

# USW@Work

A Publication of the United Steelworkers

A Powerful Voice for Workers



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"It is important that we maintain strong American steel companies powered by American steelworkers. I told our steelworkers I have their backs, and I meant it. U.S. Steel has been an iconic American steel company for more than a century, and it is vital for it to remain an American steel company that is domestically owned and operated." PRESIDENT JOE BIDEN, MARCH 14, 2024

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COMMUNICATIONS STAFF

JESS KAMM BROOMELL  
Director of Communications

R.J. HUFNAGEL  
Editor

GREG COLE  
KATELYNN PFEIL  
Graphic Designers

AARON HUDSON  
Assistant Director of Communications

STEVE DIETZ  
Photographer

CHELSEY ENGEL, RYIN GAINES, TONY MONTANA, MOLLIE RELIHAN, CHEYENNE SCHOEN, JOE SMYDO, JENN WOOD, SHERRY YANG

POSTMASTER: Send address changes to: USW@Work, USW Membership Department, 60 Blvd. of the Allies, Pittsburgh, PA 15222

EMAIL: editor@usw.org  
MAIL: USW@Work  
60 Blvd of the Allies  
Pittsburgh, PA 15222

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USW@WORK  
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## Retirement Security on the Ballot this Fall

As a retired member of Local 12-01189, I am thankful that I had the USW to fight for a secure retirement. Too many Americans aren't as lucky as I was, though. They have to rely on Social Security and Medicare to help them through what they call our "golden years."

That's one of the main reasons I encourage all of my fellow retirees to vote – not just in presidential elections like the one this year, but in all local, state and national elections. This November in particular, we have an even bigger reason than usual to go to the polls. That's because the future of Medicare and Social Security, not to mention other helpful programs, is on the ballot.

Donald Trump has said over and over that cuts to Medicare and Social Security would be on the table if he's elected. Every one of Trump's budgets while in office included cuts to retirement programs.

Thankfully, the Democrats have consistently opposed such cuts. President Joe Biden took action in his first term to strengthen Medicare and wants to strengthen and protect Social Security too, so it's around for generations to come. That's the kind of leadership we need. As seniors, that's what my fellow retirees and I should be voting for this November.

So, let's never forget that our retirement security is always on the ballot. I encourage you all to head to the polls this November and continue the fight to protect it, just like we did when we were bargaining contracts.

*James Gourley  
President, SOAR Chapter 12-7  
Sweet Home, Oregon*

## Greedy Executives Part of the Problem

I was a proud union member from 1984 to 2013. I still believe strongly in unions today.

I worked in a paper mill where I endured heat and long hours and saw many jobs outsourced through the years.

Our unions have become stronger because of the leadership and encouragement of the work force. The workers know how to run mills and get the job done right. They know what it takes to make great quality products and run a successful business.

It would be great to see fewer CEOs with their huge wages sucking the profits from businesses. After Ronald Reagan, those with wages at the top increased exceedingly, and benefits to the workers decreased dramatically. It seems nobody has addressed the outlandish wages being paid to those at the top. Truly, they probably deserve a higher wage, but their high wages have been overlooked as being the problem when a business fails to see a profit.

Businesses complain that they just "can't make it" because of union members asking for a fair wage and benefits, but the money being paid to those on top is way out of touch with reality. The greed at the top that has prevailed needs to be addressed and put out in the open.

Union workers have their wages published regularly, but the same standard has never been available for CEOs and CFOs about their wages and benefits. The reality is that their wages, benefits and perks would blow the workers' minds. The worker has been the one who has to "tighten their belt" in hard times, or the threat is that they will not have a job. We all have complied through the years to make sure we did our part.

Someone needs to address the out-of-hand raises and adjustments that have increased drastically for the people at the top since Reagan. How

can their wages be justified when others have had to sacrifice so much to "save" their jobs?

*Susie Dominowski  
Local 144 Retiree, Appleton, Wis.*

## A Purpose-Driven Movement

I won't assume anything about what makes people tick. Odds are that you're different from me, but that's OK, because differences are good. They expand our perspectives, and we become closer as people.

Based on this point of view, I decided that my purpose is to help bring disparate people together under a common goal. How did I come to this conclusion? And how is it that I decided what my purpose is?

There are myriad ways to view ideas like "purpose." I don't think purpose is inherent in our existence, but I believe we have the right to assign meaning to our lives. I struggled for years with this before I realized that I hadn't exercised my right. So I chose a purpose, a meaning.

People like us build the world. Without us, it crumbles. Our time, our effort, our labor keeps things going. Unfortunately, many in power don't admit this or even care. Where better to find purpose? I will do my small part to make them care, to make them hear us.

If you're struggling, maybe you haven't chosen the right purpose. Maybe your purpose can be found in labor, in joining with those around you to ensure that those in power hear us all. You'll stumble along the way. That's OK. You'll fail. That's OK, too. In the words of Yoda, "The greatest teacher, failure is."

Join together. Stumble, fail, get up, and go at it again. It's what I did. And I've never been happier.

*Jonathan J. Lenhardt  
Local 4-955, Syracuse, N.Y.*

## STAY CONNECTED

We welcome correspondence from USW members, retirees and their families. Letters should be short and to the point. We reserve the right to edit for length. You can reach us via email at [editor@usw.org](mailto:editor@usw.org) or by mail at 60 Blvd. of the Allies, Pittsburgh, PA 15222.



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# UNBREAKABLE

# BONDS

## USW Glass and Mold Makers at Ohio Factory Fuel Economy While Producing Top-Quality Bottles

Nigel Ball

**T**om Forker has worked at the Owens-Illinois glass factory in Zanesville, Ohio, for 48 years. Over those nearly five decades, the 355 members of the four USW locals who work at the plant have become like family to him. And, in turn, six of his own family members, both children and grandchildren, have joined the work force at the plant.

The reason for Forker's long-term dedication to his job is simple and succinct: "I care," he says.

It's a sentiment that members of the four USW locals share across all corners of the 750,000-square-foot O-I facility as they put in the hard work needed to turn out 365 million clear glass bottles each year.

### 'Highest Quality'

"Customers pay for quality," said Plant Manager Ben Valis. "Everybody knows that what we make here is the highest quality."

The bottles that O-I workers make ultimately are sent out the door to be filled with some of the world's most popular wines and spirits. Those products can be found on the shelves of grocery stores, wine and spirit shops, bars and restaurants, and ultimately, in the homes of millions of consumers.

The unique, high-quality products at O-I are part of the reason the Zanesville plant is looking forward to celebrating its 100th anniversary this

Shaquala Tillery

Alyssa Bender

August, and why the USW members there take such pride in the work they do.

“For the customer to get a good bottle on the shelf, quality involves everybody in the plant,” said storeroom leader Teresa Ziemer, who said during a recent *USW@Work* visit to the plant that she was considering retirement after 45 years at the plant.

“I feel very lucky,” Ziemer said, noting the strong wages and benefits that USW leaders negotiate for the work force. “I’ve always been proud to work here.”

### Complex Process

For 5,000 years, the process of making glass has involved two basic elements: sand and heat. Over the past 100 years, workers in Zanesville have perfected that craft with some help from modern technology.

They are among the more than 9,200 USW members who produce glass containers for O-I, Ardagh, Anchor, Gallo, Omega, Galaxy and other companies.

Raw materials – silica sand, soda ash and limestone – arrive at the factory by rail and truck. Recycled glass is added to the mix, which is melted down in furnaces with temperatures topping 2,800 degrees Fahrenheit.

From computer screens in his control room perch, USW member Shawn Bonifield carefully monitors the process to ensure the correct temperature and consistency as molten glass is formed into bottles.

“I make the glass right here,” Bonifield said. “I keep a close eye on everything.”

Gobs of red-hot glass are fed into molds, where machines blow a precise amount of air into each piece to expand their interiors to specific sizes and shapes, some simple and others ornate.

From there, the bottles undergo a complex cooling process that ensures their durability. Once the bottles are cooled, members like Ziemer and others inspect and test them for quality, shape, color and other potential imperfections.

### Trade Pressures

Owens-Illinois has been an innovator in the glass industry since 1903

when company founder Michael Owens unveiled the first bottle-making machine, which led to mass production of glass bottles, said Claude Beaudin, chair of the USW’s GMP Council.

Despite the continued shift toward automation, USW members are still involved in every aspect of the glassmaking process, from the start – known as the “hot end” – to the finish, called the “cold end.”

About 15 members of Local 121T make the glass molds, while about 45 members of Local 172M work to produce the hot glass. On the cold end, 250 members of Local 178M inspect the bottles and pack them for shipping.

About 45 members of Local 105M work in maintenance across the facility to ensure the entire process keeps running smoothly.

Despite their dedication to making the best glass bottles in the world, USW glassmakers in Zanesville and elsewhere still face pressure from overseas trade.

Late last year, the U.S. Glass Producers



Robert Hayhurst

Shawn Bonifield

Roxanne Smith



Drew Wickham

Matt Mason

Jack Spankel

Coalition, a group of bottle manufacturers and workers, filed petitions with the U.S. Department of Commerce and the U.S. International Trade Commission to curb unfairly traded imports from China, Mexico and Chile.

“As a union, the USW is committed to combating unfair trade practices in glass and other industries,” Beaudin said. “These practices are designed to distort the market and destroy good jobs. American workers are the best in the world, as long as they are able to compete on a level playing field.”

### Economic Boost

In addition to making world-class bottles as they face down unfairly traded competition from abroad, USW members in Zanesville are united in their fight for fair wages and benefits at home, an effort that pays dividends for them and their families, as well as for the surrounding community, said District 1 Director Donnie Blatt.

“The success of Owens-Illinois and its dedicated union work force does more than just support a few hundred USW families in Zanesville,” Blatt said.

“Thanks to the USW, this factory provides an economic ripple effect to the entire region of central Ohio. These workers should be proud of the products they make, and of their contribution to the economy of the Buckeye State.”

### Safety a Priority

The intense heat and other potential hazards that exist at the factory make health and safety another top priority for USW members in Zanesville and across the industry.

Crew leader Bill Hollingshead said that the ability to stop work to prevent incidents is an important part of keeping members protected.

“We can shut things down if it doesn’t feel right,” he said. “It has to be an organized team effort.”

Hollingshead, who has worked for more than 35 years at O-I and done “every job in the plant,” considers himself something of a mentor to the younger union workers, making sure they have the tools and knowledge they need to carry on a century-long tradition, and to do so using health and safety systems.

As a growing number of workers near retirement age and more younger workers join the work force, that becomes even more important, he said.

“I’m able to help them to coordinate their future, so to speak,” Hollingshead said of younger members of the work force. “The biggest part of my job is keeping everything running.”

### ‘Part of a Team’

Keeping the plant running smoothly, safely and efficiently takes the support of every worker on the plant floor, said Kyle Makin, who noted it’s important to have co-workers who look out not only for the quality of the product but also for the well-being of their colleagues.

“An extra set of eyes is always best,” Makin said. “It takes a lot of patience. It’s not just a skill set.”

