Texas
- Local 220M Waco, Texas
- Local 33M Toano, Va.
- Local 89M Danville, Va.

50M and 87M in Seattle; Local 254M in Madera, Calif.; Local 30M in Pevely, Mo.; and Locals 14M and 65M in Winchester, Ind.

At O-I, the master agreement covers 2,700 members of Local 137M in Los Angeles; Local 177M in Tracy, Calif.; Locals 140M and 3M in Streator, Ill.; Local 207M in Lapel, Ind.; Local 168M in Winston-Salem, N.C.; Locals 105M, 172M and 178M in Zanesville, Ohio; Local 195M in Muskogee, Okla.; Local 112M in Portland, Ore.; Locals 28M and 110M in Brockway and Crenshaw, Pa., Locals 259M and 220M in Waco, Texas; Locals 33M and 89M in Toano and Danville, Va.

### More Bargaining

A separate master contract covering mold makers at O-I and Ardagh expires on August 31. Bargaining was under way with those locals as *USW@Work* went to press.

Outside of the master agreement, about 200 glass workers at the former Longhorn Glass reached a new three-year contract with Ardagh, which purchased the facility from Anheuser-Busch in 2021. The agreement includes wage increases of more than 13 percent over the term of the contract, as well as language and benefit improvements. In addition, members ratified a three-year contract covering about 300 workers at Gallo Glass in Modesto, Calif., including annual wage increases and bonuses.

The 25,000 members of the GMP (Glass, Molders, Pottery, Plastics & Allied Workers International Union) became part of the USW when the two unions merged in 2016.

Tahinna Aguayo, the president of Local 137M, credited the membership of USW locals across the country and the staff of the international union for making sure members stuck together through the lengthy bargaining process. “We let the members know that it

was them that gave us the strength and the power that we needed at the table,” Aguayo said. “We’ve gotten nothing but good feedback. This is one of the best contracts we’ve gotten.”

Beaudin said that strong leadership across the board in the plants ended up being the key to success with both companies.

“We had good communication on a regular basis. I was impressed with the strength of the membership,” he said. “They were very difficult negotiations, but we feel very good coming out of them. Solidarity made the difference.”

Aguayo said that the COVID-19 pandemic was a wake-up call for her and her fellow glass workers, who went into negotiations this spring determined to make gains after continuing to work hard through the most difficult circumstances.

“We knew this was our time to push for what we deserved,” Aguayo said. “We showed the company that we weren’t going to let them roll over us.”



# Solidarity Pays Off at Corning

USW members who work at Corning Inc. facilities across five states demonstrated the power of company-wide collaboration this spring as a handful of locals – separated by geography but united by solidarity – negotiated new contracts with strong wage and benefit packages.

“The foundation for the labor movement is the belief that there is strength in numbers. So when members at multiple locations have a common employer, it makes sense to collaborate,” said Secretary-Treasurer John Shinn, who leads bargaining for the union’s Corning locals. “The more members work together with a common goal, the stronger we’ll be.”

The common goal this spring was to achieve strong agreements at all of the USW’s Corning locals, including three in New York state, one in Virginia, one in North Carolina, one in Kentucky, and one in New Jersey.

## USW Preparedness

The contracts all had varying expiration dates over a six-month period and are not part of an official “pattern” agreement like those the USW negotiates in steel, oil, rubber and other industries.

However, historically, the wages and benefits in those agreements closely follow what the union negotiates on behalf of the 2,100 members of Local 1000 in Corning, N.Y., where the company is based and where its flagship factory is located.

Local 1000 President Shane McGill has worked for the company for 13 years, but this was his first time on the bargaining committee as the leader of the USW’s largest Corning local. USW leaders spent hundreds of hours in preparation for negotiations.

“We set the tone for all the negotiations based on our prep work and our readiness,” McGill said. “The company, they were beside themselves. They were not prepared for us.”

The negotiating team came to the table with 58 items in its initial proposal, far more than they had presented in past years.

“That set the stage,” McGill said. “We really went back to the basics of why we have a union.”

The COVID-19 pandemic, he said, brought issues to the forefront of members’ minds, particularly paid sick leave, seniority and workplace health and safety, about which they may have been content in the past.

“COVID made people think,” McGill said. “That made a lot of things stand out in importance.”

## ‘Pattern of Convenience’

Perhaps the most important part of Local 1000’s preparations was connecting with other USW leaders at Corning to make sure all of their voices were being heard from the outset.

“Bringing our locals together and going after a common goal was our plan,” McGill said.

Under Shinn’s leadership, leaders at the Corning locals held daily Zoom meetings with district directors and USW staff to discuss issues and craft proposals.

“We were kind of in pattern bargaining, but not really. I’d call it a pattern of convenience,” McGill said. “The other locals deserve as much say as everybody else, but we know that we set the tone.”

McGill said he’s proud of the collaborative relationship that the Corning locals created.

“It was important to them, and it was important to us,” McGill said. “We did it together so we could get the best package not just for Local 1000, but for everybody.”

