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NEWS FOR THE UNITED STEELWORKERS IN

# DISTRICT 4

## WOMEN OF STEEL, VETERANS OF STEEL CHART PATH FORWARD

Recently, I had the pleasure of attending the District 4 Women of Steel Level 1 Training and the District 4 Veteran's Council meeting, each of which were held in Albany, N.Y., in June and July, respectively. Both of these events were very well attended by members from all over the district and some from as far away as Puerto Rico.

The Women of Steel training is always important because it educates our members on all facets of their union and informs them of their opportunities to participate and contribute to their local union, as well as introducing them to a program that promotes solidarity and activism. This session was special in another way though because the torch of leadership was passed on to the next generation.

Tammie Botelho has been the District 4 Women of Steel Coordinator for as long as I've been a Steelworker. She has led with dignity and grace and has molded the program into what it is today, which is a respected and integral part of our district. Through her leadership, and that of the council chairs throughout the district, Women of Steel has contributed to the communities in their areas and provided support to their brothers and sisters in times of need. You've seen them on picket lines, lobbying for pro-labor legislation, on food drives, providing warm clothing for the homeless, assisting with disaster relief, raising money for charities and many more activities too numerous to mention.

Tammie announced at the training that she will be retiring toward the end

of the year and she has been working to bring the next Coordinator up to speed for what we hope will be a seamless transition. Tammie has worked tirelessly and made many sacrifices to promote our program and she will be missed. She deserves all of our thanks and best wishes for a happy retirement.

During the training, Mariel Cruz Martinez was introduced as the next District 4 WOS Coordinator. Mariel was the council chair in Puerto Rico and has worked to create a strong program there. We are confident that she will bring her energy and fresh ideas to the program to carry on our traditions as well as to continue to evolve the program for the future. We welcome Mariel to the position and wish her good luck. Just as Tammie did, she will have our support every step of the way.

The District 4 Veterans of Steel Council is still relatively new and is still growing. If the record attendance at this meeting is any indication, it would seem that word is getting out about this important council.

Council Chair Cary Eldridge lined up impressive speakers for the morning session to discuss veteran's issues and access to resources for veterans and their families. These included speakers from Common Defense, the Veteran's Organizing Institute and the Institute for Veterans and Military Families out of Syracuse University.

During the afternoon, the Council discussed current ongoing initiatives and projects within the district. They also charted the path forward as far as activities and the direction the Council will take regarding plans for the future.

This was all with the intention of growing the program and increasing participation on a local and district wide level.

The District 4 Veterans of Steel Council is for veterans and their families as well as those who support veterans. If you don't already have a Veterans of Steel Committee within your local, please contact Cary Eldridge for information on how to do so as well as sample bylaws language. Those who have defended our country deserve our support.

In closing, let me say that Women of Steel and the Veteran's Council are just two of the many councils and committees our locals and members can participate in. Please support these and all the others by getting involved and participating. Remember, this is your union.



**DEL VITALE**  
DISTRICT 4 DIRECTOR

DIRECTOR'S REPORT

**BUFFALO** JIM BRIGGS, SUB-DISTRICT DIRECTOR

We are now in the heart of the summer season and everyone is still working hard to meet the needs of our membership. Coming out of a pandemic, and returning to the new normal, has created issues with regards to continued health and safety in the workplace. We will continue to step up and educate around this issue.

We have some very good new contracts, bargained and ratified by our locals, which we believe will support our members and their families going forward. One of those contracts was with Dupont and Local 6992. Through the efforts

of our Strategic Campaigns department, District 4 Director Del Vitale, Assistant to the Director David Wasiura and our staff, we were able to fight back against DuPont's attempt to gut our collective bargaining agreement. Dupont wanted cuts in many economic areas including forced pay, shift differential, overtime pay, and many others. It is clear that our local stood in solidarity during this fight and won because of it.