At its core, the health and safety of the USW members in Zanesville is rooted in union solidarity, and in the belief that each person’s job is an essential part of the whole.

“We’re all part of a team,” Hollingshead said. “Everybody wants to work together and to do quality work.”

Continuing to turn out those top-of-the-line products is the key to the future for USW glassmakers, Hollingshead said.

“I want these guys to have the same things I had, and more,” he said. “We will if we continue to push quality out.”



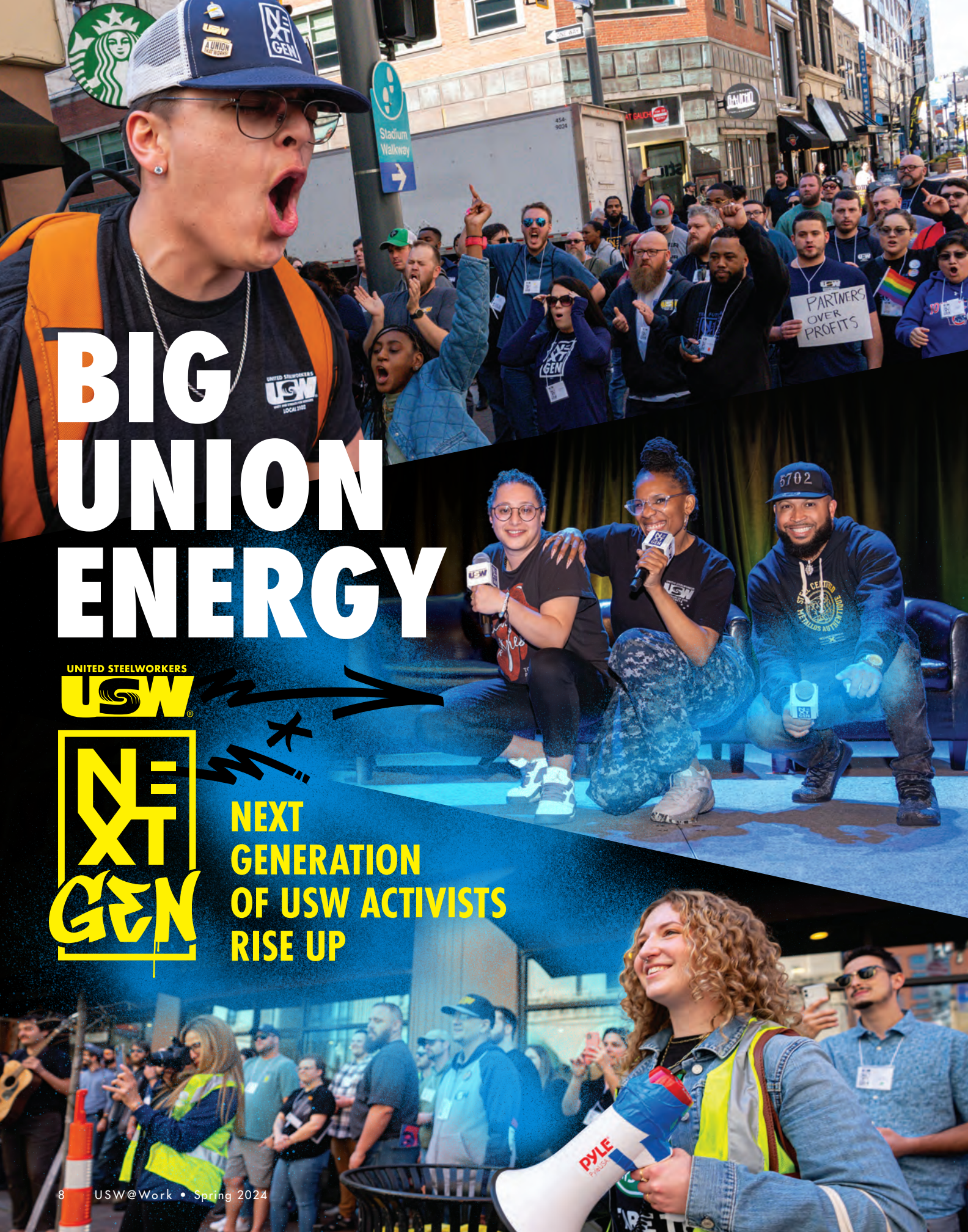
Jeremiah Honaker



(From Left to Right) – Bryan Mettler, Wendy Mettler, Andrew Williams, Tom Forker, Brandon Forker, Tina Forker, Scott Forker

Sharon Freeman





# BIG UNION ENERGY

UNITED STEELWORKERS  
**USW**

**NEXT GEN**

NEXT GENERATION OF USW ACTIVISTS RISE UP

PARTNERS OVER PROFITS

PYLE  
Pro Audio



# solidarity forever

**A** fervent spirit of solidarity swept through the streets of downtown Pittsburgh in early March as hundreds of fresh United Steelworkers activists spent four days working to amplify their engagement and to share their passion for the labor movement.

The NextGen conference, held March 3 to 7, gave young and new union activists a chance to pump each other up and gain new skills as they served on panels, learned from USW staff and member trainers in workshops, rallied in the streets to show solidarity with other unionizing workers, and gave back to the community through various service projects.

The early-morning wake-up call on the conference's first day didn't deter the crowd of rowdy Steelworkers from shaking the room to life with the sounds of cheers, applause and hit music – provided by a live DJ – at the opening ceremony.

A handful of talented young USW members served as emcees to the program, including Noah

Ledesma of Local 12-52, Ashley Seabrook of Local 8888, and Montrell Steib of Local 5702. The emcees brought energy to the stage each day of the conference, while still maintaining the spirit and purpose of all large USW gatherings – to learn, engage, and gather useful information to build solidarity with the rest of their union siblings.

District 10 Director Bernie Hall, who began his union leadership career as a founding member of the USW's NextGen committee and served as the first NextGen coordinator of his district, kicked off the conference by welcoming the new members and inspiring them to take action.

"When NextGen took off, I was 30 years old and this union put their faith in me to go and speak – not just for this union, but for the entire labor movement," said Hall, who is the first person elected to the USW International Executive Board to rise from the ranks of the NextGen arm of the union.

"The labor movement isn't a sprint – it's a marathon," said Hall. "Take your first steps now, and you'll do things beyond your wildest imagination."

## Activism Through Art

International NextGen Conference Coordinator Trisha Garcia of Local 8599 delivered the conference's keynote address, speaking on the power of ideas and the

important role creativity can play in the labor movement.

Garcia highlighted the work of Julian Hernandez of Local 183, a health care worker and NextGen member who designed and painted a colorful backdrop mural for the conference at Pittsburgh's historic Carrie Furnace on a freezing, snowy day in February.

"The idea was to use this concept of creating to tap into the vibrancy that is street art, to convey the newness and energy of NextGen," said Garcia.

Unexpectedly cold temperatures and winds created challenging conditions for Hernandez – who hails from Southern California – to use his paint cans and brushes, but Garcia and other USW staff helped Hernandez complete the project over the course of two days.

The artwork utilizes colorful, street art-style techniques and features diverse caricatures of workers in a variety of USW industries.

"It's truly been an honor being able to merge my art and activism for this conference. It's a dream come true," said Hernandez. "This piece feels like the heart and soul of what we're going to do this week."

NextGen conference-goers took photos in front of the backdrop over the course of the week.

## Learning the Ropes

Throughout the week, USW staff and member





trainers provided nearly 60 workshops for conference attendees to hone their activism skills. Workshops focused on history and labor education, labor law, bargaining and enforcing contracts, health and safety, organizing, legislative and political strategies, social justice activism, communications and more.

Paige Cisco and Andria Tipton, both members of Local 689 who work at the former Portsmouth Gaseous Diffusion Plant in Piketon, Ohio, led a course in “Community Service Safety and Health,” which highlighted the potential health and safety hazards to consider when planning community service activities for members.

Many of the principles of the course seemed simple – wearing rubber gloves when picking up trash, washing

your hands well, not mixing ammonia and bleach. But the room came to life with hands-on demonstrations that engaged members and drew upon Cisco and Tipton’s experience with handling potentially radioactive material at the Ohio nuclear site where they work.

In one activity, Cisco poured fake blood over each participant’s gloved hands to demonstrate how to safely remove rubber gloves and about the importance of properly fitting PPE. In another, participants drew images on a page with a Q-tip dipped in baking soda and water. They then smudged blackberries across the page, and the acidity in the berries reacted with the baking soda to reveal the images.

“Even if you can’t see something, it could still be a

present hazard,” explained Cisco, who began working at the Portsmouth plant as a janitor just a few years ago and is now a process operator and full-time safety representative.

In another unconventional workshop, members of the Pittsburgh Labor Choir taught people how to use union chants and music to manage attention, build morale and direct collective action. With drums, shakers and tambourines, members of the class took turns leading chants and learning the most effective ways to use music to pump up the picket line.

### Bridging the Gap

The NextGen conference provided an opportunity for longtime USW leaders and retirees, along with the newest generation of members,

to build relationships and learn from each other.

Steelworkers Organization of Active Retirees (SOAR) President Bill Pienta began his USW career in 1966 as an electrician at a steel mill. Before taking on his leadership role in SOAR, he served as president of Local 2693 and later on the International Executive Board as director of District 4.

Pienta said that the NextGen conference provided connections between younger members and more seasoned activists, both of whom have much to learn from each other.

“As I get older, I learn how much I don’t know,” Pienta said. “We have to move forward, and we have to do it together.”

Participants held a day of service on the final morning



of the conference, branching out all over the city to volunteer at nearly a dozen sites that included churches, community centers, food banks and other non-profit organizations.

While washing windows at the Kingsley Association, a community center in Pittsburgh's East Liberty neighborhood, Precious Pittman, a member of Local 8888 who helps to build submarines at the Newport News, Va. shipbuilding facility, said she came to NextGen with nearly a dozen other members of her local.

"I'm excited to see how we're bridging the gap between the older generation and the newer generation, and it's only getting better with time," said Pittman.

Zack Mainhart, co-chair of the NextGen committee

for Local 1557 at U.S. Steel's Clairton Coke Works, said he was glad to be able to build connections with some of the union's most experienced leaders, who have demonstrated that, through solidarity, workers can overcome any obstacles in their path.

"For us to be able to understand our struggles," he said, "we need to learn from them and how they navigated those situations."

### Lifetime of Activism

The final night of the conference honored AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Fred Redmond, who formerly served as the USW international vice president, with the Lifetime of Activism Award to acknowledge his investment in and support of the NextGen group of activists.

"There's nobody better to receive this award than the godfather of NextGen, Fred Redmond," said E.J. Jenkins, a NextGen activist from Local 1014 in Gary, Ind., who was honored with the Legend Award for his contributions to the labor movement that same night.

In his address to the ballroom full of young activists, Redmond highlighted their "electrifying" nature and the important role they have in organizing new workers.

"Future generations of workers are depending on you to make sure that our union remains the fighting union that we are," Redmond said.

