

The United Worker

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Biden To Use Trade Pacts, Leverage To Advance Worker Rights Worldwide

President Biden, far right, recently demonstrated his commitment to America's working families by advancing project labor agreements. (Photo courtesy POTUS Instagram).

Building on the provisions of the U.S.-Mexico-Canada Trade Agreement (USMCA), the Biden administration recently launched a whole-of-government initiative, via an executive order to use trade pacts and other leverage to advance worker rights worldwide.

Biden's objective, said Secretary of State Antony Blinken, U.S. Trade Representative Katherine Tai and Acting Labor Secretary Julie Su, is to expand and increase worker rights and incomes abroad. When those rights advance and incomes advance, those workers benefit – and U.S. workers do, too, the three said.

That's because advancing workers' rights and wages abroad also removes low-wage exploitation, which many businesses commonly use to export U.S. jobs and undercut U.S. workers, the officials said.

"In support of workers and our national security interests, my administration will consider actions to integrate and elevate workers' rights and the promotion of high labor standards in our foreign, international development, trade, climate, and global economic policy priorities," Biden's executive order declares.

Biden's order supersedes more corporate-leaning trade policies, some of which date back to the Gilded Age, which heavily rely on foreign labor to produce U.S. goods. These policies often came at a great cost to laborers in "opening markets," many of whom suffered abuse and repression. Some examples include NAFTA, USMCA's predecessor, which passed in spite of strong union opposition.

Now, Biden is pivoting the government in a pro-worker direction, and that drew cheers from the AFL-CIO. Its then-top trade expert, Deputy Chief of Staff Thea Lee, led the crafting of tough, enforceable worker rights into the USMCA during the Trump presidency. Legislative directors from the Steelworkers,

the Auto Workers and the Teamsters helped.

Labor then worked with U.S. Rep. Rosa DeLauro, (D-Conn.) and other pro-worker lawmakers, to ensure those tough standards remained and the USMCA passed. Tai noted it's led to large growth in Mexico in both independent unions – as opposed to company and pro-government unions – and rising wages there, notably in the auto industry.

With that as a model, as Tai and Su pointed out, Biden's executive order framework "will reshape how U.S. government agencies conduct international diplomacy by putting workers' rights and standards at the center," AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler said.

"Across the globe, working people are united in our fight against growing corporate overreach and abuse, low wages, attacks on organizing, the absence of strong benefits, and poor working conditions. This new strategy is a major victory for workers everywhere and underscores workers' rights are essential to our country's national and foreign policy, and national and economic security."

Shuler added, "This framework will leverage diplomacy to promote internationally recognized labor rights and worker organizing; create measures that enable swift responses to violence and threats against trade union leaders, activists and organizations; improve the capacity of U.S. agencies and foreign missions to engage with workers and their representatives to improve the lives of working people; and enhance and enforce fair trade practices. The directive recognizes that no matter where we live, all workers deserve dignity and respect on the job. We need a global economy that puts working people at the center."

During a ceremony in San Francisco where the executive order was announced, and with many union members in attendance, Su (a Californian) said, "Every worker deserves a just day's pay for a hard day's

work. Every worker should come home healthy and safe at the end of the day. And every worker should have a right to join a union. These are not just American values. They apply to workers around the world. And in President Biden's America, we want to lead by example."

Su also warned that the executive order to all federal agencies to push worker rights worldwide, together, isn't enough. "Corporations are global. So, workers, and worker power, and the way we think about workers have to be global, as well," she explained. "When some corporations cut corners and contract out work to low-road businesses that exploit workers around the world, it creates an unfair playing field for every responsible business that does right by its workers. When global actors are allowed to evade labor laws in one country by exploiting workers in another part of the world, this undermines workers' rights every-

where. And when workers are harassed, discriminated against, and attacked as they produce things sold all around the world, we cannot simply look away and ignore the ways our global economy brings with it global responsibility."