## Talks Continue

The Local 1000 sessions resulted in a four-year contract with a total of 15 percent in wage increases, including 6 percent in the first year. The local also secured paid sick leave, pension increases, and the continuation of the quality, affordable health care plan with no premium increases until 2024.

McGill and Local 1000 Vice President Jake Dailey bargained alongside their USW counterparts in Caton and Oneonta, N.Y., and also went on the road to Wilmington, N.C., to assist Local 1025 members with their bargaining.

Donneta Williams, president of Local 1025, said that gave members in North Carolina more insight into the bigger picture of the bargaining process. “We were glad to be more involved.

Members were able to make a more informed decision,” Williams said, noting that the 1,200-mile round trip from New York to Wilmington was a visible display of solidarity for members and the company.

“When we stand together in solidarity, we have more power,” Williams said. “We truly are stronger together.”

## Shared Success

As this edition of *USW@Work* went to press, McGill was preparing to travel to New Jersey to work with Local 701, the last remaining Corning local that had yet to reach a new agreement.

“We aren’t going to leave them hanging,” he said.

Williams and McGill were hopeful that this year’s success would lead to more collaboration among the Corning locals and said that even the company recognized the value of the collaboration.

“If Corning doesn’t succeed, neither the union nor the company will succeed,” McGill said. “They’re starting to see that the union being a part of this is a benefit, not a curse.”





# Atomic Workers Look to Future

## GROUP FOCUSES ON NEW OPPORTUNITIES IN FIRST MEETING SINCE ONSET OF PANDEMIC

Workers in the USW atomic sector, holding their first in-person meeting since before the COVID-19 pandemic, this spring set their sights on potential new opportunities to repurpose USW-represented nuclear facilities.

The Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, signed by President Joe Biden in November, included a \$62 billion allotment to the Department of Energy (DOE), which, if used judiciously, offers significant opportunities to reindustrialize former DOE nuclear weapons production sites, said USW International Vice President Roxanne Brown, who oversees the union's Atomic Energy Workers Council (AEWC).

"Think about how we can be more strategic about how we can tap sources of money that we never tapped previously," she said. "What is clear is that energy is the moment we are in right now, and this council, sector and sites can be part of that future."

The 2022 AEWc meeting, held in May in Washington, D.C., covered a multitude of topics, including bargaining, health and safety, benefits, and relationships with contractors. For the first time, the group also devoted a significant portion of its discussion to the potential for redevelopment and new jobs at nuclear sites when the cleanup work is done.

### 'Creative Thinking'

Kate Gordon, senior advisor to DOE Secretary Jennifer Granholm, discussed the agency's new Office of Clean Energy Deployment for place-based initiatives, which was born out of the new infrastructure law. She said clean energy technology demonstration projects – like small modular reactors, clean hydrogen, and carbon capture – could be located at DOE cleanup locations so those sites can continue to provide good jobs.

AEWC President Jim Key and Local 689 President Herman Potter also raised the possibility for recycling precious metals like copper and nickel that are available at some of the sites. These

metals are used in clean energy projects, including the production of electric vehicle batteries. Key added that the sites have plenty of land for energy or defense-related businesses.

"I appreciate the USW's vision," said William (Ike) White, DOE's acting assistant secretary for environmental management, in response to the redevelopment ideas. "This is the creative thinking we need."

### Reliable Fuel Sources

The AEWc agenda reflected the added emphasis on reindustrialization. Brown arranged for three other DOE officials to speak on the nuclear fuel cycle and supply chain and advanced nuclear projects.

"With the weaponization of oil and gas and our 20 percent dependence on Russian low-enriched uranium, people understand why we need a reliable source of fuel," said Andy Griffith, DOE deputy assistant secretary for nuclear fuel cycle and supply chain.

Low-enriched uranium is the basic material used to fabricate nuclear fuel for reactors. Griffith said the DOE is on the cusp of starting a demonstration project to produce nuclear fuel at the former Paducah Gaseous Diffusion plant site in Kentucky.

He also discussed the development

of advanced nuclear reactors and reassembled Local 652 President Matt Chavez that his members would be needed at the Idaho National Laboratory to operate the small modular reactor plant being built at the site.

### Long-Term Focus

Brown urged the AEWc delegates to think about how they can utilize her role on the DOE advisory council to secure the long-term projects needed at their sites. She said others on the advisory council are not always familiar with organized labor and its push for family-sustaining jobs and robust supply chains.

"Let's use our ability to educate others in DOE to our benefit," Brown said. "We can list the DOE programs that are vital to this sector, and help you apply for grants to help reindustrialize your sites."

The AEWc meeting also included a report from each USW site and a discussion on coordinating health care benefits through the Steelworkers Health and Welfare Fund.

Delegates voted to retain existing AEWc officers, including Key as president, and Chavez and Ryan Christensen as vice presidents. Carrie Montgomery accepted the position of recording secretary.

