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NEWS FOR THE UNITED STEELWORKERS IN

# DISTRICT 4

## 2023 CALENDAR PACKED WITH IMPORTANT EVENTS

**H**appy New Year! I hope you all had the opportunity to spend time with your families enjoying the holidays. We now welcome 2023 with hope for good things to come. If the schedule of upcoming events is any indication, the new year is showing promise.

There are already a number of conferences scheduled. The USW Health, Safety and Environment Conference will be held in Pittsburgh from April 17-21. This is a consistently great conference. I'm always amazed at how many different classes on such a wide variety of subjects are offered. There is no question that this is the premier Health and Safety conference in the labor movement. The better educated we can become, the better chance we have to keep our members safe in the workplace.

The USW Rapid Response Legislative and Policy Conference will be held in Washington, D.C., from June 11-14. We haven't had an in-person Rapid Response conference since COVID began, so this is a long time coming and much anticipated. Though we may not have had a conference since before the pandemic, Rapid Response has continued to do good work as evidenced by all the labor-friendly legislation that has passed in the last two years.

In addition to our International events, we will be holding a few of our own in District 4. Our District 4 education conference will be held in Atlantic City, N.J., August 21-24. As you know, we did not hold a conference in 2022 because we had the International Constitutional Convention this past August. Our education conference is always a big event and we're looking forward to a good turnout.

### SAVE THE DATE

Aug. 21 - 24, 2023

Caesars  
Atlantic City

### DISTRICT 4 CONFERENCE

We will also be holding our second District 4 Rapid Response Conference in Albany, N.Y., March 20-23. Our first D4 Rapid Response Conference was held in March 2020. It was a huge success, but right after the conference ended, COVID lockdowns began and we haven't been able to hold another until now.

Those of you who attended that first conference may remember that we kicked off our lobbying effort for a bill that was conceived by our own Veteran's Committee that requires employers to display a Veteran's Benefits and Services poster in an area accessible to employees. This is to inform veterans of benefits, support and services specifically for veterans.

Through the good work of our Rapid Response network, our members continued to push for this legislation and it all came to fruition when New York Governor Kathy Hochul signed the bill into law this past Veteran's Day. It was a proud moment for District 4 and for our Rapid Response and Veteran's Committees.

As you all know, Veteran's Committees have been added to the Constitution as a mandatory committee. Just before the holidays, President Conway posted a video on the USW.org Veteran's Council page asking all the districts in the United States to follow our example and try to get similar legislation passed in all their states.

While we should be proud to have set the standard, we should not rest on our laurels. There are eight more states and Puerto Rico in District 4. We need to have this law passed everywhere in our district. This will be one item of many on our agenda at our District Rapid Response Conference in March. I hope to see as many of you there as possible.

In closing, I want to again wish you all a happy and healthy New Year. I know we'll face challenges, but we'll face them together. That is what it means to be a union.



**DEL VITALE**  
DISTRICT 4 DIRECTOR

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

**MILFORD** STEVE FINNIGAN, SUB-DISTRICT DIRECTOR

At the end of 2021, we relocated the Milford Sub-District office to 9 Industrial Road. At that time, we indicated that the reason for relocation was to enhance our training for Local Union officers and members. I believe in 2022 we accomplished that. By way of example, we offered training in safety and health, which included hazard mapping, incident investigation and the OSHA 10-hour course. Additionally, we held financial training for Local Union financial secretaries and treasurers along with trustee training. There were also multiple Next Gen sessions.

In order for our local union officers, grievance committees, shop stewards and safety and health

representatives to be empowered and knowledgeable to better represent our members, we are making plans now to offer additional training this coming year. Some of the courses we will be offering include: 1) shop steward training, to best represent our members both during investigations and the grievance process; 2) how to prepare for arbitration; 3) Civil and Human Rights; 4) FMLA and ADA; and 5) various safety and health courses, just to name a few. Please look out for training notices and make every effort to attend. I would like to wish all our members a very healthy and prosperous New Year!

**EDISON** MICHAEL L. FISHER, SUB-DISTRICT DIRECTOR

Members of Edison Sub-District 7 extended the hand of activism over the holiday season, including USW Local 4-438 Next Gen Committee members in New Brunswick, N.J., who took part in a holiday food drive. Local 4-406 members employed at Roosevelt Care Center also gave generously, providing toys and gift cards for three needy families for Christmas.