Blinken outlined practical moves to enforce worker rights worldwide, besides using trade pacts as leverage. They include "engaging governments, workers, unions, civil society and the private sector to protect and promote internationally recognized labor rights." He's ordering ambassadors to "engage with workers, with unions so their voices are reflected in everything that we do.

"Second, we will work to hold accountable those who threaten, who intimidate, who attack union leaders, labor rights defenders, labor organizations – including using things like sanctions, trade penalties, visa restrictions – all the tools in our kit," he said.

Refresco Collective Bargaining Agreement



UIW National Director Karen Horton-Gennette and Laura Lopez (second from right and far right, respectively) came together with workers at Refresco Beverages to negotiate a new collective bargaining agreement in November. The shop stewards in the photo, from left to right, are Quality Lab Technician Manuel Camacho, Utility Operator Sergio Castaneda, Maintenance Mechanic Tim Fitzgerald, Production Machine Operator Antonio Parga and Production Machine Operator John Skwiat.

From the President

Elections Past and Present



David Heindel

Depending on where you live, you may be exhaling now that you're not being swamped with off-year election ads, or you may not have noticed much about the races and ballot initiatives in other states that largely were decided Nov. 7. But no matter what, I feel reluctantly confident in saying none of us will escape from the all-out advertising blitz and media saturation ahead of next year's presidential and congressional elections.

The UIW will not deviate from our decades-long stance when it comes to deciding which candidates to back, at every level of government. Our first question is always, where do you stand on workers' rights? It's our top priority, and a candidate's values must align with ours if they expect our support.

One lesson from last month's elections that shouldn't be overlooked is the genuine power of voting, period.

Turnout makes all the difference, as we've seen time after time, year after year. Keep that in mind ahead of Election Day 2024. Make sure you are registered to vote, and support the candidates who will support your job.

Last but not least, I'm trying to get a jumpstart on asking everyone who reads this column to practice civility throughout the election process. This isn't exactly a revelation, but it doesn't do our country any favors when we lose the capability or the willpower to engage in respectful dialogue about candidates and issues. There's nothing wrong with spirited debate; there's plenty wrong with closed-mindedness and outright malice.

Here's to taking the high road and giving our fellow Americans the benefit of the doubt.

Good News for Workers

At press time, President Biden issued a statement coinciding with the implementation of the White House's final rule on project labor agreements (PLAs). You may remember from our prior reporting that PLAs protect workers and consumers by helping ensure good wages, accountability, and highly skilled labor.

As the president noted, "We must do everything we can to build a better America. Today, my Administration is marking another major step that will benefit American workers, communities, the economy, and our government. For the first time in history, Project Labor Agreements will be required on federal construction projects valued at or above \$35 million. This means that projects funded by my Investing in America agenda will move faster and without delays, giving taxpayers better bang for their buck. Workers will have the security and peace of mind that collectively bargained wages and benefits bring, better pathways to good-paying jobs, and stronger health and safety protections."

President Biden added, "My father would always say, 'a job is about a lot more than a paycheck. It's about dignity. It's about respect.' He was right, and I'm determined to keep fighting for American workers, who do the highest quality work in the world, to have the dignity and respect they deserve."

The final rule is rock-solid evidence that the Biden administration continues living up to its pledge to be pro-worker. In expanding the use of PLAs on large federal construction contracts, the new regulation promotes economy and efficiency in federal procurement by eliminating the risk of delay associated with labor unrest; ensuring parties agree to dispute-resolution procedures and mechanisms for labor-management cooperation on matters like safety; making clear that PLAs may include other provisions designed to support workers from underserved communities and small businesses; helping ensure a steady supply of skilled workers for federal construction projects; and promoting competition on government contracts by allowing all contractors – including those who are non-union – to bid on contracts that require PLAs.

Season's Greetings

On behalf of all UIW officials, I extend heartfelt holiday greetings to all members and their families. I particularly appreciate and respect the dedication of our sisters and brothers who are working throughout the holiday season. Your professionalism and commitment are never taken for granted.

I wish everyone an enjoyable present, a fondly remembered past, and a prosperous new year ahead.



