

The United Worker

The United Worker is also available online at www.uiwunion.org

Volume 51, Number 1

January - March

2025

Amid Company Changes, Benefits of Union Membership at Tempur Sealy Remain Consistent, UIW Members Say



From left to right are Tempur Sealy Shop Stewards Celia Ortiz and Karl Boyd, UIW Representative Samuel Irizarry, Shop Steward Glenn Jordan, and National UIW Director Karen Horton-Gennette.

Over the years, the mattress-building industry has undergone significant changes. Customers' shopping habits have adapted to a more modernized, online approach to bed-buying, and the business model has been modified to meet the ever-changing needs of retailers, hoteliers and consumers alike.

To keep up with the shifting tides of the mattress industry, Tempur Sealy, best known for its popular mattress brands such as Tempur-Pedic®, Sealy® and Stearns & Foster®, and Mattress Firm Group Inc. ("Mattress Firm"), the nation's largest mattress specialty retailer, merged in 2013 to

help stabilize business and control distribution channels. On Feb. 5 of this year, Tempur Sealy announced its acquisition of Mattress Firm. With that addition, policies and leadership roles within the company have also changed.

Despite the recent alterations made to the company's structure at large, UIW members and long-time employees of the Tempur Sealy factory in Hagerstown, Maryland, say that the benefits of their union membership remain consistent.

Brenda Franklin, a UIW member and mattress build lead, has worked with Tem-

pur Sealy for eight years. Franklin serves as a pinch hitter of sorts, filling in where help is needed in her section of the factory, from line loaders to builders and anything else in between.

"I love being a lead," she says. "I'm actually off the table-working and doing a lot of running around, but it was much harder for me, being on that (production) table as a woman. I was the only woman ever to have been on the matt build team."

Franklin enjoys the benefits afforded to her through her membership, saying, "I like the union's perks. I use a (Union Plus credit) card, and I go to hotels, outlets. I get a lot of discounts."

Additionally, as a member of the safety committee, she is confident in the surroundings and workflow at the Hagerstown plant.

Another union member and long-time employee, **Tony Ware**, worked at Sealy back in 1993. At that time, the factory was in Williamsport, Maryland. Although he has been involved with the company for 20 years, he left to pursue his own flooring business and then returned after his daughter recently graduated from high school.

Upon his rehiring, Ware mentioned the benefits he received when he returned to Tempur Sealy. "I came back to work here because my daughter graduated and I didn't want to miss any of her sporting events from the university she's attending," he said of his decision to resume employment with Tempur Sealy. Ware's daughter attends Penn State, which is a few hours away, making this a convenient location for him to travel from so he can always be there to sup-

port his daughter.

Ware recalls how he earned enough money and had flexibility to put himself through school during his first stint with the Tempur Sealy in his youth. He reminisced about being able to arrive in the morning, leave for class from noon to 2 p.m., and then come back to finish his shift restarting at 2:30 p.m.

Since then, the rates of pay have changed for Tempur Sealy employees. What now is an hourly pay rate, used to be paid per piece produced. When he first returned, he went back to the binding area he previously worked in, the tape edge part of the factory. Nowadays he's working in the glue bridge section.

"I'm a lot older, I don't need to grind as much," he says. Luckily, with strong input from the union, the company has remained flexible and accommodating to Ware's needs during this second go-round, which further solidified his decision to return.

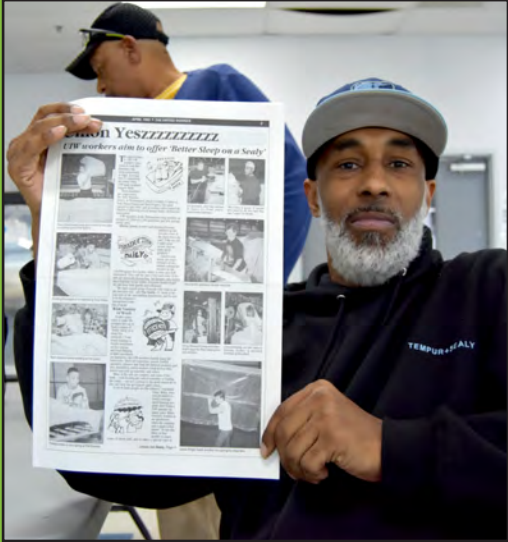
Shop Steward and Sewer **Celia Ortiz** also enjoys working at Tempur Sealy for the flexibility it offers, thanks in large part to the UIW. This is her second job since emigrating to the United States, and she loves what she does.

