

# The United Worker

The United Worker is also available online at [www.uiwunion.org](http://www.uiwunion.org)

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2025

## UIW Convention Unites Representatives, Delegates and Members from Near and Far



After day two's proceedings, the 2025 UIW convention attendees gathered for a photo op in the Michael Sacco Media Center.

UIW members and officials recently teamed up to map out a winning strategy for the union in the months and years ahead.

Meeting under the theme "Shaping Our Future," union personnel gathered in Piney Point, Maryland, Sept. 4-5 for the UIW's quadrennial convention. The host facility, the Paul Hall Center for Maritime Training and Education, employs UIW members in several different departments.

The previous convention (in 2021) was conducted online, due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

Among many other developments, delegates unanimously elected David Heindel as president, Karen Horton-Gennette as national director, and Tom Orzechowski as secretary-treasurer, in addition to electing regional vice presidents.

The convention offered attendees updates about the latest UIW happenings from each region. All sessions took place in the Michael Sacco Media Center, recently renamed for the former union president who passed away in late 2023.

To commence the first day's proceedings, Heindel honored his predecessor and also addressed the UIW's top concerns. He spoke about recent challenges such as those facing union members in the U.S. Virgin Islands and also celebrated the UIW's victories, like the successful organizing campaign at Maryland LIVE!, which added 125 new jobs to the union's roster. Heindel spoke of the union's tenacity, even in the face of opposition, and how that strength and togetherness will continue shaping a strong future for the UIW.

"Brothers and sisters, solidarity has always been the lifeblood of this union and of the labor movement," he said. "It is what carried us through the darkest times and what will carry us through the battles ahead. The UIW has never backed down, never broken ranks, and never forgotten that our strength is collective. That's why I am confident in our future. Together, with solidarity and

camaraderie as our compass, we will meet these challenges, seize new opportunities, and continue growing the UIW."

Following the president's remarks, attendees received a warm welcome to Piney Point from Seafarers International Union (SIU) Vice President Pat Vandegrift and heard the latest updates from the UIW Executive Board, courtesy of Orzechowski.

Guest speakers for this year's convention included SIU Political and Legislative Director Brian Schoeneman; Warren Nelson, attorney at Fisher & Phillips LLP; St. Mary's County Sheriff Steve Hall; Maritime Trades Department Executive Secretary-Treasurer Brittanie Potter; and Union Plus Representative Miguel Taylor.

The bulk of the convention consisted of reports and resolutions, read by union officials and delegates, detailing the most recent occurrences from each location where the UIW operates. On the meeting's first day, Monte Burgett presented the Great Lakes Region Vice President's report, and Dean Corgey presented the Gulf Coast Regional Vice President's report. On day two, Chad Partridge read the Midwest Region report; Joe Vincenzo presented the West Coast Region report and the Alaska Fisheries Division report; Joseph Soresi handled the East Coast/Atlantic Region Vice President's report; and Jacqueline Dickenson presented the Caribbean and Central American Region Vice President's report.

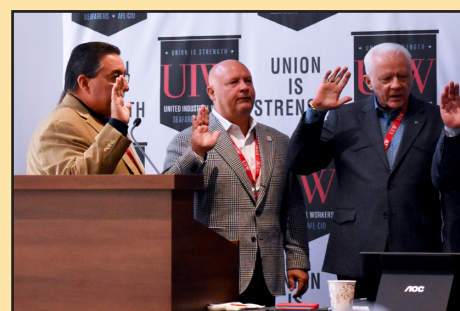
Horton-Gennette read the National Director's report, and Secretary-Treasurer Orzechowski presented his report as well.

On day one, Burgett read the Credentials Committee report; **Chad Partridge** read the Convention Arrangements report; and **Adellah Barry** read the Constitutional Legal Committee report. **Jeremy McFalls** read the Auditing Committee report, while **Javan Douglas** read the Resolutions Committee report and **Kevin Challenger** read the Civil Rights Committee report on day two. **John Merchant** also read Resolutions

## UIW Election Results



UIW President David Heindel (top photo, on right) and National Director Karen-Horton Gennette (left) were both re-elected to their positions and sworn in on the second day of the convention.



In the middle photo are President Heindel (left), Secretary-Treasurer Tom Orzechowski (second from left), and Gulf Region Vice President Dean Corgey.



In the bottom photo, from left to right are Gulf Region Vice President Dean Corgey, Atlantic Region Vice President Joseph Soresi, Great Lakes/Midwest Region Vice President Monte Burgett (the two regions have been combined into one), Caribbean and Central American Region Vice President Jacqueline Dickenson, West Coast Region Vice President Joe Vincenzo, and Legal Counsel Leslie Tarantola.

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## From the President

### 'Shaping Our Future'



David Heindel

*Editor's note: The following are the majority of UIW President David Heindel's opening remarks from the union's recent convention.*

Before moving forward, I must pause to honor my predecessor, the late UIW President Mike Sacco. We dedicated this building in Mike's honor a few short months ago, and even though we're coming up on two years since he passed away, his fighting spirit is alive and well in the UIW. Mike's legacy and his example will continue to inspire us and will serve as a guiding light as we are "Shaping Our Future."

Today, I believe the UIW is in good shape. We have much to be proud of, though plenty of challenges remain.

