

# The United Worker

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

Volume 46, Number 3

July-September

2020

## AFL-CIO's Shuler 'We Must Do Better' Grassroots Rally in Washington Spotlights Need for Justice

AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Liz Shuler was among the headline speakers who took the stage Aug. 28 during the "Get Your Knee Off Our Necks" March in Washington, D.C.

Conducted on the National Mall

(steps of the Lincoln Memorial) and billed as a demand for an end to police brutality and a push for criminal justice reform, the rally came in the aftermath of the death of George Floyd. An African American man, Floyd was

killed May 25 while in the custody of a white policeman in Minneapolis. The officer had pinned his knee on the back of Floyd's neck as Floyd repeatedly said that he could not breathe.

Other keynote speakers included

event organizer, civil rights activist and National Action Network Founder Rev. Al Sharpton; Martin Luther King III, son of the late Martin Luther King Jr.; family members of Jacob Blake, George Floyd, Breonna Taylor, Rayshard Brooks, and Eric Garner; and a host of Black mothers who over the years have lost sons to police brutality.

Some 50,000 people – many of whom were waiting in line before 8 a.m. for temperature and registration checks – turned out for the event. According to several sources, organizers originally expected 100,000 people to attend, but scaled back their projections, citing chartered buses canceled due to COVID-19 issues. The rally was planned months ago to coincide with the 57th anniversary of Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech.

"We've come, like Dr. King came 57 years ago, to say we're tired of broken promises," Rev. Sharpton told those in attendance. "There's a sense of urgency now. We need national legislation to deal with this. It's time we have a conversation with America. We need to have a conversation about your racism, about your bigotry, about your hate, about how you would put your knee on our neck while we cry for our lives. We need a new conversation."

Schuler mentioned that the AFL-CIO's 55 affiliate unions (including the SIU) represent, in total, more than 12.5 million working people across the country.

"As we stand on the shoulders of Dr. King, Congressman John Lewis, A. Philip Randolph, Bayard Rustin and all the brave souls who marched together 57 years ago, we know, as a nation, we must do better," she began. "Black Americans know the bank of justice is bankrupt. Justice was denied



AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Liz Shuler speaks to the thousands of people who turned out to the Aug. 28 "Get Your Knee Off Our Necks" March in Washington, D.C.

See *Thousands*, Page 3

## U.S. Adds 1.4 Million Jobs In August, Unemployment Rate Falls to 8.4 Percent

The U.S. added 1.4 million jobs in August, the Labor Department reported Sept. 4.

The unemployment rate declined to 8.4 percent from 10.2 percent in July, according to the August jobs report, falling below 10 percent for the first time since March. Labor force participation also increased by 0.3 percent in August, an indication of both increasing strength in the job market and rising confidence among job-seekers.

August marks the fourth consecutive month of job gains and declining unemployment since the U.S. economy bottomed out in April. More than 20 million Americans lost their jobs that month, pushing the unemployment rate to a post-Great Depression high of 14.7 percent.

The August jobs report was also in line with the consensus expectations of private-sector economists, who projected gains between 1.2 and 1.4

million jobs last month.

The economy has now recovered roughly 10.7 million of the jobs lost to the pandemic as of August, though the number of unemployed Americans is still 11.5 million above its pre-coronavirus level in February.

August also brought declines in the number of Americans unemployed for less than five weeks and those unemployed for anywhere between five and 14 weeks, while the number of long-term unemployed Americans was little changed.

The August jobs report comes amid deep partisan stalemate over another round of coronavirus relief and fiscal stimulus. Economists across the ideological spectrum have called for boosting unemployment benefits, housing protections and further aid to cash-strapped state and local governments.

Even so, the August jobs report showed dangerous signs of a slowing recovery that could be further threatened by a plateau in coronavirus cases heading into autumn.

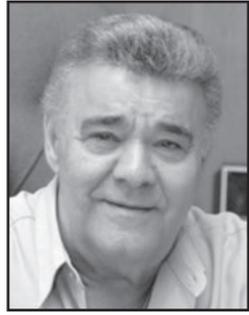
The number of those who have lost their job permanently increased by 534,000 in August, rising to 3.4 million in total and 2.1 million since February. An increasing number of permanent job losses reflects deepening long-term damage to the economy as more temporary layoffs become permanent.

Some of the industries hit hardest by the pandemic have yet to recover many of the workers lost in March and April. The food and beverage service industry regained 134,000 workers in August and 3.6 million workers since April, but still has 2.5 million fewer workers than it did in February.

## From the President

### After Election Day

The UIW will be ready to move forward no matter who wins on Election Day, and that goes not just for the presidency but also the congressional, state and local elections. As always, we support those who support workers' rights, and we will work with anyone and everyone who backs America's working families.