Other members of Local 4-406 who work for the New York Committee for Safety and Health (NYCOSH), and members of Local 9544 who work for the New York State Nurses Association (NYSNA), were honored for their activism in workplace health and safety.

Local union presidents in the Edison sub-district recently met in Atlantic City, N.J., to report on conditions affecting

the various occupations, industries, locations and worksites of the sub-district's members. The meeting came as a follow-up to the president's meeting earlier in the year and hopefully will become a regularly scheduled event.

We also had the privilege of attending the Multiplying Good – Jefferson Awards presentation in New York City. It was quite inspiring to hear of the charitable work of so many people around the country. We were joined by International Vice President Roxanne Brown and a number of Steelworkers who have won the Jefferson Award in the past.

We look forward to a new year full of activism and training for local union leaders in the sub-district, who represent our members' voices in the workplace.



1. At the Jefferson Awards in New York City, Staff Rep Luke Gordon, Assistant to the Director David Wasiura, Sub-District Director Mike Fisher, District 3 SOAR Member Nancy McCurrah, New Media Director Connie Mabin and Priscilla Puente of Local 13-225 In District 13.

2. Lisa Baum, Recording Secretary for USW Local 9544, accepts the NYCOSH Award for the N.Y. State Nurses Association, where she is a Health and Safety Specialist.

3. Roosevelt Nurses and members of USW Local 4-406 Catherine Culpepper-RN, Theresa Carideo-RN, Esther Moody-RN, Kristine Gary-LPN, and Pamela Smith-RN.

4. Marina Jabsky, USW Local 4-406 Unit Chair (left), and other USW members at NYCOSH accepting the Karen Silkwood Award at the annual NYCOSH Health and Safety Activist Awards.



## SYRACUSE JIM VALENTI, SUB-DISTRICT DIRECTOR

I would first like to wish everyone a healthy and prosperous new year. The Sub-District staff and local union leadership will be facing a very busy 2023. Our contract negotiation schedule for this year will be extremely taxing but we certainly will get through it together. The Syracuse Sub-District will be negotiating at least two contracts per month for the rest of the year.

As we discussed with the local union leadership at our annual President's meeting held in December, we will be utilizing our Building Power program to assist us in securing favorable contracts in these trying economic times. As we are all facing this difficult inflationary period, it is imperative that we address these economic inequities in our upcoming contract negotiations. It is also essential that we educate our new union members as to the importance of speaking with one unified voice, and approaching negotiations strategically.

The Sub-District developed an extensive union training agenda that will begin in March and will continue monthly throughout the year. These training programs will be held at the Syracuse Sub-District Training Center and will also be held at other locations if requested.

For those local unions with upcoming contract negotiations, it is strongly suggested that you send representatives to the Bargaining Strategies class. We will distribute the monthly schedule for these training sessions at our LM conference in February. This will provide advance notice to the local unions to approve the lost time to attend these classes.

As we all know, our work is never done and as soon as we put out one fire, another one pops up. I want to thank all the local union leadership and their members for their hard work, commitment, and dedication to our great union. Happy New Year to all!



## BUFFALO JIM BRIGGS, SUB-DISTRICT DIRECTOR

We wish everyone a safe, blessed and healthy New Year! Since our last newsletter, we negotiated a number of contracts that contained double-digit wage increases in the first year. We are working within a unique environment, coming out of the pandemic, and negotiating CBAs with an advantage we don't normally have.

Many of the companies where our members work continue to struggle with hiring and retaining workers, creating an exorbitant amount of overtime for the people working. As we go through this period, we need to keep safety and job practices on our minds. Too many times our members get caught in situations due to working long hours when they ultimately become fatigued and the same companies who are forcing them to work overtime then want to discipline them. If you feel fatigued or stressed, or if you feel it is unsafe for you to work some of these overtime hours, be sure to keep your union representative informed. This will offer you protection should anything happen.

It was a busy end of the year. We worked to enact "Buy American" legislation related to rock salt in New York and we got it done. The governor signed this bill into law. I would like to thank Director Del Vitale, Assistant to the Director David Wasiura, and Rapid Response Coordinator Mark McDonald, for all their work with this legislation. I

would be remiss if I didn't include the N.Y. State AFL-CIO and thank them for their assistance in making this happen, in particular Michael Neidl.

