IBEW News

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This summer, IBEW leaders asked for your urgent help. Our apprenticeships were under attack, threatened by a nonunion contractor-backed Labor Department rule that would allow our competitors to operate second-rate training programs and present them as equal to our own.

More than 65,000 of you, joined by another quarter-million of your union brothers and sisters in other trades, responded by speaking up in defense of the top-quality training you received through the IBEW.

“We don’t yet know how the Labor Department will decide this issue, but I can tell you one thing for certain,” said International President Lonnie R. Stephen-son. “IBEW members step up when their livelihoods are under attack, and I couldn’t be more grateful for everyone who took the time to speak out in defense of our apprenticeship training and the quality tradesmen and tradeswomen it turns out each and every year.”

The deadline for submitting public comments to the DOL passed in late August, and by early October the department had processed and posted just under 200,000 of the 325,000 submissions it received.

More than 95% of the comments were from union members urging the administration to exempt the construction industry from its apprenticeship rule. Union leaders hope the overwhelming response will be enough to persuade government regulators.

In addition to their public comments, thousands of members filled out the IBEW’s own survey about their apprenticeships. Those were also compiled and sent to the Labor Department.

The stories that emerged about the IBEW’s role in the lives of its members proved impossible not to share.

“My membership in this brotherhood has meant everything to me and to my family, but I was filled with pride reading the responses from so many of you who felt the same way,” Stephen-son said.

“In this month of Thanksgiving here in the U.S., and only a month removed from the celebration in Canada, I thought it was important to take a moment to reflect on how the IBEW and the labor movement has played a role in our lives.”

Because of the nature of the apprenticeship campaign, the stories came primarily from the construction and utility branches across the United States. But IBEW leaders know the union’s effects on members’ lives extend to Canada and across each of the brotherhood’s seven branches.

“We want to give each of our sisters and brothers the opportunity to share their own IBEW story, and we know we’ll be just as moved as more of you reach out,” Stephenson said.

TELL US YOUR IBEW STORY

The IB EW CHANGED MY LIFE continued on page 6
Paying Tribute to Our Veterans

Lonnie R. Stephenson
International President

This Nov. 11 we’ll pause to remember our two nations’ veterans and their service to us and to our countries. These brave men and women have led the fight for freedom and for justice. They’ve run from one end of our country to the other, and they embody the IBEW’s values.

But I think we owe them even more. Our veterans deserve the opportunities that a brotherhood like the IBEW can provide. That’s not just first-rate training and jobs; it’s also important that we help replace that sense of solidarity and purpose they had in the military.

These men and women already know a thing or two about working with their hands, and they thrive on the kind of teamwork and camaraderie that makes a union work site tick. The hundreds of thousands of veterans who’ve been a part of this union over our 128 years have proven they’re a perfect fit.

We’re already working to make sure veterans have a path into our apprenticeships through our Veterans Electrical Entry Program (VEEP) and through our long-term partnership with Helmets to Hardhats and the AFL-CIO’s Union Veterans Council.

Late last year, we also began the process of creating an IBEW veterans committee comprised of representatives from each of the 12 districts. Some local unions had already formed committees of their own, and we want to make sure we are prioritizing veterans’ issues at the international level as well.

Our veterans committees will be focused on ways to recruit more veterans into our ranks and to recognize their service to each and every one of us. Whether it’s organizing the local Veterans Day parade, sending care packages to troops overseas or staffing a job fair booth at a nearby base, I expect these committees will lead the way for their communities’ veterans’ issues in the years to come.

The Third District recently held its first district-wide veterans committee meeting at Local 81 in Scranton, Pa. I was thrilled to hear 37 locals were represented at that meeting, and I can’t wait to see the response across every district as more of you get your committees organized.

During our recent campaign to protect union apprenticeships, which you’ll read more about in this month’s cover story, I was amazed by how many former servicemen wrote in to tell us what their IBEW membership has meant to them. I know the IBEW changed my life, and I’m proud to lead this great brotherhood that has changed so many of yours. As we grow and evolve into the IBEW of the future, our nations’ veterans will play a huge role in helping us achieve the goals we’ve set for ourselves. I hope we can change a few of their lives as well.

We Need Your Help on Pensions

You’ve heard from me a lot over the last few months about pensions, but I need your help once again. Brothers and sisters, America’s multipensioner pension system is in serious trouble. A few large plans are within five or six years of going insolvent, threatening to leave millions of working men and women without the secure retirements they work their whole lives for. We need to take action now!

The IBEW’s national plans are all in good shape, and most of our local union plans are too. But imagine a very large boulder perched at the edge of a hill. These troubled pensions are the boulder, and all of the healthy pension plans like yours and mine are sitting down below, endangered by this monstrosity we can’t control.

Over the last year, I have traveled across this nation and talked about the looming problem we face. Since July, I’ve chaired the AFL-CIO’s subcommittee on multipensioner pensions, and I’ve heard from the retirees, politicians and labor leaders who know the devastating effects a failed pension system could have on retirees, communities, unions — even the whole economy. Honestly, it keeps me up at night.

We have an opportunity to work together as part of a broader coalition within the labor movement to avoid this dangerous situation, but we need to urge the U.S. Senate to act fast. I’ve seen bad solutions proposed, like the one late last year when lawmakers wanted to tax healthy pensions like ours to reinforce the government’s insurance system. Together, we stopped that plan dead in its tracks. It made no sense to endanger healthy pensions to pay for failing ones, and we told them so.

In July, the House passed the best chance we’ve got to avoid failure: the Rehabilitation for Multiemployer Pensions Act, or the “Buch Lewis Act” for short. To put it simply, it’s a loan program for troubled plans that won’t end up costing taxpayers a dime. Sen. Sherrod Brown introduced the bill in the Senate — SB 2254 — but now we’re running out of time. The Senate goes home for the holidays in just over a month and no one believes there’s any chance for this important legislation if it doesn’t get done in the next six weeks.

That’s where you all come in. Politicians need to hear from you! Whether you’ve answered the call before or not, we need you — Republican or Democrat — to call your senators and demand that they take action on the Buch Lewis Act. Together, let’s make sure congress hears our voices loud and clear!

Visit senate.gov/senators/contact or call 202-224-3121 to find your senator and let them know we need them to act. This issue is too important to sit on the sidelines.

Veterans Are A Perfect Fit

I enjoyed reading your “VEEP” article [in September’s Electrical Worker] and learning about the I.O.’s commitment to hiring veterans for local apprenticeships. The military’s weapons systems require advanced technology training to set up, operate and maintain. This knowledge, in conjunction with NECA/IBEW training programs, will benefit the industry, especially in control installation and programming.

Combine that with a motivated work ethic and it’s a win-win situation for the veterans and the contractors. I proudly served in the U.S. Navy as a radarman during Vietnam, and I had a successful career with Local 697.

Al Kercinik, Local 697 retiree
Gary and Hammond, Ind.

Thanks for the Hospitality

This is a letter to acknowledge the brothers and sisters of Local 229 who worked for the temporary power crew at Cabine’s York 2 Energy Center in Peach Bottom Township, Pa. I would like to thank them all for treating an older traveler in a professional and respectful manner.

Special thanks to supervisors Damin, Steve and Tommy. You could not work for better people. It’s nice to know there are locals that treat older members in this manner.

Bruce Fair, Local 24 member
Baltimore

Elections Have Consequences

Responding to “Anti-Worker Lawyer Eugene Scalia confirmed as Labor Secretary” [also on Page 20 of this issue]:

It’s a sad day for labor unions. We must fight for our rights over and over. We must vote these people out of office. Register and vote in your next election.

Lannie Sanders, Local 532 member
Billings, Mont.

Hard-Fought, Hard-Won Benefits

Responding to International Secretary-Treasurer Kenneth W. Cooper’s column in the September Electrical Worker:

I am a 48-year member, Local 26, retired eight years and so thankful for my pension and health care. Just had two surgeries and my health care was great. I am so thankful that I worked union.

Anthony Long, Local 26 retiree
Washington, D.C.

Rising Support, Rising Tide

Responding to “Gallup Says Union Support is at a Near Five-Decade High” on IBEW.org:

People may be realizing how beneficial organized labor is. We can provide a proper installation but most important is a safe install. This is due to our training and apprenticeship.

Dan Siemek, Local 701 member
Lisle, Ill.

Quality, Through and Through

Responding to “All in the Family: Trayer Workers Put ‘Rolls-Royce’ Switchgear in Line- man’s Hands” [also in last month’s Electrical Worker]:

Trayer makes great switches. We’ve installed them the past few years and have had no issues at all. You can tell by the craftsmanship that these switches are union made. Keep up the good work, guys!

Jody Vaughn, Local 1049 member
Long Island, N.Y.
We Stand Together: 500 California Municipal Workers Vote to Join the IBEW

More than 500 Long Beach, Calif., municipal workers are newly represented by Diamond Bar Local 47 after a multi-year effort to join the IBEW. The members of the Association of Long Beach Employees chose in July to affiliate with Local 47 by a nearly 95% vote. That same day, nearly half of the workers who had not been paying dues but were represented by ALBE, nearly 50 in all, signed cards to become full members of the IBEW. Today, more than 90% of the unit are members of the IBEW, up from a low of 65% after the Supreme Court’s Janus ruling made every public workplace in the U.S. a right-to-work shop. “People are willing to pay for it if they feel like they are getting good representation,” said Mike Clark, president of ALBE and senior equipment operator for the Long Beach municipal utility. “In the association, we were only getting so far, and people weren’t getting what they need.”

ALBE had been an independent employee association, unaffiliated with the AFL-CIO, representing workers in 11 departments including gas, water, sewer, street lighting, public works, fleet and general maintenance as well as at the harbor and the port. They’d hired a law firm to handle grievances and negotiations, but only part-time, and the association wasn’t developing relationships with the city, the mayor and the city council. “We did the best we could, but in the next negotiations, the city was going to eat us up,” Clark said. “Without those connections, we became an adversary.”

Clark developed a relationship with Local 47 assistant business manager Dick Reed years back, when Reed was president of Los Angeles Local 11. But it wasn’t until this spring that the association’s leaders were in position to make the final case to the membership. They reached out to Ninth District International Vice President John O’Rourke, who decided that Local 47 was the logical future home for ALBE because, in addition to its thousands of utility members, it represents public workers in nearly a half-dozen municipalities, including Anaheim, Banning, Big Bear, Vernon and Riverside. Plus, business manager and International Executive Council member Pat Lavin has,

“Our associations take note when people come to us, but let’s not think they didn’t look around at other groups,” O’Rourke said. “Dick is the consummate organizer, and I give all credit to Pat for bringing this team together and bringing this home.”

But the past record bringing independent associations into the IBEW was no guarantee of success. ALBE may be small, but it was theirs, Clark said. Not every member of the ALBE leadership was convinced at first about the wisdom of affiliating with the IBEW. “Other associations take note when people come to us, but let’s not think they didn’t look around at other groups,” O’Rourke said. “Dick is the consummate organizer, and I give all credit to Pat for bringing this team together and bringing this home.”

Clark said even his father, a now-retired lifelong member of Operating Engineers Local 12, supported the decision to get back to the table. “Post-Janus, a lot of these associations are looking for help. They see how strong we are as an organization, and they are looking for someone who will stand with them, who has the structure and ability to meet their needs and help them with internal organizing,” he said. “If we were to be full IBEW members and dissolve ALBE now, the city would see it as a decertification and push negotiations for eight months to a year.”

