

The United Worker

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President Joe Biden, flanked by Vice President Kamala Harris (left) and Labor Secretary Marty Walsh (right), signs an April 2021 executive order creating the historic White House Task Force on Worker Organizing and Empowerment. Cabinet members and top advisors comprise the task force, with Harris as chair and Walsh as Vice Chair. (Photo courtesy of International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers)

Report Announces Pro-Labor Initiatives

Task Force Update Includes 70 Recommendations to Boost Worker Empowerment

The Biden Administration more than once has declared that it fully intends to be the most union- and worker-friendly executive branch in history. Its latest action towards achieving that objective came Feb. 7 when the White House released a report prepared by its Task Force on Worker Organizing and Empowerment.

A 43-page document, the report is the result of a series of task force meetings that were conducted to gather information and ideas for possible executive actions and statements. The group

is chaired by Vice President Kamala Harris and vice-chaired by Secretary of Labor Marty Walsh, a longtime trade union member and leader.

The task force was created in April 2021 when President Biden – operating under the conviction that increasing worker organizing and empowerment is critical to growing the middle class, building an economy that puts workers first, and strengthening our democracy – issued Executive Order 14025. Its focus is to “assess the available tools and determine how to employ them to

remove barriers to worker organizing and collective bargaining.”

The report offers 70 recommendations that would “position the federal government as a model actor; use the federal government’s authority to support worker empowerment by providing information, improving transparency, and making sure existing pro-worker services are delivered in a timely and helpful manner; [and] use long-standing authority to leverage the federal government’s purchasing and spending power to support workers who are organizing

and pro-worker employers.”

The report said, “The recommendations were developed in collaboration with the over 20 executive agencies, departments and White House offices that are members of the task force. This work has been guided, too, by workers’ voices, many of whom the Vice President and Secretary of Labor met in their travels across the country.”

“The Biden-Harris Administration delivered another victory for working

See Labor, Page 3

COVID Booster Shots Provide Substantial Protection, CDC Says

The effectiveness of booster shots wanes somewhat after four months but still provides substantial protection against hospitalization, a new study shows.

The study, released by the Centers for Disease Control and Prevention (CDC) in February, found that booster shot effectiveness against hospitalization with the omicron variant was 91 percent after two months, but waned to 78 percent after four months.

Protection against emergency department or urgent care visits declined from 87 percent to 66 percent after four months. It was just 31 percent after at least five months, though the study cautioned that finding was “imprecise because few data were available.”

Vaccine effectiveness was always higher after three doses than after two, so people are still urged to get a booster shot.

The finding of some waning immunity could inform discussions of the possible need for additional shots.

BLS Releases Union Membership Numbers

The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) has released its annual report on union membership, but the findings may not tell the whole story, according to some who reviewed it.

Overall membership dropped in 2021 by approximately 241,000, meaning that around 14 million people belonged to unions. The report also found that union members, on average, earn \$10,000 more per year than their unrepresented counterparts.

The AFL-CIO, to which the SIU is affiliated, looked beyond the raw data.

“The BLS annual report on union membership makes it clear that American labor laws are unquestionably broken,” the federation said in a written statement. “While the report indicates a 0.5% drop in union membership from 2020–2021, the data is not representative of the greater union trends taking place across the country. These statistics highlight the urgent need for the passage of the Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO) Act and the Public Service Freedom to Negotiate Act.”

“In 2021, workers forcefully rejected low-wage, thankless jobs after a year of being called essential,” said AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler. “In light of the COVID-19 pandemic, it is clearer now than ever that our labor laws are designed to make joining a union as difficult as possible. Across this country, workers are organizing for a voice on the job and millions of Americans are standing in solidarity with union mem-

bers on strike. If everyone who wanted to join a union was able to do so, membership would skyrocket. The PRO Act and the Public Service Freedom to Negotiate Act are how we get there.”

The Economic Policy Institute (EPI), a nonprofit, nonpartisan think tank created in 1986 to include the needs of low- and middle-income workers in economic policy discussions, also released their analysis of the data. The organization noted, “To understand what happened to unionization in 2021, it is crucial to recall what happened in 2020. In 2020, the number of union workers declined substantially as the pandemic caused massive job loss for both union and nonunion workers. However, unionization rates – the share of the workforce that is unionized – increased substantially because union workers lost fewer jobs during the first year of the pandemic than nonunion workers did. The lower job loss among the unionized workforce was due in no small part to a ‘pandemic composition’ effect – the fact that the industries that got hit hardest by the pandemic (such as leisure and hospitality) are less likely to be unionized than industries that were more sheltered from the pandemic, and this change in the composition of the workforce raised unionization rates mechanically. Put another way, jobs in less unionized industries were lost at a higher rate, so unionization rates went up.”

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From the President

Push for Voting Rights Continues

Despite a congressional setback in late January, the AFL-CIO and other proponents of voting-rights legislation will continue the fight.



Michael Sacco

As you may know, our efforts are focused on two bills: the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act, which would reinstate federal power to review some state voting laws in order to avoid discrimination, and the Freedom to Vote Act, a wider-ranging piece of legislation that aims to establish national guidelines for voting by mail, early voting and other segments of the electoral process.

I believe that the Freedom to Vote Act and the John Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act would protect the right of every American to cast our vote and have that vote counted. Collectively, the bills are an appropriate federal response to the attacks on voting rights happening in state legislatures all across the country.

"Advancing voting rights is how we defend America against those who want to tear workers apart," stated AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler. "Mobilizing on voting rights is also how we can take on the filibuster, which has been used for generations to block progress for workers."

The federation has noted dozens of states in recent years have modified their voting laws to make the process of casting a ballot more difficult or to replace nonpartisan election officials with those professing support for only one side.

Unfortunately, any action on two bills has been stalled by the threat of a filibuster, which under current Senate rules calls for 60 senators to declare they are willing to allow either measure to simply be debated.

There is nothing more fundamental in a democracy than the right to vote, and that's why we'll continue working with the federation and other allies to defeat voter suppression tactics and secure voting rights for working people nationwide.

Put simply, voting is a fundamental right. I encourage Seafarers to be involved, to know the issues and to meet the candidates. This union doesn't care what party they belong to. We just ask them to stand up for the workers and their families who elected them.