Michael Sacco

I have mentioned this from time to time but it bears repeating, with Nov. 3 right around the corner: Practice civility in your political discussions. Focus on issues, actually listen to what the other person is saying, and remember that we all love our country, even if we're bound to disagree on particular subjects. And one of the best ways to show your appreciation for our great nation is to vote. Make sure to cast your ballot in person or via absentee for those candidates who stand up for a strong, vital labor movement.

Workers' rights are very much worth promoting and protecting, and that's what we'll continue doing regardless of the outcomes in November.

More on the elections and exactly what seats are up for grabs across the country, see related article on Page 8 of this edition of *The United Worker*.

### Working for Justice

In mid-September, the AFL-CIO teamed up with an organization named "Poor People's Campaign: A National Call for Moral Revival" to mark the 57th anniversary of the 16th Street Baptist Church bombing in Birmingham, Alabama, where four girls were killed. The organizations conducted a virtual candlelight vigil and publicized a commitment to a 10-point pledge for social, racial and economic justice.

At this moment in history, labor and faith are coming together, standing together and acting to stop injustices across our great nation. Not to be overlooked in this fight is the deepening economic crisis driven by division and greed.

This quote from the Rev. Dr. William J. Barber II at the Sept. 15 event really hits home: "We're here together – the Poor People's Campaign and America's AFL-CIO, America's unions – because we have to be. We must be. We're here because we're deeply concerned about the hate and division being sown in our society – not that it's new, but that it's being pushed and stoked... We know the movement is more powerful than racism's fear and division. We don't just believe it. AFL-CIO President (Rich) Trumka and I don't just believe it as some philosophical statement. We know it. We know it from history. We know it from Birmingham because if we tell the whole story, it was faith and labor and children and parents and White and Black and Jews and Christians in those Southern states. It was never just Black alone or White alone."

Trumka, a longtime friend of our union, stated, "Some refuse to learn. Some see what's happening and resist change or outright refuse it. Worse, some want to return to a dark past that they mythologize as 'great.' We cannot let them drag us back and hold us down. The ultimate effect of the bombing was not division, but unity. It strengthened the movement. It hastened the Civil Rights Act. It bolstered the Voting Rights Act. It did the opposite of what the Klan wanted. We stand on the shoulders of Birmingham."

Barber and Trumka called on the labor and faith communities to come together in the spirit of the four girls killed in the bombing to rededicate and recommit to rebuilding our powerful and historic coalition for social, racial and economic justice.

That's a call I'm proud to support, and I know our movement will continue working for progress.

## AFL-CIO Executive VP Tefere Gebre Says Systemic Racism Is Still 'Alive and Well in 2020'

*Editor's note: The following article was written by Mark Gruenberg, staff writer for Press Associates Union News Service. It has been edited to conform to local style and sensitivities.*

Saying "systemic racism is alive and well in 2020," AFL-CIO Executive Vice President Tefere Gebre challenged union members and the Democratic Party as a whole to confront it and campaign hard for comprehensive solutions to the nation's longest-lasting and most-corrosive chasm.

And increasing unionization is one big part of that solution, he declared.

Gebre, organized labor's top Black official, delivered his challenge to the Democratic National Convention's Labor Council, meeting "virtually" rather than in Milwaukee before the convention itself opened August 17. Like the panel meeting, the convention was held by zoom and at long distances due to restrictions needed to battle the coronavirus pandemic.

It's that pandemic that has blown systemic racism wide open for all to see, Gebre said. And we can't avoid it, as the U.S. (has) done for most of the 401 years since the first enslaved African Blacks were offloaded from ships at Jamestown, Virginia in 1619.

That's because the pandemic has taken an outsize toll on people of color, he explained.

"African-Americans and Latinx are being infected and dying at a higher rate" than whites. And as the nation tries to crawl out of an economic depression, "whites are getting back to work a lot faster than any other group."

Coronavirus data back him up. The APM research lab, using Census data running through August 4, reports the coronavirus death rate among Blacks was 80.4 dead per 100,000 people. It was 45.8 per 100,000 Latinos and 35.9 per 100,000 whites.

Systemic U.S. racism, however, goes far beyond numbers, Gebre, originally a political refugee from war-torn Sudan, told the group. It extends to education, housing, mass transit, worker rights and—since he spoke at a Democratic convention event—politics.

"How else can we explain the last four years from hell?" he asked.

"The nation is creeping towards authoritarianism, with Nazis marching in the streets, encouraged by the president," Gebre added, without naming that Oval Office denizen.

But "this is not new. Racism and inequality have been part of the American fabric."