"I came because my mom was living here and she's getting older," she says. "When I have to take her to an appointment, I can take an hour and then come back to work. I feel like whenever I have any issues, I can talk to [the management team] and they work with me."

Though Ortiz has been working at Sealy for three and a half years, she's been sewing for two decades. "I like creating the new beds and I like sewing and seeing how

Continued on back page

Still Union Strong, 30 Years Later



Pictured above is UIW member Tony Ware, who initially began his career at Tempur Sealy back in 1993. He is holding an issue of the United Worker from that same year, which included a photo of him taken during a shop visit.

ADDITIONAL TEMPUR SEALY PHOTOS ON PAGE 3

From the President

The Path Forward as One Team



David Heindel

One of our union's most important affiliations is the one we enjoy with the AFL-CIO, the nation's largest labor organization. I'm honored to serve on the federation's executive council; we met in mid-March in the nation's capital to candidly examine the political landscape while charting a successful course for America's working families.

In part, we concluded that during the period of this Congress and administration, with elected officials from both parties seeking to stand with working people, these leaders should understand that it is their actions – not just their words – that matter, and we will decide whether those actions are truly pro-worker based on the following questions:

Do those actions promote, expand, and strengthen the right of all workers to organize

free and independent labor unions and collectively bargain, and does the elected official defend workers whenever we seek to exercise those rights?

Do those actions protect basic civil and human rights, including the right of workers to be free of discrimination in all its forms? Do they support tax policies that assure all parts of society pay their fair share and that reinforce working people's ability to lead productive lives?

Do those actions advance policies that create a level playing field for all workers, and family-supporting jobs for our nation, with strong wage and hour, health and safety, and other labor standards? Do they assure that all workers have opportunities to maintain a decent standard of living, including access to health care, education, Social Security, and other critical government services and benefits?

Do those actions adhere to constitutional principles and ensure a government that is responsive to the needs and demands of working people, including via the right to vote, the freedom of speech and association, adequately funded labor agencies to enforce our protections on the job, and a functioning, fully staffed civil service committed to the U.S. Constitution and serving the American people?

I'm not exactly giving away the answers to the test by saying that in order to truly stand with the working people of this country, politicians and appointees alike had better answer in the affirmative to all of those questions, and they'd better back up the answers with tangible actions.

While we could fill this entire edition with discussion about current events that are important to workers, I want to touch on one in particular. Previous administrations from both major political parties have failed to heed legitimate concerns about the ramifications of globalization and trade policies that put near-term profits over American jobs. Responsible domestic companies, workers and unions were left to spend millions of dollars on trade enforcement cases to protect communities hollowed out by dumped and illegally subsidized goods.

The use of tariffs to ensure fair trade is a legitimate policy tool. However, the weaponization of tariffs to extract concessions unrelated to fair trade enforcement and predatory trade practices creates chaos without the promise of a better tomorrow and domestic job creation.

During our executive council meetings, the AFL-CIO resolved to push Congress and the administration to ensure that hardworking Americans are not harmed by the implementation of tariffs. Corporations like Amazon and Walmart already reap massive gains from the lowest U.S. corporate tax rates in a century. The administration and Congress must hold accountable companies who try to pass the cost of tariffs onto consumers or use such tariffs as an excuse to artificially inflate prices.

Tariffs can be part of a conversation about a strategic and meaningful plan to rebuild and advance manufacturing in America. Without a plan to rebuild and support our industrial base, renegade corporations will continue outsourcing jobs to foreign countries that cheat the system, and passing tariff costs to consumers while reaping record profits and reducing national security.

Reps Upskill at Piney Point



From left to right in the above photo are UIW Representative Samuel Irizarry, Chief Shop Steward Ginger Bagwell, Shop Steward David Aud, UIW Representative Chad Partridge, Shop Stewards Kayla Fagan, Jasmine Franco, Denise Woodland and Toni Wills, UIW National Director Karen Horton-Gennette, Chief Shop Steward Cynthia Green, Shop Steward John Wiegman, and UIW Legal Counsel Stan Dubin.