Clark said they have been contacted by other independent employee associations since the election results were announced. There are more than 5 million people in independent associations in the U.S. and more than 200,000 in California alone. O’Rourke said he sees a tremendous opportunity. “We have the time, the energy and the expertise to be formidable counterweights to the city itself.”

When the election results were announced, Clark, Reed, O’Rourke and Lavin all said they have been contacted by other independent employee associations since the election results were announced. There are more than 5 million people in independent associations in the U.S. and more than 200,000 in California alone. O’Rourke said he sees a tremendous opportunity. “We have the time, the energy and the expertise to be formidable counterweights to the city itself.”

Finally, Reed said, Local 47 and the IBEW in California can’t be intimidated in negotiations for a simple reason: “Our negotiators can’t be fired by the city because they don’t work there,” he said. “We have the time, the energy and the expertise to be formidable counterweights to the city itself.”

Clark said even his father, a now-retired lifelong member of Operating Engineers Local 12, supported the decision to go with the IBEW. “He said ‘You can’t go wrong with the IBEW. They get us every time we have a fight,’” Clark said. Under the four-year affiliation agreement signed between ALBE and the IBEW, 99.5% of dues go to the IBEW, and ALBE itself can be dissolved at any time during the duration of the agreement. But, while contract negotiations are underway with the city, ALBE will remain.

“If we were to be full IBEW members and dissolve ALBE now, the city would see it as a decertification and push negotiations for eight months to a year,” Clark said. “They are always looking for a reason to slow things down.”

Clark, Reed, O’Rourke and Lavin all said they have been contacted by other independent employee associations since the election results were announced. There are more than 5 million people in independent associations in the U.S. and more than 200,000 in California alone. O’Rourke said he sees a tremendous opportunity. “Post-Janus, a lot of these associations are looking for help. They see how strong we are as an organization, and they are looking for someone who will stand with them, who has the structure and ability to meet their needs and help them with internal organizing,” he said. “If we want to get back to a million members, every opportunity needs to be chased.”

For Clark, one of the best parts of joining the IBEW was being given the choice. “It was actually really nice to pick a union, the one that was the best for our group,” Clark said. “And of course, go with the strongest one.”
New Jersey Members Help Finally Make ‘Dream’ Mall a Reality

One of the largest entertainment and retail complexes on the planet opened its doors five miles west of New York City last month after decades of planning and delays and multiple changes in ownership. There through it all, hundreds of members of Jersey City, N.J., Local 164, are finally ready to share their hard work with the world.

“We’ve had at least 300 electricians onsite working three shifts round the clock for the last two and a half years.”
—Jersey City, N.J., Local 164 Business Manager Daniel Gumble

“We’ve been a part of conversations about development of the land ever since the late 1990s,” said Local 164 Business Manager Daniel Gumble. “We’re excited to have been a part of bringing this massive project across the finish line.”

The plan all along has been to build some sort of mall, he said. In the early 2000s, construction began on a huge shopping destination called Xanadu, located on a 120-acre parcel alongside the sprawling Meadowlands Sports Complex in East Rutherford. The Meadowlands is home to another Local 164-built behemoth, MetLife Stadium, where the NFL’s New York Jets and New York Giants play.

Financial complications, though, brought a halt to work on Xanadu several times. By 2013, with the economy improving, a halt to work on Xanadu several years earlier accompanied it.

In 2014, the Bergen County Building and Construction Trades signed a project labor agreement with Triple Five and the state of New Jersey. Ever since, thousands of union tradespeople have worked on American Dream, with PCL Construction serving as the general contractor.

Gumble praised the team effort that went into getting ready to welcome the public to the mall. “The owner of Triple Five and general contractor PCL have been tremendous to work with throughout the entire project.”

Although American Dream is technically a mall, the word doesn’t fully describe the $5 billion complex that’s geared more toward entertainment and experiences than traditional retail. The facility is so big that it’s opening in segments across a span of nearly half a year. The indoor Nickelodeon-themed amusement park, which boasts a roller coaster claiming to have the world’s steepest vertical drop, opened Oct. 25 alongside an NHL-sized ice rink.

This month is expected to bring the launch of the glass-domed DreamWorks-themed water park, complete with a 1.5-acre wave pool. In early December, an indoor ski park called the Big Snow will open its doors, boasting a 16-story, 800-foot-long ski slope with room for snowboarding.

“We basically had nine $200-million programs that happened to be in construction within a five-minute walk of each other,” Steve Schmalz, PCL operations manager on American Dream, told ENR New York. “The work site is a campus.”

But several months remain before the mall’s true grand opening in March, meaning hundreds of union construction workers are continuing to work on the site seven days a week.

“We’ve had at least 300 electricians onsite working three shifts round the clock for the last two and a half years,” Gumble said. “We have about 500 onsite now.”

American Dream benefited from the considerable expertise of Local 164’s members, who weren’t intimidated by the complicated system — variable message signs, fire alarm systems, power — you name it,” he said.

Most of the 450 shops and 100 or so eateries in American Dream’s three retail sections are expected to be ready for business by March, as well as the Sea Life Aquarium, Legoland Discover Center, multiplex movie theater and 300-foot outdoor Ferris wheel.

At that point, American Dream will become the third-largest retail center in North America. Triple Five Group also owns the two largest, the West Edmonton Mall in Alberta and the Mall of America near Minneapolis, built by members of Edmonton Local 424 and Minneapolis Local 292, respectively.

Tony Armlin, Triple Five’s senior vice president for development and construction, said American Dream’s construction “has been an enormous undertaking which has been completed through collaborative teamwork, personal commitment and key partnerships.” He had especially high praise for Local 164’s electricians.

“We are very pleased with the hard work and contributions of the highly skilled and well-trained men and women of IBEW Local 164 in completing this project,” said Armlin, who also served as American Dream’s project director. “The men and women of Local 164 take great pride in the quality workmanship that they have performed and have shown incredible commitment to helping us successfully build and complete an amazing new global destination.”

American Dream’s full opening in the spring will not spell the end of Local 164’s involvement with the project. The expected 30 million to 40 million annual visitors from all over the world will continue to benefit from the local’s handiwork, Gumble said. “We’ll have work through 2020 and beyond, as long as the PLA is in force,” he said.
**IEW Wages Lost:**

$1.8 Billion in U.S. Military Construction Cut for Border Fence

Not deferred, ‘dead.’ These projects aren’t coming back, said one IBEW leader.

The White House suspended more than 100 shovel-ready military construction projects in September to divert funding for a border fence, effectively killing hundreds of potential IBEW jobs.

The Pentagon announced the suspensions Sept. 3, outlining plans to reallocate $3.6 billion in congressionally funded military construction projects around the globe to wall funding. Inside the U.S., nearly $1.8 billion of planned construction in 26 states and territories will fund about 155 miles of fencing along the southern border.

While none of the contracts for the projects had been let, more than a dozen IBEW business managers said these were the kind of jobs that signatory contractors have won in the past and hundreds of jobs are now lost.

“It was a gut blow, really,” said Anchorage, Alaska, Local 1547 Business Manager Dan Reaves. “Our state’s economy is in the longest recession in history. We are facing significant job loss, and our members are already leaving the state. Federal and military construction has been a big portion of our work, especially for our inside members, and now we are looking at hundreds of jobs and thousands of man-hours lost.”

Local 1547 alone is facing the cancellation of $102 million in projects scheduled to start in the next year and a half. Federal and military construction effectively canceled under the president’s orders — “a gut blow,” said Anchorage Local 1547 Business Manager Dan Reaves.

“My first thought when I heard was, ‘This is going to hurt us,’” said Business Manager Dennis Floyd. “It is our bread and butter doing Davis-Bacon work. We have one contractor, 80% is 90% of what they do is prevailing wage work. To cut this out, in the short term puts us out of work, and in the long term, these were important projects; killing them puts the military infrastructure at risk too.”

New City, N.Y., Local 363 lost the most work, two projects worth a combined $160 million, both on the campus of the U.S. Military Academy in West Point.

“We would have had a real good shot at those jobs. With 10-15% of the contract being electric work, that’s at least 60 men for about a decade,” said Business Manager Sam Fratto. “It has been a bit slow — we’ve got a few people on the book — so it’s not a good thing to have any project canceled, but these are two massive projects. West Point needs those projects to continue to have a world-class military academy, and we need the paychecks.”

One of the largest canceled projects was a $62 million middle school to replace the overcrowded and crumbling school on Fort Campbell, Ky. Nashville, Tenn., Local 429 business representative Mark Poole said they’ve had members working on base for more than a decade.

“It never got to electrical bids, so I can’t say definitively that we lost work, but we have some very competitive bidders for work there and I would have been very, very confident about our chances. Very confident,” he said.

A pier and maintenance facility project at Naval Base Kitsap worth just under $200 million was canceled in the jurisdiction of Seattle Local 46. Multiple signatory contractors had already bid on a sea wall extension at the base said, Local 46 business representative Barry Fulgham.

“We think we have a good shot of landing the extensions and, if we do, our chances on the other work would have been pretty good,” he said. Local 46 used to have a near lock on the work at the base, but that slipped a decade ago, Fulgham said.

“I have been aggressively trying to get our contractors out there again. This kills some of that momentum,” he said.

The projects were canceled after President Donald Trump made a February declaration that “a national emergency exists along the southern border of the United States that requires the use of the armed forces.” In addition to the $1.8 billion in U.S. projects, Defense Secretary Matthew Esper announced an additional $1.8 billion of overseas construction projects would be “deferred” as well.

In a letter to Congress announcing the cancellations, Esper said he wanted to work with Congress to restore funding for the projects.

“You can’t run a government this way. Money is allocated for specific purposes and plans are made based on money that is allocated. That all is undone and wasted,” said Government Employees Department Director Paul O’Connor, who worked for decades maintaining the U.S. Navy’s nuclear submarine fleet as a member of Portsmouth, N.H., Local 2071.

“Whatever word the administration wants to use to describe that status of the projects, O’Connor said the right one is “dead.” The Pentagon went through a process, often yearslong at enormous expense, planning, prioritizing and preparing for specific projects. Then Congress funded those specific projects.

“Why, he asked, would they put that money back when the president did an end-around Congress’s constitutional authority to spend money when he’s given no sign that he wouldn’t do it again?” Congress will not replenish these coffers. Never,” O’Connor said.

Eielson Air Force Base near Fairbanks, Alaska, had nearly $100 million in base construction and maintenance effectively canceled under the president’s orders — “a gut blow,” said Anchorage Local 1547 Business Manager Dan Reaves.

Hill Air Force Base in Utah, right, and Naval Base Kitsap on the Puget Sound are among 42 military installations in the U.S. and territories that lost major construction projects.
The IBEW Changed My Life

To that end, a new website has been created at IBEW.org/MyIBEWStory where you and your fellow members can share what IBEW membership has meant in your lives and careers.

“Reading these responses brought me back to the start of my own career,” Stephenson said. “I was working in the produce department of a local grocery store during high school, planning to go to college for electrical engineering, when I had a chance meeting that changed my life.

Apprentices, like the ones here at Washington, D.C., Local 26’s training center, learn the skills that will prepare them for a long career in the electrical trade. More than 65,000 IBEW members spoke out to the Labor Department in defense of high-quality apprenticeships earlier this year.

*An electrician, Ray Wells, came into the store on a service call and we got to talking about how you become an electrician. I didn’t have any family in the construction business, but my dad was an auto mechanic part-time, so I grew up around tools and liked the idea of working with my hands.*

“Ray sent me to the IBEW hall, Rock Island, Ill., Local 145, where my first-class apprenticeship and a handful of patient, hard-working journeymen taught me the skills I’d need to be successful in this trade.

