

USW@work

A Publication of the United Steelworkers

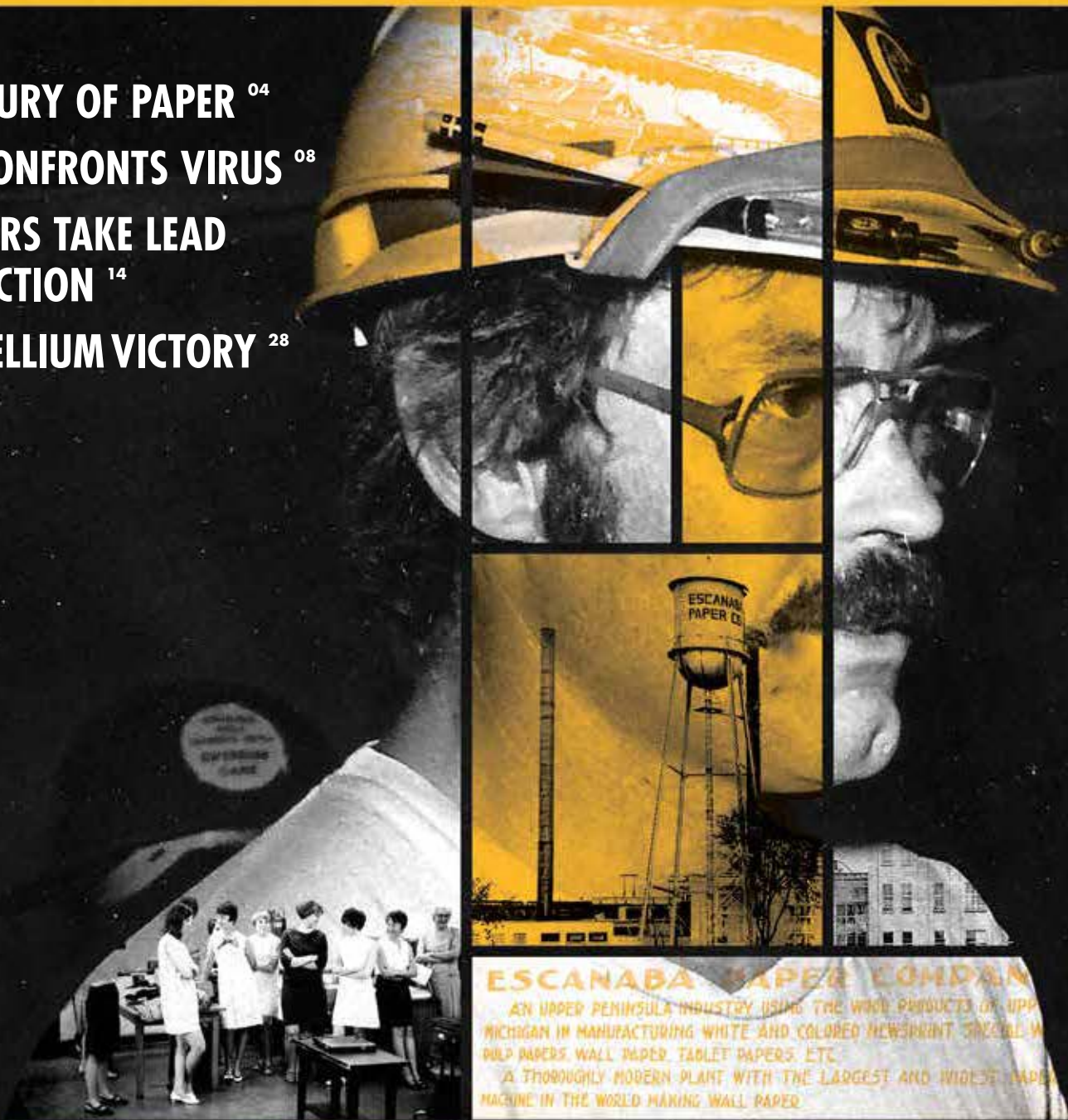
A Powerful Voice for Workers

A CENTURY OF PAPER ⁰⁴

USW CONFRONTS VIRUS ⁰⁸

**MEMBERS TAKE LEAD
ON ELECTION** ¹⁴

CONSTELLIUM VICTORY ²⁸



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"REBUILDING THE NATION'S MANUFACTURING SECTOR IS ESSENTIAL TO KEEPING AMERICA SAFE AND FREE. AND IF THAT PROCESS DOES NOT BEGIN NOW, AMERICA WILL BE JUST AS UNPREPARED FOR THE NEXT CRISIS, WHETHER THAT IS A PANDEMIC, NATIONAL DISASTER OR WAR."

INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT THOMAS M. CONWAY

CURRENT



SOLIDARITY FOR BLACK LIVES

USW members joined millions in calling for justice and reform in response to systemic racism and police violence.

24



ASARCO COMPLAINT

In a victory for USW members, the National Labor Relations Board issued a sweeping complaint for alleged unfair labor practices at ASARCO.

20



CONVENTION POSTPONED

The 2020 USW convention, originally set for August 2020, has been postponed as the nation continues to grapple with the coronavirus pandemic.

32

FEATURES

SPEAKING OUT

USW active, retired members and their families are invited to "speak out." Letters should be short and to the point. We reserve the right to edit for length.

03

TRADE WATCH

USW petitions led to an investigation of passenger vehicle and light truck tires from four countries. Much work remains to enforce the USMCA.

22

NEWS BRIEFS

Museum workers launched a USW organizing drive. Members are protesting layoffs at Essentia Health in Minnesota. A new director is now leading Canada's District 5.

32

COVER

Tom Elegeert, 1970

Images courtesy of USW Local 2-21 and the Delta County Historical Society, Escanaba, Mich.

04

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Remember Those We've Lost

Every year, Local 105 members meet at our union hall to observe Workers Memorial Day. This year, that was not possible due to the COVID-19 pandemic. Still, several virtual events were held, and I was able to participate in one through the Iowa Federation of Labor.

We should never let Workers Memorial Day go by without giving it the recognition it deserves. This year, we were able to honor the workers we've lost through our union and company newsletters, and through the plant's video network. The day has always pushed us to renew our commitment to a safer workplace, and this year was no different.

On April 15, we lost a Local 105 brother to the coronavirus. We honored him this year, along with the eight others we have lost over the years at the Davenport plant, workers whose names appear on a memorial stone in front of our union hall.

Workers Memorial Day is a day for us to honor and remember all of those brothers and sisters who went to work one day but did not return home. But it is also about much more than that – it's a call for all of us to keep pushing harder every day to protect each other at work, and to hold our employers to account for providing us a safe and healthy workplace.

We all need jobs, but not at the expense of our own health and safety, and not at the cost of our lives.

*Brad D. Greve, president, USW Local 105
Davenport, Iowa*

Keep Holding the Line for Workers

I worked almost 50 years as a union member, first OCAW, then PACE and USW. I thank God for all of us who had the pleasure to serve as stewards and board members.

Unions gave me power and a commitment to my community. I love all of the brothers and sisters who stood by us in good times and in hard times.

Thank you all for keeping us retired workers informed. I hope you all continue to hold the line. I will never cross it.

*Gregory A. Aungst
Auburn, Pa.*

Senate Must Pass Butch Lewis Act

Now more than ever, we need to look out for our retirees. That's why it's so disappointing that the Butch-Lewis Act to protect multiemployer pensions is still sitting in the U.S. Senate a whole year after it passed the House, with support from both parties.

Retirees (I'm retired from Marathon Petroleum) are not asking for a handout, or for special treatment. We just want the pensions we earned through a lifetime of hard work. Maybe that seems like too much for someone like Mitch McConnell, but when you're worth \$20 million I guess you don't have to worry about a pension check.

If the Senate can pass hundreds of billions in bailouts for Wall Street and huge corporations, it should be able to step up and make sure retirees are protected, too. I would ask everyone reading this to call your senators today and tell them to pass the Butch Lewis Act.

*Charles D Conley
Catlettsburg, Ky.*

Union Members Should Vote Biden

I saw the article in the spring edition of *USW@Work*, "Your Union, Your Voice," about the USW getting political feedback on how we, members of the United Steelworkers, feel about the upcoming presidential election this November.

I have been a member of USW Local 850 since 1972. I am now retired, and Continental General Tire closed in 2006. I have never voted for a Republican since I was eligible to vote, and I never will. My wife is a Democrat, and my grandpa was a Democrat.

I can say the Republican Party has never done one thing for me. The one in the White House right now is a raving lunatic.

Let's all remember that the Republican Party does not support unions. So I hope you will all join me in supporting Joe Biden, Democrat, for president this November.

*Tony Montgomery, Local 850
Charlotte, N.C.*

Thankful for My Union Family

My husband, Joseph V. Clark, was employed at U.S. Steel for 22 years. He lost his battle with the coronavirus on April 10.

I wanted to bring to your attention the generous support I received from Mike Lohse, the local union's benefits chairman. Mike has been my backbone since my husband was admitted to the hospital on April 3. Mike was in contact with me every day, and still is to this day. Mike has gone above and beyond to make sure I am OK, and that I have everything I need. I had the pleasure of meeting Mike and was very thankful.

I'd also like to say my special thanks to Gus, the president of the local. He has also gone above and beyond in making sure I have what I need. Gus also told me that – whether it's an employee or a spouse – we will always be union family.

I wanted everyone to know just how much the union works for the employees and their spouses. Thank you very much.

*Colette Clark
Portage, Ind.*

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A CENTURY

Members Support Tight-Knit Community in Michigan's Upper Peninsula

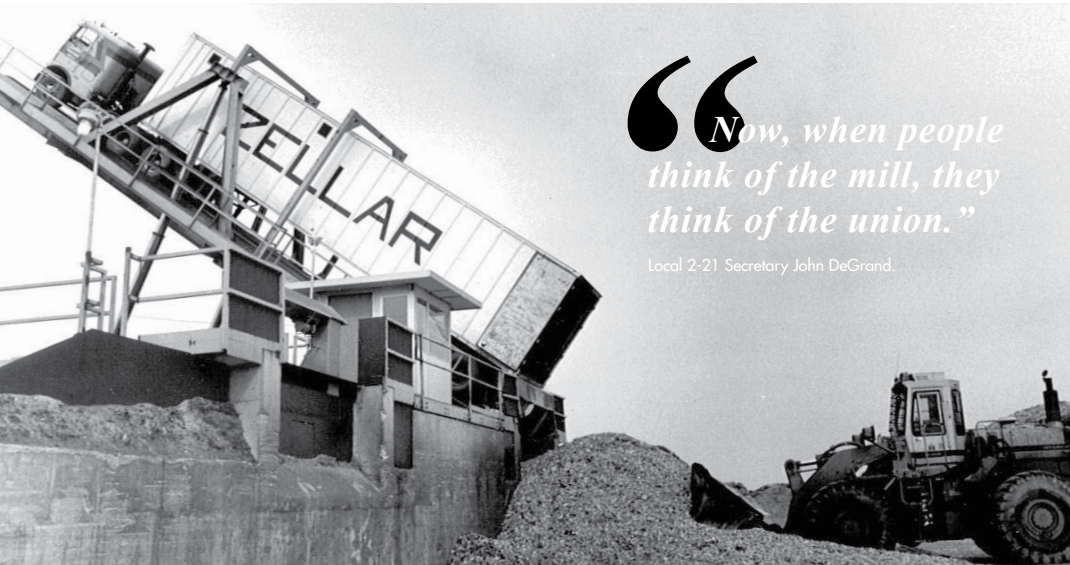
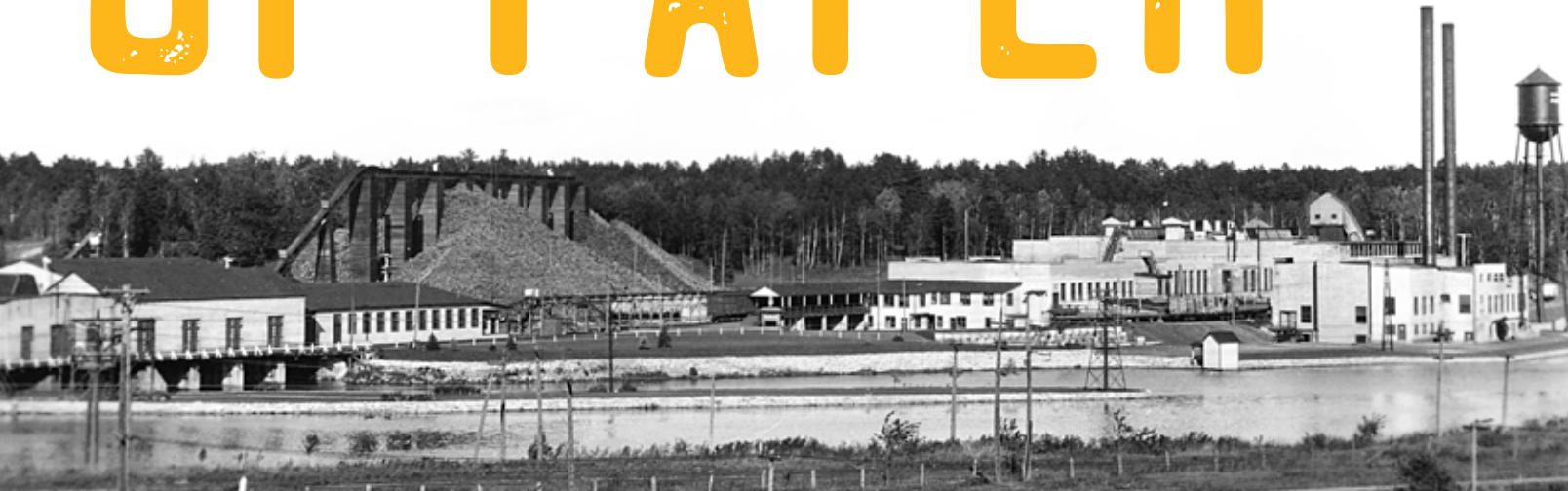
In 1920, union workers began making paper at a mill along the banks of the Escanaba River in northern Michigan. A century later, the union maintains an unbreakable link that bonds the workers with their community.