UIW Representatives and Shop Stewards congregated in the Media Center on the campus of the SIU-affiliated Paul Hall Center for Maritime Training and Education (PHC) in Piney Point, Maryland, for additional training for their roles as representatives for their fellow union members on February 25.

UIW National Director Karen Horton-Gennette and UIW Legal Counsel Stan Dubin combined forces to lead the day-long session, providing several resources, anecdotes, and best practices to aid UIW membership with various work-related issues.

"People were very interested in learning, and everyone was excited to participate in the discussions we had today," said Dubin. "I hope that they've learned how to do their job as stewards more efficiently and to represent the UIW."

The UIW representatives who attended the training were Samuel Irizarry and Chad Partridge. Shop stewards **Kayla Fagan, Jasmine Franco, Toni Wills, Denise Woodland, John Wiegman, David Aud,** and chief shop stewards **Ginger Bagwell** and **Cynthia Green** were also in attendance.

This training, which occurs as needed when UIW members step into new leadership positions, helps shop stewards and representatives effectively mediate various situations that may arise between rank-and-file members and their employers.

Irizarry, the new union representative for Tempur Sealy, in Hagerstown, Maryland, gained a fair amount of insight into his new role during the training. "Today was very informative. I'm new to the position, so I'm fairly green with all of this," he said. "It was great to go through the procedures and listen to people's stories. I hope to apply everything I've learned today in my new role."

Participants learned tips for dealing with legal proceedings and how to successfully address conflicts that may arise between employers and employees and between the union members themselves. This meeting, which lasted for a full workday, served as both a refresher course and a troubleshooting roundtable to effectively address worker concerns on behalf of the union members whom they represent.

Fagan, who is also new to her position as shop steward for Piney Point's Instructional Staff, said, "I learned a lot. [The training] was interesting and

[Karen and Stan] shared lots of good information."

Woodland, training coordinator for the claims department who serves as a UIW shop steward for several departments at Piney Point, said, "Today, I did learn a lot of different things. We discussed some things that I didn't know about, which helped me understand more about my role."

Learning more about what it takes to be a good leader was a primary takeaway from the training for Wills, payroll processor and shop steward at UIW headquarters. She stressed the importance of being a good listener and making sure members' concerns are heard. Under her stewardship, she hopes to make sure all members are protected; she believes that the training has given her more tools to help her do so.

"The best thing that a shop steward can learn is how to protect someone and how to service the union," said Franco, who works in the membership assistance office of the UIW's parent union (the Seafarers) and is a shop steward at headquarters. "I think that this opportunity that we had today was very important, so that there is no ignorance when dealing with members and how to best defend them."

"Today's training taught me new ways to handle situations with employers, employees, or any other situations that may arise," said Green, chief shop Steward at UIW headquarters. Green agreed that it was beneficial to reiterate best practices for dealing with issues that shop stewards run into while in the line of duty: "Everybody has to be treated equally and fairly. Everybody has to be on the same page and on one accord, which is why we have best practices for shop stewards to manage issues and stand up for our membership."

"For me, this training is so important for the shop stewards," said Horton-Gennette. "They have a very hard, very important role, which is to look after their members and protect the UIW. They're always on the ground running. They're the ones that are dealing with employees, with management, and just having to be face to face with the issues every day."

"We conduct this training as often as possible so that our shop stewards can have a better grasp of their duties, and so that they can review proper methods for handling different concerns as they arise in their respective union shops," she concluded.



The United Worker

Vol. 51, No. 1

January-March

2025

The official publication of the United Industrial, Service, Transportation, Professional and Government Workers of North America, AGLIW, AFL-CIO, 5201 Capital Gateway Drive, Camp Springs, Maryland 20746. Telephone (301) 899-0675. Direct inquiries to Aja Neal, editor.

Headquarters: David Heindel, president; Tom Orzechowski, secretary-treasurer; Karen Horton-Gennette, UIW national director.

Atlantic Region: Joseph Soresi, vice president

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



PRO Act Reintroduced

Editor's note: This article was written by Mark Gruenberg from Press Associates. It has been lightly edited for local style.