### New Contract in Idaho

Just prior to the AEWc meeting, workers at Idaho National Laboratory ratified a new contract with cleanup contractor Idaho Environmental Coalition (IEC). The new five-year agreement includes significant wage increases, additional pay for various work activities and improvements to contract language.

"I think this is probably the best economic offer I've seen in the 33 years I have been employed at the DOE Idaho site," said Local 12-652 Vice President and unit chair Henry Littlefield.

The contract covers about 580 USW members in 22 job classifications ranging from carpenters, mechanics, and electricians to operators, custodians, tool crib attendants and radiation control technicians.





# BILL TAKES AIM AT UNION BUSTING

**USW Backs Measure  
to Ban Tax Deductions  
for Anti-Worker Expenses**



International Vice President Roxanne Brown with Sen. Chris Van Hollen, center, and Sen. Bob Casey

USW leaders threw their full support behind a bill Sen. Bob Casey unveiled in May that would end the U.S. policy of providing tax deductions for money that corporations spend on anti-union campaigns.

“Taxpayers are unwittingly subsidizing, because of our tax code, the anti-union activities of corporate America,” said Casey, the bill’s primary sponsor. “We’ve had for 40 years a rigged tax code that helps big corporations and very wealthy Americans. You compound that insult with this kind of policy.”

The fact that the tax code currently rewards employers for their anti-union spending, Casey said, is “egregious, outrageous and unacceptable.”

The Senate bill would amend the Internal Revenue Code of 1986 to eliminate the tax breaks that the IRS currently grants to employers who spend money to try to influence workers to vote “no” in union elections.

Casey unveiled the measure at a news conference in Washington, D.C., where he was joined by several of the bill’s 20 Senate co-sponsors, as well as by USW International Vice President Roxanne Brown and other union leaders and supporters.

Brown said the bill would help tip the scales of power back in the direction of workers.

“That’s what this is really about – it’s about the power that workers should have on the job,” Brown said. “It’s also about the power that corporations have been gathering and hoarding for decades.”

Since the passage of the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA) to expand and protect workers’ rights in 1935, anti-union lawmakers, with the big-money backing of corporations, have worked year after year to undermine its pro-worker provisions.

Casey said his latest bill addresses just one of the many ways in which the legal deck, as a result, is now stacked against workers.

The bill would end tax breaks for activities that many companies employ to help them dodge unions, including hiring legal consultants, holding captive-audience meetings and conducting anti-union advertising campaigns.

“We shouldn’t have to have legislation like this,” the Pennsylvania Demo-

crat said. “Collective bargaining is the law, but in so many ways it’s being undermined.”

Casey, whose grandparents worked in the coal mines of northeastern Pennsylvania, said his family’s roots make the issue of labor rights a personal one for him.

According to the Economic Policy Institute, 40 percent of employers facing union elections are charged with unfair labor practices for their illegal attempts to silence workers, he said.

“We’re seeing it on the rise every day,” Casey said.

Casey’s bill already has 20 co-sponsors, and he said he was working with Democrats in the U.S. House who will introduce a companion bill in that chamber.

The bill’s co-sponsors include Sens. Sherrod Brown of Ohio, Elizabeth Warren of Massachusetts, Ron Wyden of Oregon, Patty Murray of Washington, Chris Van Hollen of Maryland, and Cory Booker of New Jersey, among others.

Van Hollen said that the bill is particularly important in 2022, because so many workers, especially at companies with deep pockets like Amazon and Starbucks, have attempted to organize unions in recent years.

“You can see a growing movement to organize around the country, and what you’re seeing on the corporate side is pushback,” he said. “Workers themselves who are trying to organize shouldn’t have to be subsidizing the efforts against themselves.”

At the May 12 news conference, Wyden noted that anti-union speech should be considered the same as any other political speech, which he pointed out is not tax-deductible under the current tax code.

“We are very much in line with precedent and history,” Wyden said. “We’re going to get this passed.”

Most American taxpayers aren’t even aware that they are subsidizing companies’ efforts to silence workers, Brown said, pledging the USW’s support to get the legislation passed in both houses of Congress.

“We are committed to taking this over the finish line,” Brown said. “We stand proudly with you, and we’re ready to get this done.”

# Preventing Violence at Work

## USW MEMBERS PUSH FOR MEASURE TO PROTECT HEALTH CARE, SOCIAL SERVICE WORKERS

Valencia Davis of Local 7600 has worked in health care for 38 years, serving the most vulnerable people in her community.

Sometimes, her job includes working with patients on a “psychiatric hold” for a mental health evaluation, for their own protection. Like many of her colleagues in the health care profession, Davis has experienced workplace violence more than once.

That’s why she and other USW activists are fighting for the passage of the Workplace Violence Prevention for Health Care and Social Service Workers Act. The U.S. House initially passed the bill, sponsored by U.S. Rep. Joe Courtney of Connecticut, in 2019, with another bipartisan vote in the spring of 2021.

The legislation would direct the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) to issue a standard requiring health care and social service employers to write and implement workplace violence-prevention plans.