We also had the opportunity to work with the Niagara-Orleans BOCES system to mentor a high school student in their electrical program at Sumitomo Local 135L. I want to thank the company and the local for allowing this student to shadow our members, and to realize the opportunity that is available when you choose a trade over college. This student will return to the plant in the spring to complete the mentoring program and we look forward to working with the school systems more in this type of assistance to their education. I can tell you that this young man was not only impressed with what our members do on a day-to-day basis, but also with what the union does for our members at the plant.

Finally, we held a President's meeting in December, and the Sub-District staff along with the locals have committed to working in an aggressive fashion to organize new members into our union. It was encouraging to see the leadership of the locals eager to not only work on organizing but also standing ready to make a financial commitment to get our message out so that the unorganized can understand our ability to improve their quality of life and the diversity of the workers we represent. Enjoy the New Year, stay safe, and look forward to another great year!

# RAPID RESPONSE

## Your Hard Work Paid Off!

Trade Adjustment Assistance is extended and the National Labor Relations Board will receive additional funding.

Late last year, President Biden signed the Consolidated Appropriations Act of 2023, a spending bill that funds our government for the next year. *Because of your voices and our union's persistence, two critical Steelworker priorities were addressed.*

### Trade Adjustment Assistance

In the last hours of the previous Congress, we were able to get an extension of the program from September 2022 until September of this year. The extension includes \$494 million for critical worker training and is a welcome reprieve for our members who lost their jobs because of bad trade policies. Although we did not get what we wanted initially, this would have never happened without your work and is a testament to your persistence. We will continue our work towards fair trade policies into the next session.

### National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) Funding

Although it was well below what is needed, \$25 million in funding was secured that will help avoid layoffs and potentially secure additional staffing. This is a 9.5% increase to the NLRB's budget and the first increase in nine years.

### Additional USW-Supported Funding

- \$122,400,000 in funding to the International Trade Commission (ITC) to ensure bad actors are penalized when they break our trade laws.
- \$31.9 billion for shipbuilding which will directly benefit our members who build the ships, make the steel, and mine the ore.
- Additional funding for OSHA, NIOSH, and MSHA to keep workers safe on the job.
- Medicare funding for Puerto Rico that will impact our members.

### Senate Roll Call

68 voted yea, 29 nays, and three did not vote.

### House Roll Call

225 voted yea, 201 nays, one voted present, and four did not vote.

We could not have done this without you. Thank you!

**SAVE THE DATE**  
**March 20-23, 2023**  
**D4 Rapid Response Conference**  
**Albany, New York**  
Online Registration is available at this weblink:  
<http://usw.to/D423RR>

# WOMEN OF STEEL

Since November 2022, I have taken the reins of the wonderful Women of Steel program here in District 4, turning it into my new life project. Over the months I have seen and learned a lot from you, how you are full of passion, dedication and commitment in favor of women's rights in our country. I witnessed countless moments including recognitions by the United Way, community activities and meetings led by extraordinary women.

### Highlights included:

- The Western New York (WNY) WOS Regional Council was honored at the United Way Of Buffalo and Erie County, receiving their 2021 Champions of Labor Award.
- Melissa Mazarrella received the Joseph C Weber III "Think Positive...Think United Way" Award from the United Way of Greater Niagara.
- WNY Regional council members held their annual Tree Wrapping Event, proving warm clothing to those in need.
- WOS Local 900 in Maine passed out coloring books to seniors at a local senior citizen home.
- New WOS members of Local 12160 in Connecticut assisted children that lost their father in a car accident in October.
- Women of Steel WNY Regional Council Members delivered Christmas gift bags to the residents at the Gerard Pl Transitional Apartments in Buffalo, N.Y. Our sisters, along with their Locals, have been very busy the past few months collecting \$2,390 in gift cards, along with food donations, apartment kitchen essentials, bedding, diapers, ornaments, towels and washcloths, toys, jewelry, activity sets, treats, hats, and scarves, and more, for the 13 single parent families.