With strong union support, a bipartisan group of lawmakers – led by Sen. Bernie Sanders (Ind-Vermont) – accompanied by other Democrats and Rep. Brian Fitzpatrick (R-Pennsylvania) reintroduced the Protect The Right To Organize (PRO) Act, labor’s top legislative priority.

But while the March 5 press conference in the nation’s capital turned into a parade of endorsements – led by Sanders, AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler and Senate Minority Leader Charles Schumer (D-New York) – its prospects are uncertain at best in the Republican-led Senate and virtually DOA in the highly partisan Republican-led House Education and the Workforce Committee.

Even Sanders recognized the problem, by implication, when he mentioned that when he chaired the Senate Labor Committee in the last Congress, the panel approved it. What he did not say is that it was by a party-line vote.

Further, “sadly, it never came to a vote” on the Senate floor, Sanders said. Schumer, then majority leader, wouldn’t call it up unless Sanders could find enough senators to halt a planned Republican filibuster, orchestrated by the corporate class. He couldn’t. Sanders, politely, didn’t say that.

That won’t stop Sanders, the federation, House Education and Workforce top Democrat Bobby Scott of Virginia and their allies from trying again. After all, the story they heard from Kieran Cuadras, of Wells Fargo Workers United, a Communications Workers-aided campaign, spurred them on.

Cuadras works in the financial services sector. It’s one of the least unionized. As recent prosecutions, scandals, high interest rates charged to borrowers and low interest or none paid to depositors reflect, it’s also among the most corrupt in its executive suites and trading arms.

Indeed, it was a massive scandal at Wells Fargo, where its traders fabricated accounts in customers’ names, then reaped the proceeds, that prompted the unionization drive. The Wells Fargo Workers United won, but with a struggle marked by rampant criminal labor law-breaking by the bank.

Cuadras, a 22-year Wells Fargo worker, as a teller, branch manager and investigator, helped lead the campaign. She’s familiar with unions, as her husband is a Laborer.

After the massive federal fine for the scandal, “I’d like to say things have changed” at the bank, Cuadras said. “But I saw firsthand how Wells Fargo still uses shortcuts to create the illusion of fewer complaints” investigators must solve. “They’re closing too many investigations prematurely. Managers pressure workers on ‘meeting sales outcomes,’ which is just code (words) for sales quotas.”

“We chose to form a union to change the policies that led to the fake-accounts scandal and to protect our jobs from being outsourced,” she said. Then the trouble began.

Wells Fargo managers called workers

into private one-by-one conference calls and quizzed them about the union. They held so-called “captive audience” meetings – now outlawed in several states – featuring anti-union harangues full of lies about how the union “would take their money.” Lawyers from a top union-buster, Littler Mendelson, led those sessions, the NLRB reports. Managers even threatened the workers would be fired.

And just before the union election last October, that’s what Wells Fargo bosses did. They fired, illegally, a dozen leaders of the organizing drive, Cuadras included. The union won anyway, but

Wells Fargo is appealing the victory and refuses to bargain. And all the tactics it used, except the captive audience meetings, but especially the firing threat and actual firings, broke labor law.

“CEOs have got to be held accountable for their illegal union-busting” said Cuadras. Which is the point of the legislation.

The PRO Act is designed to halt those abuses and enact protections, including mandatory arbitration of first contract disputes, card-check recognition, and higher fines for labor law-breaking, though not jail terms for malefactors. It would be the most consequential pro-worker labor law rewrite in decades.

The abuses have mounted ever since the Republican-crafted Taft-Hartley Act of 1947 emasculated the original New Deal-era National Labor Relations Act. It turned organizing drives into obstacle courses for workers seeking rights on the job. As speakers at the PRO Act session pointed out, it’s profitable for firms to break the law against their workers, because penalties are so light.

The Wells Fargo case is hung up again....

Shuler declared the time is politically right to pass the PRO Act. Organized labor’s popularity – a 70%-71% approval rating in the last two annual Gallup polls, is at an all-time high. “Every other issue splits right down the middle,” she noted.

Though Shuler didn’t say so, the mass and illegal firings of federal workers – union and non-union – this year have driven union membership up. For example, the Government Employees set a goal of adding 25,000 new members, net, for this year. They exceeded it on Feb. 10. And National Federation of Federal Employees President Randy Erwin reports his union, a Machinists sector, has added 10,000 members this year.

