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# Fighting for Tires

In June, we asked USW members in Kansas to contact Sen. Pat Roberts, Sen. Jerry Moran and Rep. Steve Watkins, and ask that their congressional representatives sign a letter to stop the dumping of foreign tires in the United States.

We had to file yet another trade case because China invested in new tire plants in Korea, Taiwan, Thailand and Vietnam. This allowed the tires to be dumped again without paying the duties and provided access to the U.S. market.

The effect of actions like this puts all domestic tire producers at an unfair disadvantage and the jobs of USW members at risk of a possible closure at their facility.

Representative Higgins of New York and Representative Westerman of Arkansas, and Senator Brown and Senator Portman both of Ohio, are leading bipartisan letters to the ITC supporting the USW's petition for AD (Anti-Dumping) and CVD (Countervailing Duty) duties on Korea, Taiwan, Thailand, and Vietnam.

Even after all the calls and emails to the offices of the Kansas Representatives, they did not sign the letter to try and save jobs.

We are happy to report that the U.S. Department of Commerce initiated the case.

It must clear an initial hurdle at the U.S. International Trade Commission (ITC) for the Commerce Department to continue its investigation.



## Let's Hear from YOU!

USW@Work is published four times a year and we need the submissions for the Fall 2020 issue by September 3, 2020. Please submit them to [D11news@usw.org](mailto: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

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### ORGANIZING

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# USW REPORTER

## Coronavirus Training

Although the pandemic has made it difficult for summer educational conferences, health and safety training is still available to members through the Tony Mazzocchi Center for Health, Safety, and Environmental Education and Research (TMC). The TMC is a primarily federal grant-funded education center that provides free or low-cost training to USW members across the U.S.

Recently, the TMC collaborated with District 11 to provide Coronavirus Awareness training that covered basic information on the virus, transmission, disinfecting, workplace controls, and mental health. The training was held using a virtual platform that allowed participants to discuss challenges faced when implementing coronavirus infection control measures and resources available to members on the USW's COVID-19 website, <http://WWW.USW.ORG/COVID19>. The USW and TMC have many resources to help locals address the COVID-19 pandemic and the worksite; "A Guide for USW Locals Still at Work" contains information on the virus and can be found on the website mentioned above.

### CORONAVIRUS TRAINING OBJECTIVES

- ▶ Understanding basic facts about COVID-19.
- ▶ Assessing the risk of workplace exposure to COVID-19.
- ▶ Define critical steps in worker protection and infection control.
- ▶ Identify methods to prevent and respond to COVID-19 exposure in the workplace.

While the coronavirus has been on the forefront, it is important to remember other hazards are still present in the workplace and need to be addressed. The TMC has adapted many in-classroom trainings to a virtual platform to ensure locals have the tools necessary to make their workplaces safer.

**TONYMAZZOCCHI**  
CENTER

**USW COVID-19 WEBSITE:**  
<http://WWW.USW.ORG/COVID19>

### VIRTUAL TRAINING *opportunities*

Resiliency: Overcoming  
Difficult Situations

Incident Investigation

Triangle of Prevention  
(TOP) Awareness

Opioids and the Workplace

Hazard Mapping

Coronavirus Awareness

*If you or your local is interested  
in scheduling a training class  
or need more information,  
please contact your  
staff representative.*

*See page 4 for listings.*

### DISTRICT 11





**Throughout USW District 11, we have been impacted by COVID-19. Thank you all for everything you've done and the sacrifices you've made so far.**

Our union will be stronger in the long run because we are learning to work together and build solidarity in new ways out of necessity during the current crisis.

The USW has always been one of the best servicing unions around and has supported our members and their locals with pride through grievance handling, contract negotiation and solving everyday problems.

Despite social distancing, quarantine and lockdowns, USW members, staff and leadership found creative ways to keep some of the most important work of the union going, even during a global pandemic.

During that time, our staff still worked hard to make sure our members were properly represented and remained safe. In most cases we were not allowed to have in-person meetings, but we quickly adapted to videoconferencing and conference calls.

Bargaining via Zoom, arbitrating over video conference, sharing contract language digitally and using conference calls and other technology for meetings and trainings are just some of the ways the union is now doing business.

The USW has implemented safety protocols at all of the union's international and district offices to correspond with state regulations and CDC guidelines.

While we've tried to conduct business as close to normal as possible, there are some things we haven't been able to do. As you know by now, the 2020 USW Constitutional Convention has been postponed until 2022.

At this time, we are still planning to have our 2020 District 11 and Women Of Steel Conferences in mid-November, although we will determine by Sept. 1, 2020 if it will be safe by then to gather in large groups.

We've sadly had to cancel many other scheduled in-person trainings and workshops due to safety restrictions.

District 11 prides itself on our education programs, and we'll begin to schedule training again as soon as we're able to get a reasonable number of people and instructors in a room safely. While we consider training essential, we put the safety of our members, families and communities first.

Many of our brothers and sisters were deemed essential and have worked throughout the pandemic under constantly changing conditions as we continue to combat the virus. In industries and businesses not considered essential, many of the workers who were laid-off are now returning to work.

In District 11, about two-thirds of workers who were furloughed as a result of COVID-19 have been recalled to their jobs.

Stay strong, be safe and stand together. Our unity and solidarity have carried us through tough times in the past, and we are confident that our union is ready for whatever challenges lie ahead in 2020 and beyond.

## District 11 Welcomes 3 New Staff Members

District 11 welcomes **Rob Haynes** as a Staff Representative working from the USW office in Independence, Mo. Rob was employed at Kansas Gas in Wichita for 30 years.