"The mill has been an integral part of the economy here for many, many years," said Local 2-21 President Gerald Kell. "We have a great work force, a lot of intelligent people, and a lot of pride in our facility and our community."

That facility, which encompasses 2,000 acres not far from Lake Michigan in the state's Upper Peninsula, has provided good jobs to generations of Steelworkers and their families, and those union members have in turn become the foundation of a town built on the production of pulp and paper.

"The mill workers have been the mainstay of this community since long before I ever started there," said former USW International Vice President and Escanaba native Dick LaCosse, who worked at the facility from 1969 until he became a union staff representative in 1983. As vice president, LaCosse led the USW's bargaining in the paper sector until he retired in 2008.

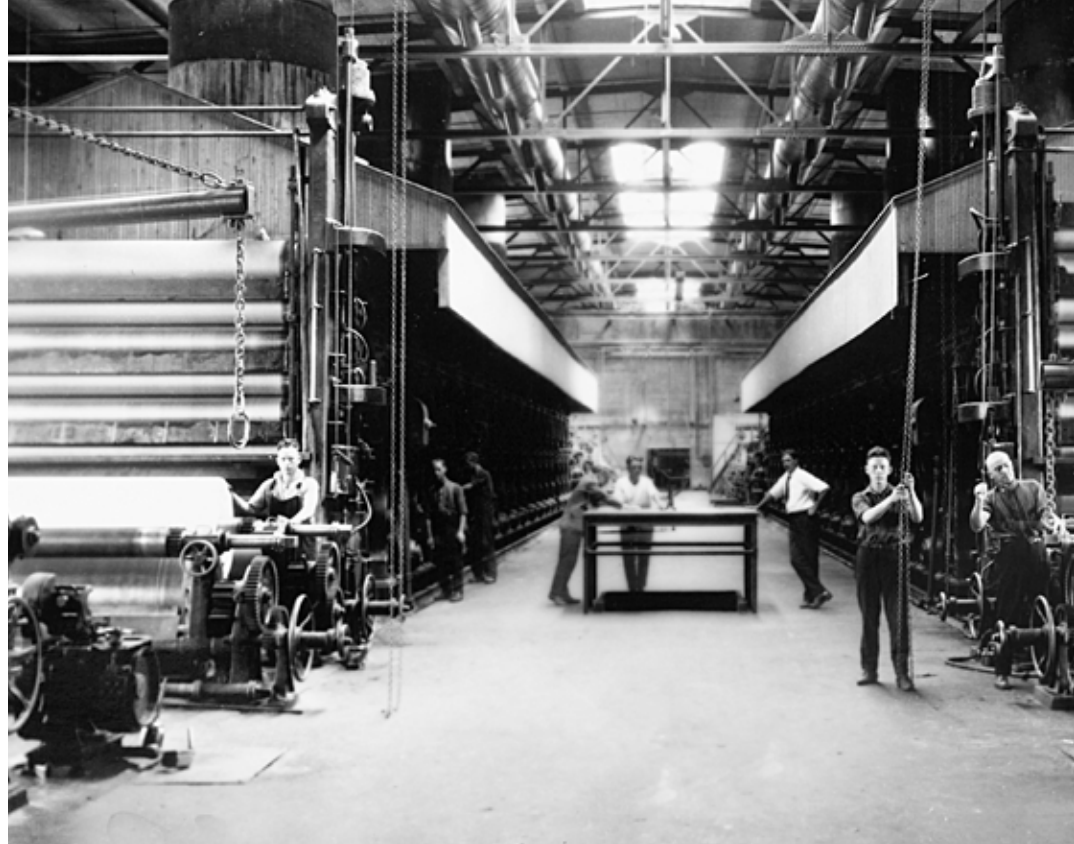
OF PAPER



“*Now, when people think of the mill, they think of the union.*”

Local 2-21 Secretary John DeGrand.





A Unique History

While union members have been making paper in Escanaba for 100 years, the pulp mill has roots even deeper than that.

In the late 19th century, when local officials needed to generate power for a streetcar line to link Escanaba with nearby towns, they decided to build a dam across the river and — in 1891 — formed the Escanaba Electric Street Railway Co. As the dam generated excess electricity, it made sense to use it to support local industrial development, and the Escanaba Pulp and Paper Co. was born.

In the early days, workers mostly produced newsprint and magazine paper. Today, their products include graphic paper used in catalogs, books and direct-mail advertising, as well as specialty papers used in label and converting applications.

When conglomerate Mead purchased the mill in 1942, the company worked hard to plant its roots deeply within the community. A series of expansions throughout the 1950s and 1960s led to rapid growth in the work force and the mill's production. Today, about 900 people work at the facility, which operates 24 hours a day, 365 days a year, and has the capacity to produce

730,000 tons of paper annually.

"I grew up at a time when everything was 'Mead,' all of the sponsorships for sports in town — everything was wrapped around the mill. They supported it, and the community supported the mill. It was a two-way street," said John Dubord, financial secretary for Local 2-21, who was born and raised in Escanaba. "It's hard to not grow up with community pride and mill pride when you grow up like that."

Despite numerous changes in ownership (NewPage purchased the mill in 2005, and Verso took over in 2015), local residents still often use the Mead name when they refer to the facility, which remains the largest employer in town.

Community Connection

Partly due to the frequent changes in management over the past two decades, it has been the USW and its hundreds of members — many of whom are third- and fourth-generation paperworkers — who have taken on the responsibility of maintaining the bond between the work force and the community.

"The local and the international strive for that every day," Dubord said. "Because we have a strong voice in the workplace, we are able to maintain that."

Among other events, the Local 2-21 Women of Steel committee, led by Chair Donna Dams, holds a backpack drive each year to help hundreds of local school children in need of supplies. Members also hold family picnics and sponsor a drive called "Strike for Hunger," in which they collect more than \$5,000 and 3,000 pounds of supplies each year for local food banks, said First Vice President James Gunderman, who has worked at the mill for 21 years.

"Now, when people think of the mill, they think of the union," said Local 2-21 Secretary John DeGrand.

Victor LaCrosse, although he is not related to the former USW vice president, is the fourth generation of his family to be connected to the Escanaba mill. He said that having a union in the facility — fighting for good wages, good benefits and job security for 100 years — has made a major difference in the quality of life not just for mill workers but for families throughout the region. "It's huge," he said.

"We take pride in saying that we're USW," said chief steward Jamie Dier. "It's not about who we work for, but the union gives you a sense of purpose. It gives you something to be proud of about your job."



Economic Ripple Effect

Dubord, whose relatives have worked as meat cutters in the area for generations, said that his family's fortunes have closely mirrored those of the paperworkers in town.

"We saw our business rise and fall depending on what was happening at the mill," he said. "If they were on strike, it made a big difference in our bottom line."

The positive effect of the USW local even stretches to other towns and workplaces throughout the Upper Peninsula, Kell said. Although it's a non-union facility, another Verso mill about 50 miles west in Quinnesec, Mich., offers nearly the same wages and benefits as those in Escanaba to ensure that it can remain competitive when hiring employees. A number of other non-union employers in the area do the same.

Besides the economic benefits, the union has made a major difference in terms of health and safety, particularly in an industry that can be among the most dangerous in the country.

"The USW has worked hard to build and support a culture of safety at every paper facility in the union," said International Vice President Leeann Foster, who oversees bargaining with the paper industry. "The members of Local 2-21 deserve

credit for embracing that commitment and doing everything in their power to make sure Escanaba's workers can return home safely to their families every day."

The union's presence in the factory gives the work force an equal voice with management when it comes to members' health and safety concerns, rather than putting it in a top-down position, said Dubord.

The workers in Escanaba were part of the United Paperworkers International Union until 1999, when that union became part of the Paper, Allied-Industrial, Chemical and Energy Workers International Union (PACE). In 2005, PACE merged into the USW.

"The folks on the floor would not even be asked to be involved in safety if we didn't have the union," he said.

DeGrand, who grew up just a few miles away and worked in non-union workplaces before coming to the Verso mill, said that the fact that Escanaba's workers have a powerful voice – one with a century of history behind it – affects morale in a positive way and gives workers a reason to look forward to coming in each day.

"We take ownership in the mill and what goes on here," he said.

Verso's CEO, Adam St. John, also

credited the workers for their dedication to the mill.

"Verso is proud to be part of the mill's rich 100-year history and thankful for our Escanaba team members' hard work and dedication to the mill, which has greatly contributed to its longevity and success," he said.

Still, despite the pride they feel in their connection to the mill, Dick LaCosse said that the members in Escanaba are even more proud to be part of the USW. In a recent interview, LaCosse recalled a conversation he once had with a member of management during contract bargaining.

"The company guy said to me, 'The people here are union members first and employees second,'" LaCosse said. "He was right, and I think it remains true today."

If Verso continues to value its work force and continues to make investments in the facility, USW members could be making paper in Escanaba for another 100 years, said Kell.

"We certainly have the assets to be successful well into the future, as long as the company continues to make investments in the mill," he said. "A lot of that is out of our hands, but we are going to keep showing up to work and doing our jobs like we do every day."



VIRUS SHINES LIGHT ON NEED FOR UNIONS

Inequality, Lack of Health Care Put More Americans at Risk

The coronavirus pandemic has shed new light on an array of systemic problems within the U.S. economy, but perhaps none more than the need for all workers – particularly those considered “essential” – to have a voice on the job.

“The labor movement was meant for this moment,” AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka said. “We don’t run from crisis. We run to it in order to help our brothers and sisters.”

Trumka said he hoped that the virus and its devastating health and economic effects would be a turning point for members of the American work force who have been ignored and left behind for too long.

More Americans now realize the importance of all workers – especially food service workers, grocery clerks, janitors, delivery drivers and others in traditionally low-wage jobs – to the health of the nation, he said.

“We’re going to get through this and, on the other end, we’ll actually be stronger,” he said. “The pandemic has identified inadequacies in the economy and, hopefully, we are going to fix those in the process.”

Besides poverty-level wages for many unorganized workers, those inadequacies include a lack of access to quality, affordable health care, especially in minority communities, a lack of paid sick leave and personal protective equipment (PPE), and inconsistent or nonexistent health and safety measures in many workplaces.

“By every measure, a worker’s economic well-being and physical well-being are going to be better if that worker is a member of a union,” said International President Thomas M. Conway. “Every mechanism that workers have used in fighting this virus would be improved under the terms of a collective bargaining agreement.”

Besides basic wage and benefit improvements, a union contract provides workers with a level of job security that allows them to take actions such as refusing unsafe work, to fight back against unfair treatment, and to be included as equal partners in conversations with management about health and safety on the job.

As the crisis continued to grow, through the spring and summer, USW members were instrumental in pushing for expanded protections in workplaces across the country, and in advocating for economic relief in Washington, D.C., and in state legislatures around the United States.

Workers Mobilize Across U.S.

Meanwhile, as record numbers of Americans were filing for unemployment, and millions more were forced to go to work in unsafe conditions, both union and non-union workers began mobilizing and organizing in ever-growing numbers.

One website that tracks labor actions estimated that the United States saw more than 150 strikes, walkouts, sit-ins and other such activities in the first three months of the pandemic.

Health care and emergency service workers, including USW members, led the way, fighting to make sure they had enough masks, faceguards, gowns, sanitizer and other equipment to care for the growing number of patients.

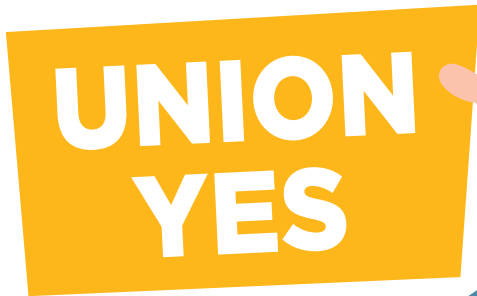
Other workers followed their lead. At Amazon distribution centers in Washington state, Chicago, New York City, Sacramento and elsewhere, workers walked off the job and gathered thousands of signatures on petitions in an ultimately successful bid to demand paid time off.

In multiple cities, delivery drivers and public transportation workers staged strikes to ensure PPE and proper social distancing, as well as the elimination of fares and other preventative measures to protect both themselves and their customers.

In Pittsburgh, sanitation workers parked their trucks at the entrance and exit to their administrators’ parking lot to gain PPE, increased staffing and hazard pay.

Grocery store workers, restaurant employees and other service workers by the thousands – at large corporations and small businesses – were successful in fighting for extra pay, time off, and PPE.

At a Perdue Farms chicken processing plant in Georgia, dozens of non-union workers staged a walkout to demand safer, more sanitary working conditions. The plant work force took action as meat and chicken plants around the country were becoming hotbeds of coronavirus outbreaks.



By summer, it was clear that in every state and every sector of the economy, American workers were nearing a crossroads.

“It’s just gotten to the point where enough is enough,” one Perdue worker said.

In addition to demanding short-term protections, the pandemic led workers to begin organizing unions in growing numbers, though the effects of the coronavirus made the task even more difficult.

At the outset of the pandemic, the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB), froze union votes, forcing more than 115 union elections to be postponed. While the freeze was eventually lifted, safety concerns persisted, and some union and elected officials urged the NLRB to allow electronic elections. Meanwhile, companies continued to seek further delays, citing security concerns.

“This epidemic may delay the fruits of some of our organizing efforts, for now,” said International Vice President Fred Redmond. “But make no mistake, this crisis has pulled back a curtain on the fact that our economy simply doesn’t work for large segments of our population. A remedy for much of what ails struggling families and communities is to make sure all workers can gain a voice in their workplaces.”

Vulnerable Communities Suffer

Despite the increase in activism, millions of workers still lacked adequate protections months after the virus began to spread. Non-union workers in low-wage jobs – particularly

in communities of color – were facing higher rates of infection and less likely to have access to health care.