“Workers are seeing (corporate profits) go up and up,” Shuler said, prompting Sanders to say that in the last 52 years, not only has union density declined, due to corporate hate, but so have wages, adjusted for inflation. “A union member makes more money, has more power and has more of a voice on the job,” the AFL-CIO leader added. But the corporate bosses hate unions so much “because they think we’re a threat” to their hegemony.

“Workers are unified,” she declared. “They see the rules are written for the richest and most powerful, and they want to stand up for fairness and opportunity.”

Tempur Sealy Wall of Fame



Tempur Sealy's Wall of Fame honors longtime employees for their tenure with the company. In the top photo, Shop Steward Karl Boyd, who has been with the company for 12 years, stands next to his wall of fame photo. Remziye Sen, who works as a Capper in the factory, is in the center photo. Her wall of fame photo (bottom) shows that she began working at Tempur Sealy in 2007.

Mr. & Mrs. Claus Arrive at Piney Point in Style



Santa and Mrs. Claus shocked everyone when they arrived to the Piney Point holiday party aboard a firetruck. The UIW members and their families were urgently in need of some holiday cheer, so they rushed over as fast as they could!

HQ Christmas Party Spreads Holiday Cheer

Families came together for the annual holiday party at headquarters for an all-ages celebration with elves (on stilts!), arts and crafts, face painting, balloon animals, and more! Mr. & Mrs. Claus also made an appearance and graciously posed for photos with members and their loved ones.



Chavez-DeRemer Sworn In As 30th Secretary of Labor

Former U.S. Rep. Lori Chavez-DeRemer on March 11 was sworn in as the thirtieth U.S. Secretary of Labor after being confirmed by the U.S. Senate on a bipartisan vote of 67-32.

“I’m deeply grateful for this opportunity to continue serving my country, and I’ll work tirelessly to help President Trump put the American worker first,” said Chavez-DeRemer, the daughter of a union member. “This administration has a clear mandate to renew the American Dream for hardworking men and women across the country. As a small businesswoman and the daughter of a Teamster, I will act on my experience and work with business and labor to support good-paying jobs, grow our economy, and ensure every American can enjoy a comfortable retirement.”

When Trump announced her nomination last November, he said he looks forward to “working with her to create tremendous opportunity for American workers, to expand training and apprenticeships, to grow wages and improve working conditions, to bring back our manufacturing jobs.”

In 2022, Chavez-DeRemer was elected to the U.S. House of Representatives by Oregon’s Fifth Congressional District, making history as the first Republican woman and one of the first Latinas elected to Congress from the state. She served on the House committees on Agriculture; Education and the Workforce; and Transportation and Infrastructure.

AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler stated, “The AFL-CIO is encouraged by Chavez-DeRemer’s confirmation as Labor Secretary, given her history of supporting the freedom of workers to organize, join unions and other fundamental values of the Protect The Right To Organize (PRO) Act. “However, we remain clear-eyed that she’s joining an administration that’s been openly hostile to working people on many fronts in its first two months.”

Shuler noted that in Chavez-DeRemer’s confirmation hearing, the former lawmaker backtracked on supporting some PRO Act provisions. Chavez-DeRemer herself had said she endorsed it only to gain “a seat at” the congressional bargaining table if it ever passed.



Labor Secretary Lori Chavez-DeRemer

“Taking over the DOL in this administration is no easy task. Whether she is successful or not will depend on whether she uses her influence to be an effective voice for workers in a sea of Project 2025 appointees attempting to dismantle critical worker protections and priorities,” Shuler added.

American Federation of Teachers President Randi Weingarten stated, “We will work with anyone who wants to embrace an opportunity agenda that helps workers and families get ahead. That is in the DNA of the labor movement and of public education. Secretary Chavez-DeRemer has a big job. She must help her party decide if the Department will fulfill its mission of promoting the interests of working people – including respecting collective bargaining and organizing – or whether it becomes captive to the interests of the oligarch class.”

Amalgamated Transit Union President John Costa, Laborers President Brent Booker and North America’s Building Trades President Sean McGarvey also welcomed Chavez-DeRemer. “We hope she has that same

commitment to ensuring workers have the ability to stand together” for “fair wages, safe working conditions, and a voice in their workplace. We trust she will defend workers’ rights to organize and bargain collectively,” said Costa.