"I never expected I’d end up as International President of this great brotherhood, but all along the way I had people encouraging me, teaching me, asking me to serve, pushing me to be a leader — demanding excellence.

"That’s what this union is all about for me. The Code of Excellence is more than a program we put on hardhat stickers and breakroom posters. It’s a mindset and a way of approaching every little thing we do, and a way of approaching every little thing we do, and a way of approaching every little thing we do."

Continued from page 1

**In Their Own Words...**

David Vivian, Journeyman Wireman
Gary and Hammond, Ind., Local 697

“I was lucky enough to get into the apprenticeship program directly after high school. I wouldn’t be where I am today if I didn’t enter into it. We just purchased our forever home. We live comfortably knowing that we don’t have to worry about medical bills or retirement. Knowing that I will retire comfortably makes it that much better.”

Na’Quelle Davis, Apprentice Wireman
Seattle Local 46

“I studied philosophy in college, but I decided I wanted to work with my hands. I was drawn to the IBEW and apprenticeships in general because they were exactly what I wished college had been. A formal, consistent training and education program that wouldn’t leave me in debt or financially stressed. I’ve never had such thorough training before starting a job.”

Joseph Bass, Retired Journeyman Wireman
Decatur, Ill., Local 146

“My dad was an IBEW member, and a member of the Sac and Fox tribe. My only regret is that I didn’t join the union sooner. I think the word needs to get out to high schools everywhere that joining a trade union is a viable alternative to a costly education. It would be hard to have the quality of life I was able to provide for my wife and son if I had stayed at the company I left when I joined the union. That company is now defunct, but my union pension plan followed me wherever I worked.”

Gregory Geshwilm, Retired Journeyman Wireman
Bloomington, Ill., Local 197

“I was one of 17,000 people laid off by Caterpillar in 1980. I went back to school and earned a bachelor’s degree, but after working various jobs, I still felt I could do better. I started Local 197’s apprenticeship program in 1995. I had a wife and three children, and being able to earn while you learn made it possible. My top-notch instruction and on-the-job experience gave me dignity and allowed me to provide a skilled service to the customer. The good wages and great benefits made me a better provider for my family.”

Amanda Stenman, Apprentice Wireman
Seattle Local 46

“I was working two jobs before I started my apprenticeship in July. I only need one now. It was essential for me to earn while I was going to school, or I would still be at my two old jobs where I was barely making enough to get by. Because of this incredible opportunity, I don’t have to stretch myself thin to provide a good life for me and my amazing 9-year-old son.”

Kevin Castle, Journeyman Lineman/Apprenticeship Director
Columbus, Ohio, Local 71

“Before I started my apprenticeship, I was missing the Marine Corps and I wasn’t happy in college because I missed the challenge and the sense of purpose I had as a Marine. After going to work as a groundman, I found that I loved it and was fascinated by the challenging work the linemen were doing. I decided that being paid well for doing something I love was better than paying for college to learn something I wasn’t sure I wanted to do. The IBEW was the right path for me.”

Connor Callahan, Apprentice Wireman
Raleigh, N.C., Local 553

“I graduated from college, but after a few years as a teacher, I needed a change. I come from an IBEW family, and I admire the skill and dedication my father displays in his craft. His good IBEW wages helped put me through college, and I’m proud to put my education to good use in the IBEW.

“My apprenticeship is preparing me for a long career in this trade, and I look forward to working in solidarity with my brothers and sisters to continuously improve our wages and conditions in the years to come.”

Justin Long, Apprentice Wireman
San Luis Obispo, Calif., Local 639

“I do not believe I could have learned the necessary skills for the electrical industry without the guidance of the IBEW apprenticeship program. Without a professional apprenticeship, working in the electrical industry is extremely dangerous and I would not feel safe on the job site without the supervision of a journeyman and classroom instruction. My apprenticeship is my ticket to the middle class.”
whether it’s on the job or in the union hall. I’m proud to be a product of a brotherhood that’s provided for my family and pushed me to be the best at what I do, and I know so many of you are as well.

The pages in this issue are filled with just a few of the responses pulled from the thousands we received, but they’re stories of veterans and college students, IBEW sons and daughters as well as people who had no connections but came in search of a career to provide for their families. They’re young people just starting out and retirees looking back on long, successful lives — even a few members embarking on second and third careers.

But they all have one thing in common: their membership in the IBEW and the training they received set them up for success and gave them and their families the opportunity for a better life. We hope you’ll share your story as well.

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**Share Your Story**

We want to know how your IBEW membership has changed your life. Tell us at IBEW.org/MyIBEWStory

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**Shamika Baker, Apprentice Wireman**

Brockton, Mass., Local 223

“I was an associate at an Amazon warehouse, working the night shift for two years so I could be home during the day for my five children. As they got older, my husband and I decided it was time to find something more substantial. I was apprehensive about applying for Local 223’s apprenticeship program, but I was encouraged by family, friends and other women to go for it.

“I am so thankful I did. I’ve always had an interest in electrical work and looked at another training program, but decided against it after doing my research. I am in my second year and I couldn’t imagine getting this level of teaching expertise anywhere else. Being able to earn a living while doing so is extremely important to me. I could not afford to go without an income with those children still at home. I have gone from working a mindless job for $15 an hour to one where I solve problems and am mentally challenged. There are not many opportunities like this for upward mobility and a significant pay increase.”

**David Terwilleger, Journeyman Wireman/Training Director**

Austin, Texas, Local 520

“Because of the IBEW, I was able to support my family and look forward to a time when I would be able to comfortably retire and not rely on others to support me. The opportunity to advance in the trade was important too. In fact, the most valuable aspect of being an electrician in a trade union is the freedom to manage my career any way I want. For those who like independence and the feeling of control over your destiny, look into an apprenticeship.”

**Lee Clancy, Operations Foreman**

St. Paul, Minn., Local 23

“I did well in high school and enrolled in college because that’s what you were supposed to do. But college wasn’t a good fit for me, so I decided to take a different path. Who wants to take out loans for classes that don’t seem relevant? "I enrolled in an IBEW limited energy installer apprenticeship, and that was a good start, but I decided to go into nuclear energy and completed a plant attendant apprenticeship too. The IBEW and its apprenticeships are the difference between me working dead-end jobs and solidly rooting my family into the middle class.”

**Chris Brown, Journeyman Wireman**

Lansing, Mich., Local 665

“I’m a U.S. Marine Corps veteran. I left active duty in 2005 after 13 years of service. I bounced around, job to job, always being told, ‘Thank you for your service, but we don’t have any room.’ When I started my IBEW apprenticeship in 2012, they told me they were honored to bring more veterans on board. I’ve been a journeyman wireman for two years now. The skills and benefits have allowed me to help put my daughter through college. I’m able to put my 8-year-old son in a stellar hockey program. I’m no longer struggling with bills and have a great benefits package, and I’m no longer worried about retirement or the future.”

**Jacqueline Darnell, Journeyman Wireman**

Gary and Hammond, Ind., Local 697

“I worked in insurance and retail before I joined the IBEW in 2013. I’d seen advertisements for colleges to train people to be electricians, but why would I pay someone to teach me when I could work and earn money while being trained? During my apprenticeship, I got pregnant with my son, who is now 4. But we had nothing to worry about because I had excellent health insurance and wages to handle expenses. No one can put a price on that kind of peace of mind.”

**Matthew Schlei, Journeyman Wireman**

Milwaukee Local 494

“I grew up in Milwaukee and topped out there, but when it started getting cold that year, I looked on the job boards for somewhere warm. Honolulu Local 1186 had open calls, so I left Wisconsin on a Thursday and by Monday, I was working on the balcony of a high-end condo with whales jumping out of the ocean right in front of me. It’s 12 years later, and I never left Hawaii. Last year I transitioned from the field to the office doing BIM electrical 3D modeling. The IBEW gave me the skills and freedom to live and work where I choose and the upward mobility to shape my career with new technology.”

For more IBEW stories, visit IBEW.org/Media-Center
Boost to IBEW Apprenticeships

Kitchener, Ontario, Local 804, is getting a helping hand — from the federal government in the form of approximately $5.5 million for its pre-apprenticeship program.

“This is a fantastic achievement,” said Local 804 Business Manager Mark Watson. “To have the federal government support our proposal shows the confidence they have in us and recognizes the IBEW as a premiere venue to train the workers of tomorrow.”

The funding comes from the Union Training and Innovation Program via two streams: the Investments in Training Equipment Stream, which the local used to purchase two elevated work platforms; and the Innovation in Apprenticeship Stream, which included the development of an online training platform to supplement the other aspects of the curriculum.

Local 804 is also using the funding to reach out to traditionally underrepresented groups like women, Indigenous people and military veterans.

“In order to diversify our workforce and meet future demands we all need to play an active role,” Watson said. “This program removes many of the barriers that prevent potential applicants from beginning their career in the electrical trade.”

The goal is to train at least 25% of individuals from those communities, a target the local achieved with its first cohort earlier this year, said business representative Dave Graham.

“We have been actively reaching out to the key groups in our area, and we’re promoting it on social media and our website as well,” Graham said. “We’re happy to have met our targets with our first cohort and it’s our intention to keep improving our outreach.”

The 1,100-member local had a pre-apprenticeship program before, but it was only able to offer essential training and on a smaller scale, Watson said. It also helped them develop the proposal for the federal funding.

“We had the ideas and the motivation, but we were lacking the funding to bring everything together,” Watson said. “This program is a game changer for us.”

The first group of 16, starting in June, received online resources, training — safety and placement.

“Without the employment at the end of the program, we would be wasting everyone’s time,” Graham said. “Through the support from the Electrical Contractors Association of Ontario, we are able to guarantee the success of our program.”

Local 804 will train a total of 240 apprentices. Graham says they had 108 applicants for their second cohort, which began on Oct. 7.

“We always had this vision of where we would like our local to go, but without this funding it may never have happened,” Graham said.

Nine other locals received funding as well: Hamilton, Ontario, Local 105; Vancouver, British Columbia, Local 213 via its Electrical Joint Training Committee; the Western Joint Electrical Training Society, which includes Victoria, British Columbia, Local 290; Edmonton, Alberta, Local 424 and its Electrical Joint Industry Training Committee; Halifax, Nova Scotia, Local 653; Kamloops, British Columbia, Local 993 and Nelson, British Columbia, Local 1003; Regina, Saskatchewan, Local 2018 and Winnipeg, Manitoba, Local 2008.

The Union Training and Innovation Program provides $5 million annually to support union-based apprenticeship training, innovation and enhanced partnerships in the electrical trades.

“This investment is wonderful news for the Waterloo region community and will unlock opportunities for underrepresented groups to participate more fully in the skilled trades,” said Raj Saini, Member of Parliament for Kitchener Centre. “Supporting the skilled trades through investments in apprenticeship training will help everyone in our community compete, succeed and thrive in a rapidly changing economy.”

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Le gouvernement canadien offre de meilleurs occasions pour les programmes d’apprentissage de la FIOE
Sign Modernization
Upgrades Manhattan Commute

It’s Monday morning, and you’re running late for your early train to the city. You break a sweat sprinting for the platform, but you look up and relax. A large over-head electronic sign tells you you’ve made it with a few minutes to spare.

For Metro-North commuters, new signage providing critical real-time information is helping to ease the stress of travel, and it’s thanks to the hard work of IBEW electricians from New York-area railroad locals.