According to the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention, Black Americans make up about 13 percent of the U.S. population but accounted for 23 percent of coronavirus deaths as of June.

In testimony before Congress, Dr. Anthony Fauci, director of the National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases, said racism is responsible for the disproportionate impact the pandemic is having on minority communities.

Besides being infected more heavily, Black Americans were more likely to die from the effects of the virus due to the nation’s unequal health care system.

E.J. Jenkins of Local 1014 in Gary, Ind., said that the labor movement must respond by confronting the pain of the Black community head-on.

“Black issues must be a major topic within the labor movement, and we should never shy away from that,” Jenkins said. “Organizing creates change, but we can’t organize for change until we’re on the same page.”

Crystal Robinson Rouse, civil rights chair for the South Carolina Education Association, agreed that organizing is the best way forward for workers of color.

“This is the time. This is our time to organize, strategize and move,” she said. “One of the things we have to remember is that we have strength in numbers.”

Tefere Gebre, executive vice president of the AFL-CIO, said that if Black

Americans died from the virus at the same rate as the rest of the country, more than 12,000 lives would have been saved.

It wasn’t just Black Americans who suffered disproportionately, Gebre noted. Immigrants, Latinx workers and LGBTQ+ Americans also faced higher rates of infection and death.

“We often hear people say the coronavirus doesn’t discriminate,” he said. “But we know that’s far from the truth.”

Looking for a ‘New Normal’

Clayola Brown, president of the A. Philip Randolph Institute, an organization for African-American union members, said that the pandemic allowed many Americans to get a closer look at the inherent racism built into the U.S. economy.

“The price to pay is too great for any more pretending that it’s not happening,” Brown said.

While many Americans looked forward to life “returning to normal” after the pandemic, Brown, Gebre and others said that the virus underscored the fact that “normal” simply wasn’t good enough for too many Americans.

Whatever changes come as a result of the pandemic must ensure that workers – especially those in the most vulnerable communities – are better off than they were before, Brown said.

“We don’t want to go back to normal,” Brown said. “Normal was not good for Black people and Brown people.”

MEMBERS FIND CREATIVE SOLUTIONS IN PANDEMIC



The coronavirus pandemic caused unprecedented changes in how Americans interacted with each other, an unexpected disruption that forced USW members to get creative in how they processed grievances, bargained contracts and communicated with their union siblings.

“Our union has always been one of the best servicing unions around and has supported our members and their locals through grievance handling, contract negotiation and solving everyday problems,” said International President Thomas M. Conway. “This pandemic isn’t going to change that.”

Despite nationwide social-distancing protocols, quarantines, lockdowns and business closures, USW members, leaders and staff found creative ways to keep the important work of the union going.

With meetings, conference rooms and in-person hearings suddenly off the table, bargaining sessions took place via Zoom, arbitrations were handled via video conference, members shared contract language digitally, and leaders used Skype, FaceTime, conference calls and other technology to hold votes, conduct trainings and carry out other business.

“We continue to find ways to have our voices heard, even if it’s mostly Zoom these days,” said Emily Miller, a librarian at the Carnegie Library of Pittsburgh and a member of the committee bargaining its first contract.

“Bargaining, achieving benefit improvements to address specific issues, safety committee meetings, demanding bargaining where necessary – these were all things we did as a union before COVID-19 struck, but we are now using virtual platforms to carry forward this work,” said International Vice President Leeann Foster, who oversees paper bargaining.

Foster said despite the pandemic, the union has achieved first contracts, added benefits to assist members with coronavirus-related expenses, stood up when companies instituted new pay practices without bargaining and conducted safety and benefit meetings.

“The work doesn’t stop for our members, and we are committed to

finding continuous ways to adapt,” Foster said.

International Vice President David McCall used video conferencing to help locals through arbitrations at ArcelorMittal regarding the union’s Layoff Minimization Plans for plants in Indiana, Cleveland and Coatesville.

As Libbey Glass works its way through bankruptcy, local union leaders in Shreveport, La., and Toledo, Ohio, are entering bargaining, anticipating that much of the discussion will be held via video in order to accommodate four USW locals and an International Association of Machinists (IAM) unit. The group produced a website to keep locals informed, and instituted a text messaging system to quickly share updates.

International Vice President Fred Redmond, who oversees health care bargaining, used video technology to connect with the Health Care Workers Council, as members continued their tireless life-saving work while conducting important bargaining.

“

We continue to find ways to have our voices heard, even if it’s mostly Zoom these days.”

Emily Miller

The union also created a COVID-19 resource page, which is regularly updated with health and safety information. Members can use an online form to report concerns.

District 7 Director Mike Millsap, Local 6787 President Pete Trinidad, and the local’s executive board set up arbitrations using video conferencing. The local also uses text messaging to reach its more than 2,000 members.

“The world is changing. Unions are changing. The way we communicate with our members must change with it,” Trinidad said.

Locals in the paper sector also bargained using video software.

“This was a first for us, but I’m proud of our union for not giving up,” said Local 264 President John O’Neil in St. Paul, Minn., a member of the WestRock bargaining team.

PANDEMIC HIGHLIGHTS URGENT NEED TO REVIVE U.S. MANUFACTURING



During the COVID-19 pandemic, workers at Kaiser Permanente hospitals became so concerned about shortages of face masks and other personal protective equipment (PPE) that they offered to track down their own.

“We don’t have stockpiles of protective equipment,” said Valery Robinson, president of Local 7600, which represents thousands of nurses, phlebotomists and other workers at the health care system’s Southern California facilities.

As was the case with hospitals throughout the nation, when Kaiser Permanente scrambled to buy more supplies, it struggled to find them.

The mad scramble for PPE and other medical equipment showed how the decrepit state of U.S. manufacturing puts the nation’s safety at risk.

Over the past 25 years, America’s failed trade policies enabled corporations to relocate millions of manufacturing jobs to countries with low wages and lax environmental laws. The corporations reaped huge windfalls, while America’s manufacturing capacity withered.

Today, the nation cannot manufacture crucial items or even scale up quickly to produce supplies in an emergency.

Instead, it’s dangerously reliant on foreign trading partners for PPE, medical equipment, pharmaceutical ingredients, consumer goods and many other items.

Those countries can experience supply chain pressures that affect America – as happened when surging global demand reduced the availability of PPE during the pandemic – or foreign powers simply could stop selling goods to the U.S. for political reasons.

Right now, America doesn’t even have a plan to retool its remaining manufacturing sites to produce goods in a crisis.

That could potentially leave the nation not only without PPE and medicines but other essential goods like tires, refrigerators, washing machines and even items needed by America’s military.

“Rebuilding the nation’s manufacturing sector is essential to keeping America safe and free,” warned International President Thomas M. Conway.

“And if that process does not begin now, America will be just as unprepared for the next crisis, whether that is a pandemic, national disaster or war.”

Manufacturing items in the U.S. may cost more than making them overseas. “But at the end of the day,” Robinson noted, “they’re right here.”

The USW long ago foresaw the danger that the loss of manufacturing muscle posed to the nation.

That’s why it vehemently opposed the 1994 North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), which enabled corporations like Carrier, Rexnord, Mondelez and General Motors to shift more than one million jobs to Mexico and leave manufacturing communities hollowed-out shells of their former selves.

Although the USW and other unions pressured Congress to adopt a new, improved trade pact, known as the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement, the original NAFTA continues to take a heavy toll.

As the pandemic raged, for example, Jeremy Hughes logged his final shifts at the Goodyear plant in Gadsden, Ala.

Goodyear closed the plant in May, three years after it opened a facility

in San Luis Potosi, Mexico, that pays workers only a few dollars an hour. Hundreds of USW members, including Hughes, lost their jobs as Goodyear gradually shifted their work to the low-cost San Luis Potosi site.

“As soon as they announced the Mexican plant, we all had a bad feeling,” said Hughes, treasurer of Local 12-L, who struggles just to find American-made tires for his future step-son’s pickup truck.

“We have to start buying American-made products,” he said. “I can’t stress that enough. The union has been

preaching that for years.”

Trade deals that incentivized corporations to offshore jobs aren’t the only reason American manufacturing withered.

U.S. policymakers also allowed foreign countries like China, Korea and Vietnam to dump unfairly traded goods into U.S. markets, undercutting the shrinking number of manufacturers still trying to operate here.

In a deliberate effort to destabilize other nations, China subsidizes its domestic companies with money, land and raw materials and then lets them

flood foreign markets with under-priced goods. American companies simply can’t compete with that kind of cheating.

Keith Frazier, president of Local 1329, said unfair competition is one reason the Domtar paper mill in Ashdown, Ark., shut down three production lines, idled a fourth and cut hundreds of jobs in recent years.

“We’ve got to keep these imports from coming in and killing our markets,” said Frazier, whose local represents maintenance workers.

He hopes the mass PPE shortages prompt more Americans to ask why the



USW MEMBERS STEP UP FIGHT FOR AID

While the coronavirus pandemic continued to have massive health and economic consequences across the world this summer, USW members stepped up their unprecedented activism to ensure that workers had the support they needed to make it through the crisis.

USW leaders, Rapid Response and SOAR activists, Women of Steel and others lobbied federal and state governments for paid sick leave and health care legislation, while local union negotiators pushed employers to ensure adequate personal protective equipment (PPE), safety precautions and other measures to keep workers healthy and give them the tools to survive the economic downturn.

Fighting for Paid Sick Leave

As several states saw another wave of outbreaks following the lifting of quarantine orders, protecting workers became a significant concern, and USW members took action.

USW leaders and district directors reached out to governors and lawmakers in nearly every U.S. state seeking to close loopholes left in federal sick leave legislation that was passed earlier this year but left far too many workers, including many health care workers, with little to no protection.

In Colorado, the USW worked with the state AFL-CIO and other unions to not only pass emergency paid sick leave legislation, but also to set up a more permanent paid leave structure for all workers.

Members were also successful in lobbying legislators in North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Massachusetts, Ohio and Michigan to introduce similar bills, while efforts continue in a number of other states.

“Our first concern is, and must remain, containing this dangerous virus and making sure our people stay healthy,” said District 2 Director Michael Bolton in pushing for Michigan’s “Workers First” plan, which included expanded paid sick leave and workers compensation, hazard pay for front-line workers, strict health and safety standards, scheduling policies, mental health assistance, and safeguards against retaliation against workers.

“We must ensure that nobody has to make the choice between their health and a paycheck,” Bolton said. “We must ensure that workers have the resources to adequately care for themselves and their families.”

It became clear in mid-summer that the coronavirus crisis would likely create hardships for workers into the coming year, requiring continued vigilance and activism from USW members on all fronts.

“There are times when members’ state-level activism is just as important, if not more important, than our work in Washington, D.C.,” said International Vice President Roxanne Brown. “We have to take the fight for justice to every workplace in our union and to every level of our government.”

nation let its manufacturing capacity slip away.

Right now, America doesn't even have a plan to retool its remaining manufacturing sites to produce goods in a crisis.

When Donald Trump failed to mobilize manufacturers to produce PPE, some USW-represented locations took the initiative on their own.

At the Cenveo envelope production facility in Chicopee, Mass., for example, members of Local 4-513 began making face masks for themselves and their co-workers with a sewing machine and cloth provided by the plant manager.

"It made everybody feel a little bit better," said Donna Blohm, a machine operator and the local's financial secretary.

Elsewhere, USW members helped their facilities modify production equipment to make face masks, hand sanitizer and other needed items for health care facilities.

As the talent and dedication of these workers show, America has the wherewithal to revive its manufacturing sector. It just needs policymakers to chart a course and then follow through.

That, Conway said, is why the USW supports the creation of a manufacturing

commission to oversee rebuilding efforts, especially in the health, food and defense sectors.

The campaign also must include investment in domestic manufacturing and strong "Buy American" provisions in government contracts so companies have incentives to make products here, instead of overseas.

Americans might disagree about who's most to blame for the shortages of PPE and other crucially needed items.

"But the facts are the facts," Blohm observed. "There wasn't enough."

OSHA, MSHA Safety Standards

The USW also joined other unions in pushing for strict federal standards for workers through the U.S. Department of Labor.

The AFL-CIO filed a lawsuit seeking to force the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) to issue an emergency temporary safety standard on infectious diseases, though a federal appeals court eventually ruled that a new standard was unnecessary.

AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka, USW Health, Safety and Environment Director Mike Wright and others blasted that short-sighted decision.

"An unprecedented pandemic calls for unprecedented action, and the court's action today fell woefully short of fulfilling its duty," Trumka said.

Later in June, the USW joined the United Mine Workers union in filing a petition seeking a court order to force the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA) to protect miners from exposure to the coronavirus with an emergency standard, arguing that miners face unique risks and often are unable to distance themselves from co-workers.

"Most Americans do not work in cramped underground quarters," Wright said in the filing. "Most are not exposed to high levels of silica and diesel emissions."

Under significant pressure from labor activists, the U.S. House of Representatives passed legislation requiring employers to develop and implement infectious disease exposure plans. Called the Health and Economic Recovery Omnibus Emergency Solutions (HEROES) Act, the legislation is awaiting approval in the U.S. Senate, though Republican Majority Leader Mitch McConnell called the bill a "wish list" and has so far refused to allow a vote.

The USW and other unions sought to amend the HEROES Act because it contained a provision that would harm multi-employer pension plans. Should the Senate take up the bill, the unions will work to have that provision removed.

The USW's Rapid Response team is urging members across the United States to continue to press for an amended HEROES Act as well as other recovery efforts, including the Moving America Forward Act, which would create millions

of much-needed jobs by investing in the nation's crumbling infrastructure. You can find contact information for your U.S. House members and senators, as well as other elected officials, at usa.gov/elected-officials.

Helping Front-Line Workers

USW members across all industries continued to step up to support health care workers, nursing home workers and others on the front lines of fighting the virus by donating food, money and critical supplies.

When members at National Grid were locked out for six months in 2018, the Massachusetts Nurses Association (MNA) stood in solidarity with members of Locals 12003 and 12012. The locals returned the favor this spring, delivering a check for \$10,500 to the MNA.