If we are struggling, it is in the area of organizing. We cannot emphasize enough the need for each and every member to reach out to unorganized locations in their area and try to cre-

**MILFORD** STEVE FINNIGAN, SUB-DISTRICT DIRECTOR

Climate change is something we all care about. We all want cleaner air and a safer environment for our families, neighbors and future generations. Unfortunately, in Massachusetts over the last couple of years, the USW has struggled with trying to prevent unrealistic, drastic and inequitable proposed regulations and legislation that would effectively ban the use of natural gas within the state.

Our fight began in 2019 when the town of Brookline, Mass., passed a gas ban for all new development. With the help of the New England Gas Workers Alliance (NEGWA), we have not been in this fight alone. The gas companies, real-estate developers, industry groups and many other labor unions have also been working very hard with us to educate and inform decision and policy makers about why natural gas bans are a terrible idea and how they would impact good union jobs in our communities. In Massachusetts alone, the USW represents approximately 2,000 members who work in this industry. These bans would have a lasting effect on our members and their families.

We have attended a number of events and testified at hearings about how important natural gas is to our economy. We should be investing money into making gas cleaner utilizing carbon capture technology, utilizing the gas systems to provide decarbonized energy like Renewable Natural Gas (RNG) and hydrogen, and continuing to repair the leaks in older gas systems and pipelines.

The USW has sent out a series of Rapid Response Communications to mobilize our membership to contact their legislators and advise them not to impose these bans.

The USW wants to be a part of any new technology that evolves within the energy markets – including geothermal energy – but gas remains an important part of our energy supplies. We will continue the fight in Massachusetts to maintain our members' good-paying jobs and educate legislators, consumers and environmentalists about the common-sense approaches to a cleaner environment.



Dave Monahan, John Savage, Nolan Rice, Chris Gilesen

ate a conversation that may lead to new members in our union.

Since the last newsletter we have conducted two Level 1 and two Level 2 stewards trainings. We are glad to report the participation was great as we trained approximately 70 members to provide the first line of defense in their workplaces. In addition to this, we have completed a number of safety trainings conducted by the District 4 HSE initiative. They have been well attended and we will continue these trainings moving forward. We encourage locals to participate in these sessions by sending delegations. Through these trainings and

steward's education mentioned above, these trained activists will demonstrate in their facility how the union works for them each and every day, and is committed to continuous improvement in these leadership skills. There is nothing more important than the health and safety of our members.

As we head home from the International Convention, I hope that our members at our locals that attended participated fully in the convention to get a full understanding of our union and how it works. I hope you enjoyed yourself at the convention and had a safe trip back to your locals!

## SYRACUSE JIM VALENTI, SUB-DISTRICT DIRECTOR

The Syracuse Sub-District held its annual presidents' meeting on June 10, 2022. The Women of Steel and local SOAR chapter joined local union presidents for lunch at a solidarity gathering. The session was very well attended. The District 4 Veterans Council gave a comprehensive update on important wins for veterans, including the passage of new legislation that will provide valuable information to our veterans and their families. There were also updates on Rapid Response, Health and Safety programs and Women of Steel. We also stressed the importance of keeping the financial business of each local union in order, and a new training session for financial officers and trustees was set for this fall at the Syracuse training center.

We're proud to announce that our newly organized Essity tissue converting plant in Greenwich, N.Y., ratified their first contract in June! Workers there overwhelming voted to join the USW late last year. They are now under the Essity Master Agreement, covering six other USW-represented sites and locking in economic provisions such as health care and retirement. Staff Representative Cary Eldridge said all the credit goes to the bargaining committee for staying united, disciplined and focused on their goal of obtaining a first contract, in spite of challenges caused by the pandemic. Congratulations to the committee and the new members at Essity who are securing a better future!



**EDISON** MICHAEL L. FISHER, SUB-DISTRICT DIRECTOR

The Edison Sub-District has continued to empower the rank and file through a series of trainings, and I've appreciated the chance to thank all the various local unions that have sent participants. The trainings took place in both North and South New Jersey, and have included sessions for shop stewards at levels one and two.

Many also participated in the Next-Gen training held at the Edison office, which served to empower and engage upcoming activists in the district.