Annual BLS Report

Around press time, the U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics (BLS) issued its annual report on union membership. It showed a decline in 2021 to the same rate as in 2019, which was 10.3 percent, and an overall total membership of 14 million. In 2020, membership rates had increased, but that was mostly because union jobs proved more secure than non-union ones during that stretch of the pandemic.

One stat that jumped out at me from the report: On average, union members earn an additional \$10,000 per year compared to unrepresented workers. They also typically enjoy better benefits.

While it isn't immediately reflected by the raw data, I don't think there's any question the past year saw remarkable union momentum — high-profile campaigns at flagship American employers, major moves in new industries, and widespread strikes as workers stood up for a fair deal and a better life.

The substantial level of union activity in 2021 demonstrates that workers want and value unions. The fact that unionization nevertheless declined is a glaring testament to how easy it is for employers who oppose unions to exploit our weak and outdated labor laws to thwart workers' attempts at organizing, and how broken U.S. labor law really is. It is urgent that Congress pass the Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO) Act and the Public Service Freedom to Negotiate Act.

In some ways, the 2021 union numbers are a wake-up call. The Biden administration and Congress must institute policies (such as the PRO Act and the Public Service Freedom to Negotiate Act) that promote the right to union representation and collective bargaining as we rebuild our economy.

AFL-CIO President Shuler Vows To Keep Up Voting Rights Fight

Editor's note: The following piece was written by Elizabeth "Liz" Shuler, president of the AFL-CIO and a member of the Shanker Institute Board of Directors. It appeared in the February 10 Albert Shanker Institute blog. Named in honor of its late president, the institute is a non-profit, non-partisan organization endowed by the American Federation of Teachers.



Elizabeth "Liz" Shuler
President
AFL-CIO

It was deeply disappointing that just days after our nation paid homage to the great civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. on his birthday, the same senators who praised his name struck down critical legislation that would have strengthened our election systems and ensured every American has the fundamental right to vote.

Even though this was not the outcome we wanted, it is imperative that America's labor movement does not give up this fight. There is nothing more fundamental to our democracy than the right to vote, and we will remember those senators who chose to stand on the wrong side of history.

On behalf of the AFL-CIO's 12.5 million union members who fight for the rights of all working people, including the 1.7 million educators, paraprofessionals and school personnel in the American Federation of Teachers, we are going to continue to stand for voting rights and speak out against racial discrimination and voter suppression.

Because we simply *cannot* afford to ignore what is unfolding across this country at breakneck speed. On January 6, 2021, empowered by President Trump's green light to overturn the will of the people, an extremist mob tried and failed to violently overturn a free and fair election. We witnessed one of the greatest assaults on our democracy since the Civil War. And even though the insurrectionists failed in that attempt, extremist efforts to subvert our election process did not end on Jan. 6.

In the 12 months following the insurrection, extremist lawmakers in 19 states passed more than 34 voter suppression laws in 2021 alone. We are already beginning to see the lasting and damaging effects of these bills.

For example in Texas, where Republicans rushed a sweeping voter "reform" (read: suppression) law through the legislature last year, thousands of Texans are now beginning to receive letters saying they have "been flagged as potential noncitizens" and can no longer vote.

Let me repeat that: With our mid-term season right around the corner, thousands of Texans are actively losing their right to vote every single day. Meanwhile, Arizona has gotten rid of its permanent early voter list, meaning far fewer voters will get an automatic mail ballot this year. In Georgia, it is now a crime to give water bottles or snacks to people waiting in line to vote—lines that are statistically much longer in Black and Latino communities.

Unless we take action, these restrictions—which disproportionately fall on voters of color—are only going to get worse.

Contrary to opponents' claims, voter suppression laws do nothing to protect democracy or stop the manufactured crisis of voter fraud. Instead, they create voting barriers that harm

historically disenfranchised groups, such as women, minorities, the elderly, people with disabilities and young people. None of these proposals do anything to solve real problems.

Voting rights and union rights go hand in hand. At the same time extremist lawmakers continue to carry out their fundamental assault on our voting rights, corporations are using every union-busting tactic in the book to deny workers' a voice on the job. Workers who practice their legal right to organize for dignity and safety are subjected to intense suppression campaigns, complete with forced anti-union meetings and false claims about the dangers of voting by mail.

Any employer who claims to defend voting rights at the ballot box but will union-bust in the same breath is actually an enemy of democracy. Nowhere is this more true than Amazon, where Jeff Bezos took to Instagram after the 2020 election to write, "By voting in record numbers, the American people proved again that our democracy is strong."

Really, Jeff? If the e-commerce behemoth practiced what they preached, why did they feel the need to illegally interfere with the mail-in voting process during the unionization campaign at an Amazon warehouse in Bessemer, Alabama last year?

I think we know why. Because voting rights and unions put power behind our voices.

Thankfully, our National Labor Relations Board ordered that the election be rerun in Bessemer and ballots went out in the mail last week. It is crucial this time around to ensure that workers' voices are heard fairly without interference from Amazon's limitless power to control what must be a fair and free election.

Similarly, with the 2022 mid-term elections fast approaching, America's unions are not going to let an anti-worker minority block the will of America's people. There is no cheating your way out of a fair democracy.

We are going to do everything in our power to make it easier to exercise the right to vote, with guaranteed early voting, mail-in voting and ballot drop boxes in every community, in every state. We are not going to sideline the hopes, aspirations and representation of the American people. Today, tomorrow and every day forward, we will raise our voices and demand democracy for all



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Headquarters: Michael Sacco, president; David Heindel, 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



UIW Firefighter Claims 2022 Employee of Year Honors in St. Croix, USVI

Both kudos and congrats are in order for **Rumina Laurencin** of the U.S. Virgin Islands (USVI).

A UIW member since 1995, Laurencin's hard work and dedication as an aircraft rescue firefighter recently reaped huge dividends when she was selected as the Virgin Islands Port Authority's (VIPA) 2022 Employee of the Year for St. Croix.

The veteran firefighter delivered the following remarks upon receiving the award:

"I am grateful for receiving the employee of the year award. I thank my supervisor for the nomination and the committee for their final selection. It makes me happy to know that my hard work does not go unnoticed.