In Connecticut, members of a unit of amalgamated Local 134L retooled part of their operations to mold face shields to aid health care workers. Members volunteered to help assemble them, with the finished face shields delivered free of charge to workers at local hospitals and assisted-living facilities.

As front-line health care providers, and many other workers, continued to confront loss and trauma in the wake of the pandemic, the USW worked hard to help. The union hosted special resilience and mental health training sessions through the Tony Mazzocchi Center on June 9 and 11.

The sessions urged workers to remember that no one can take care of others if they don't take care of themselves. The training covered topics such as how to spot signs of mental health struggles and trauma, both within oneself and others, as well as how to cope using healthy mechanisms. The USW will be hosting more virtual sessions in the future, so please stay tuned to usw.org and social media for updates.

For more information on how to keep yourself and your co-workers safe, how to donate money, PPE and other much-needed supplies to those in need, and for additional resources related to the USW's response to the coronavirus pandemic, [visit *usw.org/covid19*](http://visit.usw.org/covid19).

UNITED STEELWORKERS



**YOUR UNION
YOUR VOICE**

#USWVOICES

USW MEMBERS *Take the Lead on Election* DECISIONS



"We need a leader that understands strong manufacturing, from paper to steel to a clean environment. Workers need competitive wages and benefits through their collective bargaining agreements, so we can all live in and enjoy the American dream, period. And I believe Vice President Biden is the man for that job."

RICK FRITSCHKA

Local 2-20, Expera Specialty Solutions
Kaukauna, Wis.



"Joe Biden is the worker-friendly candidate. He is with us all the time. He's been to Labor Day parades and been the keynote speaker. He has marched along with us. He knows what it's like for people who are out there working, struggling, trying to make a living."

JOJO BURGESS

Local 14693, U.S. Steel
Clairton, Pa.

Rank-and-file members and retirees from across the United States attended town hall meetings and answered surveys throughout the winter and spring as part of the USW's "Your Union, Your Voice" campaign.

The program, an unprecedented effort to provide members with transparency into the union's endorsement process and to ensure that they are the driving force behind those decisions, has come with some expected results, along with some surprises.

"We owe a debt of gratitude to the thousands of members who came to meetings or took the time to fill out surveys," said International Vice President Roxanne Brown, who leads the USW's political and legislative efforts from the union's Washington, D.C., office. "Their voices will strengthen our union and provide an even deeper foundation for the important electoral and legislative work that we do."



"I support Joe Biden for President because I believe he will help the working class. He supports raising the minimum wage to \$15. With his health care plan, no one will have to worry about how they are going to pay if they become critically ill. He has a plan for education, to give the teachers and students the support and resources that are desperately needed regardless of their zip codes. I believe all Americans deserve equal opportunities especially our youth who are the future and so does Joe."

ECHO CARSON

Local 690L, Landaal Packaging Systems
Flint, Mich.

In addition to the members and retirees who attended the 170 town hall meetings throughout every U.S. district, thousands more responded to the USW survey that gauged opinions on a range of important legislative and policy issues. About three-quarters of the survey respondents were active members, while about 19 percent were retired, and still others were laid off, former or associate members.

Answers came from workers in every district and every sector of the U.S. economy, including steel and aluminum, paper and pulp, oil and chemical, rubber and tires, glass, health care, higher education and public services, among others.

TOP PRIORITY: HEALTH CARE

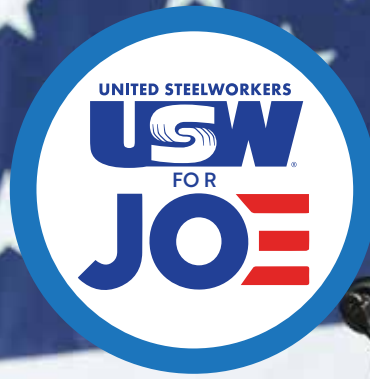
The surveys and conversations brought to light a clear priority for USW members: health care. Respondents ranked the issue of affordable health care and prescription drugs as the top priority in the survey, with 87 percent describing it as “very important.”

When asked to rank the top three issues out of a list of 13 possible choices, two out of every three people chose health care, making it the most selected issue.

During nearly all of the town hall meetings, attendees raised health care as a key concern. Frequently, town hall attendees commented on the need to control rising costs and employers’ attempts to push more costs onto members’ shoulders.

“In every demographic group and in every geographic region, the issue of health care was at the forefront of members’ minds,” Brown said.

Members’ comments included those like: “costs go up while benefits go down” or “we’re paying more, but getting less.” Others expressed worry for un- or under-insured family members



USW Endorses Biden

Over the past nine months, through a groundbreaking nationwide series of 170 town hall meetings and thousands of surveys, USW members shared their opinions on the issues that are important to them and their priorities for the future of our country.

At the same time, the USW sought answers on those issues from candidates for office across the nation – from men and women running for president to those seeking seats in the Senate and House.

Based on the responses the USW received, the choice for union members on Nov. 3 is clear. Joe Biden, son of a working-class family from Scranton, Pa., has the same priorities and shares the same values that Steelworkers fight for every day: family-supporting jobs; access to quality, affordable health care; the right to collective bargaining; safe workplaces and communities; and a dignified retirement for all.

The former vice president provided detailed answers on those issues in his response to the USW questionnaire. By contrast, President Donald Trump did not respond when the union sought his answers beginning in October 2019.

Joe Biden has fought for the issues that matter to working families his entire life. This year, he is running for president to strengthen an American middle class that has been battered by an economy that only works for the rich, by ever-rising health care costs, by weak trade

policies and by a federal government that values the voices of the wealthy over those of workers.

Joe Biden understands what workers need from their government, and he has plans to fight for it.

He knows that Americans need good jobs, and he is calling for a massive \$1.3 trillion investment in the nation’s infrastructure that will create hundreds of thousands of jobs across all industries and bring our country fully into the 21st century.

He has a plan to expand access to health care by bolstering and building upon our current system, including strengthening Medicare and Medicaid.

He believes that all Americans deserve to retire with dignity, and he has a plan to ensure that workers receive the pension and Social Security benefits they have earned without having to face crippling prescription drug or long-term care costs.

Perhaps just as importantly, Biden has proven that he will stand with workers in their fight for a better life for all Americans. Throughout his years in the Senate and as vice president, he has consistently been a voice for the rights of working families – protecting the right to organize, fighting for fairness through the Labor Department, OSHA, MSHA, the NLRB and other important avenues.

Recovering from the coronavirus pandemic and building an economy that works for all of us, for generations to come, will take bold action and a sustained commitment. Joe Biden has plans that demonstrate both.

and friends who were shouldering devastating costs incurred from illness or injury. This came even before the coronavirus swept across the nation. Some attendees shared personal stories of how having benefits helped them through the worst moments of their lives without financial ruin.

Knowing how important that issue and others are for members has given USW leaders a clear path as they determine where to direct resources for the presidential, legislative and gubernatorial elections coming up this November.

“The information we have gained from members is invaluable, and this is just the beginning,” said International President Thomas M. Conway. “This will help us become stronger advocates for members in Washington, D.C., but even more importantly, it will help us do a better job of representing the members of this union each and every day in workplaces across the country.”

RETIREMENT SECURITY CONCERNS

Retirement security, including pensions, 401(k)s, Social Security, Medicare, and Medicaid, was the second highest-rated issue in the survey, with 86 percent of respondents describing it as “very important.”

At the town hall meetings, members talked about what could be done to protect the benefits members have earned and paid for throughout their work lives, whether those were Social Security, Medicare, retiree health care or pensions.

Others noted how 401(k)s have shifted risk to individuals. Some noted concern over the future solvency of the Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation if the multiemployer pension system is allowed to collapse. And still others raised the need for all workers – no matter their age – to think ahead to their own retirement and what it might look like.



“We’re struggling to have enough PPE at our work; they’re reusing N-95 masks constantly. The supply chain is part of Biden’s plan, and it will build up everybody all around us. Because when people don’t have good jobs, they don’t have health care, they can’t afford to go to the doctor or to the dentist ... therefore, we’re losing money, we can’t maintain our jobs, and everybody loses. We’ve shown that we can change direction, we can answer the challenges that come at us.”

AMANDA THOMAS

Local 9184, Dental Associates
Green Bay, Wis.



“Americans need action, not tweets. That’s why I stand with the Biden plan. He also has first-hand experience helping the country out of economic collapse. That means a lot to me. I’m definitely looking for a strong union advocate in the White House.”

CHARLES SPIVEY

Local 8888, Newport News Shipbuilding
Newport News, Va.

WORKERS’ RIGHTS UNDER ATTACK

Without federal laws supporting the rights of workers to organize, the labor movement – and with it, the American middle class – would be in danger of collapsing. USW survey respondents recognized the importance of this issue, ranking it as their third-highest priority.

The issue of labor laws that support our ability to form unions and negotiate strong contracts was rated as “very important” on 81 percent of the union’s surveys. Participants at town halls repeatedly expressed frustration with the direction of the current, pro-corporate, anti-union National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) and U.S. Department of Labor and its systematic unraveling of the protections that workers have fought for and won for decades.

While they don’t get a lot of attention in the news, the NLRB’s actions are the reason why so many members have faced greater difficulty at the bargaining table in recent years.

Members at town halls were concerned about the weakened state of labor laws, including the increasing number of states that have adopted right-to-work (for less) laws. Some pointed to examples in their own workplaces where gains workers had made in the past were rolled back because employers felt emboldened by the business-friendly environment in Washington.

Members raised a number of other issues throughout the process, including the need for comprehensive infrastructure investment, workplace health and safety, fair trade and others. To learn more about the results of the Your Union Your Voice survey and the decision-making process for this fall’s elections, visit uswvoices.org.

While the November election is months away,



“Joe Biden doesn’t check all of my boxes, but no candidate ever will. I like that he has a plan to help make America a manufacturing power again, I like that he supports the PRO Act to make joining unions easier. I like his ideas on improving our infrastructure, and he supports the Butch Lewis Act, which will go a long way to protect pensions that are in financial trouble.”

MIKE NOLL

Local 1237, PCA
Newark, Ohio



“Candidates must commit to fighting and advocating for change, such as the PRO Act and Medicare for All. I am tired of living in a stagnated state because of inaction from our elected officials. We must fight for every vote to be accounted for. Our voices must be heard through the wall of dark money.”

EDUARDO PLACENCIO

Local 937, ASARCO, Mission Mine
Sahuarita, Ariz.

this was only the beginning of the union’s efforts to engage members in the political process. USW officers and directors plan to continue holding meetings that involve rank-and-file members directly in the legislative and electoral process in the months and years to come.

“One thing we know is that there is always another fight on the horizon - whether it’s at the bargaining table or in the halls of Congress - and it’s crucial that members are always leading the way,” said Brown. “Our job is to make sure that workers’ voices are heard by lawmakers in Washington, D.C., and all across this country.”



“Vice President Biden’s plan is what we need to revitalize the steel industry, to use our American steel in our infrastructure and make the economy vibrant again. I’ve been in the steel industry for 48 years, and my younger brothers and sisters deserve the same opportunities that I’ve been blessed with, and I see that in Vice President Biden’s plan.”

DAN BOONE

Local 979, ArcelorMittal Steel
Cleveland, Ohio

TOOLS FOR VOTERS

To check your voter registration status, find out how to register to vote, and find state-by-state information on voting by mail and other useful election-related tools, visit uswvoices.org.

PAC DONATIONS

Do you want to help the USW support candidates that fight for workers? You can make calls on behalf of candidates, distribute information and sign up to donate to the USW Political Action Committee by visiting pac.usw.org/donate/.

GET INVOLVED

Can you work at the polls on Election Day? In 2016, carrying out our election required more than 900,000 volunteers, and that number wasn’t enough, resulting in long lines in some heavily populated districts. We need members who are able to step up and volunteer on Election Day. In addition to staffing polling places, these workers cover early voting where it is permitted and count absentee ballots after the election. For more information about how you can get involved, visit uswvoices.org.



Ruling: University Administrators Sought to Block Union

A Pennsylvania Labor Relations Board (PLRB) hearing examiner ruled in June that the University of Pittsburgh administration artificially inflated a list of its faculty employees in order to impede a unionization campaign by the workers to join the USW.

PLRB Hearing Examiner Stephen A. Helmerich said that the employee list the administration provided to the board “was factually and legally inaccurate” and that more than 300 names should be removed, including upper administrators, supervisors and others, including some who had left the university years earlier.

In order to trigger a unionization vote, the union needed to show support from at least 30 percent of the potential bargaining unit. The administration supplied an inflated list, which included more than 4,000 names, making that 30 percent threshold harder to reach.

“This is just the most recent example of the administration’s hostility to the faculty exercising their right to vote,” said Peter Campbell, assistant professor of English.

In April 2019, the faculty members

fell short of reaching the 30 percent threshold of support as a result of the administration’s inflated employee list.

The USW expects the administration to appeal the ruling.

The faculty organizing campaign is one of two concurrent efforts by Pitt workers to become USW members. Graduate student workers at the university fell just short of victory in a vote to join the USW last spring, an outcome that came as a result of unfair labor practices by the university.

A PLRB hearing examiner upheld the union’s complaints and ordered a new election, but the university has contested that ruling with the board.

Union-Busting Expenses

The university has employed infamous union-busting firm Ballard Spahr of Philadelphia to help it obstruct the unionization efforts of both the faculty and the graduate students. Creating confusion over who is eligible to be in a bargaining unit is a typical tactic used by anti-union employers.

Between its attempts to thwart the

faculty and grad student workers from unionizing, the Pitt administration spent more than \$1 million over the 2018-2019 fiscal year on fees to Ballard Spahr. That figure was in addition to hundreds of thousands of dollars the administration had paid the law firm in prior years.

“Using frivolous litigation to delay an election is a classic union-busting tactic,” said Claude Mauk, senior lecturer in linguistics. “Clearly they’re worried that faculty, once they have the choice, will seize the opportunity to compel the administration to shift the university’s priorities back to the teaching, research, and clinical work that faculty do.”