CWA workers picket in downtown Washington D.C.

Solidarity Evident on Two CWA Picket Lines

December proved busy for the Communications Workers of America (CWA) and their affiliates in the Washington, D.C. area. The union was at the forefront of two major labor actions that month, first with a 24-hour walkout at the Washington Post and again at the Department of Health and Human Services (HHS) in support of HHS-contracted call center workers.

The UIW is affiliated with the CWA both through the AFL-CIO and the Maritime Trades Department.

On Dec. 7, more than 700 workers represented by the Washington Post Guild (affiliated with CWA through the Washington-Baltimore NewsGuild) walked off the job after a frustrating year and a half of stalled negotiations with the newspaper's management. The workers were seeking better pay and job protections as the Post's ownership has flirted with layoffs and employee buyouts to close a budget shortfall. It was the first time in 50 years that the Post's employees took to the picket lines.

Picketers first took their places in front of the Post's headquarters in downtown D.C. right before sunrise, and continued to hold the line until late in the night. Officials and leaders from across the labor movement marched with rank-and-file Post workers, including MTD Executive Secretary-Treasurer Mark Clements.

The following week, the CWA-affiliated

Call Center Workers United staged a rally in front of HHS headquarters in support of call center workers employed by the federal contractor Maximus. Clements and MTD Administrator/Chief of Staff Brittanie Potter represented the MTD at the rally.

Maximus employs roughly 700 workers in their Hattiesburg, Mississippi, call center to handle customer service concerns for Medicare and the Affordable Care Act marketplace. Nearly 90 percent of these workers are women of color making minimum wage. The workers' demands include not just higher pay, but also better health insurance options and protection from abusive callers who have subjected these employees to racist and sexist remarks.

CWA President Claude Cummings, who was present at both rallies, introduced a variety of speakers from the labor movement and government who joined in solidarity. Among the speakers was U.S. Rep. Benny Thompson (D-Mississippi), a longtime friend of the UIW and its parent union, the Seafarers. U.S. Reps Ro Khanna (D-California), Cori Bush (D-Missouri), and Greg Casar (D-Texas) also spoke. The rally culminated in President Cummings and several Maximus workers engaging in civil disobedience, blocking the street in front of the HHS building before being taken into police custody.

MTD Staff Stands With CWA, Supports Labor Actions



MTD Executive Secretary-Treasurer Mark Clements (above left photo, center) raises a fist in solidarity as he joins NewsGuild members in front of the Washington Post Offices. In the above right photo, Clements and Administrator/Chief of Staff Brittanie Potter (far right, with sign) at the HHS headquarters, supporting Call Center Workers United.



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Caribbean Region: Jacqueline Dickenson, vice president

Great Lakes Region: Monte Burgett, vice president

Gulf Coast Region: Dean Corgey, vice president

Midwest Region: Chad Partridge, vice president

West Coast Region: Nicholas Marrone, vice president



Halloween Hits the Halls

Union Members at HQ and Piney Point Dress Up to Celebrate the Scary Season

UIW members at the Union's HQ and at Seafarers Harry Lundeberg Seamanship School (SHLSS) donned their silliest or scariest costumes to celebrate Halloween this year.

In the photo to the right Tamika Jones, who works at Seafarers Headquarters in Camp Springs, dressed up as a nurse.

In the photo, directly below UIW members from the Claims Department in SHLSS held their annual Halloween costume contest on October 31. From left to right we have Jenell Gandy as a butterfly fairy, Kirsten Eversberg as Seafarers Barbie, Shawn Werfel as a grandpa/old man, Ann McNeal as a T-rex/dinosaur, Becky Howe as Snow White, Anna Buckler as Mrs. Doubtfire, Madison Davis as a cheetah, Erica Escobar as Sally (from Tim Burton's Nightmare Before Christmas), Minette Clarke as the board game Operation, and Tushima Frenzen as an asylum inmate. The winners of the contest were Werfel in first place, Buckler in second, and Clarke in third.

