

District 11
REPORTER

Volume 5/Issue 3

Summer 2019

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

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INSTALLATION

OF THE INTERNATIONAL EXECUTIVE BOARD



July 15, 2019
Pittsburgh, PA



John Shinn, International Secretary-Treasurer and **Emil Ramirez**, Director of District 11

Bob LaVenture, Director of District 12, **Emil Ramirez**, Director of District 11 and **Daniel Flippo**, Director of District 9.

Let's Hear from YOU!

USW@Work is published four times a year and we need the submissions for the Fall 2019 issue by **October 10, 2019**. 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.

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USW REPORTER



USW Local 264 Members Complete IMTAs at St. Paul Mill

Congratulations to twelve members of USW Local 264 from WestRock's St. Paul Mill for completing their Industrial Manufacturing Technician Apprenticeships (IMTA). This is a first-of-its-kind pilot program for the St. Paul Mill and has been received with much excitement.

The USW approached WestRock management in February 2017 with an opportunity to participate in a apprenticeship program designed specifically to enhance the skills of our front-line production workers. The local program is a product of a joint effort between the Wisconsin Regional Training Partnership and the Minnesota State Colleges and Universities system, with sponsorship through the USW and support from companies such as WestRock.

This 18-month program includes 2,736 hours of on-the-job training at the plant and 264 hours of classroom instruction. The IMTA program is registered am through the State of Minnesota, and each apprentice earns a Journey Worker credential upon completion. Additionally, each individual is awarded a manufacturing foundations certificate and a production technologies certificate from Pine Technical College.

WestRock's participants were chosen through a voluntary selection process and ranged from relatively new employees through veteran operators, each working in one of the plant's production areas. They represent every aspect of the manufacturing process—from handling the incoming raw materials and operating the various manufacturing processes and respective equipment to handling and shipping finished products.

Pictured left to right, back row: Jerry Musielewicz—Pine Technical College, Dennis Ryan, Choua Lee, Matt Johnson, Dan Dunn, Joe Costanzo, Robbie Bathke, David Vang, Brian Short, Travis Schultz. Front row: Heidi Braun—Pine Technical College, Leslie Philmon—MN Dept of Labor and Industry, Mike Gunderson—Mill Manager, Todd Dahlstrom—MN AFLCIO, Jerome Balsimo—WRTP, John O'Neil—USW Local 264 President. Not pictured: Ian Larson, Mark Brown, Joe Coursolle.

DISTRICT 11



2019 UPCOMING EVENTS

Charley Richardson Educational Institutes:

▶ **Ruttger's:** September 15-20



Forging Forward

On July 15, 2019, Tom Conway was installed as the eighth international president of our union. Throughout our history spanning seventy-seven years, our union has benefited from excellent leadership. During his term, retiring USW International President Leo W. Gerard moved our union forward, and under his guidance we saw the development of the union's leadership program, allowing rank and file members to learn the tools needed at the bargaining table and skills needed to be leaders in their local unions.

Leo stood up for workers not only in our union, but throughout the world. I believe there is no other labor leader who has done more for workers around the world than he has. He stood for justice for those who didn't have a voice, and each day he worked to strengthen and serve working people. His vision of being a co-founder of the Blue Green Alliance with the Sierra

Club in 2006 brought to the forefront that we can have good manufacturing and mining jobs and a clean environment at the same time. After serving the union from a shop steward, staff representative, district director, national director of Canada, USW Secretary-Treasurer and International President in a career of over fifty-three years, we all hope Leo has a long and happy retirement.

Many USW members in District 11 are already familiar with the leadership and bargaining skills of USW International President Tom Conway. In leading the negotiations for the rubber, oil, steel and aluminum industries, he has been successful in achieving settlements that improved the wages, benefits, working conditions and standards of living for our members and retirees over the years. Tom has been one of the most powerful voices for our union demanding that the government enforce trade laws to prevent

unfairly or illegally traded, subsidized and dumped foreign products from destroying good-paying American jobs. The USW will continue to be the leading union in many sectors under his leadership.

In addition to President Gerard, three other members of the International Executive Board retired on July 15, 2019, Secretary-Treasurer Stan Johnson, Vice President Carol Landry and Vice President Jon Geenen. Each of them served our union with impeccable leadership in their positions, and we offer them congratulations on their retirements. Former District 4 Director John Shinn now serves as the International Secretary-Treasurer, and former District 1 Director Dave McCall replaces Tom Conway as International Vice President of Administration. Roxanne Brown was sworn in as International Vice President At Large and Leeann Foster as International Vice President who oversees paper sector bargaining.

Supporting Secure Pensions in Washington, D.C.

On July 10, 2019, USW Local 460G's Tate Palmer from Mankato, Minn., and District 11 Rapid Response Coordinator Bob Ryan participated with about 25 other Steelworkers in Washington, D.C., meeting with members of Congress and encouraging them to support HR 397, the Butch/Lewis Act, a bill aimed to improve the security of multi-employer pensions in the future.

They visited 40 congressional offices, delivered information about the legislation and talked with staff about the bill's importance and its growing, bipartisan support. In fact, the USW delegation attended a morning Ways and Means committee hearing to discuss, amend and mark up the bill, providing a front-row seat to watch the country's legislative process at work.

Although many traveled long distances and spent a long day in the summer heat on Capitol Hill, the USW made sure that the voices of workers and their families were heard.





MINK Educational Institute Provides Wide Variety of Workshops for Local Leaders and Activists

From June 2-7, 2019, in Lake Ozark, Mo., the USW hosted its sixth-annual Charley Richardson Summer Educational Institute, also known as MINK (for Missouri, Iowa, Nebraska, and Kansas) at the Lodge of the Four Seasons.

About 135 union members from the four states participated in training sessions that included USW Labor History, Grievance Handling, Building Rapid Response, Communications/Public Speaking, Safety and Health, New Media, Civil and Human Rights, FMLA, Local Union Officer Duties and Responsibilities and Research Methods.

District 11 Director Emil Ramirez also gave an overview of news within the district to all in attendance, and we also received updates on Rapid Response, legislative issues and recent actions by the NLRB.

The week-long training ended with fourth year MINK students participating in a mock arbitration. Some played the role of management advocates, and others assumed the role of the union advocates. Of course, in the end, **THE UNION WON!**

Thanks to all members who attended and a special thanks to all the instructors who participated.

USW Leaders Participate in Mining Symposium

On June 20, 2019, former USW International President Leo W. Gerard, USW District 3 Director Steve Hunt, USW District 11 Director Emil Ramirez and former BlueGreen Alliance Executive Director David Foster participated in a symposium on the responsible mining of essential minerals for clean energy.

The symposium brought together leaders from labor, industry, non-profits, academics, business and environmental organizations to discuss and shed light on the demand and need for minerals and metals for an eventual transition to a clean energy economy.

Here in the United States, we have a long history on mining an abundant resource base. In District 11, we

represent miners in iron ore, palladium and platinum, just to name a few. There are going to be many opportunities and challenges for responsible domestic mining in the U.S.

As in any mining operation, the safety aspect should be first and foremost. The USW, as one of the largest mining unions in the U.S., understands that minerals need to be produced responsibly.



This means providing safe and stable work environments for labor, limiting the impact on the local environment and ensuring that mining operations have a net positive impact on local communities in the long run.

If these objectives are met, U.S. mining can serve as a positive example for mining operations around the world.