“The Metropolitan Transportation Authority used to have these hard-wired signs that didn’t provide a lot of information,” said New York Local 899 President and Business Manager John Gallagher. “Ofentimes, it was only the date or that trains were in good service.”

Through the first half of 2019, Local 899 members — along with members of New York Local 817 and New Haven, Conn., Local 375 — removed the outdated variable message signs at dozens of stations serving the various Metro-North lines.

The new, modernized signs use bright gold LEDs to display a wealth of useful information, such as the scheduled and actual arrival times of the station’s next three trains, plus those trains’ destinations and designated arrival track. The signs receive their display wirelessly, thanks to hardware also expertly installed by IBEW members.

“They might not have a formal Code of Excellence agreement in place, but you can see how the Code’s values have an influence on how our members get the job done for the MTA,” said Railroad Department Manager William Bohné. “Their work is helping tens of thousands of transit riders get into Manhattan safely and efficiently every day of the week.”

The upgraded signs provide those commuters with clear access to reliable and often crucial Metro-North train schedule information on rail platforms and in station lobbies, Bohné said.

“This upgrade was long overdue,” said Gallagher, noting that it was just one component of the MTA’s $56 million “Way Ahead” plan to modernize the Metro-North railroad’s facilities as well as its security and customer service systems. Some of Metro-North’s tracks and stations can trace their origins back to the late 1800s; in 1983, the MTA created Metro-North out of the former Conrail system.

For residents of some of New York City’s far-flung suburbs, access to convenient and reliable rail travel often means the difference between sitting and relaxing on a train trip to Manhattan versus climbing a steering wheel and fighting your way to and through New York City’s famous gridlock.

In 2017, Metro-North carried a record 86.5 million customers. Keeping this massive volume of paying customers happy — and loyal — was obviously critical for the MTA, and the agency knew it could count on the IBEW to quickly and efficiently get the new signage installed. The agency turned out to be correct, of course. These union electricians finished the upgrades within six months.

“We were able to hit it with some other work,” said Gallagher, who noted the team maintains station public address systems, too. “We work out of the radio shop, so we work on all of that stuff.”

Going forward, IBEW members will continue to maintain the signs, keeping a closer eye on the ones installed outdoors that are vulnerable to damage from vandalism and exposure to the northeastern U.S.’s brutal winters.

So far, rail customers seem pleased with the results of the work, Gallagher said. “They’re getting a lot more relevant information than before,” he said. “When they’re not happy, they’re not afraid to say so.”

Best Doctors Makes Getting a Second Opinion Easy

The wife of an IBEW member scheduled an appointment to have her doctor check out what was causing her searing knee pain. After an examination and an MRI, her doctor diagnosed a torn ligament and prescribed surgery to fix it.

Dreading weeks of painful rehabilitation, the IBEW spouse decided to seek a second opinion. And to get one, all she had to do was make a phone call, because her husband’s Family Medical Care Plan benefit through the IBEW provided access to the Best Doctors database.

Via Best Doctors’ Expert Medical Opinion service, the woman’s case was referred to one of the world’s top specialists — in this instance, the head of orthopedists at Boston’s Tufts Medical Center. That doctor determined that rather than a tear, the woman’s pain was being caused by early onset arthritis, so he prescribed a combination of an over-the-counter anti-inflammatory medication and a weight-loss program instead of surgery.

“When you’ve got important medical decisions to make, you’ve got to be completely confident that you’re making the right ones,” said International Secretary-Treasurer Kenneth W. Cooper, whose role includes oversight of the FMCP. “Best Doctors is one of the services we provide that helps deliver that confidence to participating members.”

About 180 IBEW local unions, in conjunction with their associated National Electrical Contractors Association chapters or other employers, so far have signed up to take part in the FMCP. Nearly 42,000 IBEW members are covered by the plan — a figure that more than doubles when factoring in members’ dependents.

“As more and more locals sign up, the plan gets stronger, and that allows us to reduce costs to continue to add services like Best Doctors,” Cooper said. “We’re not-for-profit and we don’t have the advertising or overhead of traditional insurers, so while overall health care costs in the U.S. have gone up 22% since 2007, FMCP’s are up just less than 1%.”

The Best Doctors benefit also includes:

- Critical Care Support, where patients get a specialist’s quick guidance on serious situations or illnesses — even from the emergency room, if necessary.
- Find a Best Doctor searches nearby and available-in-network doctors and selects someone who can best meet a patient’s needs.
- Treatment Decision Support provides patients with access to resources that help explain their conditions and treatments.
- Behavioral Health Navigator is a relatively new program similar to Expert Medical Opinion that can review cases dealing with mental health concerns.
- Contact with Best Doctors services is handled confidentially over the phone or via the internet, Bradley said. “You can get access to their advice without having to travel anywhere.”

“The FMCP is an attractive health insurance option for companies and signatory contractors looking to offer IBEW members and their families high-quality coverage at affordable prices,” Cooper said. The plan usually matches — and often surpasses — comparable coverage available from employer-provided insurance plans, he said. “Both sides can come away from the bargaining table happy.”

Local unions and employers interested in getting a quote for FMCP coverage can visit nilmcp.com or contact the plan at (866) 936-9000. Plan participants can stay informed on the latest FMCP news by subscribing to the plan’s newsletter via nilmcp.com.

Local 351’s Cosner Receives Prestigious New Jersey Labor Award

Dan Cosner grew up in an IBEW home and followed his father into the trades. He decided early in his career a leadership position would be right fit for him.

At one of his first meetings after becoming a member of Camden, N.J., Local 439, Cosner was struck by how an executive board member settled the crowd down and brought an animated discussion about a contentious issue out.

“When that guy stood up, he kind of quelled the whole room,” he said. “I thought wow, I wanted to be that guy. I thought it was pretty cool.”

Local 439 was amalgamated into Folsom, N.J., Local 351 in 1994 and Cosner ran for a spot on the executive board soon afterwards — and lost.

It was to be the last election he’d lose. He was hired as a business agent in 2001 and recently began his second term as Local 351’s business manager. He received another honor earlier this year, when rail labor leaders across southern New Jersey named him the recipient of the George E. Norcross, Jr. Humanitarian Award.

The award, named after the legendary rail and community leader in the Garden State, is awarded by the Southern New Jersey Building Trades Council for membership leadership, part of its Peter J. McGuire Labor Day celebration. Norcross Jr., who died in 1958, is the father of U.S. Rep. Donald Norcross, a former Local 351 business agent and the only IBEW member in Congress. The younger Norcross received the award in 2013.

McGuire founded the United Brothers and Carpenters and went on to be mayor of his adult life. He was co-founder of the American Federation of Labor with Samuel Gompers and is credited by many labor historians for coming up with the idea for Labor Day. President Grover Cleveland signed legislation to make Labor Day a federal holiday in 1894.

Cosner has been president of the Southern New Jersey Building Trades Council for 13 years, and is one of the labor leaders who has chosen the award’s annual recipient since 1996.

“My heart is with the IBEW but the building trades are part of my family, too,” Cosner said. “That’s what it made so important to me. I know I work with people I could make a better place selected me for this award.”

Cosner, 51, has had numerous leadership roles in his local union and in the community and Welsh said he’s built connections that have proven helpful to his membership. He served as the rest of the IBEW.

“His very politically active,” Welsh said. “It’s truly in his blood. Dan always has a smile on his face and says things are great, even when you know he might be feeling a bit frustrated.”

Cosner’s father, Ray, retired at 55 because of this IBEW pension and savings. He and his wife, Ruth, celebrated their 55th anniversary this year. “It’s truly in his blood. Dan always said yes,” Cosner said. “That’s what it made so important to me. I know I work with people I could make a better place selected me for this award.”

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In an age of shrinking bipartisanship and climbing global temperatures, the Nuclear Powers America Act might just be the bipartisan legislation the country needs to cleanly and reliably power future generations.

“The challenges we face in terms of the climate and the security and reliability of our energy grid go beyond political per- suasions because they will impact us all, and the Nuclear Powers America Act is a strong example of finding a common sense solution that works for Democrats, Republicans, environmentalists and everyone else who cares about clean energy production,” said International President Lonnie R. Stephenson.

The bill, introduced in April, calls for providing existing nuclear power plants with an investment tax credit, modeled after credits for other forms of clean energy like wind, geothermal and fuel cell. While nuclear supplies 20% of the nation’s electric generation — and 1/3 of the country’s clean energy — many plants have become economically uncompetitive and are facing early closure. An analysis by the Union of Concerned Scientists found that more than one-third of existing plants — 22% of total nuclear capacity — are unprofitable or scheduled to close. Renewables like solar are growing rapidly but still account for only 2% of total generation. By contrast, nuclear reactors generate roughly 10 times that amount.

Climate change is receiving more and more attention, groups from all sides of the political spectrum are supporting nuclear power as part of the carbon-free clean energy mix needed to fend off the worst parts of a warming planet.

The Nuclear Powers America Act aims to prevent economically suffering plants from shutting down prematurely, allowing them to continue supplying reliable, clean energy.

“The world probably can’t solve climate change without nuclear-power,” wrote Eric Holthaus in Grist, an online climate and sustainability publication. Nuclear is the most reliable source of electric generation in the country, producing energy 24 hours a day, 365 days a year. It would take more than 800 wind turbines at a cost of $3.5 billion, or 15.8 million solar panels at a cost of more than $6 billion, to replace a single nuclear reactor, according to a Third Way analysis done for Axios.

“Our fleet of current nuclear reactors provides a crucial source of carbon-free, baseload electricity,” said Senator Ben Cardin of Maryland, an original co-sponsor along with Sen. Kevin Cramer of North Dakota. “It is imperative that we keep these reactors operating — safely — while we continue to work on demand reduction, renewables, energy storage, and transmission grid resiliency.”

New York, Illinois and CA have passed similar legislation to provide zero emissions tax credits to help plants in their respective states.

Many nuclear plants are the economic backbone of their communities, including in rural areas. Each facility employs about 400 and 700 people at wages well above the minimum wage. They also provide funding for community services like schools, infrastructure and law enforcement.

The IBEW is the largest union working in nuclear energy, with nearly 15,000 members working full-time in more than 55 facilities. Thousands more rotate through the plants performing maintenance and refueling support.

Members are encouraged to contact their representatives in the House as well as their senators and urge them to support the Nuclear Powers America Act (H.R. 2724 / S. 1353).

Anti-Worker Lawyer Eugene Scalia Confirmed as Labor Secretary

After decades spent attacking the rights of workers struggling for justice and safety on the job, corporate lawyer Eugene Scalia took the helm of the U.S. Labor Department in late September.

Scalia, son of the late Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia, sailed through a GOP-controlled hearing and was confirmed a week later by the full Senate despite a unanimous opposition from Democrats.

“If there’s one consistent pattern in Mr. Scalia’s long career, it’s hostility to the very workers he’d be charged with protecting, and the very laws he would be charged with enforcing if he were confirmed,” said Sen. Patty Murray of Washington, ranking member of the Health, Education, Labor and Pen- sions Committee.

Scalia replaces Alex Acosta, who resigned in July amid controversy related to his earlier career as a federal prosecutor.

“As although opposed Mr. Scalia’s confirmation in the strongest possible terms, we are committed to working with him and Department of Labor staff, as always, in the best interests of our mem- bers and all workers,” International Presi- dent Lonnie R. Stephenson said. “At the same time, we have no illusions about how difficult that is at a time when federal agen- cies, courts and the courts are increasing- ly stacked against working people.”