"A heartfelt thank you to my former and current coworkers for making our 18-hour days bearable. The work of a firefighter requires a team effort. There must be a high expectation of trust and dependability. Your contribution to this effort made this achievement possible.

"In a predominantly male profession, I enjoy being an Aircraft Rescue Firefighter. I am the second female employed to the department. Since I became an employee at the Virgin Islands Port Authority in 1995, I enjoyed the work environment. Events such as family fun days and award ceremonies that brought us together, building our "port

family" on St. Croix, St. Thomas, and St. John.

"The Port Authority recognizes that happy employees provide efficient and quality service to customers. As an Aircraft Rescue Firefighter, we are often the first medical personnel on the scene if a traveler has an emergency. Our team must always be ready to respond. Maintaining our certification and equipment as well as our physical and emotional condition is paramount in this business.

"I will continue to make my contribution to the team. I thank you for this award."

According to its website, VIPA is an autonomous agency that owns and manages the two airports and the majority of the public seaports in the USVI. Additionally, the agency is charged with maintaining the harbors in the territory. The law stipulates that VIPA must make its properties available to the public so that the populace may reap the benefits of these facilities.

Just about everything that is used or consumed by the residents of the USVI enters the territory through boat or by plane. Food, clothing, machinery, mail, furniture, vehicles, building supplies, medical equipment - it all enters through the ports.

The VIPA employs more than 125 people, many of whom are members of the UIW.



UIW Member Rumina Laurencin poses with the floral arrangement she received for being selected as the Virgin Islands Port Authority's 2022 Employee of the Year for St. Croix.

Labor Unions Receive Boost From Task Force Report

Continued from Page 1

people today with the release of the first report," stated AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler. "This unprecedented report recognizes the critical role that unions play in creating a fairer economy. By taking steps to give more workers the right to organize and bargain collectively, the administration is once again demonstrating that it is committed to using its power to support unions."

The AFL-CIO noted the report calls for:

Ensuring workers know organizing and bargaining rights;

Establishing a resource center on unions and collective bargaining;

Protecting workers who organize from illegal retaliation;

Exposing employers' use of anti-union consultants;

Addressing equity across underserved communities; and

Sharing the positive impact unions have on all workers and the U.S. economy.

Shuler said the AFL-CIO is "committed to working with the administration to implement these recommendations." But she also called upon Congress "to pass both the Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO)

Act and the Public Service Freedom to Negotiate Act, which will ensure that every worker who wants to join a union may freely do so."

The report noted that Biden often points out "unions built the middle class and lift up workers, both union and nonunion." Given this position, the administration - at its core - believes that unions benefit everyone, according to the report, which also reminds readers that unions have fought for and helped win many aspects of American's work lives perhaps taken for granted today, like the 40-hour work week and the weekend, as well as landmark programs like Medicare.

According to the report, unions continue their fight for higher wages, greater job security, safety and health protections, health insurance and retirement plans, and protections from discrimination and harassment for all workers. Researchers have found that today's union households earn up to 20% more than non-union households, with an even greater union advantage for workers with less formal education and workers of color.

Research has also shown that growing economic inequality, growing pay gaps for women and workers of color, and declining voice in our democracy for working class Americans are all caused, in part, by the

declining percentage of workers represented by unions.

The National Labor Relations Act, enacted in 1935, noted that it is the policy of the United States to encourage the practice and procedure of collective bargaining, and to protect the exercise, by workers, of their full freedom of association. Unfortunately, according to the task force report, the federal government has not always done its part to turn this policy into action. In fact, in some cases government has actively undermined worker organizing, unions, and collective bargaining.

While some past administrations have taken individual actions to empower workers and strengthen their rights, the report stated that the Biden-Harris administration will be the first to take a comprehensive approach to doing so with the existing authority of the executive branch. The administration's goal is not just to facilitate worker power through executive action; it is to model practices that can be followed by state and local governments, private sector employers and others.

Biden has directed the task force to continue its work, provide an update on actions taken, and offer further recommendations in six months.

The full report is linked on the White House website.

Working People Respond To President Joe Biden's First Year in White House

Editor's note: The following piece was written jointly by Kenneth Quinnell and Aaron Gallant of the AFL-CIO. It has been edited slightly to conform to local style and space considerations.

Union members across the country went all out during the 2020 campaign to elect a pro-worker president to the White House. And over the past year, the Biden-Harris administration has been

delivering for America's workers. From the passage of the American Rescue Plan to the enactment of the bipartisan Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act, the labor movement has made real progress working in partnership with this administration.

Following are just some of the other advances we've achieved in the last year:

- President Biden fired the anti-worker National Labor Relations Board general counsel and installed a pro-worker majority on the board.

- Union member Marty Walsh (LIUNA) was appointed to serve as secretary of labor.

- The Biden-Harris administration created the White House Task Force on Worker Organizing and Empowerment.