In the bottom left photo, Suzanne Hildebrandt wears a colorful, neon 80s outfit, complete with fishnet gloves, shutter shades and a tutu.

UIW member and recent pensioner, Sandy McDonald (bottom right photo), sports her finest Svengoolie costume.





After 34 Years of Service, Sandy McDonald Retires from Headquarters

Beloved Kitchen Aide and UIW member Sandra McDonald (a.k.a. Sandy) retired from her decades long career at UIW Headquarters on November 30. Hired in 1989, McDonald has contributed years of dedicated service to anyone who stopped by the galley at Seafarers HQ. To honor her time as an employee, galley staff threw a well attended retirement ceremony commemorating her 34 years of service.

In the top left photo, UIW Shop Steward Cynthia Green (left) gives McDonald (second from left) a hug. Also pictured are Jessica Norris (center), Joan Branch (second from right), and Tamika Jones (far right).

Billy Hartnett (left, top right photo) says goodbye as he hugs McDonald in front of her retirement banner.

In the bottom left photo, McDonald smiles, seated in front of her decorations and banner at her retirement ceremony.

CLUW Labor Leaders Meet in Minneapolis



Above, UIW National Director Karen Horton-Gennette (second from right) and UIW member Brittanie Potter (far right) show the strength of women in the labor movement alongside Elise A. Bryant (second from left), President of the National Officers Council of the Coalition of Labor Union Women (CLUW), and member of the Communications Workers of America Union (CWA) and UIW Representative Jordan Esopa (far left).

UIW Members Vote at UIW HQ



Above, UIW National director Karen Horton-Gennette and Union Representative John Hoskins lead the vote on October 23 for a revised contract with a 6% raise for union members. The members present voted in favor of the new contract. Below, shop stewards sit at a table together while Hoskins (far right) and Horton-Gennette (second from right) explain the new additions to the contract and prepare to conduct the vote.



New UIW Pensioners

Evelyn Bonds
Sodexo Management Inc.
Stafford, VA

Luis Ruiz
Urban Commons Queensway, LLC
Long Beach, CA

Hiram Gonzalez
Acme Canvas & Rope Co.
Moca, PR

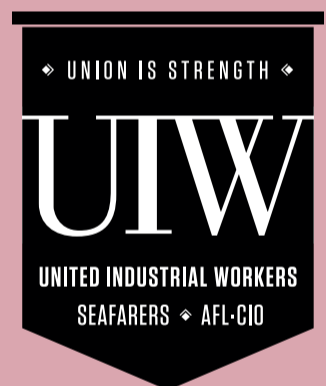
Francisco Resendez
Crown Cork & Seal
Channelview, TX

Macendonio Sanchez
Juanita's Foods
Long Beach, CA

David Lutz
Sipco Oil Corp.
Brick, NJ

Carol Hollenbach
A & E Products Group
Frackville, PA

Pedro Perez
American Casting & Mfg. Corp.
Bronx, NY



Gone But Not Forgotten

ISAAC CROXTON

Pensioner Isaac Croxton, 89, passed away on July 28. Brother Croxton was born in North Carolina. Brother Croxton became a member of UIW in 1989 while working with Victory Refrigeration and worked there until he began receiving retirement stipends in 2004. He lived in Philadelphia.

CHARLES PICKUL

Pensioner Charles Pickul, 78, died on July 31. He was born in Philadelphia. Brother Pickul signed on with the UIW in 1989 while working with Victory Refrigeration. He began receiving pension in 2010 and was a resident of Conshohocken, Pennsylvania.

GEORGE SMITH

Pensioner George Smith 73, died on August 6. Born in Queens, New York, Brother Smith joined the UIW in 1969 while working with Milonic Metal Fab Inc. He began receiving his pension in 2014. He made his home in Kissimmee, Florida.

NANCY HAINES

Pensioner Nancy Haines, 82, has passed away. Sister Haines was born in Sunbury, Pennsylvania. Sister Haines became a member of UIW in 1980 while working with Kingsford Products and worked there until she began receiving retirement stipends in 2005. She lived in Lancaster, Ohio.