This spring, U.S. Sen. Tammy Baldwin of Wisconsin introduced the Senate version of the bill, which has 26 co-sponsors, giving the measure a realistic chance of reaching President Joe Biden’s desk.

### Virtual News Conference

On May 11, during National Nurses Week, Davis, who works for California health care giant Kaiser Permanente, participated in a virtual press conference with Courtney and Baldwin announcing the introduction of the Senate bill. Davis highlighted several violent incidents when she was put in harm’s way on the job.

“One time I was watching a patient on a psychiatric hold and out of nowhere he jumped up and attempted to lock me in his private room,” she said. “When I tried to open the door, he grabbed me, and I started to scream for help.”

The violence-prevention bill has been on the USW’s list of legislative

priorities for years. In 2019, Davis and other members of the USW’s Health Care Workers Council held a lobby day in Washington, D.C., seeking support from representatives and senators for the legislation.

In an April survey of 2,500 nurses from National Nurses United, 48 percent of nurses working in hospitals reported an increase in workplace violence, up from 31 percent in September 2021. Some states have enacted legislation on their own to address this growing crisis, including Davis’ home state of California, which, in 2019, passed a workplace violence standard.

“Now employers are required to make a plan that includes frontline caregivers’ input – and every health care worker in America deserves the same opportunity,” Davis said. “We deserve a safe workplace so we can provide the best care.”

Former USW Vice President of Human Affairs, now AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer, Fred Redmond also spoke at the press conference and demanded the government step in as workers’ lives are on the line.

“Workplace violence is not just part of the job,” said Redmond, who in his USW role oversaw the union’s Health Care Workers Council. “It has been a worsening problem for more than a decade, and it is preventable. It is time for our Congress to act.”







## CONWAY TESTIFIES IN SUPPORT OF STEEL DUTIES

International President Tom Conway joined other steel industry leaders in May to testify before the U.S. International Trade Commission (ITC) in support of preserving tariffs on steel products from five countries.

“I’m pleased to be here today at a time of optimism for our Steelworkers,” Conway told the ITC. “This is why your decision in this case on corrosion-resistant steel — as well as in the review of the cold-rolled and flat-rolled steel orders — is so important.”

The optimism Steelworkers feel is due, in part, to the decision the ITC made in 2016 to impose anti-dumping and countervailing duties on corrosion-resistant steel products from China, India, Italy, Korea, and Taiwan,

Conway said. Those duties are subject to a standard five-year review before they can continue.

Conway, in his testimony, recalled the state of the industry before the antidumping and countervailing duties were imposed.

“The situation was dire,” he said. “Imports, including those from China, surged into the market at rock-bottom prices. Our workers at the mills that were still producing steel made hard sacrifices so that we could keep our industry on life support.”

The tariffs imposed on imports from those five nations, he said, helped to make the playing field fair so that the U.S. steel producers could regain their footing, hire new workers and invest in their facilities.

Still, subsidized and dumped steel imports continue to threaten the industry, said U.S. Rep. Frank Mrvan of Indiana, who serves as co-chair of the Congressional Steel Caucus.

Mrvan said that imports rose 43 percent in 2021 and, without continued vigilance, would remain a significant threat to workers in the future.

“Steel is the key material for so many critical supply chains necessary for our national and economic security,” Mrvan said. “We cannot afford to lose good-paying jobs that would be impacted by the loss of these orders.”

Antidumping duties target imports that are sold — or dumped — in the United States at below fair market value. Countervailing duties are intended to offset

illegal subsidies that foreign governments provide to steel manufacturers.

Both remedies are necessary, Conway said, to ensure a robust future for U.S. workers at all points along the industrial supply chain.

“I am proud that U.S.-made steel is mined, melted, poured, and rolled here in America,” he said. “The steel that we use in our automobiles, home appliances, and distribution warehouses is fully produced right here in the United States.”

Without continued duties on unfair imports, cheap steel would once again flood the U.S. market, threatening the industry and destroying jobs, Conway said.

“That is why I’m here today. To ask you not to undermine the substantial progress



that the steel industry has made by revoking these orders.”

Conway said the American steel industry is in a position for long-term success, but that support from leaders in Washington for the continuation of fair trade rules will be essential to that success.

“I come out of a steel mill and have a true appreciation for the hard work that our members do every day,” Conway said. “Steelworkers are today the engine of our manufacturing recovery. And these Steelworkers will be a driving force behind the renewal of our nation’s outdated infrastructure.”

Joining Conway and Mrvan to speak in favor of maintaining the tariffs were several lawmakers, including U.S. Sen. Rob Portman of Ohio, and industry leaders, including Cleveland-Cliffs Chairman and CEO Lourenco Goncalves and executives from U.S. Steel and other USW employers.

The ITC expects to release its final determinations in the case in August.

### Section 301 Letter

In addition to his ITC testimony, Conway also sent a letter in June to the office of the U.S. Trade Representative calling for the continuation of tariffs imposed on China under Section 301 of the Trade Act of 1974. Conway wrote the letter in his capacity as chair of the Labor Advisory Committee for Trade Negotiations and Trade Policy.