International Vice President Roxanne Brown said she believes that fighting spirit will continue for generations to come.

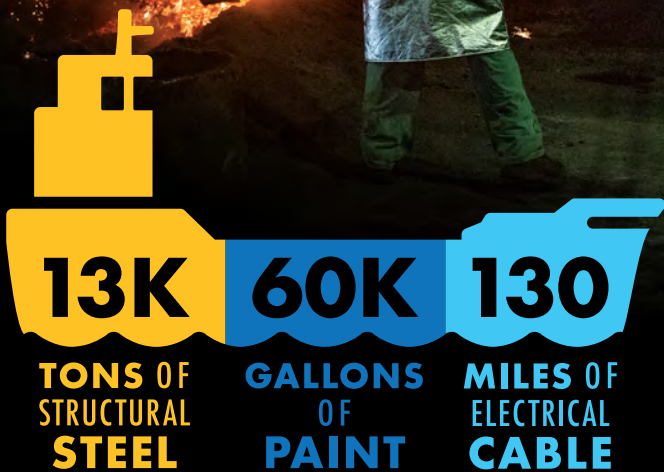
"Seeing the enthusiasm in the eyes of our young activists, I know this union will be in good hands," she said.

International President David McCall ended the conference with closing remarks to the room full of bright-eyed activists, who left energized and ready to take their newfound knowledge back to their workplaces.

"When you go home, share what you learned this week, talk to our members in the workplace about the power of our solidarity – to have a voice, to be able to succeed in protecting our members and their families," said McCall.

"There is no greater power," he said, "than what we can do together on behalf of our members and on behalf of their families."

# TRADE WATCH



*And countless other manufactured components.*

A single cargo ship can require as much as 13,000 tons of structural steel, 60,000 gallons of paint, 130 miles of electrical cable and a propeller weighing 72 tons.



**MAKE IT HERE.  
MAKE IT UNION.**

## USW LEADS COALITION

The USW led a coalition of five unions this March in filing a petition calling on the U.S. trade representative (USTR) to initiate an investigation of Chinese shipbuilding.

Over the past two decades, the People's Republic of China (PRC) has employed a number of predatory, non-market practices to massively expand its shipbuilding capacity and dominate global transportation and logistics networks. Those efforts decimated China's competitors around the world, destroying thousands of good U.S. jobs in the process.

"The United States once had nearly 30 major shipyards; now we're down to just a handful," said USW International President David McCall. "That correlates with more than 70,000 lost shipbuilding jobs, not to mention all the secondary jobs the industry supports."

### Good USW Jobs

Many of those jobs are in industries where USW members work. One commercial ship can require approximately 13,000 tons of structural steel, 60,000 gallons of paint, 130 miles of electrical cable, as well as aluminum, glass and numerous other union-made products.

"If we do not act quickly, we will soon be dependent on China not only for the products their vessels bring into our ports but also for the ships themselves," McCall said.

That dependence would have implications that go beyond the economic effects of lost jobs and shuttered

facilities. Critical supply chains, as well as U.S. national security are at stake, McCall said.

"China has surpassed the United States and now operates the world's largest navy," he said. "Rebuilding our Merchant Marine is not only essential to increasing our nation's sealift capability, it will help shore up the critical supply chains our military and commercial shipbuilding industries share, making us safer and more resilient."

### Potential Ripple Effects

Charles Spivey, president of Local 8888, observed the demise of the commercial shipbuilding industry firsthand.

Spivey joined the Newport News, Va., shipyard in the late 1970s when it was still producing tankers for companies like El Paso Natural Gas Co. and U.S. Trust Co.

But that work ended when the U.S.T. Pacific, an ultra large crude carrier built for U.S. Trust, sailed out of the shipyard in 1979. Since then, except for a brief period in the 1990s when it produced commercial ships for overseas customers, the shipyard has focused exclusively on work for the U.S. military.

Today, about 12,000 Local 8888 members make aircraft carriers and nuclear submarines for the Navy. But Spivey said they would like to resume the commercial shipbuilding work and that they have the capacity for it.

James Crawford and his co-workers at Hunt Valve in Salem, Ohio, still make valves and actuators for

# SEEKING ACTION TO REVITALIZE SHIPBUILDING

commercial ships along with parts for military vessels, but they've seen demand for commercial ship components fall over the years.

Crawford, unit president for Local 3372-07, said the trade has the potential to create new, good-paying jobs while helping to boost the nation's security.

"You can't go somewhere to fight if you're weak at home," said Crawford, part of the delegation of USW members who gathered at the U.S. Capitol in March to announce the filing of the case. "Nobody wants China to take our jobs. We need to be able to rely on American-made products."

Revitalization of the shipbuilding industry would provide new opportunities for tens of thousands of USW members across numerous supply chains.

"It would help us tremendously," said Steve Townsend, unit chair of USW Local 3261-01 at Rochester Metal Products in Rochester, Ind. "We can make just about anything having to do with iron castings. We're very versatile," said Townsend, citing hooks, brackets, water pumps and engine components as just a handful of the items he and other members of Local 3261-01 have the capacity to provide.

## Chinese Dominance

Katherine Tai, who has served in the Cabinet-level position of USTR since 2021, will review the petition and determine whether her office will launch an investigation of Chinese shipbuilding. She said she looked forward to that

process, but that it was clear China has already harmed U.S. workers with its non-market policies, which include currency manipulation, dumping of low-priced goods, and unfair subsidization of Chinese industry.

"We have seen the PRC create dependencies and vulnerabilities in multiple sectors, like steel, aluminum, solar, batteries, and critical minerals," Tai said.

As recently as the mid-1970s, U.S. shipbuilders employed more than 180,000 and launched 75 ships each year, according to the Alliance for American Manufacturing (AAM). Beginning with the Reagan administration, the government began to slash funding for shipbuilding, giving foreign competitors an edge and devastating the U.S. industry.

In 2023, McCall pointed out, China built more than 1,000 ships, while U.S. shipbuilders produced less than 10. Today, China controls about half of the world's shipbuilding capacity, a level 232 times greater than that of the United States.

## Union Coalition

Joining the USW in filing the petition were the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers, the International Brotherhood of Boilermakers, the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers and the Maritime Trades Department of the AFL-CIO. The unions filed the petition under Section 301 of the Trade Act of 1974, which provides the USTR with the authority to respond to un-

reasonable or discriminatory trade practices that burden or restrict U.S. commerce.

U.S. lawmakers also took up the cause, with U.S. Sens. Tammy Baldwin and Bob Casey sending a letter to President Joe Biden in support of the petition. Casey called China a "predatory regime."

"We have to crack down hard on this regime and hold this regime and particularly President Xi Jinping accountable for what his regime does," he said.

International Vice President Roxanne Brown said the Biden administration has already demonstrated its commitment to strengthening American manufacturing, creating good jobs and stopping unfair trade, and that rebuilding U.S. shipbuilding capacity is the next logical step.

"Labor unions and the Biden administration have worked together to establish a worker-centered trade policy and ramp up domestic manufacturing capacity through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, the Inflation Reduction Act, and the CHIPS and Science Act," said Brown. "Reviving our nation's shipbuilding industry will enable us to expand those investments, ensure a

steady supply of goods, and grow the middle class."

## Strong Support

The USW petition is asking the U.S. to force China to pay a fee each time a Chinese-built vessel enters a U.S. port. Those revenues would, in turn, be used to support American shipbuilders, creating jobs and revitalizing the industry.

American voters agree with the USW that shipbuilding must be a priority. A recent poll found 82 percent said they were concerned that the United States builds so few ships, and 74 percent supported government investments to rebuild the industry.

Scott Paul, president of the Alliance for American Manufacturing, a non-profit partnership of unions and employers, said that allowing China to continue to dominate the shipbuilding industry would have "disastrous repercussions."

"Strong measures in response to this petition are an essential first step to rebuilding America's maritime independence, and it's an urgent one," Paul said. "The Biden administration must act now to level the playing field for our shipbuilders."

"Labor unions and the Biden administration have worked together to establish a worker-centered trade policy and ramp up domestic manufacturing capacity through the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, the Inflation Reduction Act, and the CHIPS and Science Act."

International Vice President  
Roxanne Brown



## TIN MILL CASE EXPOSES FLAWS IN TRADE SYSTEM

The U.S. International Trade Commission (ITC) decided against imposing tariffs on tin mill imports in a February vote, a surprising ruling that exposed the deep flaws in the nation's outdated system of addressing unfair trade.

"USW members understand as well as anyone that without relief, foreign producers will continue to undercut our market," International President David McCall said. "It's clear that our nation urgently needs strategic reform of our broken trade system so that domestic workers and industries aren't forced to fight on a case-by-case basis to ensure they have a future."

For USW tin mill workers, that future is uncertain as a result of the ITC's negative ruling on duties. The decision led directly to the announcement by Cleveland-Cliffs to idle its tinplate production plant in Weirton, W.Va.

Lourenco Goncalves, Cleveland-Cliffs chairman, gave USW members

credit for doing everything they could to fight unfair trade and protect good jobs, noting that Cliffs and the union presented the ITC and U.S. Department of Commerce with clear evidence of unfair dumping and subsidization.

"We are forced to operate on an uneven playing field, making it impossible for us to viably produce tinplate," he said, calling the ruling "shocking."

The decision to idle the Weirton mill affects 900 workers, who, Cliffs said, would have the opportunity to relocate or receive severance packages.

Ultimately, the result of the tin mill investigation was a study in how outdated U.S. trade rules have failed workers. The playbook is simple: Foreign producers, often with illegal government subsidies, dump products in the United States at below the cost of production, deliberately distorting the U.S. market.

Anti-dumping and countervailing duties are designed to level the playing field. But too often, by the time remedies are assessed, the damage is done.

Current rules require U.S. producers to prove "injury" – often in the form of job losses or lost wages – before remedies can be implemented, so U.S. workers are at a disadvantage from the outset.

"Foreign suppliers are destroying our domestic supply chain so that American consumers of tin mill products become dependent on foreign producers," McCall said.

The U.S. Commerce Department and the ITC jointly investigate trade cases, and both agencies must make affirmative determinations for duties to be applied. Of the four current ITC commissioners, who voted 4-0 against duties, two were recommended by the Trump administration and two by the Obama administration.

In the tin mill case, the USW filed petitions in partnership with Cleveland-Cliffs in January 2023. Mark Glyptis of Local 2911, which represents workers at the Weirton mill, joined Goncalves and District 7 Director Mike Millsap to offer testimony in support of the case.

## USW CELEBRATES CONTRACT FOR TIRE WORKERS IN MEXICO

The USW in January congratulated the Independent Union of Workers of Goodyear Mexico (SITGM) in San Luis Potosí for a contract that brings members under Mexico's industry-wide agreement.

The contract increases wages, benefits and job security for the workers, who had been illegally excluded from the industry-wide contract since the plant opened in 2018.