PATSY WRIGHT

Pensioner Patsy Wright, 83, has passed away. Born in Abilene, Texas, she became a member of UIW in 1978 while working with Crown Cork & Seal. She continued to work with the company until she retired in 2002. Sister Wright made her home in Abilene, Texas.

JOYCE PICKETT

Pensioner Joyce Pickett, 83, died on August 20. Sister Pickett was born in Harlem, New York, and joined the union in 1963. She worked at Trenton Textile Engineering and Manufacturing Co. until she began receiving her pension in 2002. She made her residence in Trenton City, New Jersey.

EUGENE ROUNDS

Pensioner Eugene Rounds, 84, passed away on October 8. He was born in Glens Falls, New York. Brother Rounds became a UIW member in 1982 and worked with Progressive Driver Services Inc. until he retired in 2000. He made his home in Horicon in his home state of New York.

RICHARD GUTIERREZ

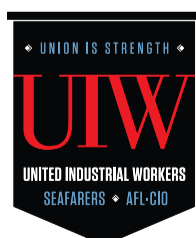
Pensioner Richard Gutierrez, 76, passed away on September 9. He was born in Houston and became a member of UIW in 1973. He worked with Crown Cork & Seal from the time he joined the union until he began receiving retirement stipends in 2009. Brother Gutierrez resided in Pasadena, Texas.

Celebrate savings

Celebrate the holidays with union member only discounts. Thousands of union families save money every day by taking advantage of exclusive benefits from **Union Plus**. Join them in accessing all kinds of discounts.



Exclusive discounts for union families



See more at
unionplus.org



UIW-HOL-12-8-23

Beck Notice

Notice to Employees Covered by Union Agreements Regulated Under the National Labor Relations Act

The United Industrial, Service, Transportation, Professional and Government Workers of North America (UIW) assists employees by representing them in all aspects of their employment and work with various industries in job sites throughout North America and the United States Virgin Islands. For the most part, the union spends a majority of its financial resources on collective bargaining activity and employee representation services. In addition to these expenditures, the union also spends resources on a variety of other efforts such as organizing, publications, political activities and community services. All of these services advance the interests of the union and its membership.

This annual notice is required by law and is sent to advise employees represented by the United Industrial Workers about their rights and obligations concerning payment of union dues. This notice contains information which will allow you to understand the advantages and benefits of being a union member in good standing. It will also provide you with detailed information as to how to become an agency fee payor. An agency fee payor is an employee who is not a member of the union but who meets his or her financial obligation by making agency fee payments. With this information, you will be able to make an informed decision about your status with the United Industrial Workers.

1. Benefits of union membership - While non-members do not receive material benefits from a union presence in their workplace, there are significant benefits to retaining full membership in the union. Among the many benefits and opportunities available to a member of the United Industrial Workers are the right to attend union meetings, the right to vote for candidates for union office and the right to run for union office. Members also have the right to participate in the development of contract proposals and participate in contract ratification and strike votes. Members may also play a role in the development and formulation of union policies.

2. Cost of union membership - Dues for UIW members are based upon an employee's hourly wage. Individuals pay two (2) times the UIW member's hourly wage with a \$20.00 (twenty dollar) minimum, and the payment is generally done through payroll deductions during the first pay period of each month.

3. Agency fee payors - Employees who choose not to become union members may become agency fee payors. As a condition of employment, in States which permit such arrangements, individuals are

obligated to make payments to the union in the form of an agency fee. The fee these employees pay is to support the core representational services that the union provides. These services are those related to the collective bargaining process, contract administration and grievance adjustments. Examples of these activities include, but are not limited to, the negotiation of collective bargaining agreements, the enforcement and administration of collective bargaining agreements and meetings with employers and employees. Union services also include representation of employees during disciplinary meetings, grievance and arbitration proceedings, National Labor Relations Board hearings and court litigation.