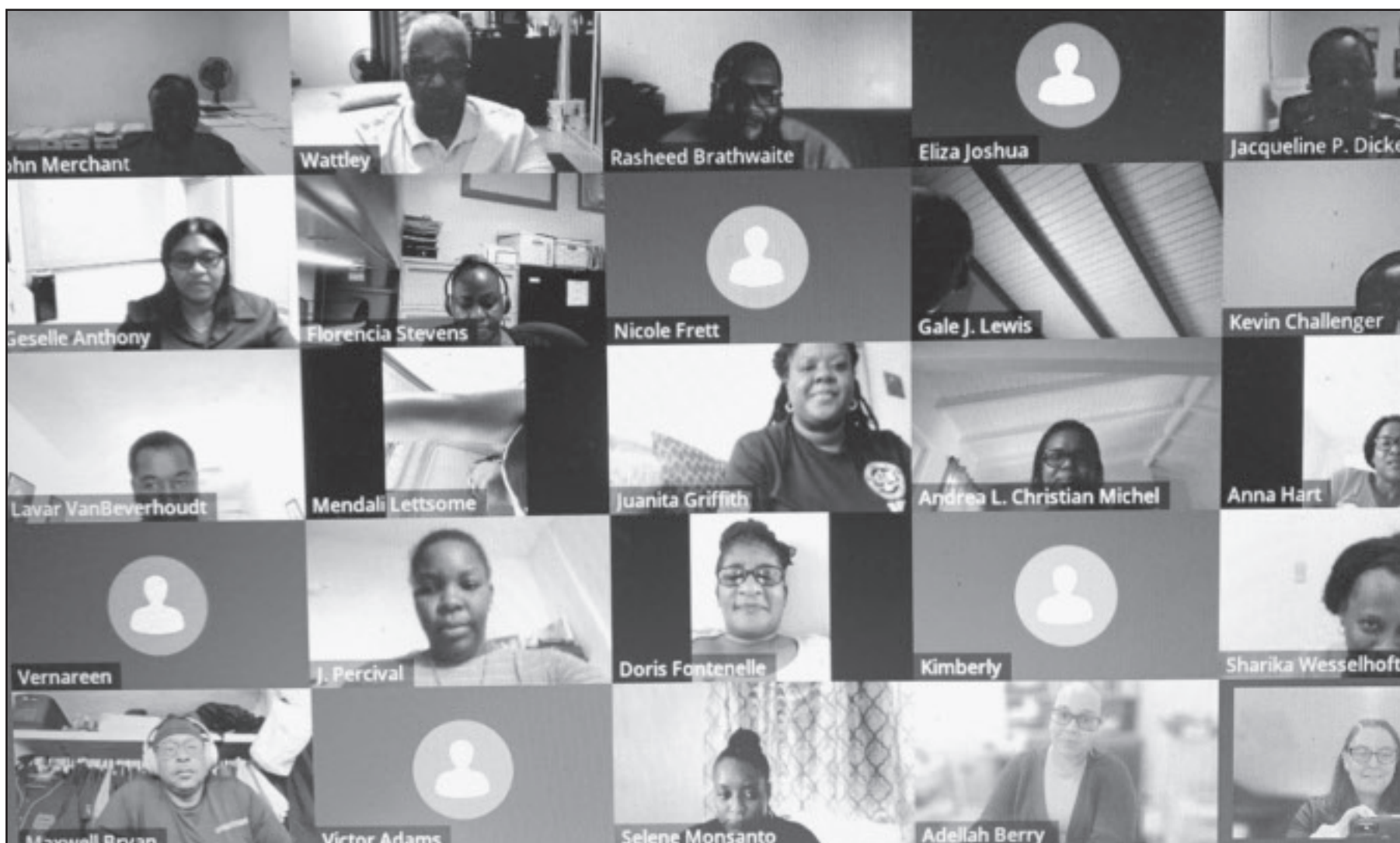
- President Biden used his bully pulpit to

advance the causes of the labor movement, including calling for passage of the Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO) Act, supporting workers' right to organize at Amazon and calling out Kellogg's corporate greed during an active strike.

- More of President Biden's lower court judicial nominees were confirmed in his first year than any president since John Kennedy.

- President Biden appointed more Black women to the U.S. Court of Appeals than any president in history.

As we look to the future, our sights are set on passing the Build Back Better Act, reforming America's outdated labor laws, and protecting our basic rights and freedoms. Our job is far from over, and we're ready to continue making progress for all working people in this country.



UIW VP Caribbean Region Jacqueline Dickenson, top right in the screen shot above, conducted a virtual shop steward training workshop from her office in St. Croix, U.S. Virgin Islands (USVI) Nov. 22. She was assisted by UIW Asst. National Director/Legal Counsel John Merchant, not pictured. In addition to UIW National Director Karen Horton-Gennette, lower right, workshop participants included UIW shop stewards who hailed from throughout the USVI.

USVI Shop Stewards Excel During Virtual Workshop

UIW members at job sites throughout the U.S. Virgin Islands expanded their knowledge and honed their abilities to represent fellow members Nov. 22 when they participated in a virtual shop steward training workshop.

UIW Vice President Caribbean Region Jacqueline Dickenson conducted the workshop from her office in St. Thomas. She was joined by UIW Asst. National Director/Legal Counsel John Merchant in St. Croix, who led discussions during portions of the workshop which involved legal considerations. UIW National Director Karen Horton-Gennette made a guest appearance from her stateside office in Algonac, Michigan. In addition to meeting and greeting some of the stewards for her first time, Horton-Gennette also fielded and answered questions.

Standard UIW shop steward training materials were used during the workshops, which covered such topics as Weingarten rights, how to investigate a grievance, representing members during disciplinary meetings and more. According to Merchant, information regarding the Virgin Islands Public Employees Relations Board was added to materials in the training that focused on the U.S. National Labor Relations Board. Workshop participants discussed the relationships of these organizations to the union's efforts to represent our employee members, Merchant added. He also noted that about 75% of the union's regional representation is for public employees. "So, we did have to tailor the standard presentation a bit," Merchant said.

A highlight for many during the workshop, according to Merchant, appeared to be the segment which incorporated the use of case studies that had been formulated for discussion. During this phase of the training, Dickenson presented factual scenarios

that could arise in the workplace and then solicited discussion and/or feedback from workshop participants. "We were surprised ourselves at how eager our stewards were to engage in discussion of these hypotheticals," Merchant said. "The dialogue they inspired provided a great springboard for important workplace concepts that every steward will need to know."

Although the training was virtual, an extremely significant upside to such a format was that it allowed union stewards from throughout the Virgin Islands to attend the same meeting simultaneously. "In the pre-COVID times, we would typically conduct a St. Croix training and a St. Thomas training separately," Merchant said. "We got feedback that our stewards really enjoyed being in conversation with their brothers and sisters on the other island."

Merchant added that going forward, union leaders in the Virgin Islands plan to follow up the latest virtual shop steward training workshop with periodic "brown-bag lunch" versions. Such an approach will allow stewards to participate in an informal and unstructured conference meeting and keep in touch with each other virtually, addressing springing concerns as they arise, Merchant said.