One such challenge is the ongoing struggle in the U.S. Virgin Islands, where working conditions at some facilities have deteriorated since the 2018 hurricanes and the pandemic. The lack of government action is unacceptable. We've filed grievances, OSHA complaints, and appealed to basic decency, but it hasn't been enough. Let me be clear, we will not stop until our members in the Virgin Islands get the safe and fair treatment they deserve. That is solidarity in action: standing together until the fight is won.

More broadly, the challenges we face mirror those across the labor movement. This administration has at times supported labor, but it has also allowed attacks on public-sector workers to go unchecked....

The UIW doesn't care about party labels. We stand with those who stand with working families, period. But make no mistake, when our existence is threatened, our answer is the same as it has always been: solidarity.

History shows what solidarity can deliver. In the depths of the Great Depression, it secured the 40-hour work week, overtime pay, and the passage of the National Labor Relations Act, guaranteeing workers the right to organize. In the 1950s and 60s, solidarity expanded to include racial and economic justice alongside civil rights. We weathered the Reagan years together, and more recently, the pandemic reignited worker activism at Starbucks, Amazon, Apple, and beyond. Each generation of workers has proven that when we stand together, we don't just survive, we progress.

The same holds true for the UIW. Since our last convention, we've delivered strong contracts across industries, proof that unity at the bargaining table works. Those contracts reflect the strength of our bargaining committees, our leadership, our rank-and-file members, and employers who recognize the value of a skilled, reliable workforce.

And solidarity also delivered victory in organizing. Just recently, we brought 125 new jobs into our Atlantic Region after a successful campaign at Maryland LIVE! That win, in today's tough environment, is no small feat. It proves what we already know, when workers stand together, we win.

Brothers and sisters, solidarity has always been the lifeblood of this union and of the labor movement. It is what carried us through the darkest times and what will carry us through the battles ahead. The UIW has never backed down, never broken ranks, and never forgotten that our strength is collective.

That's why I am confident in our future. Together, with solidarity and camaraderie as our compass, we will meet these challenges, seize new opportunities, and continue growing the UIW. The recent victory at Maryland LIVE! underscores my confidence in our union; my belief that we know how to win; and my commitment to continuing to work with all of you in Shaping Our Future.



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**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/Midwest Region:** Monte Burgett, vice president

**Gulf Coast Region:** Dean Corgey, vice president

**West Coast Region:** Joe Vincenzo, vice president



## Legislative Director Reinforces Importance of Grassroots Action



Brian Schoeneman addresses UIW Convention attendees on September 4.

Brian Schoeneman, the political legislative director for the UIW's parent union, urged convention delegates to stay involved and remain hopeful despite the many newsworthy challenges in our nation's capital.

Schoeneman spoke Sept. 4 in Piney Point, Maryland. He reassured listeners that, even amid the uncertainty of the current political landscape, there were still positive things to look forward to.

"I know it doesn't feel like we know where we're going, or whether what's happening in Washington is good, or that it's the right thing, or that we are looking for an optimistic future. But let me tell you that I think we are," he said.

He emphasized the importance of performing your civic duty by showing up to the polls to vote, saying, "The number one most important thing any American can do to make our democracy stronger is show up. And that's the hardest thing, because it's so easy to get down on what's going on, so easy to sit at home at night and doom scroll and go through your Instagram, go through TikTok, and go through Twitter, X, whatever you want to call it, and see all the bad news and think we're living in the worst time ever. We're not."

Although next year marks the 250th anniversary of the United States, Schoeneman insisted that ours is still a relatively young country compared to others. He believes that we can see 1,000 years if we continue to collaborate and make improvements.

"I think that as long as all of us want to work together and fight, we can make the future better for all of our members and for our families. And I am still confident, no matter what, the American Dream is alive and well," he stated.

One method he suggests that may play a key role in making these improvements is the union movement.

"As we say at the AFL CIO, 'It's better in a union.' I think you all are living proof of that; your lives have all been impacted positively by what's been going on within the labor movement. That's what motivates me to go to work every day," he said.

He went on to explain that making significant headway when it comes to passing legislation has proven to be a challenge, due to the current Congressional makeup. Representatives must reach across the aisle and work with people who do not always share their beliefs within the closely divided House and Senate, he said.

Schoeneman encouraged attendees to talk with their friends and neighbors and to not be afraid to engage in politics, because it's not just about arguing or convincing people to share your views on an issue.

"I think one of the difficulties that we had is that there's an entire generation of people who have grown up with social media who seem to think that winning an argument on the internet is the end all be all politics," he said.

In an increasingly polarized country, Schoeneman thinks that the things that unify us will be stronger than those that aim to tear us apart.

"We all have things that will bring us together, and that, I think, is stronger than anything else, stronger than the partisanship, stronger than the polarization, stronger than the people who are all competing for your attention every night on Fox News and MSNBC and CNN and all those other channels, if you even watch those anymore," he said. "In the end, we are stronger together. The union movement is stronger together. We have learned a long time ago that working together, you can accomplish anything."

# Who's The Lucky Winner?

Long-term Sodexo Twentynine Palms shop steward Sandra Molina (top photo) and UIW Wilmington Representative Laura Lopez (remaining photo) won raffle prizes on day two of the UIW conference. Molina won a \$100 gift card and Lopez scored a fancy new pair of sunglasses.