Employees who pay agency fees are not required to pay for expenses not germane to the collective bargaining process. Examples of these expenses would be expenses required as a result of community service, legislative activities and political affairs.

4. Amount of agency fee - As noted above, dues objectors may pay a fee which represents the costs of expenses related to those supporting the collective bargaining process. After review of all expenses during the 2022 calendar year, the fee cost associated with this representation amounts to 97.27 percent of the dues amount an employee would pay for that year.

As a result, this would be the percentage applied to the agency fee calculation for the 2024 calendar year. This means that any individual who elects to pay agency fees and submits a letter between December 1, 2023 and November 30, 2024 will have this calculation applied to their 2023 dues payment which may still be owed to the union. As noted below however, to continue to receive the agency fee reduction effective January 2025, your objection must be received by December 1, 2024.

A report which delineates chargeable and non-chargeable expenses is available to you free of charge. You may receive a copy of this report free of charge by writing to: Secretary-Treasurer, United Industrial Workers, 5201 Capital Gateway Drive, Camp Springs, MD 20746. This report is based upon an audited financial report of the union's expenses during 2022.

Please note that as the chargeable and non-chargeable expenses may change each year, the agency fee amount may also fluctuate each year. Individuals who are entitled to pay agency fees and wish to pay fees rather than dues, must elect this

option each year by filing an objection in accordance with the procedure noted below.

5. Filing of objections - If you choose to object to paying dues, an objection must be filed annually. To receive the deduction beginning in January of each year, you must file by the beginning of December in the prior year. An employee may file an objection at any time during the year, however the reduction will only apply prospectively and only until December 31 of that calendar year. Reductions in dues will not be applied retroactively. As noted above, each year the amount of the dues reduction may change based upon an auditor's report from a previous year.

The objection must be sent in writing to Agency Fee Payor Objection Administration, Secretary-Treasurer's Office, United Industrial Workers, 5201 Capital Gateway Drive, Camp Springs, MD 20746.

6. Filing a challenge - Upon receiving this notice of calculation of the chargeable expenditures related to core representation activities, an objector shall have 45 days to submit a challenge with the secretary-treasurer's office if he or she believes that the calculation of chargeable activities is incorrect. Every person who wishes to object to the calculation of chargeable expenses has a legal right to file such an objection.

7. Appeal procedure - Upon receiving the challenge at the end of the 45-day period, the union will consolidate all appeals and submit them to an independent arbitrator. The presentation to the arbitrator will be either in writing or at a hearing. The method of the arbitration will be determined by the arbitrator. If a hearing is held, any objector who does not wish to attend may submit his/her views in writing by the date of the hearing.

If a hearing is not held, the arbitrator will set the dates by which all written submissions will be received.

The costs of the arbitration shall be borne by the union. Individuals submitting challenges will be responsible for all the costs associated with presenting their appeal. The union will have the burden of justifying its calculations.

The UIW works very hard to ensure that all of its members receive the best representation possible. On behalf of all the UIW officers and employees, I would like to thank you for your continuing support.

Sincerely
Tom Orzechowski
Secretary-Treasurer

Union Member Rights, Officer Responsibilities Under The Labor-Management Reporting and Disclosure Act

The Labor-Management Reporting and Disclosure Act (LMRDA) guarantees certain rights to union members and imposes certain responsibilities on union officers. The Office of Labor-Management Standards (OLMS) enforces many LMRDA provisions while other provisions, such as the bill of rights, may only be enforced by union members through private suit in Federal court.

Union Member Rights

Bill of Rights - Union members have:
- Equal rights to participate in union activities
- Freedom of speech and assembly
- Voice in setting rates of dues, fees, and assessments

- Protection of the right to sue
- Safeguards against improper discipline

Copies of Collective Bargaining Agreements: Union members and nonunion employees have the right to receive or inspect copies of collective bargaining agreements.

Reports: Unions are required to file an initial information report (Form LM-1), copies of constitutions and bylaws, and an annual financial report (Form LM-2/3/4) with OLMS. Unions must make the reports available to members and permit members to examine supporting records for just cause. The reports are public information and copies are available from OLMS.