“As a partner at Washington, D.C.- based Gibson, Dunn & Crutcher, Scalia built a reputation for helping business clients run roughshod over employees. Early in his career he led the U.S. Cham- ber of Commerce’s battle against ergo- nomic rules in the late 1990s.

The Dol spent years developing the rules to reduce crippling injuries and ill- nesses brought on by repetitive motion at poorly designed workstations, from poultry plants and assembly lines to call centers.

“Scalia ridiculed the extensive sci- ence underlying the rules as ‘junk sci- ence’ and ‘quackery’ and suggested that unions supported the rules as a ploy to increase membership,” the Economic Pol- icy Institute reported in a summary of Scalia’s key cases.

His views opposing worker health and safety protections were considered so extreme that senators blocked his 2001 nomination to serve as U.S. solicitor of labor, the official charged with enforc- ing the nation’s labor laws. Scalia got the job anyway, serving temporarily after President George W. Bush installed him through a recess appointment.

Scalia’s anti-worker résumé also includes:

- Fighting rules opposed by delivery company UPS that would have required employers to pay for their workers’ protective safety equipment.
- Getting the Nevada Supreme Court to overturn a lower court ruling that let casino workers keep their tips instead of sharing them with supervisors.
- Unsuccessfully fighting OSHA charges against SeaWorld after a whale killed its trainer during a performance.
- Prevailing for Wal-Mart against a Maryland law requiring that companies with more than 10,000 employees make small contributions toward their workers’ health care.
- More broadly, Scalia has a long his- tory undermining the economic security of workers and consumers by helping Wall Street fight financial oversight.
- His adversary has come at the expense of investors, consumers, the entire financial system, and all hardworking Americans and taxpayers, who had to bail out Wall Street during the 2008 crash,” the organization Better Markets said.
- “The financial system today is more fragile and financial crashes are more likely as a result of the clients he chose, the arguments he advanced, and the tactics he used.”

The AFL-CIO was more blunt, sug- gesting the appeal of Scalia’s qualifica- tions to a Senate majority that values corporations over people.

“After spending a lifetime attacking the rights and dignity of working people, Scalia is ready for another chance to ruth- lessly advance corporate interests. His specialties include eroding labor rights, unabating consumer protections, endan- gering Americans’ retirement security and blaming workers for their own deaths.”

The new law largely affects workers employed by contractors in California’s 940-billion tech industry and gig-economy companies such as Uber, Lyft and DoorDash. Taxi drivers, translators, medi- cal workers and others wrongly classified in more traditional jobs will also benefit, although many industries won exemptions from the law or delays in adhering to it.

For IBEW members, O’Rourke expects the law to make it harder for con- struction companies to drive down wages by treating nonunion electricians as inde- pendent contractors.

Gonzalez said misclassifying work- ers has become an “illegal business mod- el” that undermines the state’s safety net for workers as well as fair competition with law-abiding companies. The Califor- nia Division of Labor estimates the prac- tice costs taxpayers $7 billion a year through lost payroll tax revenue.
The law codifies and clarifies a unanimous 2018 ruling by the state Supreme Court against a national package delivery company. The employer, Dynamic, reclassified drivers as independent contractors, requiring them to use their own vehicles and pay out of pocket for gas and related expenses. The court set a strict test to determine a workers’ employment status, which is now part of the law. In effect, workers are regular employees if their tasks are subject to a company’s control and are central to its business.

The Los Angeles Times described it this way: “A solo plumber with his own company who is hired by a bakery to fix a leak can be an independent contractor. But a plumber working regularly for a plumbing company and sent out on jobs must be an employee.”

Uber and other major gig-economy employers lost their fight to be exempted from the law, and are now seeing a ballot initiative in 2020. It is expected to ask voters to create a new category of workers who would be independent but qualify for some benefits and a guaranteed minimum wage.

Newsmen said plans to bring together leaders from the Legislature, labor movement and business community to “support innovation and a more inclusive economy by stepping in where the federal government has fallen short and granting workers excluded from the National Labor Relations Act the right to organize and collectively bargain.”

His signing statement indicated that doing so is urgent. “The hollowing out of our middle class has been 40 years in the making and the need to create lasting economic security for our workforce demands action,” he said. “Assembly Bill 5 is an important step. A next step is creating pathways for more workers to form a union, collectively bargain to earn more and have a stronger voice at work.”

Massachusetts, Rhode Island Back Public Employee Unions in Post-Janus World

Massachusetts and Rhode Island law-backers — in STP’s maintenance supervisor and senior reactor operator groups — have gained contract.

And the need to create lasting economic security for our workforce demands action,” he said. “Assembly Bill 5 is an important step. A next step is creating pathways for more workers to form a union, collectively bargain to earn more and have a stronger voice at work.”


The IBEW’s Family Medical Care Plan is more than just a health insurance plan; it’s also a surprisingly effective organizing tool.

The FMCP’s mission is to provide high quality and affordable medical care coverage to electrical workers and their families. But during organizing drives and contract negotiations, many employers find the plan’s competitive costs and low overhead to be alluring bonuses.

Paul Feeney, a member of Boston Local 66, said the union and its health plan, Lucero noted. “Their instructors even call us up when they have a class of new-hires and give us an hour to speak and sign up new members,” he said. “The IBEW is working with the people who are supposed to be our friends, the Democrats in the House.”

The “reasonable fee” legislation also strengthens union leaders’ right to meet with newly hired employees and to speak with other employees during breaks at work, and it allows union officials to communicate with members via public email accounts. Those emails are exempt from the state’s public records laws. Antenellis said Local 103 also want to stand in unity with the rest of the state’s labor community, particularly with public-sector unions hit hardest by the Janus decision. The Second District group was also active in contacting legislators urging them to support the bill, led by International Representative Ed Starr.

“The fees that unions lost from Janus were a significant amount,” Antonellis said. “We made a point to get out in front of it because we knew what was at stake. We had to go back and almost do a re-organization drive after Janus, but we felt like our membership was well educat-ed and they knew what was at stake.”

“The Janus decision was looked at as a blow,” House Speaker Robert DeLeo told the Boston Globe. “We wanted to send a message here in Massachusetts in response to that decision.”

Rhode Island’s law similarly allows public employee unions to assess non-members “a reasonable charge” when representing them in grievance and arbitration hearings. A second new law requires state and local government agencies to immediately inform public employee unions of new hires so the unions can educate and organize them in a timely fashion about the benefit of membership. Both bills were signed into law by Gov. Gina Raimondo in July.

Meanwhile, Local 66 is in active negotiations with an impressive 16 additional groups at the nuclear plant, ranging from tech support and maintenance to chemistry and environmental technology. Should these talks prove successful, more than 200 additional workers could be brought into the union.

The FMCP also can help the IBEW retain members in addition to organizing them. With an average retention rate around 95%, for example, CenterPoint “is all in” when it comes to the union and its health plan, Lucero noted. “Their instructors even call us when they have a class of new-hires and give us an hour to speak and sign up new members,” he said.

In 2015, Local 66 organized workers at Texas-New Mexico Power. The IBEW has a healthy 60% to 70% retention rate with that company, Lucero said, a figure that he expects to improve as workers there grow more accustomed to union representation.

Two CenterPoint Energy service area assistants pose with Houston Local 66 President Barry Grounds. The FMCP proved useful in helping to bring the group into the IBEW.

ORGANIZING WIRE

FMCP Aids Organizing Success for Utility Electricians in ‘Right-to-Work’ Texas

The IBEW’s Family Medical Care Plan is more than just a health insurance plan; it’s also an surprisingly effective organizing tool.


Local 66, which represents nearly 4,000 outside line, utility and telephone workers across central Texas, is doing its part to help the plan expand.

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Meanwhile, Local 66 is in active negotiations with an impressive 16 additional groups at the nuclear plant, ranging from tech support and maintenance to chemistry and environmental technology. Should these talks prove successful, more than 200 additional workers could be brought into the union.

The FMCP also can help the IBEW retain members in addition to organizing them. With an average retention rate around 95%, for example, CenterPoint “is all in” when it comes to the union and its health plan, Lucero noted. “Their instructors even call us when they have a class of new-hires and give us an hour to speak and sign up new members,” he said.

In 2015, Local 66 organized workers at Texas-New Mexico Power. The IBEW has a healthy 60% to 70% retention rate with that company, Lucero said, a figure that he expects to improve as workers there grow more accustomed to union representation.

These are no small organizing accomplishments, especially in right-to-work Texas where overall union membership hovers just above 4%. Right-to-work laws require non-paying employees to share free access to their hard-won representation and benefits with the nonunion employees in their workplace.

“In this state, some places are just anti-whatever the union wants,” Lucero said. “[The FMCP] will organize you some people, there’s no doubt about it, and I think that’s a big help. I think that’s a big help. I think that’s a big help. I think that’s a big help. I think that’s a big help. I think that’s a big help.

Local unions interested in finding out more about how to get an FMCP quote for members and employers should contact the plan at (305) 535-4300 or visit niftmp.com.
**Local Lines**

"United We Stand" — Strength in Solidarity

L.U. 1 (ics,es,et,esm,et,fn,lt,lt,se,5a,5b,5c), ST. LOUIS, MO — The annual Labor Day parade was Monday, Sept. 2, in St. Louis. IBEW Local 1 was third in the parade route. Some 3,200 members, their families and friends enjoyed the parade and a picnic afterward at Wilmore Park.

Bus. Mgr. Fred Jacobs said: "Labor Day is a day where we give thanks to our forefathers that have given us a place to unionize, but all workers the benefits of their blood, sweat and sacrifices. Without their efforts we wouldn’t have what we have today.”

Brother Jacobs was elected president of the St. Louis Building Trades Council on Aug. 27. Congratulations to him.

On July 11, the Inside Journeyman wiresmen ratified a three-year contract by a 4:1 margin. Highlights of the contract include:

- Wages on the check $99.30, $104.61, $104.00. Total package of $66.22, $68.28, $70.47. Percentage rates 3.05%, 3.11%, 3.20%.
- 15 roll up on vacation and holiday for all overtime.
- Stronger stewards language and increased pay for stewards.
- Two members on pipe language.
- $75 increase per week for TES pooled unemployment fund.
- $75 increase per week income security individual’s unemployment fund.
- Increase in benefits and wages for PA’s and A members led by Erin Sullivan, director of Local 3’s Mentorship Program and representative on the IBEW Women’s Committee. Local 35 of Long Island sent two sisters, and Local 182 sent five sisters for the second year in a row.

"It is so great to see the sisters come to summer school and watch them as they begin to experience the magic of it all,” Sullivan said.

Attendees also participated in some great workshops such as grievance handling, internal organizing, how to start your own podcast, public speaking and how to successfully navigate non-traditional work. "The leadership class was by far my favorite," said Local 3 maritime intermediate journeyperson Rebecca Dallalio said. “It taught me how important listening to him.”

For this year’s action project supporting workers who are fighting for better working conditions, higher wages and better scheduling since their stores were bought by the German grocery chain Lidl. Union sisters also helped make a banner for the Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Memorial, which will be dedicated in the spring of 2020 at the site of the historic tragedy on Washington Place in Greenwich Village.

"The time shared and the knowledge attained is not only applicable to my union apprenticeship, but to everyday interactions in life,” Local 3 apprentice Diana Caraberra said. "The weekend was filled with leadership, labor history, union organizing and reinforced with a constant flow of cross-trade solidarity.”