*Continued from front page*

1-10 (broken into segments) on day two.

On both days, attendees saw videos highlighting the various workplaces represented by the UIW interspersed between speakers, including the Queen Mary, Refresco, Armaly Brands, and Alaska fisheries operation. Additionally, they also watched recorded video testimonials from current UIW members, who shared details of their experiences with the union.

After lunch on day one, participants attended a presentation encouraging representatives, members, and union officials to contribute photos and content for the United Worker, our union's quarterly publication. Afterwards, UIW Union Plus Liaisons **Kristy Clements** and **Rebecca Johnson** joined Taylor in leading a presentation detailing the benefits available to union members in each region.

Nominations for UIW elections took place near the convention's conclusion. **Cynthia Green** read Heindel's nomination for president, which was promptly seconded by Laura Lopez and summarily accepted with a speech by Heindel himself.

**Sergio Casteneda**, a shop steward from Refresco, read the nomination for Horton-Gennette for national director. **Mitch Levalley** seconded the nomination, which Horton-Gennette accepted. Lopez nominated Orzechowski for the office of secretary-treasurer, which Green seconded.

**Christopher Weaver** read nominations for the five regional vice president positions. The current holders of these positions – Soresi for the Atlantic Region, Dickenson for the Caribbean and Central American Region, Burgett for the Great Lakes and Midwest Region, Corgy for the Gulf Coast Region, and Vincenzo for the West Coast Region – were nominated and then elected to serve again. The nominees for all offices were sworn in and recited a pledge to uphold the duties of their respective offices.

To wrap up the week's events, all convention attendees who were present on day two gathered in the Media Center and just outside on the lawn for group photos, commemorating the event.



Several guest speakers came out to this year's convention, including Maritime Trades Department Executive Secretary-Treasurer Brittanie Potter (left) and St. Mary's County Sheriff Steve Hall (right.)

# Birthday Celebration at UIW Con '25

UIW member and Kroger warehouse employee Brandon Grace celebrated his birthday on the first day of this year's UIW conference. In the photo on the left, he blows out the candles on the cake made for him by the staff at the Paul Hall Center during dinner. In the photo on the right, Grace (right) poses with UIW Great Lakes Region Vice President Monte Burgett.



# Nelson Salutes Collaborative Efforts of UIW and Management for Queen Mary

As both a longtime management-side lawyer and former union member himself, Warren Nelson had plenty of well-informed insights to offer at the UIW convention.

His overarching message: The UIW and one of its largest employers (the *Queen Mary*) firmly demonstrate that respectful working relationships facilitate positive outcomes for all concerned.

Nelson spoke on Sept. 4 in Piney Point, Maryland, on the convention's first day. He credited the union for playing an indispensable role in saving members' jobs at the *Queen Mary*.

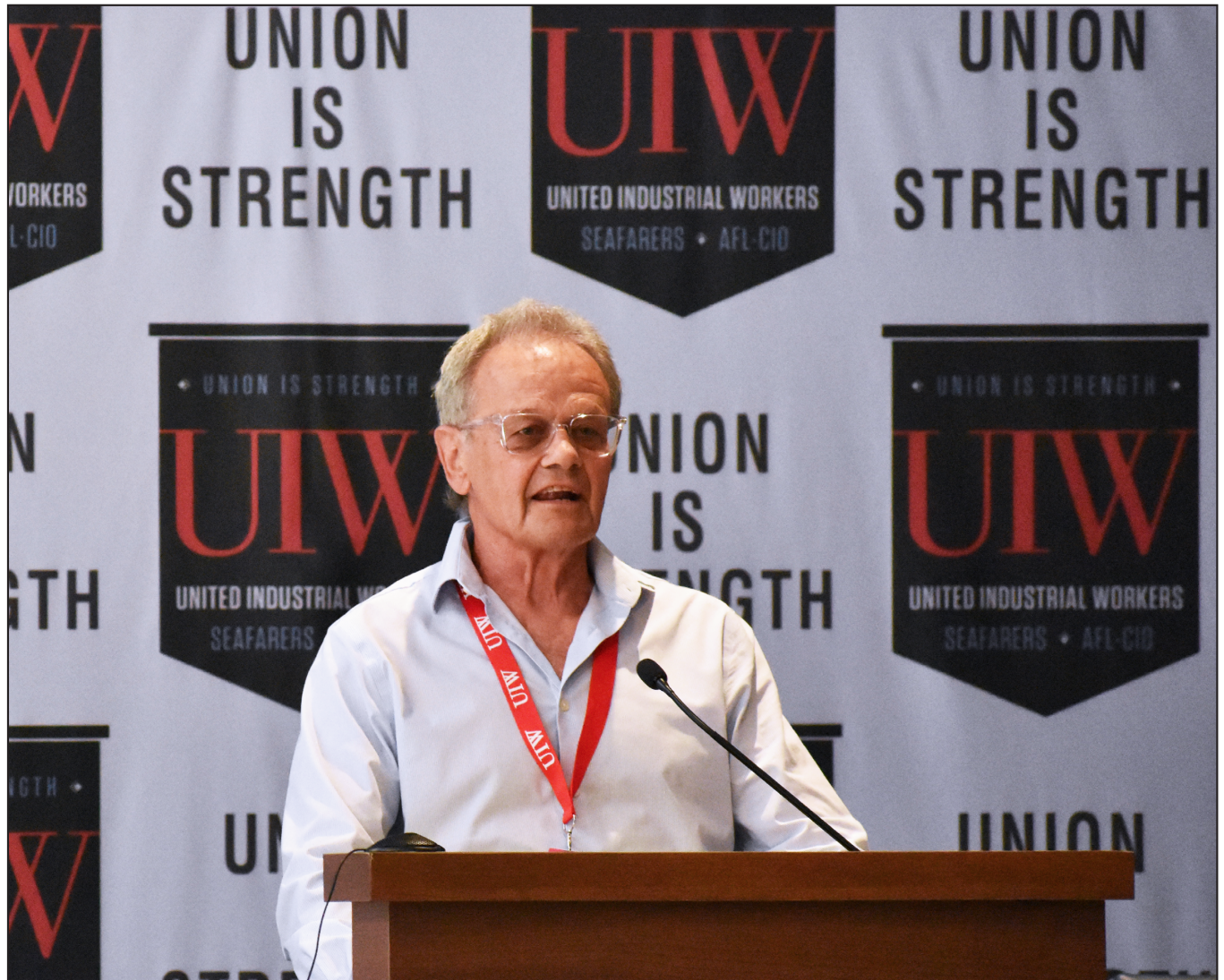
Currently a Southern California-based partner with Fisher & Phillips LLP, Nelson noted that he once served as president of a teacher's union. He has negotiated more than 250 collective bargaining agreements for employers, covering construction, manufacturing, retail, warehousing, food processing, transportation, aerospace, hospitality, health care and public-sector employees in more than 30 states, Mexico and Canada. That includes several UIW agreements with the *Queen Mary*.