“Too many U.S. companies have failed to take needed actions to address the threat from the CCP (Chinese Communist Party),” Conway wrote. “Many continue to outsource production, and research and development, undermining U.S. competitiveness and national security interests. They have failed to respond to the signals clearly and continuously sent by the CCP that it is not interested in competing, but in winning and dominating key industries. Our government must act in the national interest to strengthen our economy for the future.”

## USW Supports ‘Buy America’ Guidance

The USW announced its support this spring for the Biden administration’s interim guidance for using American-made materials and products in projects funded by the \$1.2 trillion Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act.

“President Joe Biden’s interim Build America, Buy America guidance will ensure that publicly funded infrastructure projects help to rebuild the nation’s manufacturing base, strengthen supply chains and support good-paying jobs for U.S. workers,” International President Tom Conway said. “The COVID-19 pandemic underscored the feeble state of American manufacturing, while Russia’s invasion of Ukraine drove home once again the danger of relying on foreign-sourced products.”

Reinvigorating the nation’s industrial base, in part through strong Buy American provisions, will help to safeguard the U.S. economy and national security, Conway said.

“America’s workers stand ready not only to build new transportation systems, communications networks and other infrastructure, but to supply the raw materials, parts and components needed for all of those projects,” Conway said. “These workers lead the world in responsible production practices, and they’ll deliver unparalleled quality, ensuring new roads, bridges and other improvements stand the test of time.”



## Trade Commission Maintains Paper Duties

The U.S. International Trade Commission (ITC) in May decided to maintain existing antidumping and countervailing duty orders on coated paper imports from China and Indonesia following a five-year sunset review.

The ITC review found that revoking the orders would likely cause harm to the industry and workers who make coated paper suitable for high-quality print graphics using sheet-fed presses. USW members at Sappi and Billerud-Korsnäs paper facilities make products similar to those affected by the import duties.





## FIND COVERAGE OF THE USW CONVENTION

The 2022 USW Constitutional Convention was scheduled to take place as this magazine went to press. The delegation was set to convene from Monday, Aug. 8, through Thursday, Aug. 11. To find coverage of convention business, members can visit [usw.org](http://usw.org), and stay tuned for the next edition of *USW@Work* for full coverage.

## SOLVAY EMPHASIZES CONTINUITY DESPITE SPLIT

Solvay's planned split into two independent public companies will not immediately affect USW members, corporate officials told the Solvay Global Forum this spring in Brussels, Belgium.

The Solvay Global Forum meets in person annually at the company's corporate headquarters to discuss with management the state of the company's businesses, plans for future investments, challenges, and policies and procedures.

Eight worker representatives from the company's facilities around the globe and three management representatives are members of the forum. Jeff Hill, a member of Local 14200 at Solvay's Marietta, Ohio, plant, is the forum's North American labor representative.

At this year's meeting, Solvay CEO Illham Kadri explained the separation, scheduled to be completed in the third quarter of 2023.

One company will include commodity chemicals and have nine U.S. plants. Local 7-765-01 at Chicago Heights and Local 4294-03 at Alorton, Ill., are two Solvay sites likely to fit into this business, Hill said.

The second company will have nine U.S. sites and focus on chemical materials and items like specialty polymers that are more complex to manufacture, Hill said. He said the Marietta, Ohio, plant will likely fit into this business.

"The split won't impact union contracts initially," Hill said. "Solvay will keep everything in place to keep anxiety down."

To that end, the same labor relations model will govern both companies: Each one will have a global forum, a European Works Council and a board of directors.

During its meeting, the Solvay Global Forum also addressed the yearly bonus, the proposed stock purchase plan and changes to the family leave policies, which now allow employees to break up their 16 weeks of leave into multiple chunks within one year as long as the scheduling is reasonable.

This fall, Local 14200 President Greg May will take over as the forum's North American labor representative, upon Hill's retirement. Hill has been a member of the Solvay Global Forum since its first meeting in March 2015.

"The Solvay Global Forum has been invaluable for resolving conflicts some USW locals had with plant managers and U.S. Solvay management," Hill said. "It has enabled us to improve U.S. labor relations, and has been an incredible experience for me to make our workplaces better."

## GAS WORKERS' COUNCIL MEETS IN PITTSBURGH

USW members who work in the natural gas industry addressed the challenges and opportunities facing their sector during the 2022 USW Gas Council meeting held in April in Pittsburgh.

The two-day meeting, which included 56 local union leaders from across the union, included remarks from International President Tom Conway and Secretary-Treasurer John Shinn, as well as former U.S. Sen. Mary Landrieu, who served as chair of the Senate's natural gas caucus during her three terms from 1997 through 2015.

The council members, led by District 11 Director Emil Ramirez, focused on the USW's goal of creating and preserving good-paying jobs and cleaner resources through the use of natural gas.