The fact that Pitt’s union-busting efforts have continued throughout the coronavirus pandemic makes their actions even worse, said International President Thomas M. Conway.

“It’s appalling that, during a period in which many of the university’s lowest-paid faculty are being laid off, the administration is choosing to spend taxpayer dollars and student tuition on union-busting,” Conway said.



Photo by Steve Dietz

HIGH COURT: JOB PROTECTIONS COVER LGBTQ+ WORKERS

In a landmark victory for LGBTQ+ workers, the U.S. Supreme Court ruled in June that the Civil Rights Act protects them from discrimination by their employers.

Citing Title VII of that act, the court ruled, by a 6-3 majority, that the 1964 law, which already banned job discrimination based on sex, also covers bias against LGBTQ+ workers.

“The USW is proud to celebrate along with millions of others today the Supreme Court ruling that officially bans workplace and employment discrimination against LGBTQ+ people,” said International Vice President Fred Redmond, who oversees the union’s Civil and Human Rights program. “It is now up to every one of us in the labor movement and beyond to ensure it is employed fully and fairly in our workplaces.”

Prior to the ruling, nearly half of U.S. states had no legal protections for LGBTQ+ workers, meaning that employees could be fired or could be subject to harassment, bullying or retaliation from their bosses simply because of their identity or orientation. Other states had a patchwork system of protections based on legislation and executive orders.

“An employer who fires an individual for being homosexual or transgender fires that person for traits or actions it would not have questioned in members of a different sex,” Justice Neil Gorsuch, an appointee of President Donald

Trump, wrote in the opinion of the majority, which included Chief Justice John Roberts as well as Ruth Bader Ginsburg, Stephen Breyer, Sonia Sotomayor and Elena Kagan.

Quite simply, when an employer discriminates against LGBTQ+ workers, that employer “violates the law,” Gorsuch declared.

Justices Clarence Thomas, Samuel Alito and Brett Kavanaugh dissented.

Honoring Pride Month

The ruling came on June 15, the midpoint of Pride Month, celebrated each year to coincide with the anniversary of the Stonewall Rebellion of June 1969, considered a turning point in the fight for LGBTQ+ rights in the United States. The decision also came five years after the court affirmed the legality of same-sex marriage.

“Let us honor this Pride Month with a renewed commitment to moving forward in our fight for the safety and health of all working people, while celebrating this long-overdue victory,” Redmond said. “There is still much work to be done.”

Under the Obama administration, the federal Equal Employment Opportunity Commission had included LGBTQ+ discrimination in its interpretation of civil rights laws, but the Trump administration reversed that policy.

In addition, just days before the Supreme Court ruled in the case, the

Trump administration announced that it was eliminating a rule that banned discrimination against transgender patients in health care decisions.

The rule, an interpretation of a section of the Affordable Care Act, prohibited “discrimination based on race, color, national origin, sex, age or disability in certain health programs and activities,” which the Obama administration interpreted to include gender identity.

Decisions like that demonstrate the need to continue the fight for equality for all Americans, Redmond said.

“This ruling must not be the end of our fight for a more just and equal society,” Redmond said. “The COVID-19 pandemic has revealed the many disparities in our communities, especially for Black and Latinx LGBTQ+ people, who have been disproportionately impacted by this pandemic. Many lack access to health care, and many work in essential industries earning low wages — they cannot be left to fall through the cracks created by the chaos.”

In his statement celebrating Pride Month, Redmond noted that Black transgender women have an average expected lifespan of only 35 years.

“The labor movement has always said that an injustice to one is an injustice to all,” he said. “Let us use this month, and every month onward, to live up to that acclamation and deepen our commitment to the liberation of all working people.”

NLRB ISSUES SWEEPING COMPLAINT AGAINST ASARCO

USW RESPONDS WITH OFFER
TO RETURN, STARTING CLOCK
ON POTENTIAL BACK PAY

Striking workers at ASARCO won a major victory in June when the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) Region 28 issued a sweeping complaint against the company for numerous alleged unfair labor practice (ULP) violations.

In a strategic move that capitalizes on that ruling and puts USW members in the best possible bargaining position, the union decided on July 6 to end the ULP strike and make an unconditional offer to return to work.

Under current NLRB case authority, when ULP strikers make such an offer to return, the company is required to return them to their pre-strike jobs or similar jobs. If the company refuses to reinstate the returning ULP strikers to their pre-strike jobs and claims their jobs are held by “replacement workers” or crossover employees, the returning ULP strikers may be entitled to back pay.

“We don’t know how ASARCO will respond to our unconditional offer to return to work,” the union bargaining committee said in a letter to members this July. “However, we all know that ASARCO only cares about money. By

ending the strike and making an unconditional offer to return to work, we create the conditions for potential back pay.”

Almost 2,000 members of eight international unions, the majority of whom are USW members, have been on strike at five ASARCO copper mining and processing facilities in Arizona and Texas since Oct. 13, 2019. ASARCO is a subsidiary of the multi-billion-dollar Mexico City-based mining conglomerate Grupo Mexico.

**“OUR FIGHT WILL CONTINUE UNTIL
WE HAVE NEGOTIATED THE FAIR AND
JUST CONTRACT THESE MEN AND
WOMEN HAVE EARNED.”**

INT’L PRES. THOMAS M. CONWAY

“Our fight will continue until we have negotiated the fair and just contract these men and women have earned,” International President Thomas M. Conway said following the announcement of the NLRB complaint.

In the June 16 complaint, NLRB Regional Director Cornele A. Overstreet out-

lined the failure of ASARCO management to bargain in good faith with the unions representing its employees, both before and during the ongoing labor dispute.

The union workers at ASARCO are part of one master agreement that covers members from all locations and bargaining units, with supplemental local agreements for each individual site.

The unions’ most recent contract with the company expired on Dec. 1, 2018, and the unions had been working under an extension of that agreement until shortly before the ULP strike started on Oct. 13, 2019.

The ULP strike began after the union members voted overwhelmingly in October to reject the company’s so-called “last, best and final” proposal and to protest the company’s serious unfair labor practices at the bargaining table and at the work sites. The company’s offer included no wage increases for nearly two-thirds of the work force, increased restrictions on worker bonuses, a freeze of the pension plan, and a proposal to more than double workers’ out-of-pocket contributions to their health insurance costs.

In addition to those proposals, the

unions at ASARCO have faced more than a decade of concessionary demands. Wages were frozen for a year under an extension agreement that went into effect in 2010. Then, wages were frozen, health care benefits cut and the pension plan closed to new hires under a 2011 settlement.

After the two sides were unable to reach an agreement in negotiations between 2013 and 2017, ASARCO implemented conditions, and the membership later ratified an agreement that froze wages and cut benefits.

The five copper mining and processing facilities included in the ULP strike are the Mission Mine in Sahuarita, Ariz., the Silver Bell Mine in Marana, Ariz., the Ray Mine and Hayden concentrator/smelter in the Hayden, Ariz., area and the Amarillo Refinery in Texas.

In addition to hundreds of USW members, the striking work force includes members of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAM), the International Brotherhood of Teamsters (IBT), the International Union of Operating Engi-

neers (IUOE), the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers (IBEW), the United Association (UA) and the International Brotherhood of Boilermakers.

Among the specific allegations in the NLRB's complaint against ASARCO were allegations of unilaterally implementing changes to working conditions when there was no impasse, bargaining with no intention of reaching agreement, failing to provide information necessary for bargaining, not having decision-makers at the bargaining table with adequate authority to negotiate, and discriminating against union representatives.

Conway praised the solidarity of the union members at ASARCO and credited the late District 12 Director Robert LaVenture, who passed away suddenly, shortly after the ULP strike began.

"The courageous unity and solidarity of the union membership to continue their righteous struggle for a fair contract are a tremendous credit to Bob's life's work and leadership," he said.

LaVenture's successor, District 12 Director Gaylan Prescott, whose district

includes Arizona, said that the unions will continue their attempts to engage ASARCO management in good-faith negotiations in an effort to reach a fair and equitable settlement.

"The USW stands ready at all levels to work with the NLRB to bring ASARCO to justice for breaking the law in its drive to avoid bargaining in good faith," Prescott said. "We hope that the company will take this opportunity finally to bargain in good faith and start showing its workers the respect they deserve."

Following the NLRB complaint, District 13 Director Ruben Garza, whose district includes Texas, said that ASARCO would be required to answer the complaint in writing and that the NLRB will then schedule a hearing for an administrative law judge to review evidence against ASARCO and to hear testimony in the case.

"Our members, families and communities are standing up to one of the largest and most powerful multinational corporations on the planet," Garza said. "Today, we are one step closer to justice."



Photos by Steve Dietz



ITC TO INVESTIGATE MATTRESS IMPORTS

The U.S. Department of Commerce (DOC) will investigate unfairly traded mattresses from eight countries to determine if the products are harming the U.S. mattress industry, following a preliminary ruling this spring from the U.S. International Trade Commission (ITC).

The decision came after the USW and the International Brotherhood of Teamsters joined U.S. mattress producers in filing antidumping and countervailing duty petitions with the DOC and the ITC in March.

The petitions, filed by the two unions and Brooklyn Bedding, Corsicana Mattress Co., Elite Comfort Solutions, FXI, Innocor, Kolcraft, and Leggett & Platt, call for antidumping duties on imports of finished mattresses from Cambodia, Indonesia, Malaysia, Serbia, Thailand,

Turkey and Vietnam. The filings allege dumping margins of between 48 percent and 1008 percent.

Dumping occurs when a manufacturer prices an exported product below its domestic market value or below production cost in order to gain market share. Governments often provide subsidies to cover losses that exporters suffer as a result.

In addition to the dumping allegations, the group filed a countervailing duty petition alleging illegal subsidies by China, which is already subject to antidumping duties following a 2019 case.

WORK REMAINS TO ENSURE ENFORCEMENT OF USMCA

As a new trade deal between the United States, Mexico and Canada took effect in July, the USW said that much work remains to ensure that the agreement will be effective in protecting workers and their jobs.

“Despite the big promises workers have gotten from Washington, D.C., in recent years, the U.S. trade deficit with its North American trading partners has skyrocketed under this administration,” International President Thomas M. Conway said. “This is simply unacceptable and unsustainable.”

Led by USW members, workers pushed hard to make sure the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA) was a significant improvement over its predecessor, the North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), which cost the United States tens of thousands of good jobs and led to shuttered factories across the country.

Now, the agreement must be strictly enforced, Conway said.

“Thanks to the hard work of Democrats in Congress, the new agreement contains stronger language to protect good jobs from offshoring and to ensure workers’ rights,” Conway said. “In the future, we will seek even stronger rules to protect workers and communities from offshoring, pollution, unfair trade policies and

violations of labor rights.”

The USW must remain vigilant to make sure the U.S. doesn’t allow the

failures of NAFTA to continue, Conway said.

“Simply put, the USMCA is a baseline, not a final destination. It sets minimum standards, and we must continue to fight each day to ensure those standards are enforced,” he said.

Lori Wallach, director of Global Trade Watch, part of the nonprofit advocacy group Public Citizen, agreed that the revised deal is an improvement and that enforcement is the key to success.

“President Trump’s claims the new NAFTA will restore hundreds of thousands of manufacturing jobs have proved baseless,” Wallach said. “The new NAFTA sets the floor from which we will fight for trade policies that put working people and the planet first.”

Labor Attorney Jailed

While calling for activism to ensure the success of the USMCA, the Steelworkers also joined 14 other organizations in calling for the release of a jailed labor attorney in Mexico and warning that her arrest proved that some leaders in Mexico still do not respect the new agreement’s labor protections.

In a letter to Mexican officials, the USW, along with Public Citizen, the United Auto Workers, the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers, and the International Brotherhood of Teamsters and 10 other groups,

condemned the arrest of prominent labor lawyer Susana Prieto Terrazas.

Prieto was arrested after she was accused of inciting violence at factories owned by U.S. companies, at which workers were demonstrating for safer working conditions amid the coronavirus outbreak. Though she was later released, she remained under threat of prosecution.

“Ms. Prieto’s detention is casting a pall over the proposed July 1, 2020, start of the revised North American Free Trade Agreement,” the letter stated.

U.S. Trade Representative Robert Lighthizer, in testimony before the House Ways and Means Committee on June 17, said the arrest was “a ‘bad indicator’ of Mexican compliance with improved USMCA labor standards,” and said he would seek enforcement action if necessary.

Prieto has also been an outspoken critic of company-dominated “protection unions,” common in Mexico, with unelected leaders who sign contracts without the consent of the workers. The USMCA includes a provision that Mexico would work to put an end to such arrangements.

Prieto’s arrest follows a long pattern of labor-rights abuses by Mexican authorities. At least five union organizers at the Media Luna Mine, owned by Torex Gold Resources of Canada, have died or gone missing in recent years. Also, Napoleon Gómez Urrutia, president of the USW-allied mining and metalworkers’ union Los Mineros, spent 12 years of exile in Canada while facing false charges leveled by a previous government. Gómez was eventually cleared of wrongdoing and later elected to the Mexican Senate.

USW FILES PETITIONS ON PASSENGER VEHICLE, LIGHT TRUCK TIRES

*Commerce Department
Investigating Imports*

Photo by Steve Dietz



The U.S. Department of Commerce in June vowed to investigate passenger vehicle and light truck (PVL) tire imports from Vietnam, Korea, Taiwan and Thailand, a month after the USW filed antidumping (AD) and countervailing duty (CVD) petitions.

The petitions, filed with the Department of Commerce (DOC) and the International Trade Commission (ITC), allege dumping margins as high as 195 percent for Korea, 147 percent for Taiwan, 217 percent for Thailand, and 33 percent for Vietnam. The petitions also detail government subsidies benefiting Vietnamese tire producers, including loans, grants, tax breaks and currency manipulation.