Reflecting on his contract negotiations and other UIW-related work at the *Queen Mary*, Nelson stated, "I worked with some really tough problems and some really hard negotiators, but I've also learned that if you have a long-term relationship built on trust and by proving yourself to be an honest and straightforward person, you can have a relationship where even though there may be some controversy or contention over who gets what ... you can still have a positive relationship to help people more."

Underscoring that outlook, it was UIW National Director Karen Horton-Gennette who invited Nelson to the convention. (The gathering also gave Nelson a chance to return to the Maryland county he resided in as a high school student.)

Nelson thanked Horton-Gennette, UIW Representatives Lupe Murillo and Laura Lopez, and Legal Counsel Stan Dubin for being "indispensable labor partners on *Queen Mary*." Working together, Nelson said, they dealt with "tough problems" affecting the employment relationship and employment conditions of 500 people or more in Southern California.

Three different entities have owned and operated the *Queen Mary* since the start of Nelson's tenure there. "[The *Queen Mary*] is very expensive to keep up. It's very expensive for various parties to maintain, and that's why she's gone through a number of owners," he said. Currently, the city of Long Beach owns the historical ship.



Warren Nelson shares his experiences aboard the *Queen Mary* with UIW convention guests.

Nelson was hired to negotiate labor contracts, but his positive experience collaborating with the UIW team helped him understand the value of personal connections when it comes to assisting labor relations. "You know, we can put stuff down on paper, and we can deal with satisfying the California ordinances to cover labor relations on the *Queen Mary*, but you really need to have some interpersonal connection to make sure you're getting the right information and you're taking care of problems," he said.

When the COVID pandemic began in 2020, the staff on the *Queen Mary* went from 450 to zero in a matter of two weeks. "People didn't know where they were going to be get-

ting their compensation. People didn't know where, when and if the *Queen Mary* was ever going to come back and employ people, and neither did anyone on the *Queen Mary*," he said. "But I can tell you that Lupe, Laura, Stan and Karen worked with us until the very end - throughout that process, from day to day, room to room."

Throughout the two years when no one was on the premises of the ship, Nelson and UIW officials stayed in contact.

Slowly but surely, the jobs returned. "We had to repair the building slowly, and we had to negotiate contracts and fund contracts," said Nelson. "What makes me the happiest is that we have come back. We've

also been true to our own commitments. We had a commitment to make it work at the beginning. We wanted to make sure that we laid off fairly, and that we called people back fairly. We wanted to make sure we were patient."

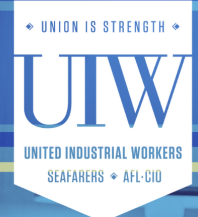
He concluded, "I'm very optimistic about the future in terms of our relationship. People badmouth California and our labor laws, they badmouth California Democratic legislatures, and most labor management attorneys would possibly do the same thing. But I can tell you, our relationship with the UIW in California is strong. I want to thank you for having me today, and I really respect you and the people that you are."