Suzanne Sitherwood, CEO of Spire Energy, addressed the attendees and offered a management perspective on how companies are fighting to keep natural gas a viable source of energy as the nation moves toward a cleaner economy.

USW Gas Council members are also scheduled to participate, from Sept. 18 to 22, in the 2022 Inter-Union Gas Council Conference, in New Orleans. This conference brings together members of six unions in the United States and Canada to educate members and build solidarity.

## COLLINS AEROSPACE ILLEGALLY LOCKS OUT WORKERS

Collins Aerospace in Union, W.Va., locked 250 members of Local 1449 out of their jobs on May 23 after only two weeks of bargaining.

In response, USW District 8 Director Larry Ray called on the company, a division of Raytheon Technologies, to abandon its strategy of trying to bully union workers into accepting management's demands and instead continue negotiating in good faith to reach a fair contract.

Ray said that USW members were looking forward to returning to the bargaining table when the company abruptly locked them out. Members have repeatedly asked the company to allow them to come back to work while they continue negotiations, but the company has refused.

"Collins Aerospace must be made accountable for its decision to hold our jobs, families and community hostage over issues that should be resolved through collective bargaining," Ray said. "Management needs to end this lockout immediately, return these workers to their jobs and resolve our differences at the table."

## BLACK LABOR WEEK ENTERS SECOND DECADE

Local 1014 member E.J. Jenkins founded Black Labor Week in 2012 in Gary, Ind., as a means to create change within the labor movement while making a difference in the Black community.

More than a decade later, he and his USW Next Gen team in District 7 continued to expand their reach as they celebrated the project's 11th year the week of April 11 to 15.

USW activists from across the United States converged on the Indiana steel town to talk with each other, visit elementary schools, and volunteer for local organizations. To Jenkins, this growth and collaboration are what he always envisioned.

"The saying goes that it takes a village to raise a child," said Jenkins. "That village has shown up consistently while growing over the years and creating valuable growth within themselves."

Members spent the week attending panels, including a Black Male Discussion and a Black Women Empowerment Seminar, as well as giving back to the local community.

Trisha Garcia, who traveled with several members of Local 8599 in Fontana, Calif., to Gary, enjoyed her time creating care packages and organizing the pantry at the Sojourner Truth House, a village of hope that focuses on women and their children.

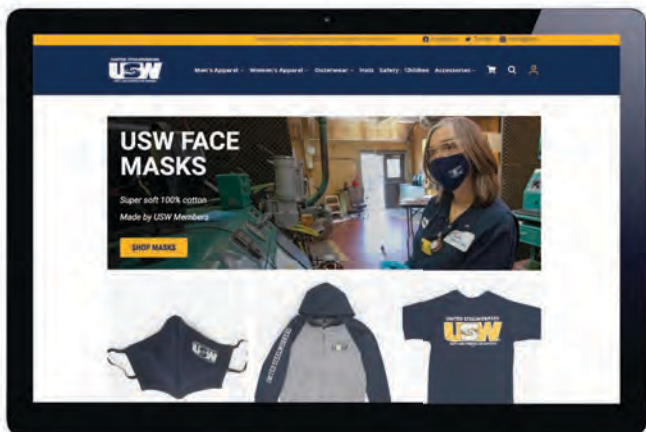
"It was one of my favorite days," Garcia said. "I was so sad that the incredible week had to end!"

This year's weeklong event also hosted a Black Voters Matter workshop and a game show created by Local 8888 called "Bridging the Gap."

"I've been blessed to birth something so amazing that's bringing change to so many in the Black community as well as education to those outside of it," Jenkins said. "And what I know for sure that keeps me going is that I want us all to win."

## VISIT THE NEW AND IMPROVED USW STORE

The union revamped its online store for USW-branded merchandise and launched an updated website where members can find everything from sweatshirts and hats to coolers and glasses. Members can find countless ways to display their union pride by visiting [steelworkersgear.com](http://steelworkersgear.com).



## USW FILES COMPLAINT AGAINST STARBUCKS

The USW in June filed an unfair labor practice (ULP) complaint against Starbucks with the British Columbia Labour Relations Board after the coffee giant refused to extend wage increases to unionized workers at a store in Victoria, B.C.

The move was "an effort to compel its unionized employees to cease to be members of the union," said District 3 Director Scott Lunny.

Lunny blasted the company's "intimidating and coercive conduct" and called on Starbucks to extend wage increases to all of its workers. USW members expressed similar complaints in a letter to company general manager Lori Digulla.

"We negotiated specific language in the collective agreement that allows for changes deemed necessary by mutual agreement of the employer and the union," the USW members said.

The ULP filing came amid a growing surge of Starbucks workers organizing unions across North America, despite the company's efforts to stop them. Within days of the ULP filing, the USW also filed for union certification at a Starbucks location in Surrey, B.C.

Workers at a store in Calgary won their USW vote in July, and workers at five other stores in Alberta also are seeking votes.