Annette Diaz, B.R.

**Women in Unions Attend UALE Leadership Development Class**

L.U. 3 (hat, em, gov, ut, mt, mo, & au), NEW YORK, NY — The 44th Annual Association for Labor Education (UALE) Northeast Summer School for Women in Unions and Worker Organizations saw its largest class yet, with 166 women from the labor movement participating in five days of leadership development hosted by the CUNY School of Labor & Urban Studies and Hofstra University from July 27-31.

This year, Local 3 sent a delegation of eight members led by Erin Sullivan, director of Local 3’s Mentorship Program and representative on the IBEW Women’s Committee. Local 35 of Long Island sent two sisters, and Local 182 sent five sisters for the second year in a row.

"It is so great to see the sisters come to summer school and watch them as they begin to experience the magic of it all,” Sullivan said.

Local Lines are printed monthly on an alternating even/odd schedule. They can be submitted by designated press secretaries or union officials via email (locallines@ibew.org) or U.S. Mail. We have a 200-word limit. We make every effort to assist local unions in publishing useful and relevant local union news; however, all final content decisions are based on the editor’s judgment. Our guidelines and deadlines are available at www.ibew.org/media-center/IBEW-News-Media-Center/Submitting-Local-Lines. Please call or visit the Media Department at (202) 728-6291 with any questions.

**Local 15 Election Results**

L.U. 15 (us), DOWNERS GROVE, IL — The IBEW Local 15 election results for 2019 have been counted and are official.

Terry Goldrick was elected business manager/president after having served the local as vice president for the past 12 years. Terry ran unopposed. Billy Phillips won the race for vice president. Billy served the local as a nuclear business representative for seven years and as assistant business manager for three years. Amy Allison will remain in the recording secretary position (unopposed). Tresa. George Longoria will continue in his seat (unopposed). Congratulations to the new leadership team at Local 15.

The local is in good hands moving forward to face all the challenges presented.

The ComEd/Local 15 Line Worker Skills Competition took place Sept. 7 at the ComEd Chicago Training Facility. Sixteen journeyman teams and six apprentices competed. Over 600 attendees registered to enjoy the day with the competitors. The event was enjoyed by all in attendance. Thank you to ComEd and Chris Riser from Local 15 for all the hard work put into organizing the event.

Sam Studer, P.S.

**Annual Block Party; Apprenticeship Graduation**

L.U. 25 (catv, es, i, ptc & rts), LONG ISLAND, NY — On Aug. 3, Local 25 had our annual Block Party here at the hall with a great turnout. We had a very large water slide and rock climbing wall as well as many more attractions for all our members and their families. We had a dunking tank to raise money for COPE. Every year the party gets bigger, and we look forward to next year to keep it growing.

Thank you to Bus. Mgr. Kevin Casey and Pres. John Guadagno and their Block Party Committee for a fantastic day. The weather was perfect.

Local 25 congratulates the apprenticeship graduating class of 2019 on their success. We commend the graduates for all their hard work and many hours of studying and working, and taking care of families, all at the same time. The graduates are our future, and we look forward to them taking our local to the next level.

Also, a thank-you goes out to Training Dir. Chris Kelly and his staff for always doing a great job. Bro. Kelly’s door is always open, and he always goes above and beyond the call of duty.

With regret we report the death of former president and Examining Board member Mike O’Grady. Mike was loved and will be missed. He was a true IBEW union man. Rest in peace, Bro. O’Grady.

Tom Lawless, P.S./E-Board

**Annual Block Party**

**Union Hall Updates**

L.U. 15 (us), DOWNERS GROVE, IL — Greetings, sisters and brothers. As our year begins to wind down, we have been busy around the union hall this year with much-needed updating. As I write this most projects are almost completed, while some are just starting but will not take too long to complete. We have updated and expanded our motor control lab and made provisions for future expansion, updated the A/V equipment in the meeting hall, and installed a new floor in our main entrance. Stop by and see what we have done!

As 2019 elections are upon us, we want you to know we are working harder than ever to bring new opportunities for work in our jurisdiction. We have continually met with our New York state elected officials to ensure they understand what we do, how we benefit everyone in our community and what ways we can work with them to secure more work ensuring

**Trade Classifications**

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Efforts are made to include this list as inclusive as possible, but the various job categories of IBEW members are too numerous to comprehensively list all.

**LU. 1’s UALE Northeast Summer School attendees from IBEW Local 3 and Local 25. From left: Desiree Depay, Michele Kappad, Erin Sullivan, Lisa Hofman, Michele Maldanado, Diana Cabrera, Heather McAule, Shouna Irving and Rebecca Dallalio.**

**LU. 15’s Block Party at the union hall on Aug. 3 featured a giant water slide and a climbing wall.**

**IBEW Local 1 contingent marches in 2019 Labor Day Day Parade in St. Louis.**
We recently learned that Vistra Energy will close four Local's service award. Colin Lavin and Examining Board member Casey congratulate Bus. Mgr. Lavin on his 50-year IBEW pin. At bottom, Asst. Bus. Mgr. Lavin was a previous Executive Board member and is the current secretary/treasurer for Local 103 Pension Plan, which will allow us to take care of our retirees through the next phase of their career. We are increasing our investment in our Market Recovery Program to keep expanding the economic prosperity for all our members. We’ve re-established a Holiday Vacation Fund and introduced strong prefab language, as well as giving back to those who came before us. Work safe, live safe and free — and buy union!

Mitch Smith, P.S.

IBEW Local 55 contingent participated in the Labor Day parade in Des Moines, Iowa.
McKinnon, James Robinson, Daniel Sheehan and Angelo Vigil. Thank you, brothers, for your hard work and dedication.

As you may know we are under some very damming attacks on organized labor from the White House. To date, an extraordinary number of rulings and laws have been passed, and the effects of those measures will not be good. Some of them Irrevocable. How could this happen?

We all took an oath to bear allegiance and not sacrifice the IBEW’s interest in any manner. Yet, some of our members for some reason continue to vote for politicians who are known to be anti-labor, the effects of which we are experiencing now.

So, what can we do about it? We all need to be proactive and have meaningful discussions about who we send to Washington one year from now. Educate family members, friends, and our own brethren. The IBEW will not tell you how to cast your vote. However, we must be mindful of how our decisions affect all of us and our livelihood that we have worked so hard to preserve. United we stand.

Annual Picnic / Golf Scramble

L.U. 141 (Ictt,o,u&u), WHEELING, WV — Work in our local is slow as of this writing, with 56 brothers and sisters on Book 1. Many of our members have been finding employment in sister locals, with many members working at a very large petrochemical complex in western Pennsylvania.

On Aug. 10, Local 141 hosted their annual picnic and golf scramble held at Wheeling Park. In addition to the golf scramble, members and their families enjoyed a buffet lunch, activities for kids, door prizes, park/pool passes, and a day filled with friendship and brotherhood. Congratulations to Bros. Brian Jaquay, Boone Robertson, Cody Bishop and Nathan Myers for winning the 2019 golf scramble.

Local 141 is very sad to report the passing of Bro. Randy Miller. Randy served for nearly 20 years as Local 141’s organizer. He retired in 2015. Bro. Miller worked very hard to elevate the nonunion electrical workers in our area to a higher standard and show them that union membership is the best option for a successful and rewarding electrical career. He will be sadly missed.

Kurt “Bug” Red, P.S.

70-Year Service Pin Awarded; Summer Events a Success

L.U. 125 (lctt,o,t&u), PORTLAND, OR — We have had a busy summer supporting a variety of events including the Pacific Northwest Lineman Rodeo and our annual golf and softball tournaments. These events allow us to continue raising funds for the Oregon Burn Center. Too often, we learn directly how much our members’ and their families, working in the office for over 39 years. I am looking forward to promoting an environment of unity, inclusiveness and diversity. We have so many great members who want to work together to advance the strength and solidarity of our local and its membership.

Bro. Daniels received the highest number of votes in winning his seat on the Executive Board. He is also the president of our local EWMC Chapter. Working together, we know great things are coming to Local 159 and our members.

We are preparing for our 31st annual IBEW Local 142 member’s family and friends participated in the local’s Golf Scramble at Wheeling Park in August.

Holiday Lighting Display; Union Election Makes History

L.U. 159 (l), MADISON, WI — Greetings, sisters and brothers.

History has been made in Local 159. This year I was elected the first female business manager of the local in its 119-year history, and Bro. Shaun Daniels was elected the first African American member of our Executive Board. I was elected in July after serving the office for over 39 years. I am looking forward to promoting an environment of unity, inclusiveness and diversity. We have so many great members who want to work together to advance the strength and solidarity of our local and its membership.

Bro. Daniels received the highest number of votes in winning his seat on the Executive Board. He is also the president of our local EWMC Chapter. Working together, we know great things are coming to Local 159 and our members.

We are preparing for our 31st annual IBEW Local 197 contingent marches in the McLean County Labor Day parade.

Labor Day Picnic a Success; Radio & TV Commercials

L.U. 177 (boes,go&u,lm&ue), JACKSONVILLE, FL — Hurricane Dorian is threatening the east coast of Florida as I write this and may have dampened the attendance at our Labor Day picnic, but it was still a success for everyone who attended and was enjoyed by all. Thanks go out to Pres. Luis Cano and all his volunteers who made it happen.

Training Dir. Danny Van Sickle recently finished his first radio commercial for the Electrical Training Alliance (funded by the Jacksonville LMCC) for the B&U Ballroom Show and 1020 KiWX FM sports radio. Bro. Ross Mullis and Sister Abigail Taylor recently finished our first TV commercial that will be shown during our sponsorship of the Athlete of the Week on First Coast News.

Unit 2 is beginning negotiations with the Duval County School Board.

Work in the Jacksonville area slowed this summer, but several hospital projects should pick things up soon. Thanks to all the locals that have work for our traveling brothers and sisters.

Mike Raikes, B.M./P.S.

Contract Negotiations; Ohio Energy Legislation

L.U. 245 (gkt,ot,ntl&u), TOLEDO, OHIO — After years of lobbying, meetings and tours, we finally got Our House Bill 6 passed, which provides for a subsidy to all green energy producers such as nuclear plants. No sooner had the nuclear power plants breathed a sigh of relief and ordered the fuel for their next run cycle than the opponent of the bill was trying to get a referendum on the November ballot to repeal it. These opponents are backed by Chinese investors and are putting out a lot of false information. Details about this issue can be found on the website www.ohiobearenergysecurity.com.

On negotiations, the Toledo Edison Energy Delivery Agreement is just about complete as of press time, and it may be ratified by the time you read this article. Negotiations with Tegna Inc. for members employed at Channel 11 should be starting soon. On
stay at the top of the food chain when it comes to knowledge of craft and application of their years of experience in their trade. The union hall offers year-round training courses in welding, Lift truck operation, crane operation, high voltage splicing, rigging, commercial driver’s license (CDL) training, and many other courses that the membership can take advantage of so they can maintain their advantage in the highly competitive construction industry.

And when the membership is not furthering their electrical education, they can be found continuing the good works throughout their communities, such as food and clothing drives, waterway and highway cleanups and many other volunteering endeavors. These good works not only lift the profile of the local in the eyes of the general public, but they also lift the spirits of those who dedicate their time and energy to a common cause.

Brian Jacoppo, P.S.

**Work Picture Steady; Great Labor Day Picnic**

L.U. 295 (I, mo, ntb, kts), BOISE, IDAHO — With Labor Day behind us, we look forward to the changing seasons in Idaho.