Those participating in the training and their respective work locations were as follows:

Virgin Islands Port Authority, St. Croix

Elvis Wattley

Bureau of Corrections, St. Croix

Rasheed Brathwaite, Maxwell Bryan, Andrea Michel, Juanita Griffith and Eliza Joshua

Bureau of Corrections, St. Thomas

Lavar VanBeverhoudt, Mendali

Lettsome, and Makeem Rhymer
Government Employees' Retirement System, St. Thomas

Geselle Anthony and Nicole Frett

Department of Labor, St. Thomas

Florencia Stevens

Department of Education, St. Thomas

Anna Hart, Verareen Webbe and Je Rae Akira Percival

Department of Justice, St. Thomas

Kimberly White

Department of Health, St. Thomas

Victor Adams and Selene Monsanto

Department of Human Services, St. Croix

Doris Fontenelle and Gale Lewis

Department of Human Services, St. Thomas

Neta Christopher

Schneider Regional Medical Center, St. Thomas

Patrice Donovan

In addition to shop stewards, several UIW staff members also participated in the training. Included were Kevin Challenger, UIW Business Rep. St. Thomas; Adellah Berry, UIW Business Rep. St. Croix; Sharika Wesselhoft, Admin. Assistant, St. Thomas.

Roles of Union Stewards/Union Reps

Shop Stewards and Union Reps essentially are charged with the same basic responsibilities. Union reps, however, conduct their duties at a higher-level of involvement than shop stewards.

Stewards perform their duties at various worksites or shops while union representatives cater to and take their marching orders from the union itself.

Shop stewards are charged with the following:

■ Handling grievances and enforcing provisions of the contract. — Stewards must watch for contract violations, as well as addressing grievances that are brought to them.

■ Organizing and keep their shops 100% Union. — Stewards should welcome new workers and encourage them to join the union. They should also keep all employees in their shops signed up and taking actions that support the union.

■ Providing leadership. — Building a spirit of cooperation and teamwork among the members they represent. Encourage all members to attend meetings.

■ Educating — Each steward should be capable of explaining union programs, worksite contracts, the labor movement, and other union matters to their members.

■ Understanding of contract. — Stewards must know what a contract says and what it means. They must understand how the contract has been interpreted during past grievance settlements, arbitration decisions, and agreements between the Union and the company.

■ Knowledge of department or shop. — Stewards must understand the operations of the departments or shop which they represent. They should know jobs, machines, rates of pay, ways of figuring wages, company rules, and other basic facts. Maintaining a seniority list and a record of members' names and addresses are essential.

■ Dealing with people. — In handling grievances, a steward must be aware of personality differences. This is why stewards must get to know the members they represent. They must also take into account the personalities and attitudes of the supervisors with whom you deal with.

Union Reps are tasked with

■ Organizing, recruiting and handling higher levels of grievances, arbitrations and negotiations.

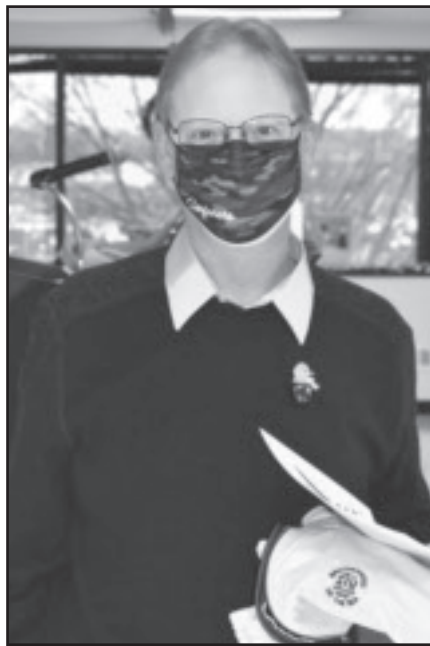
■ Conducting orientations of new members and presiding over union meetings. They also oversee regional union activities, handle issues involving politics and service members on a regular basis.



Leslie Tarantola
40 Years of Service
Legal Counsel
SIU Headquarters



Ida Morsell
35 Years of Service
Documents Supervisor
SIU Headquarters



Bryan Willis
35 Years of Service
Lead Analyst
SIU Headquarters



Danielle Szepesi
25 Years of Service
Executive Admin Asst.
SIU Headquarters

Employees Land Kudos for Jobs Well Done

More than 35 union and non-union employees recently were recognized for dedication to the union and professionalism in the performance of their respective duties.

Hailing from UIW/SIU Headquarters (HQ/SIU) in Camp Springs, Maryland and the SIU-affiliated Paul Hall Center for Maritime Educations and Training (PHC) in Piney Point, Maryland, each employee received certificates and assorted gifts for their respective years of service which ranged in duration from five to 40 years. Members of the UIW/SIU Headquarters group received kudos during a formal recognition event December 22 in the headquarters cafeteria. The outing was hosted by SIU Plans Administrator Maggie Bowen and SIU VP Contracts George Tricker. Due to protocols associated with the COVID-19 Pandemic, no such event was held in Piney Point. Employees at that location nonetheless received certificates and gifts but not the formal fanfare.

Those afforded recognition, their respective years of service, job titles and work locations were as follows:

40 Years of Service

Leslie Tarantola, Legal Counsel, HQ/SIU
Matthew Bowman, Driver, HQ/SIU

35 Years of Service

Audrey Feffer, Legal Counsel, HQ/SIU
Ida Morsell, Documents Supervisor, HQ/SIU
Bryan Willis, Lead Analyst, HQ/SIU
Howard Thompson, Facilities Director, PHC

30 Years Service

Jordan Biscardo, Director of Communications, HQ/SIU
Minette Clarke, Admin Assistant, PHC

Mary Russell, Processor, PHC
Priscilla Labanowski, Director, Vocational Training and Education, PHC

25 Years of Service

Danielle Szepesi, Executive Admin Asst., HQ/SIU
J. Pamela, Admin Support, PHC
Charlotte Gross, Housekeeper, PHC

20 Years of Service

Joan Bowman, Junior Accountant, HQ/SIU
Michael Hickey, Communications Coordinator, MTD
Andrew Bean, Driver, PHC

15 Years of Service

Juan Sande, MAP Technician, HQ/SIU
Angela Griffin, Analyst, HQ/SIU
Shelby Montgomery, Office Assistant, PHC
Jamie Shorback, Member Services Rep, PHC
Donald Rankin, Claims Clerical, PHC
Frederick Long, PC Support, PHC
Jenell Gandy, S&A Pensions Processor, PHC
Thomas Truitt, Simulator Specialist, PHC