The USW's petition is the first such action to include currency undervaluation as a subsidy, under new rules the DOC issued earlier this year. The USW alleges that the Vietnamese government's systematic devaluation of the nation's currency in relation to the U.S. dollar constitutes a subsidy that should result in duties.

"U.S. workers have for too long borne the brunt of a broken trade

system," said International President Thomas M. Conway. "When a country like Vietnam artificially suppresses its currency for the purpose of propping up its own industry, we need to treat that like we would any other illegal subsidy."

Dumping occurs when a company exports a product at a price below its domestic market value or below its actual production cost in order to gain market share against overseas competition. Foreign governments often provide subsidies to make up for the losses the exporters suffer as a result.

"This deluge of unfairly traded imports hurt our domestic industry and workers, including many USW members," Conway said. "Even though demand for PVL tires increased, domestic producers were still forced to grapple with reduced market share, falling profits and lost jobs."

As a result of those unfair practices, PVL imports from the four countries named in the petition shot up nearly 20 percent from 2017 to 2019, reaching 85.3 million tires, valued at \$4.4 billion dollars, last year.

The USW obtained AD and CVD orders on PVL tires from China

in 2015, and Chinese imports then dropped dramatically, allowing the domestic industry to invest in new capacity in the United States.

Yet importers soon sought out new sources of unfairly traded goods. Chinese producers, desperate for continued access to the attractive U.S. market, also invested in facilities in Korea and Thailand in order to export PVL tires without paying AD or CVD duties.

"Slowing Chinese imports was vitally important to saving the domestic tire industry," said Kevin Johnsen, who chairs the USW's Rubber and Plastics Industry Conference. "But Chinese producers found a way around our safeguards, and other bad actors are eager to take advantage of U.S. demand."

Conway said the Commerce Department's new rules targeting currency manipulation are an essential tool for North American workers to achieve a level playing field.

"The USW has long sounded the alarm on the dangers of currency manipulation and its impact on trade," Conway said.

The coronavirus pandemic has placed even more pressure on domestic tire producers, increasing the stakes of addressing unfair trade, Conway said.

"The main thing domestic producers should be worrying about right now is how to run their operations and keep people working as safely as possible," he said. "Yet, even as they face falling demand in the wake of this deadly disease, they're still grappling with unfairly traded imports that have continued largely unabated. Our only chance to preserve thousands of good, family-sustaining jobs is to stem this tide."

The USW is the largest North American union in tire manufacturing, representing workers at the following U.S. PVL tire plants: Cooper Tire's plants in Findlay, Ohio and Texarkana, Ark.; Goodyear's plants in Fayetteville, N.C., and Topeka, Kan.; Michelin's plants in Fort Wayne, Ind., and Tuscaloosa, Ala.; Sumitomo's plant in Tonawanda, N.Y.; and Yokohama's plant in Salem, Va.

"We need swift and decisive action. Thousands of community-supporting domestic jobs depend on it," Conway said.



**UNION
MEMBERS
FOR
BLACK
LIVES**

ISW

**NEXT
GEN**
LEADERS • ORGANIZERS
BLACK LABOR WEEK
EST. 2012

**EAT
THE
RICH
WHITE
SUPPANTS**

**BLACK
LIVES
MATTER**

Grief, Solidarity

FOLLOW FLOYD KILLING

When George Floyd was killed on May 25 while in the custody of four Minneapolis police officers, his death sparked an outpouring of grief, anger and frustration that fueled marches and protests in cities and towns across the world, with USW members joining millions in demanding justice and reform.

The killing of Floyd, whose death followed other similarly tragic, senseless slayings of Black Americans as a result of racism, also brought swift condemnation from leaders throughout the labor movement.

“At moments like these, we in the labor movement cannot be silent and must express our collective outrage over these brutal murders,” International Vice President Fred Redmond said. “Many of us are saddened, but too many people of color are worried that they could be stopped on the way home from work or a union meeting and suffer the same fate as George Floyd.”

Redmond said it was worth remembering that the USW Constitution establishes the mission of the union to “seek to eliminate all forms of discrimination” and fight for civil and human rights for all.

“Our union, the United Steelworkers, is great because of our solidarity, our respect for each other, and our unyielding commitment to

USW, LABOR LEADERS
SPEAK OUT AGAINST
POLICE BRUTALITY,
INSTITUTIONAL RACISM

justice, fairness and equality,” Redmond said. “The labor movement gains its strength from our common belief that all people are inherently valuable and have an undeniable right to a fair, just and dignified life, regardless of race, religion, gender or sexual orientation.”

Following Floyd’s killing, the national outrage at systemic racism and police violence boiled over, and millions of Americans took their anger to the streets.

It was far more than Floyd’s death that brought the nation to that moment. It was the deaths of Michael Brown, Tamir Rice and Philando Castile. It was the deaths of Antwon Rose Jr., Breonna Taylor, Ahmaud Arbery, and countless others.

Even beyond those events, protesters were expressing decades – even centuries – of

frustration with a system that has consistently supported deliberate, race-based violence and neglect aimed at Black Americans.

The fatal shooting of Rayshard Brooks by Atlanta police, which came less than three weeks after Floyd’s death, continued to fuel demonstrations and calls for reform across the United States.

“Our nation continues to be torn apart as a result of the persistent, unlawful and unchecked violence against people of color,” International President Thomas M. Conway said. “We will not turn our backs in these desperate times during which so many need so badly to be heard.”

Remell Bryant, a member of Local 1010 in northwest Indiana, attended rallies in Gary and Hammond and said that while the crowds were emotionally charged and some confrontations took place between police and demonstrators, the actions were a much-needed step in the advancement of justice.

“These events left me with some sadness, but also with a sense of hope. This is shining a light on the injustice and the anger of the people, my people, and as a result it has united us,” Bryant said. “America is now just reaping what it has sown. We want justice and we want it now.”

Redmond to Lead Task Force

Following Floyd's death, the AFL-CIO created a task force on racial justice and tapped Redmond to chair the group. AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka offered a reminder that the labor movement is rooted in the fight for justice in workplaces and communities.

Labor leaders Bayard Rustin and A. Philip Randolph, Trumka said, helped to organize the 1963 March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, where Martin Luther King Jr. delivered perhaps his most famous address – the “I Have a Dream” speech.

“Racism plays an insidious role in the lives of all working people of color,” Trumka said. “This is a labor issue because it’s a workplace issue. It’s a community issue, and unions are the community.”

Dr. King, Trumka said, was an ally of organized labor and lost his life to an assassin’s bullet while supporting the Memphis sanitation workers’ strike in April of 1968. “Protesting police brutality is not only a righteous cause,” Trumka said. “It is our responsibility. It’s incumbent on each and every one of us.”

Calls for Deep Reforms

As worldwide public demonstrations stretched through late June, all four police officers who participated in Floyd’s killing faced charges, including second-degree murder and manslaughter, as well as charges of aiding and abetting those crimes.

The protests also led community leaders around the country to re-examine the funding they provide for police departments and how they could redirect those resources to ensure better outcomes and enact deep and long-lasting reforms, a movement broadly – and somewhat inaccurately – dubbed “defund the police.” In addition, labor leaders began to call out police unions that for too long have blocked much-needed change.

In Minnesota, the USW joined the state AFL-CIO and other leaders in calling for Police Officers Federation of Minneapolis President Bob Kroll to resign after Kroll described Floyd as a “violent criminal” and called the nationwide protests a “terrorist movement.”

“We do not trust Kroll to serve and protect the public and absolutely cannot trust his leadership to serve members of his union,” said District 11 Director Emil Ramirez. “Law enforcement unions and their leaders are in a unique position to solve

the problem of police officers using deadly force against the citizens and communities they are sworn to protect.”

Police unions, Ramirez said, must “advance a more peaceful, fair and just society instead of continuing to promote violence and protect racists who hide behind badges.”

Cyndi Smith, a member of Local 2695 at U.S. Steel’s Gary Works, said she hoped that the protests that she and her fellow USW members participated in would bring about permanent changes, including a re-examination of funding, hiring practices and mental health awareness in police departments, as well as more compassionate and less confrontational police interactions with Black Americans.

“There needs to be a whole overhaul,” Smith said. “We all want change to happen. We all need to be allies for that cause.”

Trump’s Military Threat

After one particularly tense day of protests, some of which turned violent in part due to infiltration from outside groups with their own agendas, President Donald Trump held a news conference at which he threatened to deploy the U.S. military to the streets of American cities to “solve the problem,” as he put it.

That threat drew a particularly strong rebuke from both Democratic and Republican leaders across the country, including Conway, who made it clear that the labor movement would not exist at all without the right to protest and – sometimes – take its grievances to the streets.

“When a leader threatens to use the military to quiet our nation’s voice of protest, to quell our First Amendment rights,” he said, “then we are all on shaky ground.”

Trumka asked union members to continue the fight for justice and reform in their communities and their local police departments, and to use the labor movement’s defining principles of unity and strength to make sure that the Black Lives Matter moment becomes one of real, lasting change.

“That very solidarity is the foundation of the labor movement,” Trumka said.

Smith, of Local 2695, said that unions exist to fight for equal treatment for all, and the fact that equal justice is not a reality for so many Americans goes against that core mission.

“We can’t stand by and say this is OK,” she said. “This can’t keep happening.”



POOR PEOPLE'S CAMPAIGN RENEWS CALL FOR MORAL REVIVAL

Millions Gather Online to Demand Economic and Racial Justice

In 1968, the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and others called for a “revolution of values” in America. They sought to build a broad movement uniting poor and marginalized communities across the country. It would be called the Poor People’s Campaign.

Though Dr. King was assassinated in April, before the campaign’s main event — a march on Washington that June — his work carries on today under the rejuvenated leadership of friend of the union Rev. Dr. William J. Barber.

Barber and his organizers have traveled the country as part of the Poor People’s Campaign for two years. Their plan was to march in the nation’s capital in June, as activists did 52 years ago. The coronavirus pandemic, however, forced the march to shift online, but that didn’t stop people from demanding the end of systemic poverty and its interlocking injustices.

On June 20, 2020, millions of viewers tuned in for the three-hour digital gathering, sponsored by 100 organizational partners, including the USW and other unions, 16 religious bodies, artists and other advocates.

“Somebody’s hurting our people,” Barber said in his introduction, a rallying cry that wove through the virtual gathering. “It’s gone on far too long, and we won’t be silent anymore.”

Prophets of Our Time

Barber, who lives and works in North Carolina, set out to make the campaign a fusion movement of all people and organizations to end mass poverty and economic injustice. USW Vice President Fred Redmond said building bridges across movements and communities is the only path toward justice.

“Now, more than ever, our country must knock down walls and fight together,” said Redmond. “We are facing far

too many challenges as a nation and as a people to think small or stay in our silos.”

Even before the pandemic left tens of millions without jobs, the nation was home to 140 million poor and low-income people.

The online rally included a host of these people testifying, whom Rev. Dr. Alvin O’Neal Jackson, executive director of the digital assembly, called the “prophets of our time.” They included fast-food workers, teachers, homeless veterans, coal miners and single mothers.

“Their words often begin where our conscience ends,” Jackson said. “Hear them, listen ... listen.”

Amy Jo Hutchinson of West Virginia was one of the everyday “prophets” in the video rally. The 46-year-old single mother said she never spent a day without poverty at some level. She recently lost her health insurance, creating more financial hurdles.

“I have a bachelor’s degree, I’m trying to heal a medical condition right now with essential oils and prayers while I work full time,” she said in a clip of her addressing a Senate oversight committee in 2018. “I take my kids to softball games; I’m organizing around other poor people. I just don’t think we should have to give this much of ourselves in order to have a good quality of life in America, the richest country in the world.”

The Poor People’s Campaign calls for an end to this and other injustices. One of the best ways to combat them is through strengthening union rights.

Stronger Together

Olivia Williams, 24, spoke about her experience working at Starbucks at Orlando International Airport. She and her co-workers organized to join a union because of a lack of respect from management. The pandemic made the environment worse, as there was no

training for workers to stay safe.

“They only started paying attention to us when we started fighting for the union. I’m not afraid to fight — I’ve been fighting my whole life,” Williams said. “Working people like us are strong and powerful when we come together.”

Rev. Barber closed the event with a riveting call to action, saying that as the nation grapples with the coronavirus as well as the dual pandemics of racism and economic inequality, now is the time to go big and bold.

“In the long arc of human history there are moments when the universe itself groans and declares, ‘It’s time. It’s time for radical transformation and reconstruction,’” he said. “The worst mistake we could make right now is to demand too little.”

He also said that there is no excuse for mass poverty and anguish to be gripping the nation.

“Republicans racialized poverty, and too many Democrats ran from poverty,” he said. “It’s time now to expose it.”

Barber said fighting injustice is not a matter of left or right politics — it’s about life and death. Overcoming it means building power, which Barber believes is the key to a more just future.

“What we have is people power, and that is the force that will prevail.”



**LISTEN TO A SOLIDARITY WORKS
PODCAST EPISODE WITH THE
REV. DR. WILLIAM J. BARBER
AT [USW.TO/PODCAST](https://usw.to/podcast)**



VICTORY AT *Ravenswood*

COURT REJECTS CONSTELLIUM BID TO REVERSE HEALTH CARE RULING

A U.S. District Court judge in June blocked an effort by Constellium Rolled Products Ravenswood to overturn an arbitrator's ruling that prevented the company from making unilateral changes to health care benefits for its retirees.

In his ruling, Judge Thomas E. Johnston rejected the West Virginia aluminum company's argument that it had the right to modify health and prescription drug coverage for retired workers. He agreed with the arbitrator that the coverage was subject to the terms of USW's collective bargaining agreement with the company, which went into effect in 2017 and runs through Sept. 19, 2022.

"This is a significant victory for this group of workers, many of whom devoted decades of their lives to this company," said Ernest R. "Billy" Thompson, director of District 8, which includes West Virginia, Kentucky, Maryland and Virginia. "They deserve the benefits that they earned over a lifetime of hard work, benefits that this company negotiated into their union contract."