McGarvey cited Chavez-DeRemer’s support for building trades issues, “steadfast commitment to workforce development, prevailing wage, and expanding access to middle-class, family-sustaining careers (which) make her an exceptional choice.”

Labor reporter Mark Gruenberg pointed out that Chavez-DeRemer “actually drew flak from the Republican right because she had insisted on working across the aisle, and because she endorsed the PRO Act.... Sen. Mitch McConnell (R-Kentucky) opposed Chavez-DeRemer. McConnell said she listened to ‘big labor bosses.’”

The only other Republicans who opposed her are Sens. Rand Paul (R-Kentucky), the chamber’s lead sponsor of a national right-to-work (for less) law, and Tedd Budd (R-North Carolina).

New UIW Pensioners

Maria Castro
Save the Queen LLC
Long Beach, CA

Sofia Oster
Evolution Hospitality
Baltimore, MD

Ana Vargas
Authentic Specialty Foods
Fontana, CA

Michael McGough
Crown Cork & Seal
Cisco, TX

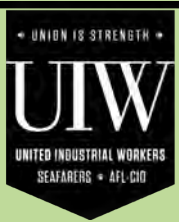
Elaine Stirling
National Fiberstock Inc.
Philadelphia, PA

Maria Rolan
Amer. Casting & Mfg. Corp.
Morovis, PR

Ramon Garcia
Victory Refrigeration
Camden, NJ

Brian Rose
Franklin International Inc.
Danville, KY

Carl Rice
Paulsen Wire Rope Corp.
Berwick, PA



Gone But Not Forgotten

JAMES O’MARRA

Pensioner James O’Marra, 77, passed away on August 28. Brother O’Marra was born in Glens Falls, New York and became a member of the UIW in 1984. He was employed with Progressive Driver Services Inc. until he began receiving retirement stipends in 2002. Brother O’Marra made his residence in Pinellas Park, Florida.

LEODEGARIO LOZANO SANTILLAN

Pensioner Leodegario Lozano Santillan, 73, passed away on July 13. He was born in Zacatecas, Mexico. Brother Lozano Santillan became a UIW member in 1989

and worked at Juanita’s Foods. He began receiving his pension in 2023. Brother Lozano Santillan made his residence in Long Beach, California.

ROBERT KLINGER

Pensioner Robert Klinger, 80, passed away on August 27. He was born in Sunbury, Pennsylvania. Brother Klinger joined the UIW in 1964 and worked at Paulsen Wire Rope Corp. until he began receiving retirement stipends in 1993. Brother Klinger resided in Northumberland, Pennsylvania.

EDITH BROKENSHERE

Pensioner Edith Brokenshere, 80, passed away on September

23. Sister Brokenshere was born in Ashland, Pennsylvania and became a UIW member in 1972. She was employed with A&E Products Group until she began receiving her pension in 2004. Sister Brokenshere made her home in Schuylkill, Pennsylvania.

NORA HOLCOMB

Pensioner Nora Holcomb, 90, passed away on October 18. She was born in Blaine, Kentucky. Sister Holcomb became a member of the UIW in 1978 and worked at Church & Dwight Company Inc. until she began receiving her retirement stipends in 2005. She made her home in London, Ohio.

MILES BENFER

Pensioner Miles Benfer, 77, passed away on October 8. Brother Benfer was born in Beavertown, Pennsylvania and joined the UIW in 1970. He worked at Paulsen Wire Rope Corp. until he began receiving his pension in 1993. Brother Benfer made his home in Sunbury, Pennsylvania.

HUBERT THOMAS

Pensioner Hubert Thomas, 78, passed away on October 29. He was born in Abilene, Texas. Brother Thomas became a UIW member in 1978 and worked at Crown Cork & Seal until he began receiving his pension in 2005. He made his home in Anson, Texas.

Union Plus Benefits

How do you want to save money today?