When the original National Labor Relations Act and the Fair Labor Standards Act were enacted in the 1930s, he noted, farm workers and domestic workers were excluded from labor law protection. They were Latinx and Black, respectively, and FDR had to omit them to appease racist Southern Democratic senators who otherwise

would have filibustered the two measures to death.

Further, the average net wealth (assets minus debts) of U.S. white households is \$160,000, compared to \$9,000 for Latinx households and \$8,000 for Black households. And what Gebre did not say is that both figures for households of color were higher before the 2008 financier-caused Great Recession. So was the figure for whites. They recovered. Households of color did not.

There's also racism in housing via redlining and blockbusting. Those topics came up at a later seminar run by the Progressive Democrats of America. And Blacks, for good reason—too many unexplained and unpunished murders by cops—don't trust the police or the criminal justice system, Gebre noted. The Black trust level is 40%. The white level is double that.

He also added racism in public transportation and education to the mix, since schools with high shares of students of color are the worst-funded and since most metro area public transit systems have majority-people-of-color workforces in the drivers' and maintenance ranks, but most supervisors are white.

All this has been highlighted by nationwide protest since a Minneapolis white cop murdered unarmed, unresisting George Floyd on May 25. His killing has sent an

estimated 10% of the entire U.S. population into the streets since, demanding wholesale and massive changes not just in police but in the criminal justice system and other areas of life.

That's excellent, Gebre said, but it's not enough for the country, for unions and for workers. "We should fix policy but it will not fix systemic racism in our neighborhoods and our workplaces," he said.

Corporations are also to blame, Gebre said, while not even mentioning how moguls frequently pit Black workers against white workers during union organizing drives. "Flying a BLM (Black Lives Matter) flag is not enough," he chided. "If you want to close the racial wealth gap, allow your workers the freedom to choose a union" without corporate interference, intimidation or worse.

Indeed, unionization would be a big part of the solution, Gebre said. Calculations show union contracts largely close the wage gap between whites and workers of color. And closing that chasm could in turn start to reduce the impact of systemic racism and its effects in other areas of society, he contended.

"But we have to keep the fire burning," Gebre warned his worker colleagues at the DNC event. "We have to keep marching, keep demanding. It's about time for us to demand our rights and our freedoms."



Tefere Gebre  
AFL-CIO Executive Vice President



## The United Worker

Vol. 46, No. 3 July-September 2020

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 Jim Cuthrie, editor.

**Headquarters:** Michael Sacco, president; David Heindel, secretary-treasurer; Karen Horton-Gennette, UIW National Director.

**Atlantic Region:** Joseph Soresi, vice president

**Caribbean Region:** Eugene Irish, 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



## Union Meeting at Jacksonville Hall



UIW Business Rep. Ashley Nelson (who also serves as SIU Port Agent), at podium in background, conducts the August membership meeting of UIW members who work at Jacksonville, Florida-based Patriot Rail. Held August 19, the meeting among other things featured reports from union officials and updates affecting the general membership and the union as a whole. Strictly observing COVID-19 protocols, all attendees were required to wear masks and have their temperatures checked (photo inset at right) in order to attend the meeting. For more on Patriot Rail, see Pages 4-5 of this edition of *The United Worker*.



## Labor Groups Urge Enforcement Of Workers' Rights in 'New NAFTA'

Seventeen labor organizations, including the UIW's parent organization, the SIU, are signatory to a public comment issued Aug. 14 on the Office of U.S. Trade Representative (USTR) notice titled "Interagency Labor Committee for Monitoring and Enforcement Procedural Guidelines for Petitions Pursuant to the United States-Mexico-Canada Agreement" (USMCA). The USTR notice appeared in the Federal Register June 30 (Docket Number USTR-2-2-0028).

Posted on Aug. 17, 2020, the statement was issued by Thomas Conway, president of the United Steelworkers and a member of the Labor Advisory Committee, on behalf of a broad cross section of unions with interest and expertise on the subject of trade and workers' rights.

Essentially, Conway stated that the proposed guidelines for what has been described as "the new NAFTA" are "seriously flawed in identifying as a consideration for making determinations as to whether to pursue a petition under the labor chapter draft rules."

The Steelworkers executive addressed provisions of the updated trade agreement regarding the enforcement of labor rights and "a Facility-Specific Rapid Response Labor Mechanism in Annex 31-A. The USMCA, in part, was designed to expand labor rights in all three signatory countries and to enhance the implementation, monitoring and enforcement of such rights. These provisions are critical to addressing the fundamental flaws and failures of the original North American Free Trade Agreement in the area of workers' rights, which has led to significant outsourcing of U.S. production and jobs to Mexico.