"Fair contracts and a strong, democratically elected labor movement in Mexico benefit workers across North America," said International Vice President Emil Ramirez, who leads USW bargaining with Goodyear. "This deal will help

close the gap between USW members and their Mexican counterparts, slowing the race to the bottom."

After the company-installed CTM union was caught stealing a ballot box in a previous vote, Goodyear was forced to negotiate with the SITGM as a result of a complaint filed under the Rapid Response Labor Mechanism of the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Agreement (USMCA). This led to an election in August that the independent union won by a vote of 899-30.

"The USW thanks the members of Congress who supported Goodyear workers in Mexico over the past six years and in particular Sen. Sherrod Brown, who worked tirelessly on their behalf," said Rubber and Plastics Industry Conference

Chair Kevin Johnsen. "We also appreciate the Biden administration's hard work on this case."

The Rapid Response mechanism for resolving disputes was one of several worker-friendly reforms that Democrats in Congress demanded when the failed North American Free

Trade Agreement (NAFTA) was scrapped in 2018 and ultimately replaced with the USMCA.

The new trade agreement among the United States, Mexico and Canada took effect in 2020.


## USW OFFERS TESTIMONY TO SUPPORT PAPER BAG CASE

USW Legislative Director Roy Houseman testified on March 14 before the U.S. International Trade Commission (ITC) regarding paper shopping bag imports from Cambodia, China, Colombia, India, Malaysia, Portugal, Taiwan, Turkey, and Vietnam.

The ITC held the hearing as part of its effort to determine if the imports

materially injured the domestic industry. The Commerce Department announced preliminary affirmative determinations in the case late last year. The investigations came in response to a petition from the USW in partnership with Novolex and the Coalition for Fair Trade in Shopping Bags.

# USW CONTINUES U.S. STEEL FIGHT AS BIDEN BACKS UNION



“U.S. Steel has been an iconic American steel company for more than a century, and it is vital for it to remain an American steel company that is domestically owned and operated.”

**PRESIDENT JOE BIDEN**

## White House Says USS Must Remain ‘Domestically Owned and Operated’

**U**SW members this spring stepped up their efforts to oppose the acquisition of U.S. Steel by a Houston-based subsidiary of Japan’s Nippon Steel Corp., and found a welcome ally in that fight in President Joe Biden.

“U.S. Steel has been an iconic American steel company for more than a century, and it is vital for it to remain an American steel company that is domestically owned and operated,” the president said.

Biden added that the country needs to “maintain strong American steel companies powered by American steelworkers.”

The USW welcomed the president’s strong support, and reiterated the union’s opposition to the deal, noting the potential long-term implications for the nation’s economic and national security if the deal were to proceed, particularly given the need for steel in infrastructure, military and defense applications.

“Allowing one of our nation’s largest steel manufacturers to be purchased by a foreign-owned corporation leaves us vulnerable when it comes to meeting both our defense and critical infrastructure needs,” International President David McCall said. “The president’s statements should end the debate: U.S. Steel must remain domestically owned and operated.”

McCall said that the acquisition of U.S. Steel by a foreign subsidiary would not be in the economic and national security interests of the United States, nor would it be in the interests of USW members.

“Nippon Steel is not a qualified successor under our basic labor agreement,” McCall said. “President Biden told USW members he has our backs, and there’s no question that he meant it. We’re grateful for his unfailing support and his ongoing commitment to advancing the interests of working families and their communities.”

Nippon’s acquisition of U.S. Steel is not yet a done deal. Federal regulators, including the Committee on Foreign Investment in the United States, which includes leaders from the Departments

of Defense, State, Homeland Security and Justice, will review the bid.

As the president signaled his opposition to the proposed deal, USW leaders continued to meet with representatives from Nippon to discuss the transaction. So far, those meetings have yielded little progress.

McCall said that Nippon had not yet been fully transparent with USW members about its finances, nor had it offered meaningful commitments to accept responsibility for labor agreements and pension and retiree benefit obligations.

The USW’s current agreements with U.S. Steel include strong protections for workers and retirees, McCall said, as well as extensive financial commitments including capital expenditures, pensions, retiree health care, and other important language.

McCall and other USW leaders vowed to continue to put the future of USW members and retirees, as well as the importance of U.S. economic and national security, at the forefront of their discussions.

“It is clear that we have a long road ahead,” McCall said.

# USW URGES

# RENEWED COMMITMENT TO CIVIL RIGHTS

Members mark Black History Month, prepare for union's civil rights conference

The USW honored Black History Month in February by calling on members to continue the fight for justice, civil rights and democracy, in the workplace and beyond.

International President Dave McCall and Vice President of Human Affairs Kevin Mapp released a statement pointing out that Black History Month should be a time for workers to remember that each of them plays a role in advancing civil and human rights for all.

"We must all play our part in ensuring the survival of our values of equality, freedom, and dignity," they said. "It is vital to remember that honoring Black history also requires fighting for a just future. The labor movement must be proactive in the battle against extremist attempts to thrust our country backward in time."

## USW Conference

McCall and Mapp called on USW members to join the union's fight against extremism by attending the International Civil and Human Rights Conference, scheduled for June in Detroit.

"We encourage USW activists to get involved in securing our democracy by joining voter outreach programs, volunteering at the polls, and educating our communities about issues impacting Black workers and families," they said.

In January, as the nation was preparing to celebrate the legacy of Martin Luther King, more than 800 union activists, including USW members, gathered in Montgomery, Ala., for the AFL-CIO Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Civil and Human Rights Conference.

The event, "Our Voice, Our Ballot, Our Future," was named in honor of Dr. King's vision for collective action to safeguard the pillars of democracy.

Keynote speeches and panel discussions focused on topics including organizing the South, advocating for LGBTQ+ workers, and fighting for democracy in state legislatures. Among the speakers was Acting Secretary of Labor Julie Su, who reminded the group that American workers are fighting back in historic numbers.

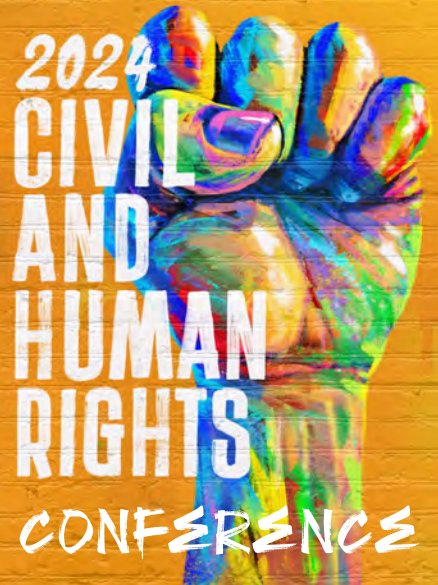
"Across our country, workers from health care to hospitality to Hollywood, teachers, delivery drivers and dock workers all demanded their fair share and said, 'We deserve to be valued,'" Su said.

Herm Santana, chair of the civil and human rights committee at Local 12775 in Indiana, said the most powerful part of the conference was touring The Legacy Museum, on the site of a cotton warehouse where enslaved Black people were forced to labor in bondage. The museum tells the story of slavery and its legacy through interactive media, first-person narratives, world-class art and exhibits.

"I saw images there that I don't think I will ever forget," Santana said. "I am a Puerto Rican man, and while my culture is known for being mixed and all-encompassing, it was a vivid reminder of why civil and human rights affects us all."

Maggie Gamboa, grievance chair for Local 7600 in California, also said she was moved by her tour of the museum, as well as a workshop on the struggles of migrant workers. As a child of immigrants, Gamboa said her time at the conference reinforced her commitment to solidarity.

"Our battles extend past your specific job, background, or history," she said. "There are so many willing to break us and keep us separated, which is why it is so important to educate our youth on the past so it doesn't get repeated."



**JUNE 9-12 | DETROIT**  
**VISIT [USW.ORG/EVENTS](https://www.usw.org/events)**

## Racial Justice Toolkit

The AFL-CIO this year released an updated version of its Toolkit on Advancing Racial Justice in the Professional Workplace, designed to help unions address issues of inequity and discrimination through collective bargaining.

The toolkit includes contract language related to pay equity, diversity in hiring, anti-harassment and anti-discrimination, addressing racial trauma, diversity committees, hair and skin tone inclusivity, loan repayment programs, and other topics.

Members who want to use the AFL-CIO's toolkit in bargaining can do so by contacting their USW staff representative, or by visiting [www.dpeaflcio.org](https://www.dpeaflcio.org) and clicking on the "Racial Justice Toolkit" tab.



— QUENCH YOUR THIRST WITH —

# Union-Made GATORADE



Bailey Carter

## WHO THEY ARE LOCAL 1999-15

## WHERE THEY ARE INDIANAPOLIS

## WHAT THEY DO PRODUCE BOTTLED GATORADE SPORTS DRINKS AND MUSCLE MILK PROTEIN SHAKES FOR PEPSICO

*#USWMade is a feature focusing on products made by USW members that consumers can purchase in stores or online.*

Follow the #USWMade hashtag on social media and check out the #USWMade playlist on YouTube to learn about other products made by USW members. If your local makes a product that you would like to feature in USW@Work, send an email to: [editor@usw.org](mailto:editor@usw.org).

For the 300 members of Local 1999-15 in Indianapolis, the Gatorade sports drink does far more than simply quench their thirst. It provides them and their families with the quality of life and sense of security that comes with USW membership.

Unit President Bailey Carter, a USW member for 18 years, said it also gives him a feeling of pride when he walks through his neighborhood and encounters young Little League, soccer or football players who ask him about the iconic beverages he helps to create.

“It’s a great feeling,” said Carter, who added that his participation in the USW’s Next Generation program has helped him convey the importance of union membership to young workers.

“We let them know that this is what the union represents, that the union can get you good pay, a good job and can help you lead a good and decent life,” he said.

Local 1999-15 also supports residents throughout the Indianapolis area by performing community service projects and making charitable donations, ensuring that the union difference is felt beyond the factory walls.

“They appreciate that,” Carter said of the local’s relationship to the community. “It’s something special.”

In addition to producing bottled Gatorade drinks of every variety, Carter and his co-workers also make Muscle Milk protein shakes for PepsiCo.

The Gatorade sports drink was first developed in the 1960s for use by student ath-

letes at the University of Florida, nicknamed the Gators. It has since become known worldwide as a fixture on sports benches, as well as for the “Gatorade Shower” traditionally delivered to victorious coaches and athletes after big wins.

While PepsiCo operates six Gatorade plants in the United States, the Indianapolis location is the only one where workers enjoy USW representation. The site supplies retailers throughout the Midwest and the East Coast.

Carter said that while he’s proud to be associated with such a popular product, he’s even prouder of his USW membership.

“Being a USW member means everything to me,” Carter said. “It’s about knowing that you’re represented by the best union in the country.”





# USW AIMS FOR GROWTH AT CORNING

Union Seeks to Follow Company Expansion in Fiber Optic, Solar Markets

Before Courtney Melvin was a member of Local 1025 in 2016, she worked in sales at a Best Buy store. The low pay and scant benefits at the non-union job made it difficult for the single mother to provide a good life for herself and her family.