# EVENTOS IMPORTANTES LLENAR EL CALENDARIO 2023



DIRECTOR'S REPORT  
EN ESPAÑOL

¡Feliz Año Nuevo! Espero que todos hayan tenido la oportunidad de pasar tiempo con sus familias disfrutando de las vacaciones. Ahora damos la bienvenida al 2023 con la esperanza de que vengan cosas buenas. Si el calendario de los próximos eventos es una indicación, el nuevo año es prometedor.

Ya hay una serie de conferencias programadas. La Conferencia de Salud, Seguridad y Medio Ambiente del USW se llevará a cabo en Pittsburgh, Pensilvania, del 17 al 21 de abril. Esta es una gran conferencia consistentemente. Siempre me sorprende la cantidad de clases diferentes sobre una variedad tan amplia de temas que se ofrecen. No hay duda de que esta es la principal Conferencia de Salud y Seguridad en el movimiento obrero. Cuanto mejor educados podamos llegar a estar con respecto a la seguridad, más posibilidades tendremos de mantener a nuestros miembros seguros en el lugar de trabajo.

La Conferencia Legislativa y de Políticas de Respuesta Rápida de la USW se llevará a cabo en Washington DC del 11 al 14 de junio. No hemos tenido una Conferencia de Respuesta Rápida desde que comenzó el COVID, así que esto es algo que viene desde hace mucho tiempo y es muy esperado. Aunque es posible que no hayamos tenido una conferencia desde antes de la pandemia, Rapid Response ha seguido haciendo un buen trabajo, como lo demuestra toda la legislación favorable a los trabajadores que se ha aprobado en los últimos dos años.

Además de nuestros eventos internacionales, celebraremos algunos de los nuestros en el Distrito 4. Nuestra Conferencia de Educación del Distrito 4 se llevará a cabo en Atlantic City, New Jersey, del 21 al 25 de agosto. Como saben, no celebramos nuestra Conferencia en el 2022 porque tuvimos nuestra Convención Constitucional Internacional en agosto pasado. Nuestra Conferencia de Educación es siempre un gran evento y esperamos una buena participación.

También celebraremos nuestra segunda Conferencia de Respuesta Rápida del Distrito 4 en Albany, Nueva York, del 20 al 23 de marzo. La primera se celebró en marzo de 2020. Fue

un gran éxito, pero justo después de que terminó la conferencia, comenzaron los bloqueos de COVID y no hemos podido celebrar otra hasta ahora.

Aquellos de ustedes que asistieron a esa primera conferencia pueden recordar que iniciamos nuestro esfuerzo de cabildeo para un proyecto de ley que fue concebido por nuestro propio Comité de Veteranos que requiere que los empleadores exhiban un cartel de Beneficios y Servicios para Veteranos en un área accesible para los empleados. Esto es para informar a los veteranos de los beneficios, apoyo y servicios específicamente para veteranos.

A través del buen trabajo de nuestra red de Respuesta Rápida, nuestros miembros continuaron presionando por esta legislación y todo se concretó cuando el gobernador de Nueva York, Hochul, firmó el proyecto de ley el pasado Día de los Veteranos. Fue un momento de orgullo para el Distrito 4 y para nuestros Comités de Respuesta Rápida y de Veteranos.

Como todos ustedes saben, los Comités de Veteranos se han agregado a la Constitución como un comité obligatorio. Justo antes de las vacaciones, el presidente Conway publicó un video en la página del Consejo de Veteranos de USW.org pidiendo a todos los distritos de los Estados Unidos que sigan nuestro ejemplo y traten de aprobar una legislación similar en todos sus estados.

Si bien debemos estar orgullosos de haber establecido el estándar, no debemos dormirnos en los laureles. Hay ocho estados más y Puerto Rico en el Distrito 4. Necesitamos que esta ley se apruebe en todas partes en el Distrito 4. Este será uno de los muchos temas de nuestra agenda en nuestra Conferencia de Respuesta Rápida del Distrito en marzo. Espero ver a tantos de ustedes allí como sea posible.

Para terminar, quiero desearles nuevamente a todos un feliz y saludable Año Nuevo. Sé que enfrentaremos desafíos, pero los enfrentaremos juntos. Eso es lo que significa ser una Unión.