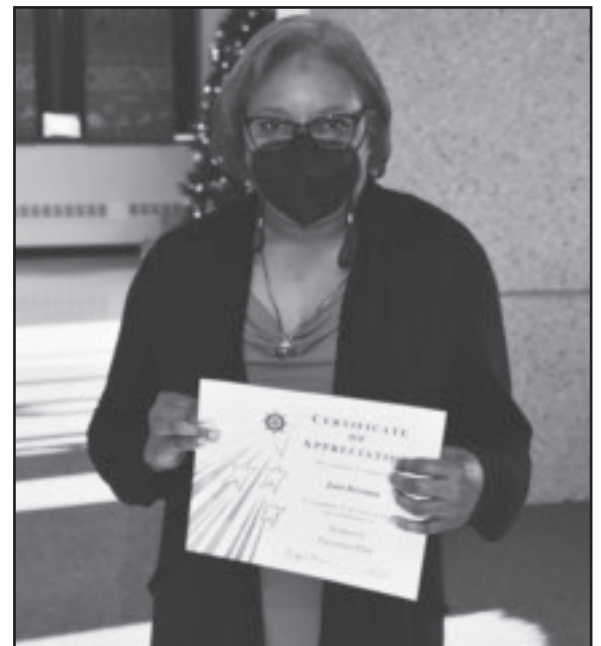
10 Years of Service

Brittanie Potter, Admin Support, HQ/SIU
Faye Best, Production Staff, HQ/SIU
Teresa Clements, Lead Conference Aide, PHC
Mary Willis, Clerical, PHC
Paulette Swann, Bartender, PHC
Amber Johnson, Admin Support, PHC

5 Years of Service

Thomas Watts, Program Analyst, HQ/SIU
Contessa Anderson, Accountant Coordinator, HQ/SIU
Abenet Deseta, Dues Accountant, HQ/SIU
Thomas Reece, Academic Specialist, PHC

Ronda Louis, Housekeeper, PHC
Gary Joy, Instructor, PHC
Sandra Guy, Nurse, PHC
Brittany Joson, Instructor, PHC
Bryan Owens, Instructor, PHC
Deborah Richardt, Instructor, PHC
Dana Dreher, Processor, PHC



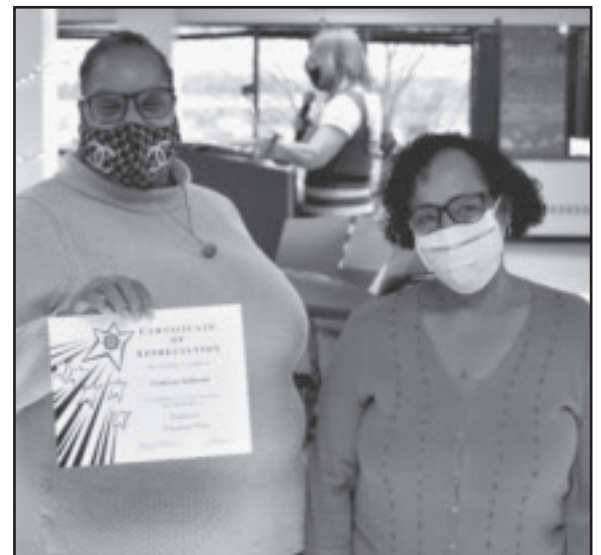
20 Years of Service
Joan Bowman
Junior Accountant, HQ/SIU



15 Years of Service
Angela Griffin (left)
Analyst, HQ/SIU
Juan Sande (right)
MAP Technician, HQ/SIU



10 Years of Service
Faye Best (left)
Production Staff, HQ/SIU
Brittanie Potter (right)
Admin Support, HQ/SIU



5 Years of Service
Contessa Anderson (left)
Accounting Coordinator, HQ/SIU
Abenet Deseta, (right)
Dues Accountant, HQ/SIU

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

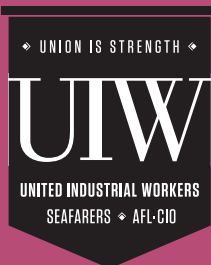
201-3A Altona & Welgunst
Suite 101
St. Thomas, USVI 00802
(340) 774-3895

TACOMA, WA

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

WILMINGTON, CA

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



UIW-Contracted Companies Host Holiday Bashes For Employees at Three Worksites on West Coast

UIW-contracted Sodexo and Ruvilla Solutions service three mess halls at the U.S. Marine Base in 29 Palms, California, which are staffed by union members.

In a gesture of goodwill towards and appreciation for these employees and their families, the two companies jointly sponsored one-day Christmas parties at each of the mess hall locations. The festivities were held December 21, December 22 and December 23, respectively.

Nearly 190 UIW members are employed by the two companies on the West Coast. Fifty perform services for Sodexo while another 135 receive their paychecks from Ruvilla Solutions.

The companies provided food and beverages for each of the parties. In addition, each outing featured raffles and assorted games which allowed employees to compete for a wide assortment of prizes. Up for grabs during the raffles and games were: gift cards, vacuums, coffee makers, alarm clocks, earbuds, crock pots, video games, chocolates, televisions and more.

The photos on this page represent a small sample of the merriment, comradery and goodwill had by everyone who attended.

Sodexo is the global leader in services that improve Quality of Life, an essential factor in individual and organizational performance. Founded in Marseille, France in 1966, the company now operates in 56 countries and serves 100 million consumers each day through its unique combination of on-site food and facilities management services, benefits and rewards services and personal and home services.

Ruvilla Solutions, LLC was formed as a Service-Disabled Veterans Owned Small Business in 2013. A Washington State Registered LLC, the company's founding office is located in Vancouver, Washington. Ruvilla Solutions offers superior services in the food, janitorial, housekeeping, maintenance, and facilities support. The company operates in multiple locations in California as well as in North and South Carolina.



UIW members help themselves to the fare being served December 23 at the Phelps Building on the U.S. Marine Base in 29 Palms California. Pictured in photo above, from left to right are UIW members Roy Clay, Diana Montero, Robert Cassi and Christina Schultz. The individual second from left is an unidentified member of the U.S. Marine Corps.