“It took three years just to obtain benefits,” said Melvin, who now works at the Corning optical fiber plant in Wilmington, N.C.

“At Corning,” she said, “I got benefits on day one.”

Those benefits improved the well-being of her family, while her USW contract delivered strong wages, health and safety protections, and other life-changing improvements that union membership provides.

“In other industries, those were things that were non-negotiable,” said Melvin, who is part of the ongoing effort to encourage more workers to become USW members. “I definitely wanted to be a part of the movement so we could keep it going.”

## Cutting-Edge Future

As Corning seeks to grow its business in the fiber optic and solar energy markets, the union hopes to follow suit, working to organize new members at those facilities, particularly in the southern United States.

In Corning’s most recent annual report, CEO Wendell Weeks detailed recent declines in traditional sectors such as automobiles, televisions, smart phones and computers, while celebrating growth in the optical fiber and solar markets.

It’s that shift that is driving workers toward the USW at non-union Corning facilities focused on cutting-edge technology.

“If we want to have success as a

union now and into the future, we have to go where workers are and help them build power from the ground up,” said International Secretary-Treasurer John Shinn, who oversees bargaining for the USW’s Corning locals, including three in New York state, one in Virginia, one in North Carolina, one in Kentucky, and one in New Jersey.

Founded 173 years ago as a glass

and ceramics company, Corning has consistently focused on research and development in an effort to diversify its product lines and grow its business. Over the years, the company spun off many consumer product lines into separate companies and, beginning

in the 1970s, began focusing on specialty glass and materials used in industrial and scientific applications.

In 2007, for example, Corning developed and began manufacturing Gorilla Glass, an ultra-strong, ultra-thin glass used on iPhones, iPads and other touch-screen devices.

More recently, as smartphone and tablet sales declined and automotive production remained constrained, Corning shifted focus to the solar energy and fiber optic markets, particu-

larly at non-union plants.

Meanwhile, the Biden administration’s 2021 Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act included \$65 billion to deliver high-speed internet to the 24 million U.S. households that lack it, a major boost for exactly the kind of fiber optic cable Corning makes in Wilmington and elsewhere.

In addition, industry statistics show

that solar energy accounted for nearly half of all new electricity-generating capacity in the United States in the first three quarters of 2023. And U.S. solar capacity is expected to more than double over the next four years.

“These transitions provide us with an opportunity to grow our

union, to ensure that the jobs that are created in these emerging industries are good, community-sustaining jobs that provide a long-term future for working families,” Shinn said.

## Corning’s Shift

Still, as its business continues to grow, Corning has in recent years begun a noticeable shift. Despite a long and productive relationship with the USW at locations across the eastern United States, the company has begun to move



“If we want to have success as a union now and into the future, we have to go where workers are and help them build power from the ground up.”

International Secretary-Treasurer John Shinn

production of some of its most in-demand products to non-union shops, while stepping up its anti-union rhetoric.

Corning has seven locations in North Carolina, with only one of those – Wilmington – represented by the USW. Local 1025 President Donnetta Williams is approaching 30 years at the facility and knows firsthand what the USW could do for workers at Corning’s non-union sites.

“I knew it made a difference,” Williams said. “When I came in, my income tripled.”

Besides the obvious financial benefits, she said, the USW shines a spotlight on health and safety issues, one that does not exist at non-union facilities.

“You have to hold the company accountable, and you have to hold your facility accountable to make workers safer,” Williams said. “It’s very important to be at the table, to have a voice, and to make a change.”

## Organizing Drive

It’s that desire to have a voice that is leading other Corning workers, in North Carolina and elsewhere, to challenge the status quo and push to join the USW.

Union drives are underway at Corning facilities in Concord and Hickory, which also optical fiber; at a 6-year-old site in Durham, where workers manufacture glass for pharmaceutical packaging; and at other locations.

In addition to her role as local president, Williams serves as a vice president with the state AFL-CIO, and has seen an uptick in interest in unions from workers across the economy.

“We are wide open with activity,” Williams said of organizing activity in her state.

While North Carolina and most other southern U.S. states have so-called “right-to-work” laws designed to cripple unions, Williams, who comes from a family where both parents were union members, said the key to winning in an anti-union environment is educating workers.

“In the South, a lot of people have a negative view of unions,” she said. “They don’t understand that it’s a privilege to have a union to guide you, to stand with you, to fight for you. We try to convey that to new people.”

## Organizing the South

Williams credited her predecessor at Wilmington’s Local 1025, Wilhelmina Hardy, with prioritizing the education of new members and inspiring her to take on a leadership role.

After more than 20 years at Corning, Hardy took her leadership experience there and used it to launch a second career as a USW organizer. Now she helps workers throughout the South to understand the power of a union and to advocate for themselves through collective action.

Among the campaigns Hardy helped to lead was the successful effort last spring by 1,500 workers at Blue Bird Bus Co. in Georgia to join the USW. The victory gained national attention for its overwhelming success in the South.

The vote at Blue Bird was the largest union organizing win at a manufacturing plant in the region in 15 years, and provided inspiration for other workers throughout the South who are hungry for the benefits of union membership.

Still, Hardy said, organizing in the South, or anywhere, can be a difficult task when companies and anti-union political leaders gang up to intimidate workers.

“They have to want it. You can’t force it on any worker. They have to want change,” Hardy said. “So many workers are afraid, afraid they might lose their jobs if they even speak the word ‘union.’”

As Williams and Hardy agreed, getting workers past that fear means making sure they know what their employers are allowed – or not allowed – to do.

“Educating workers on their legal rights is a must,” Hardy said.

## Eyes on the Future

As Corning moves more production work to non-union sites, the urgency of organizing those facilities grows. In addition, Williams said, members must continue to organize internally to ensure that workers in Wilmington and elsewhere buy into the importance of their membership in the USW.

“It’s challenging, but it’s important,” Williams said. “We can do more together.”

As someone who is relatively new to Corning, Melvin spearheads her local’s internal organizing work

with entry-level employees. To help members learn about their rights and benefits, she created a Google Classroom page where members can read their contract and other documents and answer questions about what they learned.

“There is power in numbers. In order to ensure that we keep what we have now, we want to make sure that our numbers remain high,” Melvin said.

While working hard at the local level to build solidarity, Williams also collaborates with Shinn and leaders at other Corning facilities with USW contracts. Though there is not a master agreement for all Corning locations, council members coordinate bargaining and mobilization as much as they can, and members have volunteered in union organizing efforts.

“The solidarity is there,” Williams said. “We are there for our brothers and sisters.”



“In the South, a lot of people have a negative view of unions. They don’t understand that it’s a privilege to have a union to guide you, to stand with you, to fight for you. We try to convey that to new people.”

Local 1025 President Donnetta Williams

Building strength and unity among existing members, and recruiting those rank-and-file workers to organize others, will help potential members see the benefits of the union and inspire them to join the movement, Hardy said.

“If we have all the facilities in North Carolina, and if we all came together, it would be a win-win for everybody,” she said. “For the company, and for the workers.”



# THE *Benefits* OF *Teamwork*

PLAYERS IN NEW SPRING  
FOOTBALL LEAGUE GAIN  
A VOICE AS MEMBERS  
OF LOCAL 9004, UNITED  
FOOTBALL LEAGUE  
PLAYERS ASSOCIATION

UNITED STEELWORKERS  
**USW**  
UFL PLAYERS ASSOCIATION

Two years ago, when Dartez Jacobs was in his first year as a player in the United States Football League (USFL), his season ended prematurely when he suffered a pair of concussions.

Because he and his fellow USFL players did not yet have the protections of a union contract, Jacobs was forced to navigate his recovery largely on his own, without a structured support system. “Not having an established union left us at the mercy of the league to decide contract terms without player input,” Jacobs said. “I was forced to advocate for myself and walk through the injury reserve process in real time.”

## Collective Voice

Today, the players in what is now the United Football League (UFL) enjoy the protections of a collective bargaining agreement – and what Jacobs calls “an ecosystem of support” – thanks to their membership in the USW. For the past year, Jacobs has served as the president of Local 9004, known as the UFL Players Association.

Players in the 8-team spring league began training camp not long after the Super Bowl in February. The UFL is scheduled to play a 10-game regular season beginning in March, with the playoffs and league championship set to take place in June.

Ensuring that athletes had the strength of a collective voice before the new league took the field was an important priority for Jacobs.

“We would not have an opportunity to be heard had we decided not to unionize,” he said. “There aren’t many instances where athletes have the ability to self-govern and to voice their opinions during negotiations that affect their livelihood.”

Those negotiations yielded a collective bargaining agreement

in January that included incentive-based player bonuses, an increase in wages and roster sizes, a reduction in player fines, and improvements to the league's concussion protocol, among other protections.

The contract made the UFL, created from the merger of the USFL and the XFL, the first spring football league in the United States with players represented by an established labor union at the start of league operation. USFL players joined the USW after the formation of that league in 2022.

International Secretary-Treasurer John Shinn, who represents the USW on the AFL-CIO Sports Council, said being part of the USW provides the players with numerous advantages.

"Throughout the league, from training camp and through the season, players will receive better pay and have more security," Shinn said.

## Contentious Merger

Merging two leagues into one and gaining union representation for the new group of players was a challenge for Jacobs and his fellow UFLPA (Local 9004) leaders, including Vice President Devin Gray and bargaining committee members Vad Lee, Jonathan Newsome, Boogie Roberts, Brandon Wright, Kristijan Sokoli and Josh Love.

"We endured our fair share of adversity in our short operating existence, but it came as no surprise," Jacobs said. "The biggest challenge is acknowledging those who do not have the players' best interests in mind, and boldly navigating those relationships with grace."

Among the challenges the players faced was the fact that the establishment of the newly merged organization required the dissolution of a handful of established teams from the two original leagues.

"The model between both leagues had to be reset in order to sustain future financial gain," Jacobs said. "Having a union presence shifts the perspective from just being a football player and amplifies the players' voice through player-led advocacy."

## Health and Safety

Like his USW siblings across other industries, advocating for members' health and safety has been one of Jacobs' stated goals since he became

UFLPA (Local 9004) president. It's a concern he shares with his NFL counterpart, J.C. Tretter, who serves as the president of the NFL Players Association, and who was a vocal supporter of the spring league players' decision to join the USW, which he called "one of America's strongest unions."

"We would not be as successful protecting players without the power of a union," Tretter said. "It's the collective power of our union that led the way."

## History of Support

Jacobs traces his support for collective action back more than a decade, to when a 2014 lawsuit against the NCAA challenged the college sports organization's policy of limiting players' compensation to the value of their athletic scholarships.

Legal action by former teammate Martin Jenkins and Darius Robinson helped lead the way in pushing the NCAA to institute new policies that now allow athletes to monetize their personal brand and endorsements while still maintaining their eligibility to play college sports.

"I saw firsthand the importance of player advocacy," Jacobs said. "The nature of collective bargaining is similar, as it requires players to propose policies advocating for change."

