

District 11
REPORTER

Volume 6/Issue 4

Fall 2020

Official Publication of District 11 United Steelworkers. Published four times a year and inserted in **USW@Work**.

Emil Ramirez, Director
Cathy Drummond, Assistant to the Director
Joyce Russotto, Admin.
Assistant to the Director



3433 Broadway Street NE, Suite 315
Minneapolis, MN 55413

Phone612-623-8045
Fax.....612-331-4266

Sub-District 1 Office

3433 Broadway Street NE, Suite 315
Minneapolis, MN 55413

Phone612-623-8003
Fax612-331-4266

Staff: Brian Ecker, Travis Lohmann, Robert Ryan, Gene Szondy, Michelle Ivey, Michael Woods, Karen Stockton, Stacey Andersen, Randy Boulton

Sub-District 2 Office

3675 South Noland Road, Suite 310
Independence, MO 64055

Phone.....816-836-1400
Fax816-836-0312

Staff: Dave Rizzuto, Greg Tate Jr., Robert Tripp, Terri Pierce, Rob Haynes

Staff Office

415 Jones Street
Eveleth, MN 55734

Phone.....218-744-2757
Fax218-744-7926

Staff: Cathy Drummond, John Arbogast, John Kesler, Monte Morlock, Michele Fredrickson, Tiffany Olson

Staff Office

3307A Hollenberg Drive
Bridgeton, MO 63044

Phone.....314-209-0613
Fax314-209-0662

Staff: Cameron Redd, Ronald J. Wilkey, Ruth Cooley, Jeff Hartford

Send comments and suggested articles to:
D11news@usw.org



© Copyright 2020 by District 11 United Steelworkers, AFL-CIO-CLC. All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced without the written consent of District 11.

ArcelorMittal, Local News Stories Highlight Service of Iron Range Volunteer Firefighters

A very large fire on a hot summer day during the Fourth of July weekend brought attention to the important work USW Local 6115 member Casey Omersa does when he's not on the job as a crusher planner at ArcelorMittal's Minorca mine.

Omersa is a second-generation volunteer firefighter with the Gilbert Fire Department—one of more than a dozen departments dispatched to help battle a blazing house fire in Virginia, Minnesota, on Sunday, July 5, 2020.

The spectacle of the raging fire, which took close to eight hours to extinguish, caught the attention of an ArcelorMittal manager who lived in the neighborhood and recognized Omersa.

The company featured Omersa and other Minorca and Hibbing Taconite workers who were on the scene of the fire, including Jake Stachovich, Rob Zeiher, Ben Mancini and Tony House, in a story on its website.

Local news then picked up the story, highlighting the important roles Omersa and other USW members play in keeping our families and communities safe. We know their example will inspire others to serve their communities.



Let's Hear from YOU!

USW@Work is published four times a year and we need the submissions for the Winter 2021 issue by January 29, 2021. Please submit them to D11news@usw.org.

Also include a telephone number or active e-mail address in case we need additional information. We will try to include all submissions and we reserve the right to edit information in order to fit the allocated space.

GET INVOLVED

CIVIL RIGHTS

David Rizzuto
USW District 11 Civil and Human Rights Coordinator
515-953-0783 office
515-953-0786 fax
515-490-1277 cell
drizzuto@usw.org

EDUCATION COORDINATORS

Brian Ecker
becker@usw.org
Ron Wilkey
rwilkey@usw.org

NEXT GENERATION

For information on Next Generation, please contact the District 11 office at 612-623-8045.

ORGANIZING

For information on Organizing, please contact the District 11 office at 612-623-8045.

RAPID RESPONSE

Bob Ryan
USW District 11 Rapid Response Coordinator
3433 Broadway Street NE
Suite 315
Minneapolis, MN 55413
612-623-8003 office
612-331-4266 fax
ryan@usw.org

SOAR

Bonnie Carey
USW District 11 SOAR Coordinator
Bettendorf, IA 52722
309-721-7908 cell
bonnie.carey@gmail.com

WOMEN OF STEEL

Cathy Drummond
USW District 11 Women of Steel Coordinator
415 Jones Street
Eveleth, MN 55734
218-744-2757 office
218-744-7926 fax
cdrummond@usw.org



WOS COUNCIL COORDINATORS

Christina Lehman—Iowa
4866 NE 39th Avenue
Des Moines, IA 50317
515-201-6134 cell
christinar1972@outlook.com