A big shout out to the Boise Central and Labor Council for putting on another great Labor Day picnic.

Roy Zychowicz, P.S.

**Local 257 Officers are Sworn In**

Officers of Jefferson City, MO, Local 257 were sworn in. From left: former president Greg Schrock; Pres. Joel Vanderslice; Jeff Murphy, Examining Board; Rec. Sec. Pete Loizas; Glenn Brummer, Executive Board; Matt Henning, Exec. Board; Treas. Scott Porter; Bus. Mgz/Fn. Sec. Don Brumme; delegate to International Convention; John Bernskoetter, Exec. Board; Sam Luebbering, Exec. Board; Vice Pres. Shawn Hillen; Branden Martin, Exam. Board; Troy Fischer, Exec. Board; and Brad Heckman, Exec. Board. Not pictured: Exec. Board member Mike Fanning and Exam. Board member Marc Lindenbusch.

**Continuing Education**

L.U. 269 (i, ko), TRENTON, NI — There is no better way to stay employed than making yourself a valuable asset to your employer. Training certifications are not trophies to be collected and shown off; they are a valuable commodity to the skilled tradesman and the contractor alike. A well-educated workforce is a highly employable workforce and our members strive to

月经特别篇——2019年妇女委员会

2019年妇女委员会

I.O.W.A. — Labor Day 2019 was a celebration of those who do the real work of making our society and economy work. About 300 Local 347 members attended the parade and party, which saw nearly 1,300 participants.

The politics surrounding Labor Day is interesting. 1884 was the first Labor Day held in September to honor the American worker. Ten years later, in 1894, Grover Cleveland signed a bill to make Labor Day a national holiday as a token to workers to quell labor unrest. Now that Labor Day 2019 has passed, we are immersed in an onslaught of politics. It began at the Iowa State Fair where my wife and I were interviewed by a reporter from The Economist for an article subtitled “Adventures at the bottom of the pack.” Briefly, I explained my being a single-issue voter based on the need of union revival. The political focus on Iowa will increase from now until February. This is our opportunity to be heard! So, be heard!

Local 347 is happy to announce the signing of labor agreements with two of our signatory manufacturers, EP2 and Keystone.

Working in the building trades is good. We have travelers working and will probably need them for some time. Thanks to the brothers and sisters for helping man this work. We also have 65 new apprentices starting this year.

The local thanks Al DeHeer for his service to our local. Al served on the Pension Committee and then Local 343 at this international event. Sister, you truly are a “one percent,” for now.

Avoid paying the Trump tariffs … buy “Made in the USA” products!

Tom Small, P.S.

**Labor Day 2019; “Make Our Voices Heard”**

L.U. 347 (em, mnt, ntb, s, spk), DES MOINES, IOWA — Labor Day 2019 was a celebration of those who do the real work of making our society and economy work. About 300 Local 347 members attended the parade and party, which saw nearly 1,300 participants.

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Tom Small, P.S.
LOCAL LINES

Officers Elected

L.U. 649 (catvem,i,rtlt,ds,spakus), POCATELLO, IDAHO — Local 649 held its election of officers, who took office in July. The local also elected delegates to the IBEW 40th International Convention.


Local 649 would also like to thank our outgoing officers for their service: Craig McDonald, Jeff McKinlay, Chris Abernathy, Pat Bristol, Steve Willard, Leola Duke and Chris Lochrider.

Congratulations to our recently retired brothers: Kenneth Clay Bingham, Robert Steven Ray, Jerry Cogdill and Mickey McMillian. Brothers, you have earned it — best of wishes to all of you from Local 649!

Clay Himming, A.B.M.

End of Summer Events

L.U. 531 (o), LAPORTE, IN — At this writing, we were approaching the end of another summer season in northwest Indiana and it was capped off with a couple of great events. The annual 531 golf outing was Aug. 3, at Chesapeake Run golf course in North Judson. This saw a large turnout, close to 80 golfers, and we had a perfect weather day for the festivities. A big thanks to Mike Lowenthal for coordinating the event several years in a row now. Your efforts are appreciated, Mike.

Another recent event was the biannual awards banquet that was held at the Blue Chip Casino in Michigan City. This event has become a favorite for many of the members and seems to get larger every time. I can remember when awards night was pizza and beer in the basement of the Carpenter’s hall, and now it is an event well worth attending. I believe our attendance numbers were in the upper 300s this year and it keeps getting larger every time. For the younger members who don’t attend “old timers night,” you should really reconsider — this is a great night out and a great way to see people you normally would not get to see. Thanks to everyone who puts the event together. The slide show that runs all night is always fun to watch.

Work has been steady, and it appears that it should stay that way for at least the remainder of the year. I hope everyone enjoyed their summer and I look forward to seeing everyone again soon.

Jeremy Woelver, P.S.

The fifth annual IBEW Local 569 Padres Day at Petco Park had a great turnout of nearly 750 members and supporters. Credit: Brian Campbell

Congratulations to Officers

L.U. 545 (o), ST. JOSEPH, MO — Congratulations to newly elected Local 545 officers.


Executive Board Members: — Tom Brooke, Nick Boyer, Chad Moore, Jon Reiner, Brandon Osteen and Ross Halley; and Examining Board members — Spencer Richter, Tyler Wolfe and Kendal Kafer. These officers and board members who received their service pins to commemorate more than 20 years of membership with the IBEW — including Jay Bartley, Robert Harrington and Jack Miller, who have been with IBEW for 65 years!

Brett Finney, R.S.

Local 613 extends condolences to the friends and family of Local 611 congratulates apprenticeship graduating class of 2019.

Apprenticeship Graduation

L.U. 613 (catves,gnw,ltcl,i,supas,u), ALBUQUERQUE, NM — On Aug. 17, we held our annual Apprenticeship Graduation Banquet at the Marriott Pyramid.

There were 15 graduating apprentices.

Congratulations to the new journeyman wiremen: Justin Arnold, Brad M. Begay, Daniel Burgess, Francisco Camacho Alvarez, Luis B. Carbalaj-Lara, Robin Lena LaChapelle, Mason Lucas Lacy, Timothy L. Madrid, Nathan C. Maestas Sr., Amarante Edward Montoya, Greg Moore, Ruben J. Romero, Andrew Russell, Jesse Sandoval, Jamie Lee J. Romero, Andrew Russel, Jesse Sandoval, Jamie Lee J. Romero, Andrew Russel, Jesse Sandoval, Jamie Lee J. Romero, Andrew Russel, Jesse Sandoval, Jamie Lee J. Romero, Andrew Russel, Jesse Sandoval, Jamie Lee J. Romero, Andrew Russel, Jesse Sandoval, Jamie Lee J. Romero, Andrew Russel, Jesse Sandoval, Jamie Lee J. Romero, Andrew Russel, Jesse Sandoval, Jamie Lee J. Romero.

J. Romero, Andrew Russel, Jesse Sandoval, Jamie Lee

L.U. 617 honors the sacrifices made by our military veteran brothers and sisters.

Fall Fest in October; Honoring Military Veterans

L.U. 617 (c,lm,ba,ks), SAN MATEO, CA — Local 17 held our annual Veterans-Halloween Fall Fest in October. Costumed children and adults filled the union hall, as families enjoyed a pancake breakfast. Activities included: movies, games, face painting, cookie decorating and the opportunity to renew old friendships.

We are grateful that our work picture continues to grow. Our tireless efforts at Six Flags over Georgia have come to fruition with the grand opening of new Terminal 1. The hard work and dedication of our local members and traveling brothers and sisters show that union work is truly exceptional.

Local 617 honors the sacrifices made by our military veteran brothers and sisters.

Local 617’s annual Veterans-Halloween Fall Fest features a specially decorated pumpkin highlighting the IBEW.

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IBEW Life Saving Award; Champions, Longtime Members

L.U. 569 (jmas,mt,rtlt,spakus), SAN DIEGO, CA — IBEW Int. Pres. Lonnie R. Stephenson awarded Local 569 Bro. Oscar Stewart with IBEW’s highest honor — the Life Saving Award.

On the morning of Saturday, April 27, 2019, a man opened the door on a campground of a local synagogue in Poway, killing one woman and injuring three others. We are deeply thankful that our IBEW 569 brother and Navy and Army veteran Oscar Stewart courageously stood up to hate. He helped stop further bloodshed by scaring off and chasing away the shooter.

In commending Oscar’s valiant actions to stand up to hate and save lives, we are reminded of Pres. Stephenson’s own words of solidarity: “Bigotry of any kind divides member against member, destroys the foundations of solidarity and undermines our power as a union.”

Next, we wish to congratulate our IBEW 569 “A Team” — they are the back-to-back champions of the IBEW Ninth District Softball Tournament! Plus, we had great attendance at our IBEW 569 Padres Day and Tallgate Party!

Finally, we congratulate our IBEW 569 members who received their service pins to commemorate more than 20 years of membership with the IBEW — including Jay Bartley, Robert Harrington and Jack Miller, who have been with IBEW for 65 years!

Gretchen Newsom, P.S.

Fall Fest in October; Honoring Military Veterans

L.U. 617 (c,lm,ba,ks), SAN MATEO, CA — Local 17 held our annual Veterans-Halloween Fall Fest in October. Costumed children and adults filled the union hall, as families enjoyed a pancake breakfast. Activities included: movies, games, face painting, cookie decorating and the opportunity to renew old friendships.

We are grateful that our work picture continues to grow. Our tireless efforts at San Francisco International Airport have come to fruition with the grand opening of new Terminal 1. The hard work and dedication of our local members and traveling brothers and sisters show that union work is truly exceptional.

Local 617 honors the sacrifices made by our military veteran brothers and sisters.

Local 617’s annual Veterans-Halloween Fall Fest features a specially decorated pumpkin highlighting the IBEW.

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Gretchen Newsom, P.S.
The Electrical Worker  | November 2019

Officer Transitions; Hurricane Season Preparation

L.U. 627 (u), FORT PIERCE, FL — Greetings, brothers and sisters!

At the May Executive Board meeting, Bro. Kevin Mueller was appointed as Local 627 Treasurer, filling the seat vacated by Sister Julia McClelland. Also, Bro. David Drew was appointed as financial secretary for the local, succeeding Bro. Mueller. Congratulations to Bros. Mueller and Drew on their new positions.

As of this late summer writing, Hurricane Dorian was set to make landfall in our local’s service area as a Category 4 storm. Emergency response teams and restoration crews were geared up to ensure safe, efficient power restoration. With high confidence and great pride, our craftsmen faced the challenges ahead.

Brothers and sisters, whether performing routine simple tasks or complex power restorations, please ensure that safety is a top priority. Please continue to be “your brothers’ keepers” and demonstrate the Code of Excellence with pride, skill and solidarity. Safety & solidarity!

Fernando Salcedo, P.S.

'Trending Up' With Increased Participation

L.U. 697 (c,es,mt&se), GARY & HAMMOND, IN — L.U. 697 remains on an upward trend, as of this late summer writing. As of this late summer writing, Hurricane Dorian was set to make landfall in our local’s service area as a Category 4 storm. Emergency response teams and restoration crews were geared up to ensure safe, efficient power restoration. With high confidence and great pride, our craftsmen faced the challenges ahead.