Pushing for positive changes like those at the NCAA level is a cause the USW has supported since 2001, when the union established a partnership with the National College Players Association (NCPA).

With the support of the USW, the NCPA and Executive Director Ramogi Huma have fought for more than two decades to allow athletes to receive compensation for the use of their names and likenesses, to improve health and safety standards, increase athletes' freedom to transfer, and to improve medical coverage, among other changes.

Over the years, the NCPA, which includes more than 20,000 athletes at more than 150 campuses, has been successful in pushing the NCAA to make changes on all of those policies.

While the NCPA's efforts to change the NCAA's system of exploitation took years to bear fruit, Huma said the fight for fairness must continue at all

levels of the sports world.

"Seeing some of the benefits that athletes are getting now, it's definitely all worth it," said Huma, who earlier this year was included on Time magazine's list of Black leaders working to end the racial wealth gap. "If you feel like you're on the right side of history, just don't give up."

## Eyes on the Future

Giving up is not in the cards for Jacobs, an Atlanta native who has successfully taken on leadership roles everywhere he has gone, beginning with his time as a safety and team captain for the Georgia State Panthers.

After earning bachelor's and master's degrees there, he spent two seasons in the European League of Football before being selected in the 2022 USFL Draft by the New Orleans Breakers.

Jacobs served as a player representative on the union's negotiating committee prior to assuming his current role as local president. In addition, he serves as an ambassador for the Concussion Legacy Foundation, advocating for improvements to player safety.

Speaking from his own experience, Jacobs said, he is committed to making sure that no player who suffers a concussion returns to play before he is ready.

As for his fledgling football league, Jacobs foresees a bright future, as long as the league and the players are both able to prioritize the well-being of athletes.

"Expansion is the future of the UFL," he said. "There is a cost associated with development. The sustainability of this league depends on if it can exemplify player-centric business practices."



## More Information

For more information about the UFL, including team rosters, game schedules and tickets, visit [www.theufl.com](http://www.theufl.com).



# THE GRASSROOTS DIFFERENCE

## USW Activists Run – and Win – in Political Races Around the Country

When USW member Ed Price ran for a seat in the Louisiana State Senate in 2017, he faced long odds, opposing a wealthy sugar cane farmer with the deep pockets and name recognition of a well-known political family.

Price, however, had the union difference on his side. As a member of Local 620 in Gonzales, La., Price had a coalition of fellow workers ready to knock on doors, make phone calls and speak to voters one-on-one about the issues. That grassroots campaign had a significant impact, and the Democrat won his seat with 63 percent of the vote.

“We didn’t have the largest budget, but it was door-to-door, walking, knocking, talking to people,” Price said. “We probably had anywhere from 25 to 35 people walking through the neighborhood every day, knocking on doors, talking to people. That made a huge difference.”



Ed Price

### Longtime Leader

Price, who served for 26 years on his local school board before joining the legislature, credited his experience as a union negotiator with giving him the skills and knowledge to seek office. In neighboring Mississippi, that same union difference has helped Sherry Guyton Odneal hold public



Sherry Guyton Odneal

office for more than 20 years. Odneal was re-elected in November 2023 to her seat on the Lowndes County Election Commission.

Oodneal serves as financial secretary of Local 351L at the BF Goodrich plant in Tuscaloosa, Ala., as the local Women of Steel committee chair and as a member of the West Alabama Labor Council. She also lends her efforts to the USW’s Rapid Response grassroots education and mobilization program.

Besides providing a better quality of life for workers, Odneal said, the USW’s contract language on political work allows her to devote time to her second career in public service.

“If I didn’t have the union, I wouldn’t be able to hold this position,” she said. “When I see something wrong, I don’t just want to complain. I want to do something about it.”

Oodneal said she urges more of her USW colleagues to get involved in the political process for that reason, arguing that union members should put more people like themselves in office.

“We can make a big difference, getting out there, volunteering,” she said. “We want the people in office to be for working people.”

That can turn the tide on issues like health and safety, union organizing rights, wages, retirement security, health care, and other important policies, Odneal said.

“It’s not about the R or the D,” she said. “It’s about who is going to support working people.”

### ‘It Was Worth It’

Like Odneal, JoJo Burgess knows the value of one-on-one interactions

with voters. He credits grassroots politics with his election win in November making him the first Black mayor of Washington, Pa., 30 miles southwest of Pittsburgh.

Burgess, a member of Local 1557 at U.S. Steel’s Clairton Coke Works, faced long odds at the outset of his campaign. Ultimately, he defeated the incumbent mayor in the primary and won the general election by 39 votes.

“Nobody thought I could win,” Burgess said. “If I don’t knock on those doors, I don’t win that race.”

Burgess said he ran for mayor because he believed he could make the biggest impact on the local level, and he wanted to show others that they, too, had the power to change their communities.

“I wanted to let people know that they have a voice and have a say in what’s going on,” he said. “I’m not a politician, but that was a means of getting where I needed to be.”

Burgess said he was proud to be his city’s first Black mayor, but that wasn’t his goal. “I don’t want to be known as the first,” he said. “I want someone else to be known as the next.”

### Positive Role Model

The chance to set an example for his younger siblings was part of what motivated Justin Willis of Local 7-507 to seek office.

As a commissioner for Bridgeview in Cook County, near Chicago, Willis said the education he gained as a USW member played a big role in his election.



JoJo Burgess



Justin Willis

“We need to step up as leaders every chance we get,” Willis said. “Our union has a responsibility to make our communities better.”

Inspiring others and bringing them into the movement is part of being an effective leader, Willis said, whether it is in politics or in the union.

“We all have a chance to grow and learn,” he said. “The power of the tongue is mighty.”

Willis, Odneal and Burgess are just a few of the dozens of current or former elected officials with USW connections across the United States. They include Local 9 member



Kathy Wilder,

who won a write-in campaign for her Maine school board, and U.S. Rep. Chris Deluzio, who helped his fellow faculty members at the University of Pittsburgh win USW representation in 2021 before winning a seat in Congress the following year.

Those victories prove that “labor is not on defense anymore,” Deluzio said.

### ‘A Chance to Move Someone’

It was the 1967 election of the first Black mayor of Gary, Ind., Richard G. Hatcher, that inspired DeWitt Walton to get involved in politics.

Walton, who was born in Mississippi and grew up in Gary, Ind., went to work for Inland Steel in 1976 and quickly



became active in his local union and his community. He went on to serve for more than 25 years as a union organizer and USW staff member, and later served as the program director for the Pittsburgh chapter of the A. Philip Randolph Institute’s “Breaking The Chains of Poverty” workforce development program.

Walton, who witnessed violent racism in high school and college, and later saw the steel industry’s struggles of the 1980s and 1990s firsthand, said he learned early on that he needed to speak out for himself and for others. Since 2016, he has held a seat on the 15-member Allegheny County Council, the legislative body serving more than 1.2 million people in Western Pennsylvania.

“My entire life has been one where I’ve had to deal with adversity,” he said. “I knew if I wasn’t at the table and part of the process, I’d be on the menu.”

Walton said that it’s important that all USW members get involved in the electoral process, through knocking on doors, talking to voters at their work sites, making phone calls, writing letters and other avenues.

“You have a chance to move someone,” he said. “You can’t ask for a better interaction than that.”

The need for lawmakers who share workers’ values pushed DeJonaé

Shaw, a licensed vocational nurse and member of Local 7600 in California, to run for election to the California State Assembly.

Shaw said she wanted to fight for the USW’s core values of workers’ rights, good jobs and quality health care.

“We need lawmakers who understand what it’s like to be a renter or to struggle to pay the mortgage,” said Shaw. “We need lawmakers who know what it means to decide between food and the medication you need. That’s why I’ve decided to run for office and why we need other union members to do the same.”

### ‘Get Out There’

Shaw and Odneal agreed that voters should choose the candidates who will fight for the issues that are most important to them.

When it comes to issues like workers’ rights, workplace safety and other priorities, “it’s all about who holds office,” Odneal said. “It’s important for union members to get out there.”

Walton said he hoped more union workers would vote and also consider seeking political office to help him and others push a workers-first agenda.

“There’s no better organization to help you get there,” he said, “than the United Steelworkers.”



# STEELWORKERS FOR BIDEN



## USW ENDORSES PRESIDENT ★ BIDEN

### Member-Led Process Shows President Has Workers' Backs

Over the past four years, the USW surveyed thousands of members, held hundreds of town hall meetings with workers across the country, and asked candidates for public office to share their positions so members would know which candidates' priorities align with their own.

As a result of that process, the USW executive board voted in March to endorse Joe Biden for a second term.

"President Biden proved time and again during his first term that he stands with working families," said USW International President David McCall. "His vision and leadership allowed our nation to strengthen workers' access to collective bargaining, grow the middle class, and embark on a path to widespread prosperity."

Through the USW's "Your Union, Your Voice" surveys, beginning in 2020, members made their priorities clear: They want leaders who fight for good jobs, retirement security, quality, affordable health care, workers' rights, a robust manufacturing base, healthy and safe workplaces, and fair trade. Members who haven't yet responded to the survey can do so at [uswvoices.org](http://uswvoices.org).

"It's clear from the president's record, as well as members' survey responses, that he and our union share many of the same priorities," McCall said.



### Creating Good Jobs

In 2021, President Biden began delivering on those priorities right away. That summer, USW members led a nationwide effort to enact a large-scale infrastructure program with strong Buy American provisions. A few months later, Biden signed the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, unleashing \$1.2 trillion for new roads, bridges, communications networks, water, gas and electric utility systems, ports, airports and other critical needs.

"For years, other administrations promised a major infrastructure bill, but President Biden delivered it," said International Vice President Emil Ramirez. "Through the infrastructure law, the Inflation Reduction Act, the CHIPS and Science Act, and other legislation that puts working families first, he has made good on his promise to create good, union jobs and healthier communities."

The administration combined those historic investments with a worker-centered trade policy that has rebuilt the nation's supply chains, supported critical industries and promoted domestic manufacturing, creating good jobs now and well into the future. As of this spring, the administration has seen the creation of more than 14 million jobs, and unemployment sits at 3.9 percent, the longest stretch in 50 years it has been below 4 percent.

### Workers' Rights

In addition to fighting for good jobs, the president has made workers' rights a hallmark of his administra-

tion, said International Vice President Roxanne Brown.

"President Biden's leadership revitalized the Department of Labor and National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) so that they are once again fulfilling their mission to empower working people," Brown said.

Biden has filled his administration with worker-friendly appointments. Among his first acts as president, Biden appointed the first union leader to be secretary of labor in nearly half a century and fired Donald Trump's anti-worker general counsel from the NLRB.

The president has repeatedly called on Congress to pass the PRO Act, which would remove many of the unnecessary barriers workers face when joining unions and bargaining contracts. And Biden created the White House Task Force on Worker Organizing and Empowerment, which put the full weight of the entire executive branch of government behind helping workers organize and bargain good contracts.

