

# The IBEW SPARQ

A quarterly newsletter highlighting IBEW values

Vol. 3 | Issue 1 | Winter 2019

## Putting IBEW Excellence on Display

At the IBEW, professionalism means different things to different workers. But in every case, it boils down to this: When our superior training and work ethic shine through; when we show our customers and stakeholders what IBEW excellence is all about—that's professionalism.

Professionalism can be showing up for an appointment on time and explaining the problem and how you'll fix it. Or maybe it's putting in that extra effort to satisfy an upset customer when he or she reaches a call center with a problem.

On a construction site, it's putting in a full day's work for a full day's pay and getting the job done right the first time.

For railroad members, professionalism is working safely and in a way that gets passengers and cargo where it's going without disruption.

It's also working together with management in pursuit of common goals and remembering that we're often the public face of the companies we work for.

When our utility members are the first on the ground after a natural disaster, as we saw with the California wildfires and Hurricane Florence last year, we're the professionals helping those in need.

It isn't enough to be competent. Putting our best face forward and showing why we're the right choice for a job is why companies and



Photo credit: Local 1245/John Storey

customers keep coming back to us. They recognize our professionalism.

Another plus for professionalism is that non-union workers notice and want to be a part of it.

East Windsor, N.J., Local 827 recently organized workers at three Altice USA locations in the state—Newark, Lodi and Oakland—which means more than 200 new members when contracts are finalized. The Altice workers noticed the professionalism of IBEW Verizon technicians, who they'd often run into on the job.

Altice has successfully fought attempts to organize at other locations, but credit for Local 827's success goes to persistence and to the newly organized members.

Ultimately, professionalism is about perception. It's about how other people see us and, with the right attitude and a lot of hard work, we can make our IBEW professionalism pay—with higher wages, bigger jobs, better benefits and more work opportunities.



What does SPARQ mean to you? Have an idea for the newsletter? Email [theSPARQ@ibew.org](mailto:theSPARQ@ibew.org)



## Making a Noticeable Difference

Every day, IBEW's railroad members help keep passengers and freight moving safely and smoothly all across North America, and our adherence to the Code of Excellence is how we make it happen. With the Code, we reinforce our membership's reputation for bringing professionalism to every task we perform.

Here's just one example: In September, Amtrak recognized Wilmington, Del., Local 2270 member James Mort, who is part of the public announcement system testing team at the railroad's maintenance shop.

For his role in developing a way to improve the announcement systems on the service's trains, Mort was among a select group of Amtrak workers who were honored with a President's Service and Safety Award at a special ceremony in Washington, D.C.

Innovators like Mort flourish in work environments where profes-

sionalism rules, and that is something every IBEW member should aim for. Professionalism often breeds collaboration, which makes problem solving easier.

From rail yards to platforms and engines to railcars, IBEW members take care to look, act and present ourselves

in a professional manner. We show up on time, equipped and ready to get to work from the moment we clock in. By doing this, we boost customers' and managers' confidence that we'll not just do the work, but we'll do it right.

Should conflicts arise, professionalism also helps ensure that we pursue resolutions respectfully through the proper channels, rather than taking matters into our own hands.

By adhering to the IBEW Code of Excellence, no one should ever have a reason to call our professionalism into question.



## SPARQ GOES LOCAL



**The BP Oil Refinery in Whiting, Ind.**  
Gary and Hammond, Ind., Local 697 made a Code of Excellence presentation for M.J. Electric, a longtime signatory contractor in the area, to secure a bid at the local BP Oil Refinery. The presentation was a success; the contractor went on to use the Code to win the BP bid. The Code resonated, and now IBEW members at M.J. Electric are on the job at the refinery.