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Help for Fighting Addiction In the Construction Industry

L.U. 1049 (Ictt,ctukw), LONG ISLAND, NY — A recent article in the Electrical Worker, “Opioids and the Construction Industry,” (August 2019) hit close to home for us at IBEW 1049. Sadly, we have had several members, their families and their co-workers adversely affected by the disease of addiction. At recent general meetings, Bus. Mgr. Ronald Bauer has implored any member who may have an addiction issue to seek help. If you feel you may have an addiction issue, contact the union hall. We can get you in touch with those who can and will help.

If you know of a co-worker, a friend or even a family member who may be struggling, reach out to them. Talk to them and strongly encourage them to seek help. Let them know that you care about them. Maybe by reaching out we can avoid some of these tragedies our local has been facing.

We are currently in negotiations with our largest employer, PSEG-Long Island. At this writing, we are cautiously optimistic that we will complete negotiations prior to the contract expiration date of Nov. 15.

Thomas J. Dowling, R.S.

Local 1253 members Matt Butler (left) and Josh Bragan receive their apprenticeship graduation certificates at the local’s summer picnic. They have achieved journeyman wireman status.

‘Welcome to New Apprentices’

L.U. 1253 (i&m), AUGUSTA, MAINE — Local 1253 accepted into its apprenticeship program 25 new apprentices for the September 2019 school year. Local 1253 congratulates Matt Butler on acing the state of Maine electrician exam and becoming a journeyman wireman.

The work outlook remains strong in Local 1253 with projects including paper machine rebuilds, solar fields, salmon farms and plenty of commercial work in our future.

Chuck Fraser, B.M.

AFL-CIO Labor Day Picnic

L.U. 1347 (es,sm,pet,rtb&u), CINCINNATI, OHIO — For a second year in a row, Local 1347 attended the Labor Day Picnic hosted by the AFL-CIO at Coney Island. In southern Ohio, this year we had a much bigger turnout from our membership than the year before, and we hope to see many more familiar faces attending as the years go on.

Local 1347 members and their families enjoy 2019 Labor Day Picnic.

The weather was beautiful for the countless trade union members that joined together to celebrate this wonderful holiday. We look forward to next year’s event.

Andrew Kirk, B.M./F.S.

District Progress Meeting

L.U. 1501 (es,em,ms,pet,rtb&u), BALTIMORE, MD — Bus. Mgr. (Pres. Dion F. Guthrie) recently attended the IBEW Fourth District Progress Meeting held in New Cumberland, WV.

IBEW Fourth District Int. Vice Pres. Brian G. Malloy put on one of the best Progress Meetings that I have ever attended, and I have been attending these meetings for over 50 years. This meeting was also in the ideal place for me, as the Mountaineer Horse Racetrack was just across the street. This gave me the opportunity to visit that racetrack to see how it operates and functions — of particular interest since I represent IBEW workers at racetracks all across North America. I am very proud to be a union member in the IBEW Fourth District, especially noting how we have “progressed” over the years.

James Boyd, F.S., P.S.

Concerns About Proposed Sale Of Emera Maine Electric Utility

L.U. 1837 (rtb&u), MANCHESTER, MAINE — IBEW Local 1837 legislative leaders and Emera Maine rate-payers held a press conference in Orono to share their concerns about the proposed sale of Emera Maine to ENMAX of Calgary, Alberta.

Mainers are worried about the proposed sale and the impact it could have on the electric utility’s workers as well as on the ratepayers of Maine’s second largest electric utility.

Specifically, they are concerned that ENMAX is paying too much ($1.3 billion, all financed by debt) and is too small a company to provide the service Emera Maine’s ratepayers need and deserve. Cuts in staffing and service along with substantially increased electric rates may be necessary to help finance this proposed acquisition.

“More than 350,000 people in northern Maine depend on Emera Maine for electricity, including myself,” Senate Pres. Troy Jackson said. “With so much at stake, we need to make sure the sale of Emera to ENMAX doesn’t leave hardworking families and seniors in the dark. The [Maine] PUC shouldn’t allow this deal to move forward unless it is in the best interest of Maine ratepayers.”

Other speakers at the news conference included: members of the Maine Legislature’s Joint Committee on Energy, Utilities and Technology, a small-business person; and Bus. Mgr. Dick Rogers of IBEW Local 1837, which represents more than 200 Emera Maine employees.

“We urge the Maine Public Utilities Commission to carefully consider the impacts on Maine workers and Emera Maine customers before allowing the sale to proceed,” Rogers said. “We believe that there must be a significant, binding agreement in place to assure that Emera Maine customers have the quality electric service they need and deserve.”

Matthew Beck, B.R./Organizer

Have you moved?

Notify us of an address change
www.ibew.org/ChangeMyAddress or call 202-728-6263

WWW.IBEW.ORG
June International Executive Council Meeting

Minutes and Report of The International Executive Council’s Regular Meeting

The regular meeting of the International Executive Council was called to order at 8:28 a.m., by Chairman Erikson, on Monday, June 24, 2019, in Hoboken, New Jersey. Other members of the council in attendance were Calabro, Calvey, Burgham, Riley, Fuso, Wine, Lavin and Galbraith.

International President Stephenson presented reports from members of the International Executive Council on a variety of matters affecting all branches of the Brotherhood.

International Secretary-Treasurer Cooper reported to the members of the International Executive Council on the IBEW Pension Fund and the Investment Portfolio of the Brotherhood both in Canada and in the United States.

Legal Defense
Payments for legal defense, made from the General Fund, were examined and approved in accordance with the requirements of Article X, Section 2, of the IBEW Constitution.

Financial Reports
The International Secretary-Treasurer’s Reports for the various funds for the Brotherhood were presented to the members of the International Executive Council, examined, approved and filed.

Article XX and XXI Cases
There were no new Article XX or Article XXI cases to report.

International Charge
IBEW Local Union 969 remained under International Charge.

Effective — August 1, 2019
Representative, Tenth District
John K. Craig, International
Reciprocity Department

Effective — January 1, 2019
President, Fifth District
Lonnie R. Stephenson

Effective — September 1, 2019
Representative, Construction & Maintenance Department
Kirk E. Groenendaal, International Representative

Executive Council was called to order at 9:39 a.m. The next regular meeting of the International Executive Council will commence at noon, on Wednesday, August 28, 2019, in Chicago, Illinois.

The International Executive Council conducted a thorough review of the facts pertaining to an appeal from Local Union 2330. The IEC upheld the decision of the International Secretary-Treasurer Cooper.

The IEC acted on numerous applications under the IBEW pension fund. For a complete listing, consult www.IBEW.org, clicking on the International Executive Council link on the “Who We Are” page.

The Electrical Worker was the name of the first official publication of the National Brotherhood of Electrical Workers in 1893 (the NBEW became the IBEW in 1899 with the expansion of the union into Canada). The name and format of the publication have changed over the years. This newspaper is the official publication of the IBEW and seeks to capture the courage and spirit that motivated the founders of the Brotherhood and continue to inspire the union’s members today. The masthead of this newspaper is an adaptation of that of the first edition in 1893.

Kirk E. Groenendaal, International Representative, Construction & Maintenance Department
Effective — September 1, 2019
William W. Neiles, International Representative, Fifth District
Effective — May 12, 2019
Martha J. Pullar, Director, Broadcasting and Telecommunications Department
Effective — April 1, 2019

Vested Pension
Joseph C. Koehler, Membership Development Department
Effective — January 1, 2018
Gregg A. Sickles, IEC
Effective — August 28, 2019

Jennifer Wood, International Office Employee
Effective — August 19, 2019

For the International Executive Council
This regularly scheduled meeting was adjourned on Tuesday, June 25, 2019, at 5:39 a.m. The next regular meeting of the International Executive Council will commence at noon, on Wednesday, August 28, 2019, in Chicago, Illinois.

The masthead of this newspaper is an adaptation of that of the first edition in 1893.
WHO WE ARE

IBEW Membership Turned into Her ‘Freedom Ticket’

This Army veteran and mother of three is the face of the IBEW’s most recent national television commercial.

Crystal Rourke says life wasn’t quite as tough two years ago as it now sounds.

Yes, she was going through a divorce and often had to work three jobs to support her three sons. They included working as a probation officer, a corrections officer and driving for Lyft. She also worked toward a graduate degree so she could become a full-time probation officer.

Through it all, she tried to maintain a positive attitude, though that wasn’t always easy.

"Fake it until you make it," the U.S. Army veteran said with a laugh. "I was just pushing and pushing forward."

In early 2018, while working for Asplundh, the international tree-trimming company, and still attending school, Rourke finally got a well-earned break.

A co-worker told her Xcel Energy, a longtime IBEW utility partner in Minnesota, was hiring groundmen and drivers and encouraged her to put her name on the books at Minneapolis Local 160.

Her ‘Freedom Ticket’

"I'm not just surviving; I'm living. That was a huge deal for me. If you told me a year ago where I'd be now, I'd have felt like I'd won the lottery."

Rourke grew up in rural Missouri, near a farm — even while her grandmother and grandfather worked as a team and her father was estranged from her.

"Working in jail taught me how to interact with people and how to communicate," she said. "You're outnumbered [by the inmates] and you don't have a lot of physical tools in your toolbelt. You have to rely on your mental toolkit."

Working outside is nothing new. Rourke fondly remembers baling hay and feeding the pigs on her family's Missouri farm — even while her grandmother and grandfather said she should be in the kitchen doing "women's work."

Serving in the Army and later working for Asplundh convinced her she could handle herself in a physical environment dominated by men. Rourke said she is one of just four women out of 165 field workers in Xcel's Electrical Utility Construction Department.

"She's also the focus of the latest in a series of national television advertisements, which highlight the value of IBEW membership for young people looking for a career that will provide a stable, middle-class life without the burden of college debt."

"It's my freedom ticket," Rourke, 35, said. "It's my way to make my own way, to provide for my family and be able to take off weekends and holidays."

Rourke was hired in April 2018 and earned Local 160 membership in the process. She's left her other jobs — ages 15, 13 and 9 — and to provide the family with quality health insurance.

She's also the focus of the latest in a series of national television advertisements, which highlight the value of IBEW membership for young people looking for a career that will provide a stable, middle-class life without the burden of college debt.

"This has been a crazy sort of joy ride," she said. "I'm finally starting to reach the point where I don't feel like the bottom is going to drop out on me."

Initially, Rourke was hesitant to do so. She feared she would be "laughed out of the office." She overcame the initial fears, however, and after applying, she was called back for an interview. Rourke said the person interviewing told her she was qualified except she lacked a tanker endorsement, which allows drivers to haul 1,000 gallons or more of liquid and gas.

She immediately drove 15 minutes to a Minnesota Driver and Vehicle Service Office, studied for the test on her phone and earned her endorsement that afternoon.

With that, Rourke was hired in April 2018 and earned Local 160 membership in the process. She's left her other jobs — ages 15, 13 and 9 — and to provide the family with quality health insurance.

"Her enthusiasm is just so impressive," Local 160 Business Manager Robert Boogren said. "She never seems to have a down moment. It's amazing she's turned into such a positive person because things could have easily gone the other way."

"For Rourke, the journey over the last 18 months is still a bit unbelievable. She has a good relationship with her ex-husband, which allows her to travel to out-of-town assignments.

Despite being new to union membership, Rourke hopes to continue to be a vocal advocate for the labor movement; she spoke at the Sixth District Progress Meeting earlier this year. She also would like to mentor young women who are going through tough times, in part because landing a job that takes care of a family's needs can be difficult to find."

"This has been a crazy sort of joy ride," she said. "I'm finally starting to reach the point where I don't feel like the bottom is going to drop out on me."

"I had no idea what opportunity was available to me until I took a leap of faith and joined the IBEW."