By contrast, the prior administration repeatedly sought to limit union protections and workers' bargaining rights.

### Retirement Security

In addition to speeding the nation's recovery from the COVID crisis, Biden's American Rescue Plan also included the Butch Lewis Act, a longtime USW priority that shored up the troubled pension plans of more than a million Americans, including 120,000 USW members and retirees.





# VOTE NOV. 5

“Thanks to the president’s resolve, hundreds of thousands of workers can now look to the future with optimism rather than fear,” said International Secretary-Treasurer John Shinn.

In addition, Biden has stood firm when facing off against repeated attacks by conservatives in

Congress who want to cut Medicare and Social Security and other vital programs. In his response to the USW’s survey, the president promised that he would continue to “protect Social Security and Medicare and work with Congress to strengthen them.”



## Affordable Health Care

Under the Biden administration, more Americans have health insurance than under any other president.

In the fight for the Inflation Reduction Act, President Biden took on the powerful pharmaceutical industry, and won. His plan allowed Medicare to negotiate lower prices for some of the costliest prescription drugs, capped out-of-pocket costs, and capped the cost of insulin at \$35 for seniors. He also cut home energy costs, health insurance premiums, and the cost of many cars.

“This administration has taken steps to improve the health of our communities by helping rural health care providers stay open,” said International Vice President Kevin Mapp. “This boosts our health care work force and improves access to affordable care.”

In his response to the USW’s candi-



date questionnaire, the president promised that he would “continue to invest in the American people and fight to lower the costs of housing, child care, long-term care, and more by making the wealthy and big corporations pay their fair share and slashing wasteful spending on special interests.”

## Fight for Fair Trade

In addition to its once-in-a-lifetime infrastructure law, the administration created a Made in America Office to ensure that taxpayer dollars are spent on products made by American workers.

Biden’s choice for U.S. trade representative, Katherine Tai, has initiated a trade agenda that focuses on putting U.S. workers first and ensures them a seat at the table, rebuilds supply chains and supports vital industries.

Biden also has stood up for USW members at U.S. Steel, opposing the sale to Nippon and insisting that we must maintain a strong American industry.

“I told our steelworkers I have their backs, and I meant it,” Biden said. “U.S. Steel has been an iconic American steel company for more than a century, and it is vital for it to remain an American steel company that is domestically owned and operated.”



## Safety and Health

The Biden administration reversed the Trump administration’s focus on gutting worker safety by investing in the

Department of Labor and proposing major increases in funding for the department’s worker-protection agencies, OSHA and MSHA.

Under Biden’s watch, the Labor Department proposed a rule to better prevent worker exposure to silica dust, and another rule to prevent chemical disasters. The department is also prioritizing enforcement efforts in industries that are more prone to fires, explosions and other dangerous incidents.

“USW members and their families are safer and more secure than they were four years ago, thanks to President Biden’s leadership,” said International Vice President Luis Mendoza.

As they prepare to head to the polls this fall, McCall said, workers should consider their own priorities – from good union jobs to health care to retirement security – and choose candidates who consistently fight for them.

“From infrastructure to retirement security, international trade to safer workplaces, President Biden got the job done,” McCall said. “We’re honored to back him as he runs for a second term.”

**ELECTION DAY IS NOV. 5, 2024**



*For information on voter registration, to volunteer, to learn more about the USW’s core issues, and to access other important election-related details, visit [USWVoices.org](https://uswvoices.org).*



## MEMBERS RATIFY NEW CONTRACT AT TECNOCAP

Members of Local 152M voted in late December to ratify a 2-year collective bargaining agreement with Tecnocap that raises wages, increases pension contributions, creates safeguards for workers and provides other improvements.

The deal comes more than four years after the expiration of the previous contract that covered about 50 workers. In that time, Tecnocap, a Wheeling, W.Va., manufacturer of metal closures, committed serious violations of federal labor law, such that the National Labor Relations Board in August went so far as to condemn the company as a repeat offender.

District 8 Director Larry Ray, who represents workers in West Virginia and three other nearby states, credited the win to the strength and solidarity of the members.

“It’s clear that Tecnocap had every intention of trying to break our resolve and force a deeply concessionary contract down our throats,” Ray said. “But we remained united, and ultimately we prevailed.”

Over the course of negotiations, the union was forced to

file more than 50 unfair labor practice charges. Tecnocap’s illegal actions included unilaterally cutting employee health insurance and forcing employees to work 12-hour shifts.

“This battle was hard-fought,” Ray said. “We beat back the company’s unreasonable demands and proved once again that we are most powerful when we stand together.”

“It’s clear that Tecnocap had every intention of trying to break our resolve and force a deeply concessionary contract down our throats, but we remained united, and ultimately we prevailed. We beat back the company’s unreasonable demands and proved once again that we are most powerful when we stand together.”

**DISTRICT 8 DIRECTOR  
LARRY RAY**



The Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) in March published a final rule on the Walkaround Representative Designation Process, commonly known as the walkaround rule.

The new rule would protect the rights of workers to have representatives of their own choosing take part in OSHA inspections in the wake of health and safety incidents or complaints. The USW was a strong proponent of the new rule.

“Simply put, the OSHA walkaround rule will make American workers and workplaces safer. This is good news for all working people, both union and non-union,” said International President David McCall. “It only makes sense to allow workers to designate their own representatives in OSHA investigations. This is the same right we afford to employers, and there is no reason workers should receive different treatment. This rule is critical to the success of OSHA safety investigations, and to our efforts to make all workplaces safer.”

McCall noted that the Mine Safety and Health Administration (MSHA), under the same Labor Department umbrella as OSHA, already extends to miners the right to decide who will represent them during investigations.



# USW APPLAUDS FINAL OSHA 'WALKAROUND' RULE

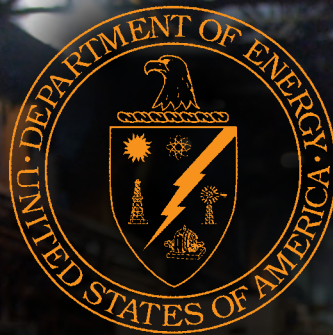
"Now, thanks to this rule, millions of other workers will be able to exercise this same power," McCall said. "The walkaround rule provides American workers with a stronger voice on the job and gives them greater confidence that workplace safety investigations will be thorough, precise and reliable."

USW Health, Safety and Environment Director Steve Sallman, who has participated in countless investigations following incidents and complaints across every industry, said the new rule would improve OSHA's ability to effectively conduct inspections.

"This is a victory for every American worker," Sallman said.

**"Simply put, the OSHA walkaround rule will make American workers and workplaces safer. This is good news for all working people, both union and non-union."**

**INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT  
DAVID McCALL**



# ENERGY DEPARTMENT INVESTS BILLIONS IN CRITICAL INDUSTRIES

The USW cheered an announcement by the U.S. Department of Energy in March that it would release up to \$6 billion in funding through the Biden administration's Inflation Reduction Act (IRA) to support carbon-reducing projects in a host of critical industries, including steel, aluminum, glass and cement.

"The USW is excited that the Biden administration is making these forward-thinking, transformative investments in our nation's manufacturing future, and doing so in a way that puts workers, families and communities first," said International President David McCall. "These investments will allow companies to make needed upgrades and reduce pollution while also helping our manufacturing base compete globally."

Several existing USW facilities are in line to receive funding, including aluminum supplier Constellium, National Cement Company of California, Heidelberg, Exxon, Owens-Illinois Glass, Gallo Glass, Libbey Glass, and U.S. Pipe.

In addition, IRA funds will be used to support new indus-

trial sites, where the USW has neutrality agreements with employers, including Century Aluminum, Sublime Systems and Brimstone. Other USW employers are also set to receive funding for projects at non-USW work sites, including Cleveland Cliffs, Eastman Chemical, Dow Chemical, BASF, International Paper, and ISP Chemicals.

"As the largest union in many of the industries these investments will support, the USW is proud to partner with companies to ensure that this funding from the Inflation Reduction Act will work to grow our nation's manufacturing capacity in critical industries while also reducing our carbon footprint," McCall said.

Anna Fendley, USW director of regulatory and state policy, said that the funding would help pave the way for more workers to enjoy the benefits of union membership.

"We look forward to working with all of the USW's partners to move these efforts forward and ensure the jobs these investments create are good, safe and community-supporting union jobs," Fendley said.

# KNOW YOUR RIGHTS



## WHAT IS A GRIEVANCE?



One of the most important benefits of union membership is that it provides workers with the power to address issues on the job.

Workers without a union have far less leverage when faced with such problems. In non-union shops, management can in many cases simply ignore workers' concerns and terminate them for almost any reason. This is known as "at-will employment."

### A Voice on the Job

In unionized workplaces, however, workers have a voice, a collective bargaining agreement, and a process for dealing with the issues they face. That often involves filing a grievance, one of the most important mechanisms workers have to fight for their rights on the job.

"The union's grievance procedure is a critical tool for union leaders," said International Vice President Roxanne Brown. "It's one of the best avenues we have to defend workers' rights and represent members on a day-to-day basis."

In a general sense, a grievance is a "cause for complaint." Most contracts outline the grievance process under articles or sections titled "Grievances," "Complaints," or "Grievance Procedure." Grievances generally are disagreements between the union and management about an issue covered by the contract. For advice on pursuing a grievance, members should contact a member of their local grievance committee, a local union officer or their staff representative.

### Types of Grievances

Every grievance procedure is unique, and union members and their grievance committee representative should carefully review their contract, including on important procedural issues. Most grievances fall into one of a few categories.

**VIOLATION OF CONTRACT LANGUAGE:** Unions and employers can bargain terms covering any conceivable issue or condition in the workplace. The contract is always the first place to look when considering whether a dispute about management's conduct creates a grievance that can be processed.

**JUST CAUSE FOR DISCIPLINE AND DISCHARGE:** Most contracts stipulate that "just cause" must exist for management to discipline or discharge a worker. While a contract might not define what "just cause" is, there are certain standards that most arbitrators will accept and that union leaders should use when pursuing this type of grievance.

**VIOLATION OF WORK RULES OR POLICIES:** Under many collective bargaining agreements, management has the right to issue rules that must be observed by the workers as a condition of employment. The union, however, may have the right to challenge these policies. Management must enforce the rules fairly and abide by them when dealing with those that are covered by them.

**VIOLATION OF MANAGEMENT RIGHTS:** While a contract's "management rights" clause can place many aspects of a company's operations directly under management's control, these rights also convey responsibilities for which management can be held accountable.

**VIOLATION OF PAST PRACTICE:** If management violates a longstanding practice that has come to be accepted by both parties, this can be grounds for a grievance. Deciding whether a past practice exists requires the union to review carefully the experience in the workplace.

*Know Your Rights is a USW@Work feature intended to help USW members learn more about their rights in the workplace and how to exercise them. For more information about grievance procedures and other important information about union members' rights, visit [education.usw.org](http://education.usw.org).*



# IN MEMORIAM

In observance of Workers Memorial Day on April 28, the United Steelworkers remember those who lost their lives at USW workplaces during the past year.