Officer Elections: Union members have the right to:

- Nominate candidates for office
- Run for office
- Cast a secret ballot
- Protest the conduct of an election

Officer Removal: Local union members have the right to an adequate procedure for the removal of an elected officer guilty of serious misconduct.

Trusteeships: Unions may only be placed in trusteeship by a parent body for the reasons specified in the LMRDA.

Prohibition Against Certain Discipline: A union or any of its officials may not fine, expel, or otherwise discipline a member for exercising any LMRDA right.

Prohibition Against Violence: No one may use or threaten to use force or violence to interfere with a union member in the exercise of LMRDA rights.

Union Officer Responsibilities
Financial Safeguards: Union officers have a duty to manage the funds and property of the union solely for the benefit of the union and its members in accordance with the union's constitution and bylaws. Union officers or employees who embezzle or steal union funds or other assets commit a Federal crime punishable by a fine and/or imprisonment.

Bonding: Union officers or employees who handle union funds or property must be bonded to provide protection against losses if their union has property and annual financial receipts which exceed \$5,000.

Labor Organization Reports: Union officers must:

- File an initial information report (Form LM-1) and annual financial reports (Forms LM-2/3/4) with OLMS.

- Retain the records necessary to verify the reports for at least five years.

Officer Reports: Union officers and employees must file reports concerning any loans and benefits received from, or certain financial interests in, employers whose employees their unions represent and businesses that deal with their unions.

Officer Elections: Unions must:

- Conduct elections for officers of national unions or intermediary districts at least every four years by secret ballot.

- Conduct regular elections in accordance with their constitution and bylaws and preserve all records for one year.

- Mail a notice of election to every member at least 15 days prior to the election.

- Comply with a candidate's request to distribute campaign material.

- Not use union funds or resources to promote any candidate (nor may employer funds or resources be used).

- Permit candidates to have election observers.
- Allow candidates to inspect the union's membership list once within 30 days prior to the election.

Restrictions on Holding Office: A person convicted of certain crimes may not serve as a union officer, employee, or other representative of a union for up to 13 years.

Loans: A union may not have outstanding loans to any one officer or employee that in total exceed \$2,000 at any time.

Fines: A union may not pay the fine of any officer or employee convicted of any willful violation of the LMRDA.

Note: The above is only a summary of the LMRDA. Full text of the Act, which comprises Sections 401-531 of Title 29 of the United States Code, may be found in many public libraries, or by writing the U.S. Department of Labor, Office of Labor-Management Standards, 200 Constitution Ave., NW, Room N-5616, Washington, DC 20210, or on the internet at www.dol.gov

UIW Directory

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(410) 327-4900

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2800 South High St.
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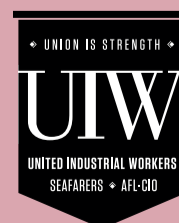
ST. CROIX, USVI
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SHBP Hosts Flu Shot Clinic at HQ

Seafarers Health and Benefits Plans (SHBP) hosted their yearly flu shot clinic in October. Many staff members at Headquarters participated, reducing their chances of catching the most recent version of the influenza virus.

In the top left photo, Larry Bull (left) strikes a fearful pose with the pharmacy technician.

Lance Thompson (top right photo, left) bravely bares his arm in preparation for his inoculation.

UIW Shop Steward Gloria Ricks (bottom left photo, left) smiles as the pharmacy tech readies her shot.

Below, in the bottom right photo, Megan Wathen looks away right before receiving her flu vaccine.



Federation, Microsoft Announce 'First of Its Kind' Agreement

From the AFL-CIO, to which the UIW is affiliated:

The American Federation of Labor and Congress of Industrial Organizations (AFL-CIO) and Microsoft Corp. on Monday announced the formation of a new partnership to create an open dialogue to discuss how artificial intelligence (AI) must anticipate the needs of workers and include their voices in its development and implementation. This partnership is the first of its kind between a labor organization and a technology company to focus on AI and will deliver on three goals: (1) sharing in-depth information with labor leaders and workers on AI technology trends, (2) incorporating worker perspectives and expertise in the development of AI technology, and (3) helping shape public policy that supports the technology skills and needs of frontline workers.