LaTachee (Lala) Rivers



Beto Meza



Trinity Ivery



Marcus Rice



Paciencia Jackson

Membership Numbers in Unions Decline During 2021

Continued from Page 1

The EPI continued, "In 2021, that dynamic happened in reverse as jobs were added in the recovery. The 'trampoline' effect – the fact that the jobs that come back in a recovery tend to look pretty much like the jobs that were lost – means that the jobs that came back in 2021 were concentrated in industries (such as leisure and hospitality) that have low unionization rates. This contributed to the substantial decline in the unionization rate in 2021, undoing the 2020 increase.

In a similar vein as the AFL-CIO's comments, the EPI also pointed out, "The share of workers who do not but would like to have a union at their workplace is far higher than the share who had

union representation in 2021 (11.6%). While more recent data are unavailable, an analysis of 2017 survey data showed almost half of nonunion workers polled (48%) said they would vote to create a union in their workplace tomorrow if they could. That figure is up substantially from about one-third (32–33%) of nonunion, nonmanagerial workers asked similar questions in 1977 and 1995."

According to the BLS report, in 2021, the union membership rate was 10.3 percent (the same in 2019). The rate is down from 10.8 percent in 2020.

In addition, nonunion workers had median weekly earnings that were 83 percent of earnings for workers who were union members (\$975 versus \$1,169), and the union membership rate of public-sector workers (33.9 percent)

continued to be more than five times higher than the rate of private-sector workers (6.1 percent).

The AFL-CIO concluded by saying, "The BLS report also shows promising data for communities of color. Black workers continued to have the highest unionization rate in 2021, with 12.9% membership.... Black union workers are paid 13.7% more than their nonunionized peers. According to a 2021 Gallup poll, union approval is at its highest level in over 50 years, with 68% of Americans supporting organized labor, including 77% of young people. An MIT study found that 60 million Americans would join a labor union if they could, underscoring the need for changes to labor laws."

UIW Pensioners

Guadalupe Arceo
Queen Mary
Long Beach, California

Jimmy Barber
Kingsford Products
Thurston, Ohio

Evelyn Coulter
Sodexo Management, Inc.
King George, Virginia

Rosa Dominguez De Leon
Queen Mary
Long Beach, California

Rafael Donado
Milo Components, Inc.
Fords, New Jersey

Mimie Gray
Sodexo Management, Inc.
Woodford, Virginia

Edward Hockenbrocht
Paulsen Wire Rope
Sunbury, Pennsylvania

Alberto Jamie
Queen Mary
Los Angeles, California

Benjamin Murillo
Queen Mary
Downey, California

Hipolito Navarro
A&E Products
El Paso, Texas

Juan Ortiz
Juanitas Foods
Garden, California

Larry Raster
Armaly Brands
Springfield, Ohio

Julio Ramos-Rosa
Victory Refrigeration
Camden, New Jersey

Hiram Rivera Sanchez
Victory Refrigeration
Camden, New Jersey

Helen Tatman
Franklin International
Columbus, Ohio

Gone But Not Forgotten

DENNIS BOUDREAUX
Brother Dennis Boudreaux, 67, died January 19. Born in McAlester, Oklahoma, Brother Boudreaux signed on with the UIW in 2017 while working as a maintenance mechanic at San Bernardino, California-based Refresco. He was a resident of Marietta, California.

GENEVA CARTER
Pensioner Geneva Carter, 90, passed away April 19, 2021. Sister Carter joined the union in 1972 while working at Bron-Shoe. A native of Franklin, Ohio, she started receiving compensation for her retirement I 1990. Sister Carter made her home in Worthington, Ohio.

SHARON LEMASTER
Pensioner Sharon Lemaster, 67, died December 7. Born in Springfield, Ohio, Sister Lemaster donned the UIW colors in 1973 while working at Church & Dwight. She went on pension in 2005 and called West Jefferson, Ohio home.

ALMOUS MCKENZIE
Pensioner Almous McKenzie, 93, passed away October 13. A military veteran, Brother McKenzie came under the union umbrella in 1970 while working at Church & Dwight. He started receiving retirement stipends in 1994. Brother McKenzie was a native of Volga, Kentucky but called Springfield, Ohio home.

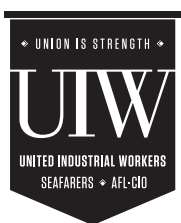
DOMINGO PATLAN
Pensioner Domingo Patlan, 78, died January 12. The Kyle, Texas-native signed on with the UIW in 1974 while working at Crown Cork & Seal. Brother Patlan was a resident of Abilene, Texas and became a pensioner in 2005.

ELIVA PEREZ
Pensioner Eliva Perez, 74, passed away November 29. A military veteran, Sister Perez was born in Three Rivers, Texas. She joined the UIW in 1986 while working at Hamilton/29 Palms. She began receiving stipends for her retirement in 2012 and made her home in 29 Palms, California.

STEVEN REITENOUER
Pensioner Steven Reitenouer, 66, died December 15. Brother Reitenouer hailed from Bellmawr, New Jersey. He signed on with the union in 1973 while working at Victory Refrigeration. Brother Reitenouer went on pension in 1990 and was a resident of Camden, New Jersey.

VINCENT RYAN JR.
Pensioner Vincent Ryan Jr., 80, passed away January 23. Brother Ryan joined the UIW ranks in 1963 while working at A&E Products. A native of Shenandoah, Pennsylvania, Brother Ryan began receiving retirement stipends in 2003. He resided in his native city and state.

LORETTA TYLER
Pensioner Loretta Tyler, 71, died January 29. Born in Virginia, Sister Tyler donned the UIW colors in 1994 while working at Plymkraft, Inc. She retired and went on pension in 2018. Sister Tyler resided in her native state in the city of Hampton.



Meet Some of the Union's Shop Stewards

Shop stewards play a vital role in the day to day operations of UIW shops across the country and throughout the U.S. Virgin Islands (see related article on Page 4 of this edition under the headline 'Role of Union Stewards/Union Reps'). More than 100 union members serve in this position at 60-plus UIW worksites. Pictured in the photos below are 10 of them.