"Many unions were deeply engaged with the USTR, the Department of Labor, Congress and other entities during the entire process of drafting and consideration of USMCA," he continued. "We are similarly committed to being active and engaged in the implementation, monitoring and enforcement of the agreement. The Labor

Advisory Committee for Trade Negotiations and Trade Policy (LAC), by statute, is charged with performing a number of tasks and providing advice as to the operation of the agreement. We understand, however, that as the Administration has not asked for the LAC's input on this proposed rule the LAC cannot provide them. This would appear to run counter to the fact that the Congress has clearly identified the important role that the LAC plays not only in the area of labor rights but in advancing the interests of working people. Thus, we are filing these comments on behalf of the millions of working people we represent and not for the LAC."

The comment is co-signed by Gabrielle Cateris of the Screen Actors Guild-American Federation of Television and Radio Artists; Joseph DePete of the Air Line Pilots Association; David Heindel of the Seafarers International Union; Mary Kay Henry of the Service Employees International Union;

James P. Hoffa of International Brotherhood of Teamsters; Robert Martinez of the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers; Sara Nelson of the Association of Flight Attendants-Communication Workers of America; Marc Perrone of United Food and Commercial Workers; Cecil Roberts Jr. of the United Mine Workers of America; Lee Saunders of the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees; Paul Shearon of the International Federation of Professional and Technical Engineers; Anthony Shelton of the Baker, Confectioners, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers' International Union; Elizabeth Shuler and Richard Trumka of AFL-CIO; Lonnie Stephenson of International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers; Baldemar Velasquez of the Farm Labor Organizing Committee; Randi Weingarten of the American Federation of Teachers; Larry I. Willis of Transportation Trades Department AFL-CIO and Rory Gamble of United Auto Workers.



## Thousands Muster at D.C.'s National Mall for 'Get Your Knee Off Our Necks' Rally

*Continued from Page 1*

to Jacob Blake and George Floyd and Breonna Taylor and Rayshard Brooks because they were Black. Justice was out of reach for Riah Milton and Dominique Fells, two Black trans women who were killed earlier this summer.

"Union members have been out in the streets protesting these injustices," Shuler continued. "Professional athletes, many of them proud union members, have stood up in ways they never have before. The Milwaukee Bucks players said enough is enough, and the NBA playoffs are now on hold. WNBA players have spoken out, [as have players from] Major League Baseball, soccer and more."

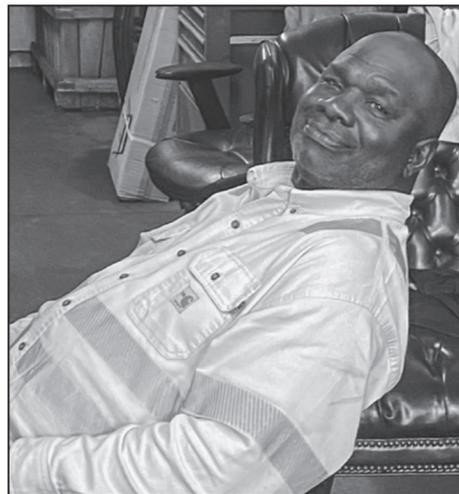
Shuler said that regardless of the setting – whether in professional sports or generally in our communities – "we in the labor movement are feeling excruciating pain, anger and grief. We will do our part to end racism in our economy, our politics, our workplaces AND our union halls.

And on top of the widespread racism throughout our country's institutions, COVID-19 is exposing the cracks that were already poisoning our system. A system that denies housing and health care and opportunity to far too many people of color. That's why Black and brown people are more likely to lose their jobs or get sick and die in this pandemic."

The federation official also said there's no time to waste. "We have to do better," Shuler said. "Now – NOW – is the time to do the work and pass the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act and the George Floyd Justice in Policing Act that are sitting in the Senate."

She conveyed the federation's support for the Black Lives Matter movement and concluded, "As a White person, I know that I will never experience the same pain and trauma that Black people have been feeling over and over again. All I can say is I understand what I can't possibly understand. But I choose to stand, and to kneel, and raise a fist, and shed a tear, and say a prayer. And fight like hell to make real change.

"As one united labor movement, we stand with our Black members, friends and neighbors. Our mission is to empower families and communities to reach their dreams; that's why we're in this movement. It's how we inch closer to achieving Dr. King's Dream from 57 years ago. It's how we wake up America. And it's how we TOGETHER continue the march of those who marched before us."



Anthony Brown  
Chief Shop Steward



Addison Powell  
Shop Steward



Alvin Pabon  
Foreman



David Parrish  
Truck Driver



Kenny Fennell  
Truck Driver



Linda Rykaczewski  
Truck Driver

## UIW Members Keep the Goods Rolling at Patriot Rail

While hundreds of thousands of their brothers and sisters represented by other unions across the country were hit hard during shutdowns and state issued stay-at-home orders resulting from the Coronavirus Pandemic, the more than 150 UIW members who work at union-contracted Patriot Rail in Jacksonville, Florida so far have escaped relatively unscathed.