## Group Photo, Take Two

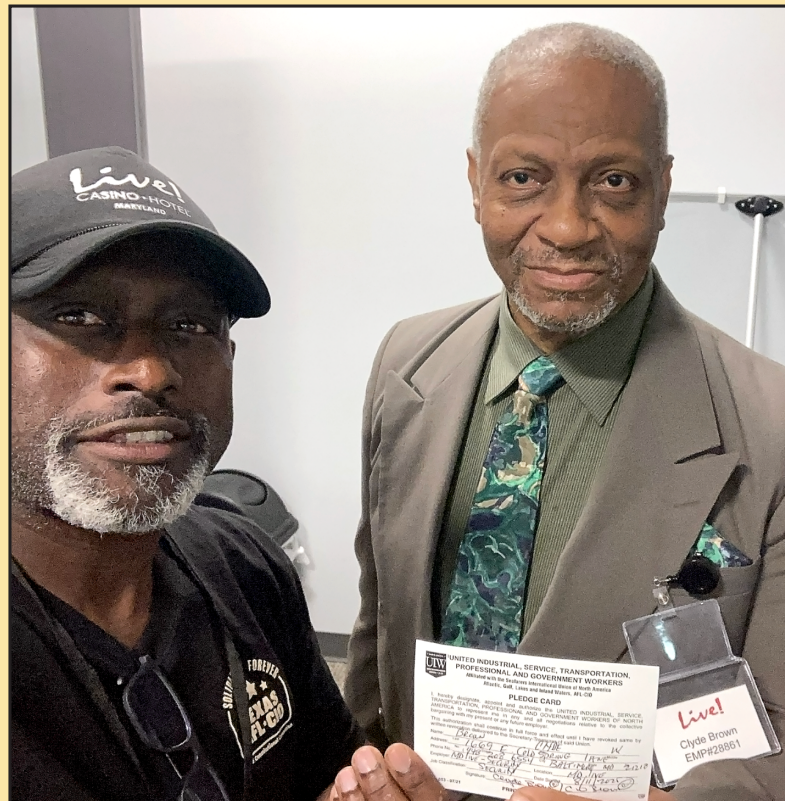


Both group photos turned out so well that we couldn't decide which one to use! Here is the alternate, outdoor version featuring all day two UIW convention attendees.

CHECK OUT OUR NEW UIW FACEBOOK PAGE AT [FACEBOOK.COM/UIWUNION](https://www.facebook.com/UIWUNION)



# Maryland LIVE! Gets Organized



Approximately 125 new jobs were added to the UIW as a result of a successful organizing campaign at Maryland LIVE! Casino & Hotel. The security ambassadors at LIVE! will now be represented by the UIW. Ashley Nelson (not pictured), Mario Torrey, Jordan Esopa, Sam Spain (not pictured), Kevin Sykes, Sam Irizarry, and Monte Burgett were major driving forces behind this organizing drive's success. "I wouldn't have wanted to be with another group of individuals. We're something like Delta Force VII!" said Nelson. "The employees were welcoming and delighted to see us, and in the words of Corey Jackson (security ambassador), 'The UIW is a breath of fresh air, we're glad you guys came!'" In the left photo, LIVE! Employee Clyde Brown (right) poses with his pledge card along with UIW Rep Kevin Sykes (left). In the top photo on the right, Torrey (left) and Esopa (right) are present while a LIVE! employee completes their pledge card. In the remaining photo, Esopa (left) and Torrey (second from right) chat with LIVE! employees as they prepare to celebrate their new UIW representation.

## Gone But Not Forgotten

### FRANCIS COYLE

Pensioner Francis Coyle, 80, passed away on August 8. He was born in Philadelphia. Brother Coyle became a member of the UIW in 1989 and was employed at Victory Refrigeration until he began receiving his pension in 2014. He resided in Camden, New Jersey.

### ROSEANN BIRD

Pensioner Roseann Bird, 73, passed away on May 27. Sister Bird was born in Ashland, Pennsylvania. She joined the union in 1991 and worked for A&E Products Group until she began receiving her pension in 2003. Sister Bird resided in Ashland.

### PEARL REED

Pensioner Pearl Reed, 85, passed away on June 23. Sister Reed was born in Maryland. She became a member of the UIW in 1972 while working with East Wind Industries Inc., where she remained employed until 1987, when she began to receive retirement stipends. Sister Reed made her residence in New Castle, Delaware.

### JOHN HENDERSON

Pensioner John Henderson, 90, passed away on July 8. Brother Henderson was born in Fairfax, South Carolina. Brother Henderson became a member of the union in 1972 and was employed at National Graphics Corporation until he began receiving his pension in 1997. Brother Henderson resided in Columbus, Ohio.

### BRENDA CLICK

Pensioner Brenda Click, 84, passed away on July 30. Sister Click was

born in Lawn, Texas. She joined the UIW in 1978 and worked at Crown Cork & Seal until she began receiving retirement stipends in 1998. Sister Click made her residence in Abilene, Texas.

### LEE LENIG

Pensioner Lee Lenig, 82, passed away on January 10. Brother Lenig was born in Sunbury, Pennsylvania. He joined the union in 1967 and worked for Paulsen Wire Rope Corp. until he began receiving retirement stipends in 1988. Brother Lenig made his residence in Selinsgrove, Pennsylvania.

### CHRISTOBAL "CHRIS" LUCERO

Pensioner Christobal "Chris" Lucero, 69, passed away on May 23. He was born in Colorado. Brother Lucero became a UIW member in 1988 and worked at Progressive Driver Services Inc. until he began receiving his pension in 1999. He resided in Loveland, Colorado.

### CANDACE COOPER

Pensioner Candace Cooper, 79, passed away on May 10. Sister Cooper was born in Portland, Oregon. She joined the UIW in 2006 and worked at American Benefit Plan Administrators until she began receiving retirement stipends in 2008. Sister Cooper made her residence in Milwaukie, Oregon.