Talina McClure—MOKAN
33212 Koala Circle
Excelsior Springs, MO 64024
816-877-6484
total_princess1980@yahoo.com

Marketa Anderson—WMMN-KOTA
502 SW 8th Avenue
Chisholm, MN 55719
218-403-0219
m_manderson@msn.com

Tina Fife—WY/MT
PO Box 553
Lyman, WY 82937
307-747-4672
tfife78@gmail.com

USW REPORTER

3M COTTAGE GROVE MEMBERS *Push Back Against Company's Unsafe Proposals*

More than 350 members of Local 11-418 began mobilizing in August, preparing to fight for a fair agreement and pushing back on management's contract demands that would undermine health and safety and disrupt work/life balance.

"It is good to see the solidarity of our membership fighting back against these unreasonable company proposals which would negatively affect the health and safety of our members and the communities they live and work in," said John Shinn, head of the USW's chemical sector.

Bargaining started June 8 for a new agreement covering some 292 production workers and 70 in the building crafts. They work at the 3M Cottage Grove campus in Minnesota at six plants, each organized as a division with its own departments.

Members make everything from chemicals for other products to abrasives used in sanding pads and grinding wheels. They make glass bubbles for insulation and weight reduction for items like cars and planes, matting for catalytic converters, specialty films and tape.

Local 11-418's contract expired Aug. 18 and is extended until Oct. 16, 2020. If an agreement is not reached by then, the contract will continue on 72-hour rolling extensions.

Local 11-418 Vice President Justin Recla said management proposes that the departments within a division be combined into one department so managers can move employees into different jobs at will. "This would be extremely unsafe, and 3M has no training in place to even try to accomplish this," he said.

"All they talk about is flexibility. They said if we would agree to the proposal, they would 'try' to have training in place



within two to three years. The 'Run now, Train Later' initiative is not an acceptable method," Recla said.

With help from USW's Strategic Campaigns department, the local formed a Communications Action Team, which is texting bargaining updates and information about rallies to members, handing out flyers about informational pickets and using social media to drive home the local's message. A billboard located near the 3M campus, Maplewood, also reinforces the local's solidarity and need for a fair contract.

All these communication channels resulted in a good turnout of about 150 members for the local's first informational picket.





Elections have consequences, and President Donald Trump's National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) has spent almost four years undermining workers to give management an upper hand.

Last year, the Economic Policy Institute (EPI) published a detailed report about how, under the Trump administration, the NLRB has systematically rolled back workers' rights to form unions and engage in collective bargaining with their employers, to the detriment of workers, their communities and the economy.

In its October 2019 report, EPI recounts how the Trump board faithfully addressed each item on a top-ten corporate-interest wish list published by the U.S. Chamber of Commerce in early 2017—taking action on ten out of ten items!

Now, even after the COVID-19 pandemic has revealed the urgent need for stronger workplace protections, Trump's NLRB ramps up a scorched-earth campaign aimed at annihilating organized labor and subjugating American workers.

The string of NLRB rulings amounts to death by a thousand cuts, each one chipping away at the long-established rights and practices enabling working people to join together to build better lives.

For example, the NLRB—run by Trump's hand-picked corporate cronies—imposed additional, unnecessary steps to the union election procedure solely to drag out the process and give employers more time to thwart organizing efforts.

And the agency went further, empowering employers to begin withholding email addresses and other information unions need merely to contact prospective voters.

The board also ruled that employers may discipline a worker just for mentioning a union drive to a colleague during work hours.

In a decision rooted in spite, rather than logic, it concluded the mere reference to an organizing effort—even an offhand remark—constituted an illegal solicitation of a colleague's vote.

The NLRB is supposed to be responsible for protecting workers' rights. But under Trump, it's stacking the deck in favor of greedy corporations desperate to silence workers' voices and bust unions at any cost.

The Trump administration continually seeks new ways to rig the system against working people.

In one of its biggest gifts to corporations yet, the NLRB went to court to overturn an Oregon law that affords workers a degree of protection from the pernicious anti-union meetings that employers across the country regularly hold to belittle union supporters, lie about labor and kill organizing campaigns.

In Oregon, employers may hold anti-union meetings. But they cannot force workers to attend them. The NLRB filed suit to change that, arguing the law violates employers' free-speech rights.

That's right. The Trump administration wants to further free employers to lie, bully and fearmonger during organizing drives, even as it empowers the same companies to discipline workers for so much as mentioning a union.