Thus far during the pandemic, not a single union member at Patriot has lost any wages due to the coronavirus, according to UIW Business Rep. Ashley Nelson at the Port of Jacksonville. "This is a direct result of the tremendous teamwork and working relationship that our members have with the company," he said. "In addition, our members so far have done (and continue to do) a terrific job of observing COVID-19 protocols and performing common sense actions that keep themselves and their families safe."

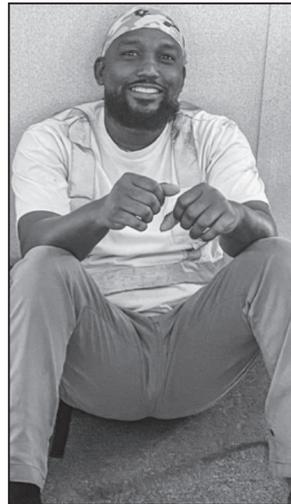
Patriot Rail provides full-service terminal and warehouse operations and offers comprehensive cargo transfer service including rail capability. The company has extensive experience in handling containerized cargo, breakbulk, bulk, RO/RO, LO/LO, heavy lift, and out of gauge cargoes. Performing the loading and unloading of both temperature-sensitive and ambient cargoes on ocean going vessels, Patriot also provides the complete range of services required for international trade.



Cliff Fields  
Lasher Header



Daniel Gerena and Donald Lewis  
Headers



Donald Hampton  
Lasher



Randy Kidd  
Lasher Header



Darrion Brown  
Genset Mechanic



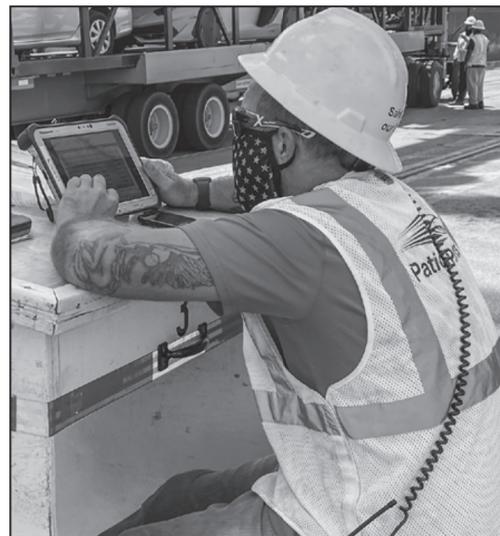
Fabian Lewis  
Topman



William Hein  
Checker



Tierra Randolph  
Checker



James Colling  
Checker



Julio Sobrado  
Flagman



Rayown Clark  
Dockman



Marvin McCoy  
Dockman

# 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 3rd St. 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

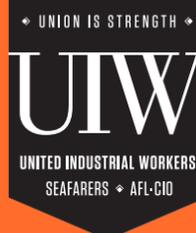
201-3A Altona & Welgunst  
Suite 101  
St. Thomas, USVI 00802  
(340) 774-3895

## TACOMA, WA

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

## WILMINGTON, CA

510 N. Broad Ave. 90444  
(310) 549-3920



## Looking in on UIW Members At National Railway

While the COVID-19 Pandemic continues to wreak havoc at job sites across the country, union members employed at UIW-contracted National Railway Equipment Company in Mt. Vernon, Illinois continue to work hard and successfully accomplish their duties. More than 120 UIW members work at the company which manufactures, rebuilds, repairs and restores locomotives for domestic as well as international customers. Locomotive cabs, frames, electrical cabinets, engines and many other parts are also manufactured and sold by the company. Clockwise from above, Tim Davis saws steel for locomotive components while Kyle Ingersoll devotes his total attention to a welding project. Jesse Kelley installs wiring on a main electrical cabinet and Tim Payne sands a locomotive component.



# 2020 Flu Season Signals Start of Critical Period

*Editor's note: This article was provided by the Seafarers Health and Benefits Plan Medical Department.*

The 2020-2021 Flu Season is rapidly approaching and now is the time for everyone to begin formulating strategies to mitigate the condition as much as possible. Specifically, everyone 6 months and older (or those caring for them) should begin planning on getting vaccinated in order to reduce the overall burden of respiratory illness, protect vulnerable populations, and decrease burden on the healthcare system.

According to the Centers for Disease Control (CDC), between 39 million and 56 million people were sickened with the flu during last year's flu season, which ran from Oct. 1, 2019 to April 4, 2020. This resulted in 18 million medical visits and 410,00 hospitalizations. The CDC estimated that there were at least 24,000 deaths related to the flu during the 2019-2020 season.