### SANFORD LOVELY

Pensioner Sanford Lovely, 86, has passed away. He was born in Vanceville, Kentucky and joined the union in 1977. Brother Lovely was employed at Z Steward & Silver Inc. and worked there until he began receiving his

pension in 1984. He made his residence in Columbus, Ohio.

### MARY CHERNESKY

Pensioner Mary Chernesky, 69, has passed away. She was born in Shenandoah, Pennsylvania. Sister Chernesky became a member of the union in 1974 and was employed at A&E Products Group until she began receiving retirement stipends in 2004. She resided in Shenandoah.

### TONY L. FOX

Pensioner Tony Fox, 81, has passed away. Brother Fox was born in Sunbury, Pennsylvania. He became a member of the UIW in 1968 and worked at Paulsen Wire Rope Corp. until he began receiving his pension in 1993. He resided in Lewisburg, Pennsylvania.

### WILLIAM SHEARSTONE

Pensioner William Shearstone, 85, passed away on July 12. He was born in Shenandoah, Pennsylvania. Brother Shearstone joined the UIW in 1973 and was employed at A&E Products Group until he began receiving retirement stipends in 2004. He resided in Shenandoah, Pennsylvania.

### ROGELIO GUERRA

Pensioner Rogelio Guerra, 72, passed away on August 30. He was born in Mexico. Brother Guerra joined the UIW in 1976. He worked at Crown Cork & Seal until he began receiving his pension in 1998. Brother Guerra made his residence in Galena Park, Texas.

## New UIW Pensioners

**Dennis Wyatt**  
Franklin International Inc.  
Somerdale, NJ

**William Brennen**  
Franklin International Inc.  
Northumberland, PA

**Lori Reynolds**  
Franklin International Inc.  
Columbus, OH

**Cynthia Fitzpatrick**  
Franklin International Inc.  
Willow Street, PA

**Charles Myrick**  
Franklin International Inc.  
Novice, TX

**Reth Orn**  
Victory Refrigeration  
Philadelphia, PA

**Faatamalii Peau**  
Ruvilla Solutions  
Twentynine Palms, CA

**Jose Rios**  
Urban Commons Queensway LLC  
Long Beach, CA

**Thomas Johnson**  
Save the Queen LLC  
Muskegon, MI

**Linda Morris**  
Sodexo Management Inc.  
Jennings, MO

**Odilon Reyes Cortez**  
Urban Commons Queensway LLC  
Long Beach, CA

**Jeffrey Williams**  
Armaly Brands  
Columbus, OH

**Leonel Ortuno**  
Evolution Hospitality  
Long Beach, CA

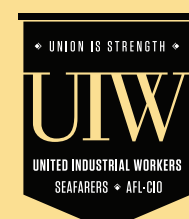
**Wallace Alleque**  
Seatrain Ship Building  
Brooklyn, NY

**Sherry Rouse-Rudd**  
Franklin International Inc.  
Canal Winchester, OH

**Sam Hand**  
Franklin International Inc.  
Orient, OH

**Steven Carter**  
First Coast Terminals LLC  
Jacksonville, FL

**Ricky Koester**  
Crown Cork & Seal Inc.  
Crosby, TX

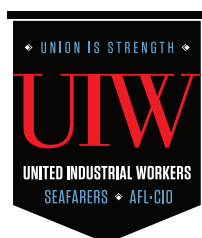


# SAVE ON EVERYDAY THINGS

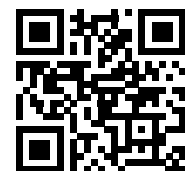


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# AFL-CIO Addresses Senate's Introduction of the Protect America's Workforce Act

The AFL-CIO and affiliated unions representing federal workers applauded the introduction of the Protect America's Workforce Act in the U.S. Senate Sept. 17. The legislation would reverse two executive orders issued by President Trump and restore collective bargaining rights to federal workers.

Since Trump's first executive order in March stripped nearly 1 million workers of their collective bargaining rights, the administration expanded the attack to include more federal agencies just before Labor Day. The administration also has begun implementing the orders by canceling the contracts of nearly 450,000 workers at the departments of Agriculture, Health and Human Services, Homeland Security, and Veterans Affairs and the Environmental Protection Agency.

"Donald Trump's executive order launched the biggest act of union-busting in our history, ripping away collective bargaining rights from a million federal workers," said AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler. "In the months since, his administration has expanded that order and unilaterally canceled union contracts for nearly 450,000 workers. These moves are an assault on our fundamental freedoms and undercut critical services people across the country rely on.

"We commend Sens. Warner and Van Hollen, and Minority Leader Schumer for bringing the fight to overturn the Trump administration's attack on workers to the Senate," she continued. "Bipartisan momentum is already building in the House, where lawmakers are collecting the final signatures on a discharge petition to bring this bill to a vote. The labor movement looks forward to working with senators to stop the senseless assault on workers who provide essential government services to communities across America. The labor movement stands united behind this bill, and we call on every senator—Democrat, Republican and independent—to keep their promise to workers by backing this legislation."