Mortgage Program



Wireless Discounts

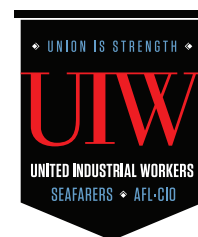


Auto Buying Service



Cash Back Shopping

See more at
unionplus.org



UIW-MULTI-4-3-25

Employees Honored for Years of Service Awards



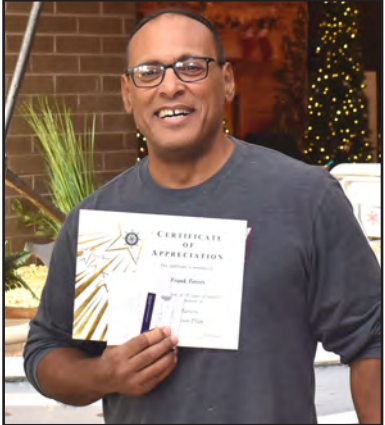
5 years - Headquarters (left photo) - Lori Currence, Lauren Moxley, Zachary Chase, Victoria Sacco, Jasmin Franco, and Kellie Rowley (not pictured). Piney Point (right photo) - Mark Buyes, Kalycia Banks, Candis Kreemer, John Otto, Paul Triantos, Adam Shiffer, Leigh Ann Koch-Dewitt, John Bell Jr., and William Ridgell (not pictured).



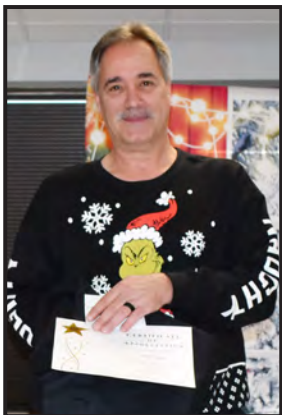
10 years - Headquarters (left photo) - Nicholas Merrill and Roseanne Fox (not pictured). Piney Point (right photo) - Cindy Springer, Tina Stevens, Donna Nelson, Christine Davis, Amber Rye, Christopher Raley, Mark Goldsmith, Patrick Schoenberger (not pictured), and Charles Noell (not pictured).



15 years - Headquarters (left photo) - Constance Young, Stacy Thacker, Brian Horton, Craig Floyd, Norma Ferguson-Pike, and Sherri Curtis. Piney Point (right photo) - Catherine Bean, Carol Strohmeier, David Aud, Monica Szepesi (not pictured), and Michael Roberts (not pictured).



20 years - Piney Point (left photo) - Kimberly Greenwell. **25 years** - Headquarters (center photo) Donna Brisco, Stephanie Baker, and Debra Miller. Piney Point (right photo) - Frank Torres.



35 years - Headquarters (left photo) - Tammy Kiley-Brazerol, Kristy Clements, and Catherine Ganoe (not pictured, retired). Piney Point (second photo from left) - Bonnie Johnson. **40 years** - Headquarters (second photo from right) John Sacco. **45 years** - Piney Point (right photo) - Kerrie Thompson.

UIW Directory

HEADQUARTERS
5201 Capital Gateway Drive
Camp Springs, MD 20746
(301) 899-0675

ANCHORAGE, AK
721 Sesame St.
Suite 1C 99503
(907) 561-4988

BALTIMORE, MD
2315 Essex St. 21224
(410) 327-4900

COLUMBUS, OH
2800 South High St.
P.O. Box 07770, 43207
(614) 497-2446

HONOLULU, HI
606 Kalihi Street 96819
(808) 845-5222

HOUSTON, TX
625 N. York Street 77003
(713) 659-5152

JACKSONVILLE, FL
5100 Belfort Rd. 32256
(904) 281-2622

JERSEY CITY, NJ
104 Broadway
Jersey City 07306
(201) 434-6000

JOLIET, IL
10 East Clinton St. 60432
(815) 723-8002

NEW ORLEANS, LA
3911 Lapalco Blvd.
Harvey LA 70058
(504) 328-7545

NORFOLK, VA
115 Third Street,
Norfolk VA 23510
(757) 622-1892

OAKLAND, CA
1121 7th St. 94607
(510) 444-2360

PHILADELPHIA, PA
2604 S. 4th St. 19148
(215) 336-3818

PINEY POINT, MD
45353 St. George's Avenue 20674
(301) 994-0010

SAN JUAN, PUERTO RICO
659 Hillside St, Summit Hills
San Juan, PR 00920
(939) 204-0337