While anyone can get sick from the flu, some individuals are at higher risk than others. Included in this category are people 65 or older, those who have chronic medical issues/conditions, the very young, and pregnant women.

The signs and symptoms for flu usually arrive suddenly. Some of the symptoms that an individual who has contracted the illness may exhibit include: fever or chills, cough, sore throat, runny or stuffy nose, muscle or body aches, headaches, tiredness. Some may also may have diarrhea or vomiting.

Most people who get the flu will recover in a few days to less than two weeks. Some, however, may develop complications such as pneumonia, severe sinus and ear infections, heart



problems, encephalitis of the brain, and sepsis.

Everyone should be aware that there are many different types of flu viruses and that they are constantly changing. For this reason, the composition of the flu vaccines for the U.S. is reviewed annually and updated as needed in order to match the flu viruses that are circulating.

Flu vaccines protect against the three or four viruses that research-

ers decide will be most common for that particular year. This illustrates the importance of everyone getting their annual flu shots. Simply put, these injections are a last line of defense when it comes to combating the complications caused by the flu virus.

In this vein, September and October would be a good time to get the flu vaccine. Doing so during this period will give individuals protection through the winter months when the

flu is most active.

It is vitally important for essential workers, and persons at increased risk for severe illness, to get the flu shot yearly. For many Seafarers, flu shots are mandatory, both aboard military vessels and many commercial ships.

Everyone should be aware that COVID-19 cases continue to increase throughout the country. With the seasonal flu season just around the corner, both illnesses could run rampant simultaneously. Such a situation undoubtedly could pose real challenges for the general public, essential workers and health officials.

However, systems are in place to protect the population from COVID. Wearing face masks, practicing good hygiene and social distancing, avoiding group gatherings and other indoor activities, working from home, and virtual learning for schoolchildren are some of the measures which thus far have yielded favorable results.

The presence of the COVID-19 Pandemic means that it's more important than ever for everyone to get flu shots this year. The flu weakens individuals' bodies to the point that they become more susceptible to the coronavirus, thus putting them at added risks. It should also be pointed out that it is possible to have the flu and COVID-19 at the same time. Such a scenario obviously decreases one's chance of survival and should be avoided at all costs. The other point to remember is that there is still no vaccine available for COVID-19, so prevention of its spread currently is our only line of defense against it.

Everyone is advised to stay as healthy as possible and get all immunizations as required, especially the yearly flu shot.

## Gone But Not Forgotten

### MELESIO CORTES

Pensioner Melesio Cortes, 69, died August 8. A native of Mexico, Brother Cortes signed on with the UIW in 2003 while working at the Del Monte Corporation. He started receiving stipends for his retirement in 2010. Brother Cortes was a resident of Long Beach, California.

### THOMAS ESPEY III

Brother Thomas Espey III, 76, passed away December 8, 2019. Born in Albany, New York, Brother Thomas donned the UIW colors in 1982 while working at Progressive Driver. A U.S. military veteran, Brother Thomas went on pension in 2004. He made his home in Saratoga, New York.

### GLORIA FALESKI

Pensioner Gloria Faleski, 73, died June 18. Sister Faleski came under the union umbrella in 1966 while working at A&E Products. A native of Shenandoah Heights, Pennsylvania, Sister Faleski began receiving stipends for her retirement in 2004. She made her home in Catawissa, Pennsylvania.

### MELVIN HALL

Pensioner Melvin Hall, 67, passed away April 19. Born in Abilene, Texas, Brother Hall signed on with the UIW in 1979 while working at Crown Cork & Seal. He retired and went on pension in 2005. Brother Hall resided in his native city and state.

### LARRY MOORE

Pensioner Larry Moore, 75, died June 8. Brother Moore joined the union in 1977 while working at Franklin International. A native of Columbus, Ohio, Brother Moore starting receiving compensation for his retirement in 2006. He made his home in the city and state of his birth.

### MARY NASH

Pensioner Mary Nash, 91 passed away June 27. She signed on with the UIW in 1968 while working at Plymcraft, Inc. A native of Virginia, she retired and went on pension in 1991. Sister Nash resided in her native commonwealth in the city of Hampton.

### TEODORO PAPASIN

Pensioner Teodoro Papisin, 77, died March 3. Born in the Republic of the Philippines, Brother Papisin became a UIW member in 1989 while working at Victory Refrigeration. He went on pension in 2004 and lived in his native country.

### RICHARD PASSARO

Pensioner Richard Passaro, 79, passed away July 30. Brother Passaro donned the UIW colors in 1959 while working at Schaevitz Machine Works. The Brooklyn, New York native changed jobs in 1959 and began working at union-contracted Victory Refrigeration. Brother Passaro retired in 1991. He made his home in Gloucester Township, New Jersey.