2023 will be a year full of challenges and wonderful experiences to live. It will be a year full of goals to set and a lot of work for our common goal. I thank all of you for your commitment and leadership always standing out for the fight for that long-awaited goal, EQUALITY. I hope this new year gives infinite blessings to each of you and your family.

MARIEL CRUZ MARTINEZ



New WOS members of Local 12160 accepting gifts from our generous staff representative to assist children that lost their father in a car accident in October.



Melissa Mazarrella received the Joseph C. Weber III "Think Positive...Think United Way" Award from the United Way of Greater Niagara.



The WNY Regional Council was honored by the United Way Of Buffalo and Erie County, receiving the 2021 Champions of Labor Award.

# VETS OF STEEL

## USW VETERANS BILL BECOMES LAW!

I am so proud to report that with everybody's hard work and dedication, New York Governor Kathy Hochul signed our Veterans bill into law! The USW Veterans Council was instrumental in creating this law which will enable military personnel, veterans and their family members easy access to information about the resources and benefits they earned through their service. This is a monumental victory for all New York State veterans. Our goal is to get similar laws passed in all District 4 states and Puerto Rico.

## VETERANS COMMITTEES ARE NOW MANDATORY FOR LOCAL UNIONS PER THE USW CONSTITUTION

USW delegates passed a resolution at the International Constitutional Convention this past August to require Local Unions to establish veterans' committees in order to raise awareness and further our commitment to encourage assistance and a greater understanding of the unique needs of veterans within our workplace.

## VETERANS DAY PARADE

The USW Veterans Council was honored to march in the Annual Veterans Day Parade at the New York State Fairgrounds. The parade is attended by hundreds of Veterans and their families – it's a great way to show our appreciation

for their service and sacrifice. The event is also a good way to spread the word about the services and support available to Veterans, as many organizations set up tables and displays about the programs they offer.

## SUPPORT FOR VETERANS

USW Local Unions from around the District are stepping up to show their support for Veterans. Local 1000 in Corning, N.Y., held their annual golf tournament and raised \$2,910.40 to donate to the Disabled American Veterans. Local 5696 Veterans Committee and Women of Steel in Boston donated \$1,000 to Veterans Inc. They also volunteered for Holiday Harvest, where they helped distribute Thanksgiving meals to over 500 needy veterans and their families. Those are just two examples of USW locals doing their part to support veterans. We'd love to hear how your Local is supporting veterans – send pictures and stories to [celdridge@usw.org](mailto:celdridge@usw.org).

## SAVE THE DATE

The annual District 4 Veterans Council meeting is July 13, 2023 in Albany, N.Y. Watch for more details in upcoming newsletters. For more information about the USW Veterans Council contact Cary Eldridge, District 4 Veterans Committee Coordinator, at 315-468-1623.



Veterans Day Parade, Syracuse, N.Y.



USW Local 5696, Boston, Mass.



USW Local 1000, Corning, N.Y.

## DISTRICT 4 SOAR

New England SOAR members, led by District SOAR Coordinator Al Polk, along with staff representatives from the Milford, Mass., sub-district, supporting Sen. Maggie Hassan's (D-NH) re-election to the U.S. Senate.





# VETERAN BENEFITS AND SERVICES

The following resources and hotlines are available at no-cost to help veterans understand their rights, protections, benefits, and accommodations:

[dol.ny.gov/veteran-benefits-and-services](http://dol.ny.gov/veteran-benefits-and-services)

## MENTAL HEALTH AND SUBSTANCE ABUSE RESOURCES

*All calls and texts are free and confidential*

### U.S. Department of Veterans Affairs Veterans Crisis

**Line:** [www.veteranscrisisline.net](http://www.veteranscrisisline.net)

Call: 988, press 1      Text: 838255

### Suicide and Crisis Lifeline: [www.veteranscrisisline.net](http://www.veteranscrisisline.net)

Call: 988      Text: 988

### Crisis Textline:

Text: 741741      Chat: [crisistextline.org](http://crisistextline.org)

### NYS Office of Mental Health (OMH):

[www.omh.ny.gov](http://www.omh.ny.gov)

### NYS Office of Addiction Services and Supports

**(OASAS):** [www.oasas.ny.gov/hopeline](http://www.oasas.ny.gov/hopeline)

Call: 1-877-8-HOPENY (467469)