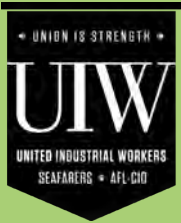
ST. CROIX, USVI
4031 Estate La Grande Princess
Suite 37
Christiansted, USVI 00820
(340) 773-6055

ST. LOUIS, MO
4581 Gravois Ave. 63116
(314) 752-6500

ST. THOMAS, USVI
3730 Altona & Welgunst
Suite 101
St. Thomas, USVI 00802
(340) 774-3895

TACOMA, WA
3411 S. Union Ave. 98409
(253) 272-7774

WILMINGTON, CA
510 N. Broad Ave. 90744
(310) 549-3920





The United Worker

Volume 51, Number 1

January - March

2025

Years of Service Awards Page 7

Great Benefits for UIW Members Persist at Tempur Sealy

Continued from page 1

everything comes together when I put the pieces together,” she says. Ortiz consistently strives to produce quality work and is proactive about learning new skills on the job. “I always try to do a good job,” she says. “I’m grateful for the opportunities that my supervisor gave me to learn in other areas, too.”

Recently, Ortiz was given a chance to act as a bilingual advocate for her fellow employees during the contract negotiation that took place in October. “In the last meeting we had for negotiation, that’s how they found out that it was important to have someone who speaks Spanish there. Because I was there, I was able to translate for employees who needed it, and I spoke for them when they had something to say or had any concerns,” says Ortiz.

“A lot of people here don’t speak a lot of English, so I can be their voice as another Spanish-speaking person,” she adds. “My own English has started to improve because it’s been 10 years since I moved here from my home country, but I never went to school here.”

Being a union member and shop steward adds to Ortiz’s job satisfaction at Tempur Sealy because she takes pride in being able to help her fellow employees. She ensures that those employees are adequately represented and if they have issues or grievances, that they’re able to express themselves clearly. “Sometimes other employees have great ideas they want to express, but the language barrier can be frustrating, even for me,” she says.

She is optimistic that her enthusiasm for her work will continue throughout her career at Tempur Sealy. “I feel very grateful to be doing something that I really like,” says Ortiz. “I can work together with my supervisors, or any other supervisors here, and they hear when you say you have a concern or a

suggestion. I like that they always hear what we have to say.”

Union member **Luis Espada**, who works in the mattress build section, has been happily employed at Tempur Sealy for two years. In fact, he fills various roles and provides coverage when other employees are absent.

He likes being a union member because he appreciates the UIW’s service, how they treat the other union members, and how they keep employees updated regarding changes that occur within the company. Espada also thinks that the shop stewards who represent them are good people. “It’s easy to get along with them. They’re good workers,” Espada says.

Espada believes that being part of the union has improved his life in many ways. “Well, it made me a better person. It made me consider, in general, how other people think, and other people’s feelings,” he says.

Being a union member also motivates him to go after more in his career and seek additional opportunities on the job. Espada, who is also bilingual and hails from Puerto Rico, is inspired by Ortiz’s experience advocating and translating for the Sealy employees that primarily communicate in Spanish. He hopes that he, too, can assist and represent other employees that may not speak English in negotiations and so that their concerns are considered.

“One of my goals is to end up becoming a shop steward, so that I can take care of others, too,” he says.

Last year, UIW members voted on a new collective bargaining agreement at Tempur Sealy International in Hagerstown, Maryland. The new contract passed and was ratified and employees have been enjoying the updated benefits ever since.



Pictured above is Shop Steward Glenn Jordan, Quilter. In the photo below is Kendall Henley, 4300 Operator.



Pictured above in the left photo are UIW member Brenda Franklin (at left) and shop steward Celia Ortiz. In the right photo, from left to right are UIW member Luis Espada, and Shop Stewards Celia Ortiz and Karl Boyd.



Pictured above is Darwin Sanchez, Flanger. In the photo below is Jeff Curtis, Machine Operator (Staples Grid).



In the left photo is Reyna Cruz, Vent Embroiderer, showing off her work. In the top right photo is Steven Ruiz, Palletizer Operations. Misty Burton, Quality Inspector is shown in the photo in the center right. The bottom photo on the right is Edgar Collado, Material Handler.