The Protect America's Workforce Act was introduced by Sens. Mark Warner (D-Virginia) and Chris Van Hollen (D-Maryland), and Minority Leader Chuck Schumer (D-New York). In the House, the bill was introduced by Reps. Jared Golden (D-Maine) and Brian Fitzpatrick (R-Pennsylvania), with 221 additional cosponsors. Organizing by the labor movement and members of Congress is also driving up signatures on a discharge petition, which will soon reach the requisite 218 to send the bill straight to the House floor.

"President Trump's March executive order stripping most of the federal workforce of collective bargaining rights represents the single most aggressive action taken by the federal government against organized labor in U.S. history, dwarfing any previous action against public or private sector working Americans," said American Federation of Government Employees (AFGE) National President Everett Kelley. "AFGE members are grateful to Sen. Warner for introducing the Protect America's Workforce Act and standing up for the nonpartisan civil service, the women and men who serve in it, and the critical role that collective bargaining has played for decades in fostering a safe, productive, and collaborative workplace that serves the American people."

"Federal workers are essential to our nation's health and well-being, and when they have the freedom to collectively bargain for safe working conditions and strong public services, we all benefit. The billionaires running this administration are hell-bent on rigging our government to line their own pockets, and silencing federal workers is how they plan to do it," said AFSCME President Lee Saunders. "We thank Sen. Mark Warner for introducing this legislation, and we urge the Senate to quickly pass this bill."

"I thank Sen. Warner for introducing the Protect America's Workforce Act in the Senate," said IAM Union International President Brian Bryant. "Protecting the rights of the federal workers we represent is a priority of our union, and passage of this very important piece of legislation is key in reversing the

attack on these civil servants. Federal workers are essential to the livelihood and prosperity of the U.S., and these workers rightly deserve the right of collective bargaining, which provides benefits like protections in the workplace and better service to the public."

"IFPTE was founded in 1918 by federal workers at the Norfolk Naval Shipyard as our nation was fighting World War I. At agencies that support military readiness, advance scientific breakthroughs and space exploration, and protect communities and commerce from environmental hazards, our federal sector local unions have a long and proud history of making sure federal employees and federal agencies can succeed and serve the American public," said International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers (IFPTE) President Matt Biggs. "We know full well that the Trump Administration's Executive Orders to deny more than one million federal workers their bargaining rights on a bogus national security rationale makes this the most anti-labor, anti-worker administration in United States history. IFPTE applauds Senator Warner, Senator Van Hollen, and Leader Schumer for standing up for federal workers' union rights and for a government that works for America by sponsoring the Protect America's Workforce Act."

"NFFE is proud to endorse the Protect America's Workforce Act, which will restore union rights for over one million civil servants," said National Federation of Federal Employees (NFFE-IAM) National President Randy Erwin. "The union-busting executive order signed by President Trump in March has proven to be detrimental to federal workers and the essential services they provide to the American people every day. This legislation has garnered broad bipartisan support in the House of Representatives and will surely do the same in the Senate. Lawmakers from both sides of the aisle understand that if this bill is not passed into law, their constituents will suffer the consequences. Thank you to Sen. Warner and the initial cosponsors of the legislation for their leadership on this critical issue."

"As nurses, we use our voices on the job every day to fight for safe staffing and the best possible care for our veterans," said Irma Westmoreland, RN at the Charlie Norwood VA Medical Center in Augusta, Ga. and director of National Nurses United (NNU)'s VA division. "The Trump administration attempted to silence our voice by stripping collective bargaining rights from over a million federal workers, but we will not be silent. We thank Senator Warner for introducing the Protect America's Workforce Act on the Senate side to restore our collective bargaining rights, and we urge the House and Senate to act quickly to pass this bill so nurses can continue advocating for the best care that veterans deserve."

"They protect the environment, care for veterans, and support public health and education. Characterizing these workers as a national security threat in order to strip them of their union rights and protections is shameful and a gross overreach by this administration," said Heather Conroy, executive vice president of the Service Employees International Union (SEIU). "The Protect America's Workforce Act is necessary to restore their collective bargaining rights, including protection against illegal firing, discrimination or retaliation, particularly at this time in our country."

"Federal government employees play a crucial role in public service by keeping our transportation systems safe, investigating accidents, overseeing critical weather forecasts, and providing essential supplies to the U.S. military," said Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO (TTD) President Greg Regan. "These workers already surrender many of the rights that private-sector employees enjoy, such as the ability to negotiate wages and benefits and the fundamental right to strike. Transportation labor urges the Senate to pass the bipartisan Protect America's Workforce Act and restore the basic collective bargaining rights of federal workers."

## UIW Directory

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**COLUMBUS, OH**  
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(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

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Harvey LA 70058  
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Norfolk VA 23510  
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**OAKLAND, CA**  
1121 7th St. 94607  
(510) 444-2360

**PHILADELPHIA, PA**  
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**PINEY POINT, MD**  
45353 St. George's Avenue 20674  
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**SAN JUAN, PUERTO RICO**  
659 Hillside St, Summit Hills  
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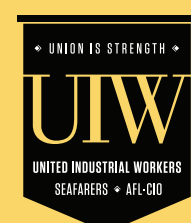
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Christiansted, USVI 00820  
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**ST. LOUIS, MO**  
4581 Gravois Ave. 63116  
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**ST. THOMAS, USVI**  
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Suite 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



## Members Nominate Officials During UIW Elections

In the left photo, Sergio Casteneda nominates Karen Horton-Gennette to continue serving in her role as UIW National Director. In the remaining photo, Cynthia Green reads her speech nominating David Heindel to reprise his role as UIW President.