Text: HOPENY (467369)

## TAX BENEFITS

### NYS Department of Tax and Finance

- Information for military personnel and veterans: [tax.ny.gov/pit/file/military\\_page.htm](http://tax.ny.gov/pit/file/military_page.htm)

- Property tax exemptions: [tax.ny.gov/pit/property/exemption/vetexempt.htm](http://tax.ny.gov/pit/property/exemption/vetexempt.htm)

## EDUCATION, WORKFORCE, AND TRAINING RESOURCES

### Veteran Readiness and Employment

**(VR&E) Program:** [www.benefits.va.gov/vocrehab](http://www.benefits.va.gov/vocrehab)

### New York State Civil Service Credits

for Veterans Program: [www.cs.ny.gov](http://www.cs.ny.gov)

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

### NYS Domestic and Sexual Violence Hotline:

Call: 800-942-6906 Text: 844-997-2121

### NYS Workplace Sexual Harassment Hotline:

Call: 1-800-HARASS-3

### NYS Department of Motor Vehicles:

- Veteran Status Designation Photo Document: [dmv.ny.gov/more-info/veteran-status-designation-photo-document](http://dmv.ny.gov/more-info/veteran-status-designation-photo-document)

- Veteran License Plate: [dmv.ny.gov/plates/military-and-veterans](http://dmv.ny.gov/plates/military-and-veterans)

## LEGAL SERVICES

**Veterans Treatment Courts (VTC):** [ww2.nycourts.gov/courts/problem\\_solving/vet/courts.shtml](http://ww2.nycourts.gov/courts/problem_solving/vet/courts.shtml)

Email: [ProblemSolving@courts.state.ny.us](mailto:ProblemSolving@courts.state.ny.us)

### NYS Defenders Association Veteran Defense Program:

[www.nysda.org/page/AboutVDP](http://www.nysda.org/page/AboutVDP)

## NEW YORK STATE DIVISION OF VETERANS' SERVICES

Website: [veterans.ny.gov](http://veterans.ny.gov)

Help Line: 1-888-838-7697

Email: [DVSInfo@veterans.ny.gov](mailto:DVSInfo@veterans.ny.gov)

Services: Legal, education, employment and volunteer, financial, health care, and more.

## NEW YORK STATE DEPARTMENT OF LABOR VETERANS' PROGRAM

Website: [dol.ny.gov/services-veterans](http://dol.ny.gov/services-veterans)

Help Line: 1-888-469-7365

Email: [Ask.Vets@labor.ny.gov](mailto:Ask.Vets@labor.ny.gov)

Services: Workforce and training resources, unemployment insurance, the Experience Counts program, and more.



Division of  
Veterans' Services

WE ARE YOUR DOL



Department  
of Labor

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**DISTRICT 4**

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# NEXT GENERATION

Your District 4 Next Gen Coordinators held Level 1 Next Gen training around the district during the week of October 23. District 4 Next Gen co-coordinators Brian Callow and Israel Torres facilitated the trainings in Edison, N.J., Milford, Mass., Syracuse, N.Y., and Buffalo, N.Y. These trainings covered labor history, district and international union structure, some fun right-to-work skits, and exciting new Next Gen activities that everybody enjoyed. Participation was great at all these sessions district-wide. Over the course of the week-long district tour, approximately 100 members participated in the training and all left eager to go back to their locals and share with their sisters and brothers what they learned. Thank you to everyone in attendance!



# CIVIL & HUMAN RIGHTS

The Civil and Human Rights Committee is one of the constitutionally-required committees for each USW local, and District 4's Civil and Human Rights Committee had the opportunity to host trainings this past year for those locals that were interested. The locals collaborated with the International Civil and Human Rights Department to bring technicians into the district to provide training on a variety of subjects, mostly covering Title VII of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, as amended, and any issues arriving out of it.

If your local is interested in Civil Rights training, please contact your Staff Representative or Civil Rights Coordinators Lowell Alexander and Mike Fisher.

Trainings are also available through the AFL-CIO Civil Rights Conference, the A. Philip Randolph Institute, the Labor Council for Latin American Advancement, the Coalition of Labor Union Women, Women of Steel and others.

## GET INVOLVED

**HEALTH, SAFETY & ENVIRONMENT**

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