*Note: In addition to those workers listed above, countless USW members lost their lives to occupational disease during the past year. The USW mourns their loss.*

NAME	AGE	DATE OF DEATH	COMPANY
Dru Worker	25	4/25/2023	Seneca Petroleum, Lemont, Ill.
Jaquan Pugh	24	5/11/2023	International Paper Co., Pine Hill, Ala.
Joshua Vyse	40	5/14/2023	Mativ Inc., Stevens Point, Wis.
Scott Higgins	55	5/15/2023	Marathon Refining Logistics Services, Texas City, Texas
Damien Bryant	22	6/15/2023	Algoma Steel Inc., Sault Ste. Marie, Ontario
William Hackman	59	6/23/2023	Sawbrook Steel Casting, Cincinnati
Patrick W. Wing	63	7/27/2023	Cooper Tire & Rubber/Goodyear, Texarkana, Ark.
Oscar Sanders	64	10/12/2023	Scepter Inc., Bicknell, Ind.
Pierre Warford	32	10/20/2023	Evraz Rocky Mountain Steel, Pueblo, Colo.
Noah Jon Dinger	24	11/13/2023	Sibanye-Stillwater, Stillwater Mining Co., Nye, Mont.
Roderick L. Jackson	36	12/6/2023	National Grid, Waltham, Mass.
Paul J. Tracey	58	12/6/2023	National Grid, Waltham, Mass.
Todd E. Fair	56	12/8/2023	Cypress Creek Logging Ltd., Gold River, British Columbia
Andrew Stayzer	58	1/18/2024	WestRock, North Tonawanda, N.Y.
Gillis "Bonty" Millette	51	1/24/2024	Dallan LP, Thunder Bay, Ontario
Raymond Lofland	67	2/5/2024	International Paper Co., Grand Prairie, Texas
John R. May Sr.	61	3/4/2024	Optimus Steel, LLC, Beaumont, Texas
Robert Wood	37	3/17/2024	Weyerhaeuser New Bern Lumber, New Bern, N.C.
Courtney Smith	30	3/19/2024	Linett Co Inc./Tri-Arc Manufacturing, Blawnox, Pa.



## USW CALLS FOR BETTER ENFORCEMENT OF WESTRAY LAW

The USW joined workers' families and their fellow labor unions to call for a greater commitment from governments to stop workplace deaths as Canada marked the 20th anniversary of the enactment of the Westray Law on March 31.

The law amended Canada's criminal code to make it easier to impose criminal liability on corporations for workplace injuries and fatalities.

But the USW's National Director for Canada, Marty

Warren, said the law has been a failure because it is so rarely used.

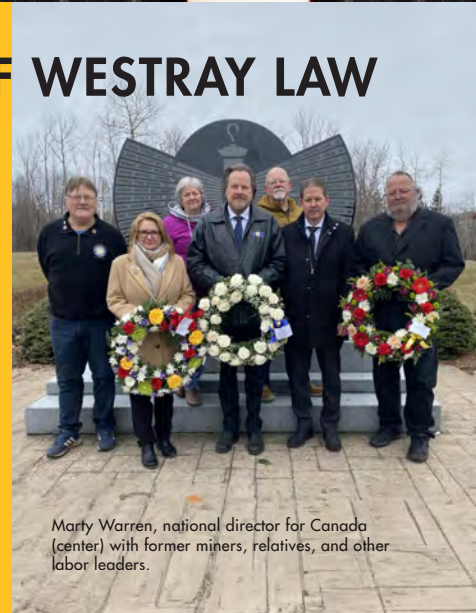
"Since the Westray Law came into effect in 2004, workplace deaths have claimed the lives of some 20,000 Canadian workers, and tens of thousands of other workers have been seriously injured or made ill on the job," Warren said. "The overwhelming majority of these workplace fatalities and injuries were preventable, yet the Westray Law has rarely been used to

prosecute employers and hold them criminally accountable. The law simply has not been enforced. This is an ongoing, 20-year travesty."

The Westray Law was named in memory of 26 coal miners who were killed in the Westray Mine explosion in Nova Scotia in 1992. The law passed following a decade-long lobbying campaign led by the USW, other unions, former Westray miners and family members of the workers killed in the mine.

*"The overwhelming majority of these workplace fatalities and injuries were preventable yet the Westray Law has rarely been used to prosecute employers and hold them criminally accountable. The law simply has not been enforced. This is an ongoing, 20-year travesty."*

Marty Warren, national director for Canada



Marty Warren, national director for Canada (center) with former miners, relatives, and other labor leaders.



# NEWS BRIEFS

## MEMBERS RATIFY HARLEY-DAVIDSON CONTRACT

USW members voted in April to ratify a new contract with Harley-Davidson covering more than 1,000 workers at two local unions in Wisconsin.

The agreement covers about 700 members of Local 209 in Milwaukee and about 370 members in Tomahawk, in the north-central area of the state.

The five-year contract includes wage increases of between 20 percent and 29 percent over the term of the agreement, as well as other gains, such as a signing bonus, doubled shift differential, improvements to the health care and retirement plans, and additional vacation and personal time off, as well as numerous key language improvements.

The contract also made major progress toward eliminating a two-tier wage system that had suppressed members' pay in recent years.

"The goal throughout bargaining has been to fight for a contract that honors the skill, dedication and sacrifice of USW members," said District 7 Director Mike Millsap, who chaired the negotiations. "Hard-working USW members are the reason this company has remained so successful, and they deserve to be compensated for that effort."



## HEALTH CARE WORKERS IN WYOMING JOIN USW

Workers at a long-term care facility in Cheyenne, Wyo., are now USW members after voting to join the union in February.

The 40 new members work at Edgewood Healthcare Sierra Hills in a variety of positions, including Registered Nurses (RN), Certified Nursing Assistants (CNA), dietary aides, housekeepers, bus drivers, and more.

Taylor Ewig, who has worked as a CNA at the facility for nine years, said the most important issues that she and her co-workers hope to address are staffing levels and wages.

"During night shift, there are only two CNAs taking care of 80 patients," Ewig said. "We also have a number of hospice patients who require a higher level of care."

Ewig said she looks forward to getting to the table and being able to talk honestly with management about how to improve conditions.

"I'm just so proud of all my co-workers for coming together and doing this," Ewig said. "We've never been so close."

## DRUMMOND TO CHAIR HEALTH CARE SECTOR BARGAINING

USW International President Dave McCall announced in February that District 11 Director Cathy Drummond would be leading bargaining in the health care sector.

Drummond, who is the first woman to serve as a district director, began her career as a coder

at the Adams Clinic in Hibbing, Minn., now owned by Essentia Health. In 1998, she helped organize her workplace, the first in a string of health care clinics in Northern Minnesota and western Wisconsin to join the USW.

She knows firsthand what it takes to be a health care worker and why it's so important for workers across the sector to have the protections of a union contract.

"One of the goals moving forward is to create a strategic bargaining plan for the sector as workers deal with a variety of challenges," said Drummond. "Staffing is obviously a big concern, along with automation and workplace violence. We need to make sure our members and staff have the resources they need to tackle these issues."

International Vice President Kevin Mapp, who currently oversees bargaining in the sector, will work with Drummond during the transition.





## NEW CONTRACT COVERS 3,000 CN RAIL WORKERS

Members of Local 2004 reached an agreement in March on a new contract with Canadian National Railway covering 3,000 workers.

The three-year deal came after months of negotiations that began in October. The contract, which covers workers who inspect, maintain and repair tracks, bridges and other

infrastructure, expired Dec. 31.

“Our members do important work in ensuring the continuing viability of our national railways,” said Cole Kramer, Local 2004 president. “I am pleased that we were able to reach an agreement that fairly compensates them for their efforts.”

## USW PRESENTS DONATION TO PEDIATRIC MEDICAL CENTER

Leaders from USW District 4 presented a \$20,000 donation in March to the GoGo Foundation at the organization’s growing pediatric health care center in Ponce, Puerto Rico.

The nonprofit GoGo Foundation established the GoGo Pediatric Institute in Ponce in 2008 with the goal of making comprehensive medical services more accessible for families in financial need.

The facility, named in honor of a local child who lost a courageous battle with cancer, provides medical care to approximately 18,000 patients each year.

Mayra Rivera, president of Local 8198, which represents municipal employees in Ponce, received a 2021 Multiplying Good award for her tireless activism on behalf of Puerto Rico’s workers

and families, particularly in the wake of the devastation of Hurricane Maria. Rivera chose to donate her \$500 Multiplying Good prize to the GoGo Foundation, a decision that caught the attention of other leaders in the district.

“Our union strives to do more than simply represent workers on the job. Our goal is to make a positive impact throughout the communities where members work and live,” said USW District 4 Director David Wasiura, whose region includes more than 1,000 workers in numerous industries across the island of Puerto Rico, as well as tens of thousands of workers in Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Rhode Island and Vermont.

## USW MEMBER JOINS D.C. ROUNDTABLE

Local 9002 Unit President Desirae Beatty joined International Vice President Roxanne Brown in February in representing the USW at the Biden administration’s Black Labor Leaders Roundtable.

The two women addressed ways in which the White House could continue to support workers and grow the middle class. They also spoke about how union jobs empower Black workers.

Beatty and her fellow 500 members work in long-term care at the Allegheny County-run Kane Community Living Centers in southwestern Pennsylvania. The meeting was a unique opportunity to speak to federal officials about how important it is for the sector to have access to unions.

“Our union helped us negotiate for our part-time workers to double their hourly wages, from \$9 to \$18 an hour, instantly,” Beatty said. “Our staff rep, Kelly Weaver, let our public employer know that two-tier wasn’t going to work anymore.”

Beatty said she was amazed that she had the opportunity to discuss labor on such a prominent platform.

“I cannot get over the fact that I’m a certified nursing assistant from North Braddock, and I had the chance to speak in the White House,” said Beatty. “I would have never had that opportunity if I weren’t involved with the union.”

## USW: OUR DIVERSITY IS OUR STRENGTH

The USW marked International Women’s Day on March 8 by recommitting the union to its ongoing efforts to empower women and female-identifying workers.

“From our inception the USW valued inclusivity,” the USW said in a public statement. “Our union constitution begins: ‘To unite in one organization, regardless of creed, color or nationality, all workmen and working women eligible for membership.’ This was a key tenant of the Steel Workers Organizing Committee (SWOC) founding principles that helped shape our union and still guides the work we do today.”

Through the Women of Steel program and through other efforts to organize, educate and engage members, the USW works to forge a path of inclusivity for women workers, the statement said.

“Our activists are everyday people who lead committees, serve in local office, raise their families, and fight for their communities,” the statement said. “This diversity in background and experience gives us strength and empowers us to negotiate contracts that provide justice and fairness to workers.”

# 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](mailto:membership@usw.org)



## NEXT GEN ACTIVISTS RISE UP

Hundreds of fresh USW activists shared their passion for the labor movement at the second-ever international Next Generation conference in March. **8**