The dispute began in August 2018, when the Ravenswood, W.Va., company informed its retirees in a letter that it was planning to terminate their group medical and drug coverage at the end of that year and replace it with health reimbursement

accounts that they could use to purchase supplemental Medicare coverage. The union filed a grievance objecting to the company's plan, which ultimately led the two sides to arbitration.

The USW filed suit to obtain an injunction, which prevented the changes from taking effect while the arbitration proceeded.

"This ruling is just a small part of the story. We went through a lot just to get the injunction," said Local 5668 President Ed Barnette, whose father retired from the Ravenswood plant and whose mother was one of the union's original Women of Steel. "It was absolutely devastating what the compa-

ny was trying to do."

Barnette said he spoke to retirees suffering from cancer, leukemia, Alzheimer's disease and other life-threatening conditions who were terrified of losing their insurance coverage.

The arbitrator's ruling, upheld by Judge Johnston in his June 11 decision, ordered that "the retiree benefits in question must be maintained, unchanged, through the entire term of the 2017 agreement."

"We have collective bargaining agreements to prevent exactly this kind of scenario – to keep corporations from making unilateral, top-down decisions like this, decisions that hurt working people," Thompson said. "I



Photos by
Steve Dietz



USW SUPPORTS BLUEGREEN MANUFACTURING PLAN

USW leaders joined other members and leaders of the labor-environmental partnership, the BlueGreen Alliance (BGA), in June to help launch the organization's ambitious agenda to rebuild American manufacturing and fight the effects of climate change.

"The USW will always reject the false notion that we must choose between good jobs and a clean environment," International President Thomas M. Conway said as the BGA rolled out its plan. "We believe this country must have both, or we will have neither. That belief has formed the basis for our membership in the BlueGreen Alliance for the past 14 years."

The USW, along with environmental watchdog the Sierra Club, founded the BGA in 2006. Today, the organization includes more than a dozen unions and environmental groups committed to fighting for good jobs, clean infrastructure and fair trade. The BGA's manufacturing proposal outlines a set of national actions necessary to create an industrial economy that is globally competitive, clean, safe and fair for workers and communities.

"These priorities, if they are followed, will mean a stronger, safer, more prosperous future for all workers, families and communities in the United States," Conway said. "American industrial workers – and Steelworkers in particular – are an essential part of that future."

The BGA agenda outlines a set of national actions to modernize the U.S. industrial base, create good jobs, combat climate change and ensure fairness for workers and communities. The five pillars of the plan are to invest in a new generation of American manufacturing; to innovate to transform industry; to responsibly mine, recycle and reclaim the critical materials necessary for a secure, clean economy; to use public investment to create markets for a strong, clean, fair manufacturing economy; and to change the rules to build a clean economy that works for all Americans.

hope that this ruling sends a clear message that employers can't simply decide to ignore the pieces of their contracts that they don't like."

Barnette said he hopes the ruling will help other workers in similar fights to preserve their benefits.

"I know the work people put in here and what this has meant to them. It's a big victory for everybody – in this area especially," he said. "This could help other locals down the road, too. I hope they can build off of what we did."



On July 1, Conway testified before a special U.S. Senate committee on the climate crisis, calling for robust investments in domestic manufacturing that would create good jobs and reduce emissions.

"We can and must transform our manufacturing sector to become the cleanest, most efficient, most advanced in the world," Conway testified. "Our goal should be to accomplish that mission without displacing a single worker."

In fact, workers are an essential part of the necessary transition to a green economy.

"For a long time, USW members have been leaders in pushing green technology forward," said International Vice President Roxanne Brown, who directs the union's legislative and policy efforts in Washington, D.C., and in state legislatures across the country. "USW members are essential to the manufacture of clean, environmentally friendly products, including tires designed for greater fuel efficiency, paper products from recycled materials, bearings for wind turbines, and new steel pipe to prevent leakage."

"Manufacturing workers, especially USW members, are the key to solving our environmental crisis, while making sure we remain competitive and continue to provide good, family-supporting jobs," Brown said.

Ensuring that domestic manufacturers can remain globally competitive as they make costly investments is also essential, Conway said.

"As long as domestic manufacturers are bearing any cost of reducing emissions that is not borne by foreign competitors, they will be at a disadvantage in the marketplace," said Conway. "Therefore, we must also have a strong, comprehensive and timely border adjustment mechanism."

Congress and the president must make good, clean jobs their top priority, Conway said, noting that the COVID-19 pandemic has shed light on the urgency of the United States rebuilding its manufacturing base and putting Americans back to work.

"We don't have the luxury of time," Conway said. "We need to act now, to ensure the long-term health of our citizens, our economy and our planet."

To achieve its goals, the USW will need the support of other unions, as well as government and industry leaders, Conway said.

"We must make sure that American workers are leading the way on these changes, rather than becoming victims of them," he said.

USW ARBITRATION DATABASE

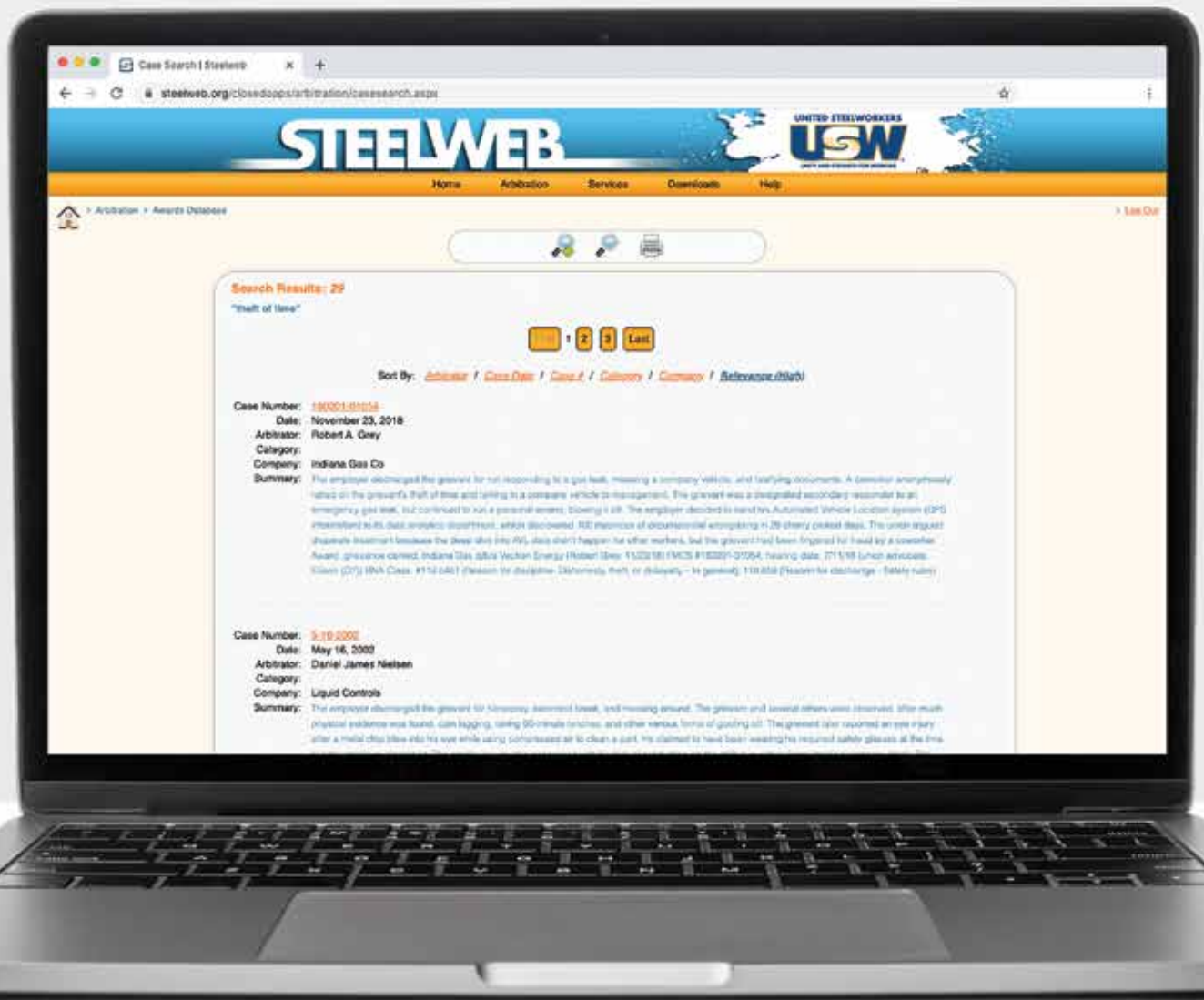
HELPS LOCALS *with* GRIEVANCES

Nearly every day, Matt Beckman, vice chairman of the grievance committee for Local 1010 in Hammond, Ind., checks out the USW's database of 17,000 arbitration awards to prepare and defend his members at ArceorMittal.

"I absolutely use it all the time, pretty much every day. It keeps us in the loop about what everybody else is doing," Beckman said. "It's a wonderful tool for research."

The searchable database, created by the arbitration section of the USW's Collective Bargaining, Research and Benefits Department, is now available for free to all local unions registered on Steelweb (www.steelweb.org).

"It helps us with cases involving the Family and Medical Leave Act (FMLA) in terminations and safety violations. It runs the gamut," said Beckman, who uses



the database for information that he used to find in a law library.

“We firmly believe in research, and this really helps us in researching similar problems that all workers go through,” he said.

American labor arbitration awards are private, and only a small fraction of all awards are published or otherwise publicly available.

The USW database comprises almost every award that the collective bargaining and research department could find since 2004, as well as all U.S. Steel cases back to 1978, all ArcelorMittal awards and most Alcoa cases.

In addition, the database contains important older awards from other industries, as well as all cases that appeared in old USW Arbitration Newsletters and Pike & Fischer’s Steel Arbitration Awards.

“You can use the database to look up and see how the rules themselves and interpretation of the rules were created,” said Tony Panza, grievance chairman for Local 979 at ArcelorMittal in Cleveland.

Researching the database can help local unions evaluate arbitrators who appear on panels and identify the evidence that particular arbitrators may need to rule in the local union’s favor.

Arbitration topics are often similar across industries.

“The database gives us an opportunity to look at other cases that are similar and cases that have come from other industries,” Beckman told *USW@Work*. “I just read one from BFGoodrich that I’m going to use in an arbitration coming up.”

The database may contain awards on similar grievances out of different locations and industries, or by the very arbitrator selected to hear a specific local union’s case. Repeating the language found in archived awards can be persuasive in new cases.

“We’re trying to win some grievances, so to be able to go into the

database and read through old cases and find the circumstances and the language that speak to our issues, I can’t tell you how useful that is,” Panza said.

“You can get a sense of current arbitrators, and see if they fit, if their thinking is in line with the case or whether another arbitrator might be better.”

The USW is seeking help with the database project from local unions. Local union officials should retain copies of arbitration awards when they come in, but also send a hard copy or email a PDF for inclusion in the database.

Please send copies to the Collective Bargaining, Research and Benefits Department, 60 Blvd. of the Allies, Pittsburgh, PA 15222, or email a PDF to arbitration@usw.org. The department particularly interested in getting copies of awards when the union’s advocate is either a local union officer or an attorney.

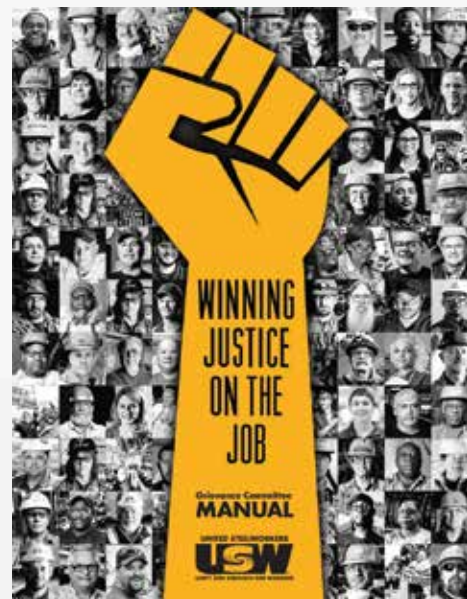
The department also recommends that local unions start research with arbitration textbooks like BNA’s Grievance Guide. Additionally, for \$30 a month, local unions can buy access to the Bureau of National Affairs (BNA) Labor and Employment Practice Center database, a powerful research tool.

Local unions with questions, problems or suggestions for improvements should contact the Information Systems Department at webmaster@steelweb.org or (412) 562-1990.

Grievance Tracker on Steelweb

The Information Systems Department has developed an electronic grievance tracking system, which local unions can register for on Steelweb. This tracker sends reminder emails to alert stewards or officers when a grievance deadline is approaching.

Local unions using the grievance tracking system can stay on top of a busy grievance docket and respond to member questions about the status of grievances filed on their behalf.



GRIEVANCE COMMITTEE Manual

Another resource is the Grievance Committee Manual – Winning Justice on the Job – available from USW Mail and Print Operations. The manual offers suggestions to help grievance committees manage the grievance procedure effectively and represent coworkers conscientiously.

Unlike the USW Steward Handbook, which focuses more on the war in the trenches, this manual should help local union officials think about the big picture. It can familiarize newcomers with the basics and suggest new approaches to experienced local union grievance representatives.

“THE DATABASE GIVES US AN OPPORTUNITY TO LOOK AT OTHER CASES THAT ARE SIMILAR, AND CASES THAT HAVE COME FROM OTHER INDUSTRIES.”



INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION POSTPONED

When the coronavirus pandemic limited travel and forced the extended shutdown of hotels and conference centers along the Las Vegas Strip this spring, the USW International Executive Board was forced to take action to postpone the union's 2020 constitutional convention.

"The health and safety of our members, staff and families is our paramount concern," International President Thomas M. Conway said. "Unfortunately, there are still too many unknowns for us to responsibly proceed as previously scheduled."