# The United Worker

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## 2025 UIW Resolutions

The following are two of the resolutions approved by UIW members during the 2025 convention.

### Workers Must Have a Voice in AI Implementation

The use of artificial intelligence is rapidly transforming workplaces across industries by automating tasks, influencing decision-making processes, and restructuring job responsibilities.

While there isn't a universally agreed-upon definition of AI, there is no doubt employers are increasingly implementing AI technologies with aims of increasing productivity, reducing costs, and managing workflow. Unfortunately, regardless of their motivation, we believe they often do so without fully considering the social, ethical, and economic implications for workers.

We do not fear technological change and in fact understand that in the big picture, it is vital to our progress. But we are adamant that workers and their unions must have a seat at the table throughout this critical period.

The introduction of AI in the workplace can lead to significant changes in job duties, work conditions, staffing levels, surveillance practices, and performance evaluation systems. If those changes happen without meaningful input from rank-and-file workers, it risks undermining job security, fairness, worker rights, and efficiency itself.

We believe that workers are the most knowledgeable about the practical realities of their jobs and are best positioned to identify how AI tools may support or hinder their work, safety, and productivity.

Moreover, collective bargaining, labor-management partnerships, and worker committees have historically provided effective means for addressing workplace innovation while protecting employee interests. Such history informs us that democratic participation in the introduction and regulation of AI tools is essential to ensure transparency, accountability, and the ethical deployment of technology in the workplace.

With all of that in mind, the UIW affirms the right of all workers to offer meaningful input regarding any workplace changes related to the deployment of AI. We will continue advocating for strong contract language, legislation, and jobsite policies that guarantee worker involvement in all stages of AI implementation – from planning and procurement to oversight and review.

Further, we encourage education and training initiatives to help workers and their unions understand AI technologies, assess their implications, and speak out for their rights and interests.

Last but not least, our union stands in solidarity with all efforts to ensure that AI in the workplace serves the public good, enhances human dignity, protects jobs, and strengthens – not weakens – the voice of working people.

### Union Popularity is Increasing

For decades, Americans were evenly divided in their relative support of labor unions and big business, but that's no longer the case. Now, Americans are more likely to side with labor than at any time in the past 60 years.

According to newly released American National Election Studies (ANES) data from late 2024, Americans feel more positively toward labor unions and more negatively toward big business than any time since ANES began asking the question in 1964. Using consistent methods to allow comparability over time, ANES uses representative samples of Americans and asks them to rate their feelings toward labor unions and business on a 0–100 scale.

Between 1964 and 2012, Americans' sentiments toward labor unions and business moved together, surging and dipping in tandem. For instance, during mid-1970s stagflation, Americans cooled to both unions and business.

In 2016, Americans' sentiments toward labor and business split. Feelings toward business stayed flat while feelings toward labor unions warmed to nearly a record high. In 2020, positive views of labor unions kept climbing to a record high while sentiment toward business fell to a record low.

Just-released data from late last year shows that favorable opinions of unions climbed even higher while sentiment about business fell even further, setting new records for both.

Looking at subgroups where the changes are bigger and smaller can offer insight into what might be driving this recent change. While Gallup has published similar high-level trends on unions and major corporations over the years, the ANES data enable analysis by subgroup. Also, the ANES survey is more recent than the latest Gallup ones.

The changes for men and for women are similar. This change is not driven by differential attitude changes by gender.

In contrast, recent trends do differ by education group. Until 2012, Americans with the most formal education were the most pro-business. By 2024, they became the most pro-union. On the other hand, Americans with the least formal education (less than high school) were historically among the most pro-union but recently became the least pro-union. High school graduates, those who have completed some college coursework, and those who have earned at least a bachelor's degree all expressed record-high pro-union sentiment in 2024. Even those without a high school diploma remained near their record high.

There are several possible explanations for the public's increasing support for unions. They include broad grassroots organizing campaigns that have become more and more visible; dissatisfaction with wealth concentration; and the reactions of some employers to the pandemic which made it clear to many Americans that their boss would use power against them. This seems to have left Americans looking for more control over their job and working conditions.

While the rise in public sympathy and appreciation has not yet translated into a higher share of workers forming unions, it can only benefit the labor movement moving forward. It's up to us, collectively, to take advantage of the opportunity.

## Union Plus Team Presentation Details Union Benefits



Pictured in the top photo (left to right) are UIW Union Plus Liaison Kristy Clements, Union Plus Representative Miguel Taylor and UIW Union Plus Liaison Rebecca Johnson, sharing the ins-and-outs of the UIW benefits package. In the other photo in the front row, National Director Karen Horton-Gennette (right) and Plymcraft Shop Steward Lamont Davis review hand-outs shared during the presentation.

## UIW Regional Updates



UIW Regional VPs and union representatives put together comprehensive reports of the goings-on in their locales to share with convention attendees. In the above photos (left to right) are Jacqueline Dickenson, VP for the Caribbean and Central American Region and Joe Vincenzo, VP for the West Coast Region. Below (left to right) are Joseph Soresi, VP for the Atlantic Region and Dean Corgey, VP for the Gulf Coast Region.