He served as president of Local 13417 from 2009-2019 and as vice president and chief steward prior to that. Rob and his wife of 34 years, Kerry, have four adult children and three grandchildren.

When not at work, Rob and Kerry spend time riding on their Harley, chasing their grandkids around and letting them do things their parents could never get away with!



District 11 welcomes **Karen Stockton** as an administrative assistant in the Minneapolis office. Karen brings many years of experience working as a paralegal in private practice representing injured parties. She comes from a long line of union family members.

Karen lives in the Twin Cities and enjoys outdoor activities with her family.

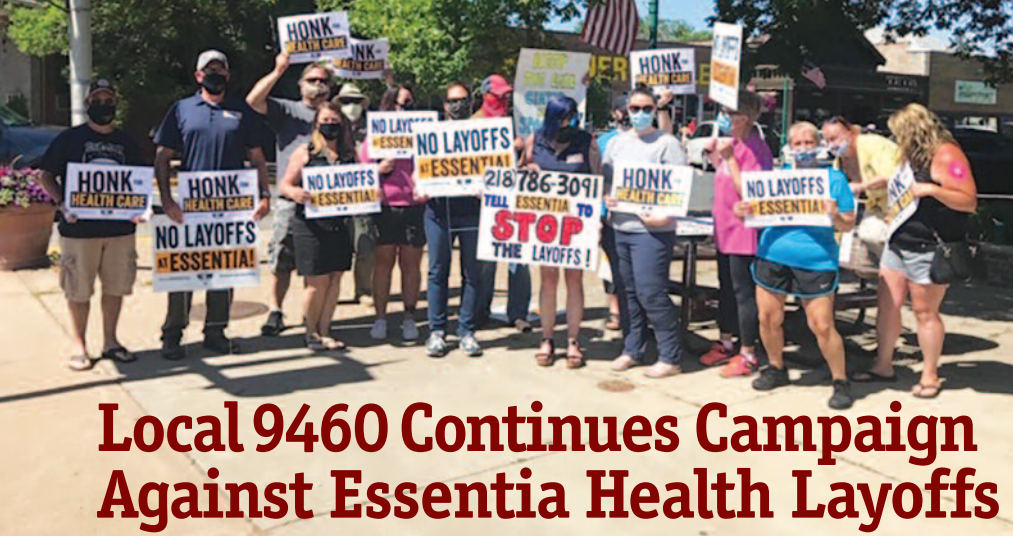


District 11 welcomes **John "Arbo" Arbogast** as a staff representative working from the USW office in Eveleth, Minn.

Arbo was employed at U.S. Steel Minntac in Mt. Iron for 25 years as an iron worker. He served as president, vice president, grievance chairman and trustee at Local 1938.

His wife Mary of 31 years is also a member of USW Local 1938, and they have two adult children.





## Local 9460 Continues Campaign Against Essentia Health Layoffs

The large health care system of the Minnesota Iron Range, that has received more than \$95 million in government coronavirus relief funds as of July, cited canceled elective surgeries as the reason behind the decision, but Local 9460 President Deanna Hughes said that move was short-sighted and wrong.

"It's unfortunate they're choosing to go down this avenue when there are so many other cost-saving options they could look at," Hughes said in a recent radio interview. "They just had their minds made up."

Local leaders have been meeting with management for several weeks to negotiate the layoffs, which made up six percent of the company's workforce. That number does not account for an additional 850 employees who were indefinitely placed on administrative leave across several locations. Essentia, unfortunately, is refusing to pay the laid-off workers' health insurance beyond July.

Members and their allies have organized several actions against these layoffs with vast community support. There are also large billboards dotting the landscape of northeast Minnesota in support of the workers, which were erected following a caravan through downtown Duluth, Minn., on June 1. The local also hosted an informational picket on June 27 in Spooner, Wis.

Local 9460 Vice President Adam Ritscher said billboards and picketing actions will continue as the union fights back against the layoffs.

"We know the company is going to be a tough challenge to get them to stop the layoffs," Ritscher said. "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."

Hughes said patients have already voiced concerns over short-staffing issues since the cuts began.

"Our communities are going to start seeing this impact more and more, because when you have reduced staff, you have reduced access to quality health care," Hughes said.

The local has been able to prevent some of the initial layoffs, but not enough, in Hughes' mind.

"What we would like to see is community members and patients reaching out to Essentia about this," she

Workers at Essentia Health, who are members of Local 9460, continue to campaign against 900 job layoffs announced by their employer in March, as the coronavirus pandemic began to spread across the United States.

said. "And I think Essentia forgets sometimes that a lot of their employees are also their patients."

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

"We're going to keep holding Essentia accountable for the millions in funds they've received from the government and keep fighting back against the remaining layoffs to make sure our folks can get back to work," Hughes said. "We just need to keep our eyes on the prize."

Local 9460 includes roughly 2,400 members in the northern Minnesota and northwest Wisconsin area. Their contract with Essentia Health is its largest.

## USW Mourns Retired Staff Representative Ernie Cooper

We regretfully report that retired District 11 Staff Representative Ernie Cooper passed away on Thursday, April 23, 2020, at 78 years of age. Our warmest thoughts are with his wife, his two daughters and their families, including four grandchildren.

Ernie began as a local union representative at Wire Rope and eventually served as president of USW Local Union 5783 in St. Joseph, Missouri.

He served union members in Missouri, Iowa, Nebraska and Kansas during his long and distinguished career with the USW, and he also served as president of the Staff Representatives Union.