Building upon the historic neutrality agreement the Communications Workers of America negotiated with Microsoft covering video game workers at Activision and ZeniMax, as well as the labor principles announced by Microsoft in June 2022, the partnership also includes an agreement with Microsoft that provides a neutrality framework for worker organizing by AFL-CIO affiliate unions. This framework confirms a joint commitment to respect the right of employees to form or join unions, to develop positive and cooperative labor-management relationships, and to negotiate collective bargaining agreements that will support workers in an era of rapid technological change.

"This partnership reflects a recog-

nition of the critical role workers play in the development, deployment, and regulation of AI and related technologies," said AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler. "The labor movement looks forward to partnering with Microsoft to expand workers' role in the creation of worker-centered design, workforce training, and trustworthy AI practices. Microsoft's neutrality framework and embrace of workers' expertise signals that this new era of AI can also catalyze a new era of productive labor-management partnerships."

"By working directly with labor leaders, we can help ensure that AI serves the country's workers," said Brad Smith, vice chair and president of Microsoft. "This ground-breaking partnership honors the rights of workers, learns from the advice of labor leaders as we develop technology, and helps us provide people with the skills that will become essential in a new AI era."

The partnership will deliver on the following goals:

AI education for workers and students: Microsoft will provide formal learning opportunities on the latest and prospective developments in AI, providing labor leaders and workers with critical information and insights on this new technology as it evolves.

This will begin with learning sessions that will take place during the winter of 2024 facilitated by Microsoft's AI experts, who will provide information about how AI works and where it's going, outline its opportunities, and analyze the potential challenges. These sessions will be augmented by on-demand digital resources that labor leaders and workers can access online. Working with

the American Federation of Teachers, Microsoft will explore joint opportunities for career and technical education work that prepares students for high-paying jobs of tomorrow. In addition, they will hold deep-dive and experiential workshops from 2024 through 2026 that will be tailored to specific careers and roles.

Direct feedback from labor leaders and workers: To ensure that the expertise and perspectives of workers inform the work of Microsoft's AI developers, the partners have developed a mechanism for labor leaders and workers to share experiential insights, concerns and feedback directly to the people who develop this technology. This collaboration will begin with a focus on unions and workers in selected key sectors.

This collaboration will start this winter and take the form of Microsoft-hosted labor summits. The partners will bring labor leaders and workers together with Microsoft's key AI product developers, researchers and business leaders for intensive discussions intended to co-design and develop "worker-centered technology."

Joint policy and skills development: As Congress debates future AI and workforce legislation in the committees of the House and Senate and the bipartisan AI Insight Forums, the AFL-CIO and Microsoft will join forces to propose and support policies that will equip workers with the essential skills, knowledge and economic support needed to thrive in an AI-powered economy. The two organizations will support the expansion of registered apprenticeships, particularly in nontraditional tech occupations, and advocate for funding for

Career and Technical Education.

On the AI curriculum front, LinkedIn Generative AI content will be tailored to specific sectors most affected by AI, and Microsoft and the AFL-CIO's Technology Institute will jointly develop and implement new content and professional learning opportunities to prepare workers for the future workplace.

Both partners acknowledge AI creates a real capacity to enhance workers' jobs if used to augment work rather than diminish workers' agency and responsibilities. According to new polling by AFL-CIO, 70% of workers worry about being replaced by AI. At the same time, a recent Microsoft study of workers found that 70% would delegate as much work as possible to AI to lessen their workloads. To improve work while creating richer possibilities for our lives on the whole, the transition to an AI-assisted future must center workers' voices. That's why Microsoft and the AFL-CIO have created this labor-tech partnership—to make sure workers have a voice in the process and that their needs are understood.