## UIW Pensioners

**Mildred Auxila**  
Queen Mary  
Signal Hill, California

**Jesus Barajas**  
Queen Mary  
South Gate, California

**Glenn Barnes**  
Crown Cork & Seal  
Willis, Texas

**Kevin Beck**  
Paulsen Wire Rope  
Watsontown, Pennsylvania

**Roberto Briseno**  
Del Monte Corp  
Wilmington, California

**Ruben Chapa**  
Crown Cork & Seal  
Pasadena, Texas

**Jean Davis**  
A&E Products Group  
Ringtown, Pennsylvania

**Stanley Dixon**  
Church & Dwight  
London, Ohio

**Consuelo Duarte**  
Juanitas Foods  
Wilmington, California

**Anthony Falasca**  
Victory Refrigeration  
Sicklerville, New Jersey

**Mary Foose**  
A&E Products Group  
Ringtown, Pennsylvania

**Tomas Gonzales**  
Juanitas Foods  
Wilmington, California

**Cheryl Grundy**  
National Fiberstock, Inc.  
Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

**Harvey Lawrence**  
Portus  
Lauderdale Lakes, Florida

**Tiburcio Martinez**  
Juanitas Foods  
Lakewood, California

**Maria Ochoa**  
Queen Mary  
Long Beach, California

**Jose Rivera**  
Juanitas Foods  
San Pedro, California

**Miriam Santos**  
Queen Mary  
Long Beach, California



# The United Worker

**UIW Members Keep Goods Rolling at Patriot Rail**  
Pages 4-5

Volume 46, Number 3

July-September

2020

## AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka on 2020 Election: Dems 'Have to Pay Attention to Working People to Win'

*Editor's note: The following article was written by Mark Gruenberg, staff writer for Press Associates New Service. It has been lightly edited to conform to local style and sensitivities.*

As they head into the homestretch of the 2020 campaign, national Democrats "have to pay attention to working people" to win this fall, AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka said.

And Democratic Presidential Nominee Joe Biden, who was formally approved by the party's virtual convention roll call August 18 "gets it," Trumka declared.

"He's always been a blue-collar guy and he's still a blue-collar guy," the union federation chief added.

The federation president gave that analysis, and a critique of what 2016 nominee Hillary Clinton didn't do, in a 35-minute interview with Jonathan Capehart of the *Washington Post* before the rollcall that evening. The interview is one in a series the paper ran for weeks with analysts, newsmakers and politicians both before and during the conclave.

Trumka was the sole union leader in the week's 20-person convention-oriented lineup. The wrap-up on August 20, before Biden's acceptance speech that night, featured House Speaker Nancy Pelosi (D-California), and Biden's last presidential primary foe, Sen. Bernie Sanders (I-Vermont), who enthusiastically has endorsed the former vice president.

Biden has advantages Clinton lacked. Polls show a virtual tie between Biden and incumbent President Donald Trump among blue-collar white men, whom Trump heavily won in 2016.

And, Trumka said, Biden learned from Clinton's mistakes of taking both union voters and certain states, notably the Great Lakes industrial states of Michigan, Wisconsin, Ohio and Pennsylvania, for granted. She skipped at least the first two.

All four states narrowly went for Trump in the last election. Union voters remembered former Democratic President Bill Clinton, her husband, pushing through the jobs-losing "free trade" pact, NAFTA. They also witnessed Hillary Clinton's campaign flipflop on the Trans-Pacific Partnership. They deserted her in droves. In those four states, Trump won half of union family votes, narrowly won all of them overall, and the presidency.



Richard Trumka  
President, AFL-CIO

One reason those voters deserted, Trumka said, is they justifiably believed the powers-that-be, in both politics and corporate suites and in both parties, had left them behind. That's persisted, but Biden is addressing it, unlike Hillary Clinton, he added.

"Right now, there's inequality of wealth and wages. There's inequality of opportunity. And there's inequality of power. But you can't address the first two without addressing the inequality of power," first, Trumka explained.

"Joe understands that" and understands the way to achieve it is "workers have to have a stronger voice on the job, and that there is a need to grow the economy from the bottom up and the center out, not from the top down."

As a result, Trumka asserted, the Democratic platform, which he helped draft, "is the most pro-union platform I've seen in my 50 years" in the labor movement.

Capehart, however, challenged Trumka by saying those same blue-collar white voters, especially men, saw Trump as

blue-collar, too, despite his palatial Park Avenue digs and Mar-A-Lago estate. The AFL-CIO chief replied he believes those voters saw Trump as "a guy who said 'I'll come in and change the rules for you.'"

"He's changed them all right. Our (worker) health and safety are threatened. Our wages are threatened. Our pensions are threatened. Our rights are threatened."