Shop Stewards at UIW/SIU Headquarters in Camp Springs, Maryland (above from left) are: **Gloria Ricks**, **Cynthia Green**, **Toni Wills**, **Sheila Richardson** and **Stacy Thacker**. Green, who has worked for the union since 1998, serves as chief shop steward.



Shop Stewards at the Union-affiliated Paul Hall Center for Maritime Training and Education (PHC) in Piney Point, Maryland are (above from left) **John Weigman III**, **Denise Woodland**, **David Aud** and **Bonnie Johnson**. Johnson, a union member since 1989, is the worksite's chief shop steward while Woodland services employees who work in the PHC Claims Department.



Chris Weaver (above) serves as shop steward at Columbus, Ohio-based Franklin International. Weaver has been a shop steward for seven years. He was a member of the negotiating committee for the worksite's current labor agreement.



After Initial Silence, AFL-CIO Backs Ukrainian Labor Colleagues in Conflict Against Russia

Editor's note: The following piece was written by Mark Gruenberg of Press Associates Union News Service. It has been edited slightly to conform to local style and space requirements.

After prior silence on the crisis between the U.S. and Russia over the Ukraine, U.S. unions—those that issued statements at all—sided with their Ukrainian union colleagues in favor of a peaceful resolution. Some in late February, led by the AFL-CIO, demanded Russia withdraw troops from the Ukraine.

Russia's decision to send troops into eastern Ukraine came after negotiations, which U.S. unions called for, did not produce a solution. The U.S. responded with sanctions, which drew wholehearted backing from North America's Building Trades Unions (NABTU). The AFL-CIO's stance brought a mixed reaction online, at least on its twitter feed.

"We demand an immediate withdrawal of Russian troops and a commitment to political and diplomatic solutions to the crisis that will cause needless suffering and hardship for people throughout the country," federation President Liz Shuler said in her first tweet.

"The AFL-CIO joins with unions from around the world in standing in solidarity with our union partners in Ukraine," her second tweet read.

The Confederation Of Free Trade Unions Of The Ukraine promptly tweeted back: "Thank you for solidarity!"

NABTU President Sean McGarvey was tougher, calling Russian President Vladimir Putin a "thug" and saying building trades unionists stood by ready to help the Ukrainians "repel this unjustified attack."

"We are working with our partners and contractors to do whatever it takes to expedite maintenance to keep our domestic refining industry at maximum production," McGarvey said. U.S. refineries could replace some of the Russian natural gas cut off from Europe by NATO alliance sanctions.

"NABTU is prepared to move our highly-skilled craft people to where they're needed and do all we can to support our fellow countrymen and leaders at this time," McGarvey added.

Then he became more outspoken, saying the U.S. "has been polarized for far too long. This sustained division has been fueled by misinformation, much of it emanating from the very same thug who attacked Ukraine."

The country "must recognize this,

and rally around the Commander-in-Chief"—Democratic President Joe Biden—"and our allies in Europe as we push back against Russia's unwanted aggression, which is set to undermine a democratically elected government and a peaceful and sovereign nation."

The statements on February 23-24 came as anti-war sentiment increased elsewhere in the U.S.—Sen. Bernie Sanders (Ind-Vt.), and CodePink were among war's foes—and in Russia. That same AFL-CIO twitter feed aired a video of an anti-war demonstration of hundreds of thousands of people in St. Petersburg.

All but one of the other unions checked—the Teamsters, Service Employees, the Office and Professional Employees, the Steelworkers, the Autoworkers, AFSCME, SEIU, the School Administrators and both teachers unions—were silent in initial days. National Nurses United also called for a ceasefire, withdrawal of troops and resumption of negotiations.

"Any invasion of another sovereign nation is a crime against humanity that always threatens to lead to an incalculable loss of lives and other long-term health consequences for the people of that nation," NNU President Zenei Triunfo-Cortez, RN,

said in a statement.

Wars are "human calamities that are not justifiable and must end," she added.

Triunfo-Cortez also said what no one else did: A confrontation between "the two largest nuclear-armed nations in the world," the U.S. and Russia, "is particularly chilling." That alone should lead all the nations to solve the crisis peacefully and immediately.

And any solution must realize all nations "have legitimate security concerns when foreign troops are positioned near their borders," the union said, without a direct quote.

The Eugene V. Debs Museum in Terre Haute, Ind., devoted to the famous leader of the fabled American Railway Union, which was forced to call the 1893 Pullman strike, posted his quote saying workers would be sent to fight, without a voice in the decision. Debs, an anti-war activist of the early 1900s, went to jail for opposing World War I.

"Let me emphasize the fact...that the working class who fight all the battles, the working class who make the supreme sacrifices, the working class who freely shed their blood and furnish the corpses, have never yet had a voice in either declaring war or making peace," Debs had said.

Newest Union Representatives



Adam Cordle
Great Lakes Region



Adellah Berry
Caribbean Region



Jordan Esopa
Atlantic Region

The union recently welcomed three new members to its cadre of Union Representatives. They are **Adam Cordle**, **Adellah Berry** and **Jordan Esopa**. The veteran of the trio, Cordle has been a union member for 24 years. Prior to assuming his new duties, he served as shop steward for 20 years while working at the Great Lakes Kroger Distribution Center. During that period, he served on three contract negotiating committees. Cordle is located in the Great Lakes Region and will be working out of Columbus, Ohio. Berry hails from the Caribbean Region. She joined the union in 2019 after being employed as a receptionist at an engineering firm. Berry also attended Bunker Hill Community College in Cambridge, Massachusetts. Since becoming a union member, she has worked as an administrative assistant in St. Croix. Berry will remain at that same location in her new position. Rounding out the group is Esopa. The real newcomer of the crew, she came under the UIW umbrella December 6, 2021. Prior to donning the union colors, she attended the College of Charleston in Charleston, South Carolina. She earned her Bachelor of Arts Degree in Political Science with a focus on labor studies. Esopa will be representing the Atlantic Region. Union representatives perform a variety of crucial duties for the union and its members. Among them are routinely interacting with members to become aware of their concerns, filing and following through on grievances and generally overseeing operations at worksites in their regions.