## FIRST-TIME NEGOTIATING TEAM WINS STRONG CONTRACT

Local 12075-26 Unit President Duane Switala and his negotiating committee bargained increased wages, a higher shift differential, more opportunities for job progression and other items to improve working conditions at International Flavors & Fragrances' Midland, Mich., site.

The contract, which members ratified on May 11, was the committee's first chance to bargain a new agreement since DuPont last year merged its nutrition and biosciences business with International Flavors & Fragrances.

The four-year contract, which is retroactive to Feb. 11, 2022, covers more than 100 members in logistics, operations and the lab. It raises wages by more than 15 percent and runs through Feb. 11, 2026.

International Flavors & Fragrances makes chemical binders for coatings and pharmaceuticals that require a time release.



# NEWS BRIEFS

## USW MARKS 30 YEARS SINCE WESTRAY DISASTER

In the early morning hours of May 9, 1992, an explosion ripped through the Westray coal mine in Plymouth, Nova Scotia. The explosion took the lives of 26 miners and forever changed the lives of the people of Plymouth and many surrounding communities.

This spring, the USW marked 30 years since the devastating disaster where an entire shift of workers perished and 11 bodies were never recovered. Those miners remain entombed in the underground wreckage of the mine, now covered by a memorial park where a monument stands as a lasting tribute.

Leaders and members of the USW traveled to Pictou County, N.S., to mark the 30th anniversary of the Westray disaster, joining the families and community to remember the miners who were killed.

“Today, on the 30th anniversary of the Westray disaster, Steelworkers are in Pictou County to vow to continue our fight for justice for the 26 miners and their families,” said Marty Warren, USW National Director for Canada. “Our union recommits to fighting for safer workplaces until no worker, family or community has to experience such tragedy. We will not stop until there are no more Westrays and no more deaths on the job.”

The USW has never stopped fighting for justice for the Westray families and the thousands of families across Canada whose loved ones have been killed at work. In 2004, Steelworkers successfully had the Canadian government introduce the Westray Bill, which amended the Criminal Code of Canada to hold corporations criminally accountable for causing preventable death and injury on the job.

The USW’s national campaign, “Stop the Killing, Enforce the Law,” targets all levels of government, law enforcement, attorneys general, and Crown prosecutors. The campaign’s goals include increased training for law enforcement and Crown prosecutors in using the Westray Law and the appointment of dedicated police officers and prosecutors to investigate and prosecute workplace fatalities when gross negligence is involved.

## USW DISAPPOINTED IN BIOFUEL REQUIREMENTS

The USW expressed its disappointment in the Environmental Protection Agency’s final rule setting biofuel blending percentages, after the agency increased requirements for 2021 and set quotas for 2022 at their highest level to date.

“There are limits to how much ethanol an engine can burn, just as there is a ceiling for how much gasoline consumers can buy,” said Mike Smith, who chairs the USW’s National Oil Bargaining Program. “If we consider these constraints together, it’s clear that the biofuel thresholds are now unattainably high.”

The union also decried the predictable impact of the final rule on a fundamental flaw in the renewable fuel program: the limited and unregulated market for renewable identification numbers (RIN).

“Our members and the industry need long-term stability,” said Smith. “Instead the rule will put increasing pressure on small, non-integrated refineries that rely on biofuel credits to meet their obligations.

“High and fluctuating RIN prices jeopardize our members’ jobs, which is why the union submitted comments attesting to the undue burden this market puts on workers and their employers. Unfortunately, EPA failed to heed our warning.”

Smith said that in a time of economic uncertainty that includes record-high gas prices, regulators should be making it as simple as possible to refine oil domestically.

“Introducing more volatility into an already broken RIN system isn’t going to solve our nation’s energy crisis,” said Smith. “It’s only going to increase costs and jeopardize jobs.”



## USW CELEBRATES AAPI HERITAGE MONTH

The USW marked Asian American Pacific Islander (AAPI) Heritage Month this May by pledging to protect AAPI workers’ rights and confront racism at home and across the world.

“The USW proudly celebrates the many contributions of Asian American and Pacific Islander workers throughout our nation’s history and stands in global solidarity with workers in Asia and across the world,” USW International President Tom Conway said in a statement.

“As we seek to make our trade system fair and balanced, we recognize that we have an obligation to protect workers’ fundamental labor rights, in North America and in all our partner nations,” Conway said. “This includes ending forced labor, ensuring workers can form independent unions and stopping retaliation against workers speaking out against unsafe work.

“Greedy multinational corporations are perfectly happy to pit workers against each other in a race to the bottom on wages and working conditions. We must resist their attempts to divide us,” said Conway. “Instead, we must confront racism in our workplaces and communities and redouble our efforts to eliminate race-based violence. We must also strive to ensure all workers are able to access their basic human rights so that workers the world over can collectively negotiate fair contracts that allow them to provide for their families and return from work safely.”

## USW CONDEMNS ARREST OF KOREAN UNION LEADER

The USW strongly condemned the May 4 arrest of Youn Taeg-gun, first vice president of the Korean Confederation of Trade Unions (KCTU), who was detained for his leading role in organizing a general strike on Oct. 20, 2021.