Workers in every sector of the economy across the country realize that only by organizing can they win family-sustaining wages, decent benefits and safe working conditions.

However, building better lives for millions of ordinary Americans will require an NLRB committed to defend their right to organize and bargain collectively instead of restricting it further.

The president nominates NLRB members as well as the agency's powerful general counsel, and the Senate confirms them. So only the election of federal officials committed to workers' rights can truly put the agency back on course.

Trump and his Senate allies not only installed corporate lawyer Peter Robb as general counsel but put former GOP congressional staffer Marvin Kaplan and corporate lawyers John Ring and William Emanuel on the five-person board—appointments that deliberately set in motion the war on unions and workers.

In a recent letter, the USW urged senators to reject Trump's renomination of Kaplan, whose term expired this summer, because of the unprecedented damage he helped inflict on American workers, who only want fair treatment on the job. The Senate voted to confirm him for another term anyway.

Our union is too familiar with the consequences of electing politicians who talk about looking out for American workers while turning a blind eye to the ways employers take advantage of a playing field unfairly tilted in favor of management.

Too many workers have already paid the price for the outcome of our last election.

The good news is that we are our own best hope to change the current direction and prevent the further erosion of our power at the bargaining table.

USW Local 105 Community Action Committee Helps Rebuild Cedar Rapids After Derecho

Sandy Conway has been active in USW Local 105 for many years. She sits on the executive board as one of the two elected guards and works as an Ultrasonic Inspector at the Davenport Works Arconic facility. Having a desire to help those in need, Sandy has been instrumental in running a fund raising program.

Sandy will tell you it can't be done alone and could only be accomplished with the support of the members of USW Local 105 and help from volunteers like Amber Hartford, Brenda Hagenmaier, Rene Tichler, Rhonda and Cory DePorter, Dave Rindler, Cindy Fuller, Nathan McMichael, Ed Warner, Bill Cargill, Helen Ptacek, Eva McMeekan and Connie Coopman. This group has had a huge impact on several local events, including charitable contributions for Arconic Christmas baskets and Quad City Homeless Veterans.

On August 10, 2020, a Derecho storm hit Iowa and surrounding states, and while several communities were hit hard by the storm, Cedar Rapids, Iowa, appears to have taken the brunt of it.

As of late August, many citizens remain homeless or without power. USW Staff Representative Stacey Andersen and many members of USW Local 11-436 at WestRock who live in Cedar Rapids have had their homes damaged.

Sandy discovered that Teamsters Local 238 of Cedar Rapids had converted their hall into a storm relief and donation center for the citizens of Cedar Rapids to find anything from bottled water to diapers and other essentials after this devastating storm.

Sandy wanted to help and reached out to a friend that saved coupons from local stores and purchased a truckload of supplies to take to Cedar Rapids. On Friday August 21, she and Amber Hartford loaded the truck, and on Saturday morning delivered the supplies to the Teamsters hall.

Everybody has a place in our union, and so many of our brothers and sisters, neighbors, friends and families need support that anyone can always find ways to contribute time, service or money for the betterment of all.



A Sister Gone Too Soon

Sister Paula K. Anderson from USW Local 560 in North Dakota passed away tragically on Thursday, June 11, 2020, after an ATV accident.

Paula began her career at Bobcat on general assembly in 1995 and eventually became lead implementer on the day shift. Paula was an active union member, participating in Women of Steel and many other union activities.

Her most memorable activity was Christmas shopping for local families in need during the holiday season each year. She regularly helped organize benefits, fun runs and other community activities and also served as trustee on the executive board for USW Local 560.

The "Paula Anderson Memorial 4-Wheeler Run" was held on September 19, 2020 in Milnor, North Dakota. T-Shirts and Can Koozies were sold for the event, and all proceeds benefit the Hospice of Red River Valley.

"Paula is someone that you could always count on! If she said she would do something, you knew it would get done," said Local 560 Women of Steel Chair Deb Carter. "She was someone I depended on a lot and she made everything look so easy. She is deeply missed for her quick wit, sarcasm, free spirit and big laugh."

Local 11228, Agco, Donate More than \$4,000 to Food Bank



Members USW Local 11228 and its Women of Steel committee partnered with Agco to conduct a raffle to benefit the Hesston Resource Center, raising \$2,020, which was matched by employer, Agco. Together, they presented a check for more than \$4,000 to the food bank, which serves the people in our community who need it most.