"And workers aren't stupid. When you take away" those safeguards and standard of living, they know it.

But as unionists hit the campaign trail for Biden and running mate Sen. Kamala Harris (D-California), at least in ways the coronavirus pandemic's restrictions will let them campaign, they face another barrier in talking Biden with their colleagues: A 10-percentage point lead for Trump over Biden in handling the economy, despite the current official jobless rate of 10.2%, at least 31 million unemployed and Republicans' refusal to extend the \$600 weekly federal unemployment relief checks through the end of January.

So, Biden, Trumka said, must make

the case by facing forward, emphasizing platform planks and his own record in proposing and pushing through a large public works job creation program, centered around both traditional infrastructure and green jobs.

Those plans, Trumka again emphasized, are "geared towards working people" particularly blue-collar workers "and giving them a fair shake."

"What's Donald Trump going to do?" he asked sarcastically. "Say 'I lost (you) 12.9 million jobs this year?'" That's the minimum number that disappeared when the coronavirus-caused closures plunged the U.S. into the deepest crash since the Great Depression.

The pandemic and its impact will also be a big worker theme on the campaign trail, Trumka predicted. Biden has already started in on that, with a hard-hitting pre-convention critique of Trump's malfeasance and offering his own plan.

It starts with everyone nationwide wearing anti-virus face masks in public whenever outside or in public spaces such as restaurants, stores or hotel lobbies.

Trumka also noted that Trump's predecessor, President Barack Obama, who was Biden's boss, had federal anti-pandemic structures in place. Those structures helped the U.S. respond quickly and effectively to the 2013-16 Ebola pandemic in West Africa. U.S. aid and technical expertise helped confine it there and prevent it from spreading. Trump dismantled the whole apparatus, Trumka said, leaving the U.S. virtually defenseless against the coronavirus, and then ducked responsibility. Trump also wants to send all kids back to school, regardless or anti-coronavirus readiness, or lack of it.

"He wouldn't even help us get PPE," Trumka said, referring to personal protective equipment: Masks, ventilators, hazmat suits and protective gloves. "We still had to provide these ourselves. Thousands of (union) workers got sick and several hundred have died."

Overall, the latest figures from the most authoritative source, Johns Hopkins University, show that as of August 31, 6,031,065 million people have tested positive for the virus since the pandemic was declared March 13 and 183,601 have died.

"You can't fix the economy"—President Trump's mantra—"until you fix the pandemic," Trumka said.

### Presidential Election Approaches, Now is Time To Plan How You Will Vote

The prospect of conducting the presidential election during a pandemic has prompted many states to reexamine their plans for how to conduct the election safely, including when it comes to access to early or absentee voting.

To find out what your home state is doing with respect to the elections, especially in the areas of early voting, absentee ballots and voting by mail, visit [www.Vote.org](http://www.Vote.org). About two-thirds of Americans (65%) say the option to vote early or absentee should be available to any voter without requiring a documented reason, while a third say early and absentee voting should only be allowed with a reason, according to a Pew Research Center survey conducted

June 16-22. The 2020 United States election is scheduled for Tuesday, November 3, 2020. All 435 seats in the United States House of Representatives, 35 of the 100 seats in the United States Senate, and the office of President of the United States will be contested. Thirteen state and territorial governorships, as well as numerous other state and local elections, will also be contested.

Both the Republican Party and the Democratic Party nominated their respective presidential tickets at

party conventions held in late August. Incumbent president Donald Trump is the Republican nominee, having faced token opposition in the 2020 Republican Party presidential primaries. Joe Biden is the Democratic Party's nominee after securing a majority of delegates in the 2020 Democratic Party presidential primaries. Various third party and independent candidates, including Jo Jorgensen of the Libertarian Party and Howie Hawkins of the Green Party, are also seeking the presidency.

Democrats have held a majority in the U.S. House of Representatives since the 2018 elections, while Republicans have held control of the U.S. Senate since the 2014 elections. Barring vacancies and party-switching, Democrats will enter the election with control of approximately 232 of the 435

seats in the House of Representatives, while Republicans will enter the 2020 elections with control of 53 of the 100 seats in the Senate. All 33 Class 2 senators are up for election, and two states (Georgia and Arizona) are holding special elections for the Senate. The six non-voting congressional delegates from the District of Columbia and the permanently inhabited U.S. territories will also be elected.

Regularly-scheduled elections will be held in 86 of the 99 state legislative chambers, and eleven states will hold gubernatorial elections. Various other state executive and judicial elections will also occur. The outcome of these state elections will have a major impact on the redistricting cycle that will take place following the 2020 United States Census. Various referendums, tribal elections, and local elections, including numerous mayoral races, will also take place in 2020