Youn's arrest is particularly outrageous given that International Labor Organization (ILO) Conventions 87, protecting freedom of association and the right to organize, and 98, protecting the right to organize and collective bargaining, entered into force in the Republic of Korea on April 20.

Youn led the strike in part because at the time, KCTU president Yang Kyeung-soo was in detention on similar spurious charges. Like President Yang before him, Youn has been charged with violation of the Infectious Disease Control Act on Demonstration and Assembly, despite the KCTU's proper observance of COVID-19 protocols.

The strike took place shortly after representatives of the USW, UAW and AFL-CIO visited the Korean embassy in Washington, D.C., to demand Yang's freedom. The USW also raised the arrest of President Yang and the interrogation of Vice President Youn during the meeting of the U.S.- Korea Free Trade Agreement Labor Council on April 26.

Vice President Youn's arrest, in the context of current discussions on the Indo-Pacific Economic Framework and President Joe Biden's upcoming visit to South Korea, can only be seen as an expression of the Korean government's intention to disregard fundamental labor rights and international conventions.

The USW called on the Korean government to openly adhere to ILO conventions by releasing Youn and ending police harassment of trade unionists for engaging in legitimate union activity.



### OBITUARY: MARIE MALAGRECIA, FIRST SOAR COORDINATOR

Marie Malagrecia, a long-time USW activist and the first SOAR coordinator, died on June 9, 2022, at the age of 95.

In 1985, then-International President Lynn Williams named Malagrecia as the first coordinator for the union's new program for retirees, the Steelworkers Organization of Active Retirees (SOAR). Malagrecia served in that capacity until 1994, when she retired with 47 years of service to the union.

"Much of what SOAR does today has its foundation established under Marie's leadership," current SOAR Director Julie Stein said in paying tribute to Malagrecia.

## WORKERS RATIFY NEW CONTRACT WITH CONTITECH

Members of three local unions who work at ContiTech facilities voted in June to ratify a new three-year contract with the rubber and plastics manufacturer.

The new agreement, which runs through September 2025, covers a total of 600 members of Local 286L in Lincoln, Neb.; Local 843L in Marysville, Ohio; and Local 904L in Sun Prairie, Wis. Those workers make products including conveyor belting, track, power transmission products, and automotive hoses for a variety of markets.

"We entered these negotiations during a challenging time for the work force and the rubber industry – from the ongoing effects of the pandemic, to inflation to supply chain problems," said District 11 Director Emil Ramirez, who chaired the USW bargaining committee. "The fact that we achieved an agreement that moves the membership forward in so many areas is a testament to the strength and solidarity that exists throughout these local unions."

The new ContiTech contract provides a signing bonus, increases retirement plan payments, and maintains cost-of-living wage increases and quality health care coverage. The agreement also includes provisions to attract and retain new workers, including higher wage rates, faster wage progression, more vacation time, and a shorter wait time for health insurance eligibility.

The ContiTech settlement marked the beginning of a summer of major bargaining in the rubber and tire sector. The USW's contracts with BF Goodrich, Bridgestone-Firestone and Goodyear/Cooper all expire near the end of July. USW bargaining committees were still in negotiations with those companies as *USW@Work* went to press.

## MINNESOTA HEALTH CARE LOCAL SCORES BIG WINS

Roughly 70 members at the Range Center in Hibbing, Minn., who provide top-level care to people with mental and physical disabilities, won multiple gains in their latest contract that was negotiated in a single day.

One of the top priorities at the bargaining table for Marketa Anderson, president of amalgamated Local 9349 and unit chair for the Range Center, was recognition pay for workers who've been at the center for many years.

"It's the veterans who keep this place going," Anderson said. "It was important for their work and commitment to be recognized."

The bargaining committee was able to do just that and secured longevity bonuses for employees with a minimum of two years of service. They also won significant increases to starting wages for all job classifications, from dietary instructors and office assistants to licensed practical nurses (LPNs) and custodial workers. Maintenance technician starting wages saw the biggest increase, \$4.25 per hour.

The team also negotiated an increase to the company's monthly contribution to the workers' HSA from \$50 to \$100, helping to offset rising costs.

The local has seven more contracts up for negotiations this year with large health care employers, including Essentia Health. Anderson said they are hoping to continue building community support as these campaigns launch.



## 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)



### USW in the Spotlight at AFL-CIO Convention

USW members, including Local 366 Unit Chair Anam Jabbar, left, took center stage at the AFL-CIO Convention in June in Philadelphia. Jabbar spoke about the pride that she and her USW co-workers at American Roots in Maine have in their union, their company, and the work they do. The convention delegates also elected one of the USW's own, former International Vice President Fred Redmond, to the position of secretary-treasurer, and Liz Shuler as the first woman president of the federation. International President Tom Conway, flanked by a group of 20 USW members, nominated Redmond for the position.

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