The convention had been set to take place during the first week of August 2020 inside the MGM Grand conference center in Las Vegas. That facility, as well as other similar ballrooms and meeting centers in Nevada and across the country, was closed through the spring and early summer while the response to the coronavirus pandemic required a limit on the number of people who could safely gather in one place.

"We have been advised to limit non-essential travel and avoid large public gatherings," Conway said.

The convention is now scheduled for August 8-11, 2022.

The MGM Grand shut down its operations on March 12, and as of July still had not resumed holding conferences on the scale of the USW's triennial gathering, which usually attracts about 3,000 people, including thousands of member delegates and guests from around the world.

The constitutional convention is the USW's top governing body, where rank-and-file members from local unions across North America debate and pass resolutions that guide the union's policies and activities in the coming years.



Hopefully we can all begin to gather together soon at all the levels of our union. In the meanwhile, stay safe, look out for each other and reach out to the union through your normal channels and visit the [USW.org](https://www.usw.org) website for updates and resources that are helping us handle this crisis period.



Following the USW Executive Board's decision to postpone the event, more than 77 percent of USW members voted to support the postponement plan before the June 30 deadline.

Because the USW will be holding local union and international elections in 2021, which will require a significant investment of time and resources from local unions, the constitutional convention – another major expense for locals

– was set for the following year.

"We will of course issue a new convention call and prepare for the convention as that date approaches in the normal fashion," the Executive Board said in a July 1 letter to local unions.

While the convention is postponed, the USW has worked hard to fill the void of in-person meetings, training sessions and other events by continuing to hold electronic get-togethers on platforms including Zoom, Facebook Live and other avenues.

"We are doing our best to continue the work of the union while also prioritizing the health and safety of members and their families," Conway said. "USW staff members are still working hard to provide excellent service for members while working from home. We are confident that everyone will continue to do so as we slowly, and safely, transition back to our regular activities."

In its letter, the Executive Board urged local leaders to continue to be vigilant in making sure that their workplaces are safe and healthy for all members and to reach out to the international for any help they may need.

"Hopefully we can all begin to gather together soon at all the levels of our union," the letter said. "In the meanwhile, stay safe, look out for each other and reach out to the union through your normal channels and visit the [usw.org](https://www.usw.org) website for updates and resources that are helping us handle this crisis period."

Museum Workers Launch Bid to Join USW

In the latest in a wave of efforts by academic and other white-collar workers to become members of the USW, hundreds of staff members from four Western Pennsylvania museums announced in late June that they had launched a unionization drive.

Presenting themselves as the United Museum Workers, the group of more than 500 scientists, educators, art handlers, clerks, event ushers and other employees at Pittsburgh's Carnegie Museum system said they were looking forward to holding a successful vote.

"We are proud future members of the United Steelworkers union, whose members built the fortune of our museum's founder," the group's mission statement said.

The group held a virtual "rally" as their workplaces were reopening after several months of shutdowns and furloughs related to the coronavirus pandemic.

The Carnegie Museum system was founded in 1895, originally as the Carnegie Institute, by steel giant Andrew Carnegie. The museums consist of the Carnegie Museum of Natural History, the Carnegie Museum of Art, the Carnegie Science Center and the Andy Warhol Museum.

Despite their diverse range of departments and duties, Gabi DiDonna, an assistant registrar of loans at the Carnegie Museum of Art, said in the campaign's video announcement, "What unites us is a dedication to preserving and presenting art, scientific collections and ideas."

DiDonna also said that although working at a prestigious, mission-driven nonprofit is often a labor of love, many of the workers struggle to make ends meet. "Prestige doesn't pay the rent," she said.

Along with better pay and benefits, the United Museum Workers are demanding inclusivity in hiring, accessibility, increased transparency and a voice in the museum's decision-making process.

"We are looking forward to the days ahead," DiDonna said at the rally's conclusion, "and we can't wait to win our election."



USW Celebrates 78th Birthday

The USW on May 22 marked 78 years since union activists first organized in Cleveland to form the United Steelworkers of America, with a statement from President Thomas M. Conway highlighting the resilience of the union to weather crises and its commitment to improving the lives of working people.

"While there have been times over the past 78 years that we've been challenged and felt under siege, our union has never been broken," said Conway. "And because of our determination, solidarity and willful purpose, we never will be broken."

Throughout its history, the USW has merged traditions and fought many battles with difficult employers, leading to the improvement of the lives and working conditions of thousands of workers across North America.

Conway said the USW is still guided by its founding principles and underscored the importance of the union's voice in legislative and political processes.

"We should all hold our heads up high today, knowing that each of us play a real and lasting role in keeping this great institution vibrant and relevant in today's society," said Conway. "The work we do each day helps not only our fellow members but also others who need us. We have much to be thankful for, and we should all be proud to be a part of this noble union."

Court Orders Jersey Shore Steel to Bargain

A federal court in April granted Region Six of the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) an injunction ordering Jersey Shore Steel to recognize and bargain in good faith with USW Local 4907-04 in Pennsylvania, reinstate three unlawfully discharged union officers and undo unilaterally implemented changes to working conditions.

"Step-by-step, we are marching toward justice at Jersey Shore Steel for workers who have been unfairly impacted by management's various schemes to avoid good faith negotiations," said USW District 10 Director Robert "Bobby Mac" McAuliffe. "We are proud to fight on their behalf as long as the company continues its attempts to undermine workers."

In an April 29, 2020, decision, U.S. Judge for the Middle District of Pennsylvania Matthew W. Brann ordered the company to take action as the NLRB prepares to prosecute Jersey Shore Steel.

NLRB Region Six will prosecute Jersey Shore Steel for multiple alleged violations of the National Labor Relations Act at the USW-represented facility near Montoursville in Lycoming County, Pa.

"Ultimately, the unity and solidarity of our members will carry the day at Jersey Shore Steel," McAuliffe said. "Management needs to get the message and stop breaking the law."

The company's unfair labor practices included failing to bargain in good faith or provide information necessary for negotiations, unilaterally changing working conditions, unlawfully discharging members of the USW bargaining committee and threatening workers with plant closure.

NEWS BRIEFS

Lemieux Named District 5 Director

The International Executive Board this spring appointed Dominic Lemieux to serve as the USW's new director of District 5, which comprises the Canadian province of Quebec. Lemieux took over the post from Alain Croteau after serving as his assistant since 2016.

Before becoming assistant director, Lemieux served as the USW's North Shore Regional Coordinator. He also serves as a Vice President of the Quebec Federation of Labour (FTQ) and a member of the Board of Directors of the FTQ's Solidarity Fund.

Lemieux became a USW staff representative in 2008 after working in the Abitibi gold mines and at Stelco (now Arcelor-Mittal) in Contrecoeur. While on the job, he quickly developed an interest in workplace health and safety and became an activist on the USW Local 6951 executive board.

He has traveled throughout Quebec as a member of the USW's organizing team and has led major negotiations with multinational employers including Rio Tinto, Alcoa, Lafarge, ArcelorMittal, Glencore and many others.



He chaired the FTQ Youth Committee from 2007 to 2009, and played a key role in the campaign that led to a ban in 2018 on two-tier pension and benefit plans in Quebec workplaces.

Lemieux holds a certificate in health and safety from the University of Montreal and completed the Harvard University Trade Union Program.

NLRB Steps Up Attacks on Workers

The Republican-dominated National Labor Relations Board issued two more decisions in June meant to hinder union organizing efforts.

In the first ruling, the board decided that companies can prohibit discussions of union organizing between employees during working time. The ruling stemmed from a case in which the board upheld disciplinary action against a worker for talking with another employee about a union election for several minutes during work time.

"Union solicitation is likely to disrupt work," the board said, adding that employers may take action even if the conversation does not interrupt work.

Later in June, the board overturned an Obama-era precedent that prohibited employers from taking drastic disciplinary action against workers in the period after the union is organized but before a first contract is signed with the newly formed union.

The new rule, which conflicts with previous U.S. Supreme Court decisions, means that – prior to a first contract – management may discipline workers without having to notify or bargain with the newly formed union over its decisions.

The NLRB said the new rules would apply retroactively to all pending cases.



USW Honors Civil Rights Icon Rep. John Lewis

The USW joined a chorus of millions in celebrating the life and legacy of U.S. Rep. John Lewis when the civil rights icon died July 17 at the age of 80.

"His endless courage in the face of injustice is a reminder of what ordinary people can do in extraordinary times – though, one could easily argue Rep. Lewis was far beyond ordinary," the union said in a joint statement by International President Thomas M. Conway and Vice President Fred Redmond. "Every decision he made in Congress, he made with people at the center of his mind, not politics. Every step he took in life, he took in the same way – with great purpose and passion."

Rep. Lewis, one of the original Freedom Riders, activists who directly challenged segregation in the American South, was an ally and friend of the Rev. Martin Luther King Jr. Rep. Lewis helped organize and spoke at the 1963 March on Washington, led countless other civil rights efforts throughout his career and represented Atlanta in the U.S. Congress for more than 30 years.

"We are not simply moved to tears by Rep. Lewis's death, but moved to action," the USW statement said. "We will fight for every American's right to vote, for their right to come home at night after work in the same condition they left, and for their right to a life of dignity and liberty."

A champion of the labor movement, Rep. Lewis received numerous honors throughout his life, including the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 2011. In 2018, the USW presented Lewis with the union's Wellstone Award, given annually to a public figure with a deep commitment to public service and the well-being of workers.

USW Postpones Leadership Scholarship Classes

After much thought and debate, the USW decided this spring that it would postpone all Leadership Scholarship 2020 classes due to the continued spread of the coronavirus.

District directors and officers are currently working to set dates for 2021, while also working on setting up online activities including workshops, movies and a book club. For more information, check out the USW website and social media groups.

USW Members Protest Essentia Layoffs

Workers in Minnesota's Iron Range continue to protest the elimination of 900 jobs at Essentia Health, a decision that has left hundreds of USW Local 9460 members jobless since May and without health insurance after July.

The layoffs made up 6 percent of the company's workforce – not including an additional 850 workers placed on administrative leave through July – and came despite Essentia Health receiving \$95 million in government coronavirus relief funds as of July.

The company cited canceled elective surgeries as the reason for the decision.

Local leaders have met with management to negotiate the layoffs several times in recent weeks and were able to prevent some layoffs, but not enough, according to Local 9460 president Deanna Hughes.

"What we would like to see is community members and patients reaching out to Essentia about this," Hughes said. "And I think Essentia forgets sometimes that a lot of their employees are also their patients."

Community allies joined the campaign in solidarity events, including a drive-by caravan on June 1 in Duluth, Minn., and an informational picket June 27 in Spooner, Wis.

Local 9460 vice president Adam Ritscher said campaign actions will continue as the union fights back against the layoffs.

"This is just the first of what will be a series of actions and billboards in an effort to not lay off essential workers in the midst of the pandemic," said Ritscher.

Community members and patients of Essentia Health can contact the health care system directly at 218-786-3091 to voice support for the workers.

Alberta Local Helps Build Shelter

The Women of Steel Committee of Local 1-207 in Alberta, Canada, played a vital role in making sure the Jessica Martel Memorial Foundation was able to open the doors of its new domestic violence shelter and resource center this past June.

Local 1-207 President Ray White learned about the foundation in 2016 at the National Policy Conference in Edmonton, and since then, he and his fellow Steelworkers have been raising funds, building awareness, and securing materials and furniture.

Local 1-207 members, District 3 and Local 1944 in Burnaby, British Columbia, together raised thousands of dollars for the cause, organizing a golf tournament, purchasing tables at the Montreal Massacre luncheon and more.

"This was truly a team effort," said White. "I have never been prouder to be a Steelworker."

Jessie's House in Morinville, Alberta, a 9,200-square-foot building, is the first new emergency shelter to be built in the province in 22 years. It offers housing, court assistance, tutoring, family counseling and other services. The home also includes a USW Women of Steel Suite in honor of the union's efforts.

USW Salutes Postal Workers

The USW issued a statement on July 1, National Postal Worker Day, honoring the sacrifices of postal workers and calling for Americans to continue to support the U.S. Postal Service as it confronts the COVID-19 pandemic and a financial crisis.

"Postal workers risk their lives every day to deliver the medicines and other supplies that their fellow Americans need to survive the health crisis," International President Thomas M. Conway said. "They bring the letters that keep families and friends connected during this unprecedented period of lockdowns."

In November, the U.S. Postal Service will play a critical role in preserving American democracy by delivering what is expected to be a large number of absentee ballots likely to be cast in a presidential election occurring amid the pandemic.

"Sadly, although the postal service is more important than ever, its fate has never been in greater jeopardy," Conway said.

In April, the postal service announced that it was likely to run out of money by September without federal aid. While President Donald Trump and some other Republicans have attempted to pin the blame on fiscal mismanagement, the truth is that the crisis is a result of more than a decade of effort by Republicans to starve the postal service of resources and place impossible financial obligations on it in an effort to privatize it.

"The USW salutes postal workers for their heroic service to America and calls on the federal government to take immediate steps to safeguard this vital institution," Conway said.



U.S. Among Worst Nations for Labor Rights

The United States is the worst violator of labor rights among the world's developed countries, according to a survey of unions.

According to the International Trade Union Confederation, which includes 331 labor organizations in 163 countries, the United States received a rating of 4, indicating "systematic violations of rights," while every other Group of Seven nation received a rating of 3 or better.

Top-ranking nations for protecting labor rights included Sweden, Italy, Netherlands, Ireland and Germany.

The confederation also said that workers' rights are being threatened around the world, with violations currently at a seven-year high. Countries in North Africa and the Middle East were named the worst offenders, with some banning strikes and others banning collective bargaining altogether.

Among the worst-ranked countries in the survey were Bangladesh, Brazil, Colombia, Egypt, Honduras, India, Kazakhstan, the Philippines, Turkey and Zimbabwe.

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



A Win for ASARCO Workers

Striking union members won a major victory this summer in their long fight against ASARCO when the National Labor Relations Board Region 28 issued a sweeping complaint against the company for numerous alleged unfair labor practice violations.

See page 20.