It is said that we learn from our past, and in that spirit, I'm happy to report that an additional SOAR chapter has been established in the South Jersey area. Local 4-380 has sponsored the effort by helping the retired members there to form their chapter and receive a charter from the International. International Secretary-Treasurer John Shinn, a member of Local 4-380, recently presented the charter.

Elsewhere in the Sub-District, Local 4-438 Financial Secretary Fred Johnson ran a food drive which raised money and collected food for a food bank in central New Jersey.

In closing, I hope everyone has a great summer, and I look forward to welcoming our Sub-District 7 delegates to the USW Constitutional Convention being held in Las Vegas in August!



LU 4-438 Unit Chair Fred Johnson with Jennifer Apostol, Director of REPLENISH food program at the Middlesex County Food Bank. USW Local 4-438 members donated about 200 pounds of food and gave \$641.



# MUJERES DE ACERO, VETERANOS DE ACERO TRAZAN SU FUTURA TRAYECTORIA

Recientemente, tuve el placer de asistir a la Capacitación de Nivel 1 de Mujeres de Acero del Distrito 4 y a la reunión del Consejo de Veteranos del Distrito 4, cada una de las cuales se llevó a cabo en Albany, Nueva York, en junio y julio, respectivamente. Ambos eventos contaron con una gran asistencia de miembros de todo el distrito y algunos de lugares tan lejanos como Puerto Rico.

La capacitación de Mujeres de Acero siempre es importante porque educa a nuestros miembros en todas las facetas de su sindicato y les informa sobre sus oportunidades para participar y contribuir a su sindicato local, además de presentarles un programa que promueve la solidaridad y el activismo. Sin embargo, esta sesión fue especial en otro sentido porque la antorcha del liderazgo pasó a la siguiente generación.

Tammie Botelho ha sido la Coordinadora de Mujeres de Acero del Distrito 4 durante el tiempo que he sido trabajador siderúrgico. Ha dirigido con dignidad y gracia y ha moldeado el programa en lo que es hoy, que es una parte respetada e integral de nuestro Distrito. A través de su liderazgo y el de los presidentes de los consejos a través del distrito, Mujeres de Acero ha contribuido a las comunidades en sus áreas y brindado apoyo a sus hermanos y hermanas en tiempos de necesidad. Los han visto en piquetes, cabildeando a favor de una legislación a favor de los trabajadores, en campañas de recolección de alimentos, brindando ropa abrigada a las personas sin hogar, socorriendo en casos de desastre, recaudando dinero para organizaciones benéficas y muchas más actividades demasiado numerosas para mencionarlas.

Tammie anunció en la capacitación, que se jubilará a fines de año y ha estado trabajando para poner al día al próximo Coordinador en lo que esperamos sea una transición sin inconvenientes. Tammie ha trabajado incansablemente y ha hecho muchos sacrificios para promover nuestro programa y la extrañaremos. Se merece todo nuestro agradecimiento y nuestros mejores deseos de feliz jubilación.

Durante la capacitación, Mariel Cruz Martínez fue presentada como la próxima Coordinadora de WOS del Distrito 4. Mariel fue presidenta del consejo en Puerto Rico y ha trabajado para crear un programa sólido allí. Estamos seguros de que ella aportará su energía e ideas frescas al programa para continuar con nuestras tradiciones y continuar con la evolución del programa para el futuro. Damos la bienvenida a Mariel al cargo y le deseamos mucha suerte. Así como se hizo con Tammie, contará con nuestro apoyo en cada paso del camino.

El Concilio de Veteranos del Acero del Distrito 4 todavía es relativamente nuevo y sigue creciendo. Si el récord de asistencia a esta reunión es una indicación, parece que se está corriendo la voz sobre este importante concilio.

El presidente del concilio, Cary Eldridge, alineó oradores impresionantes para la sesión de la mañana para discutir los problemas de los veteranos y el acceso a los recursos para los veteranos y sus familias. Estos incluyeron oradores de Defensa Común, el Instituto Organizador de Veteranos y el Instituto para Veteranos y Familias Militares de la Universidad de Syracuse.

Durante la tarde, el Consejo discutió iniciativas y proyectos actuales en curso, dentro del distrito. También trazaron el camino a seguir en cuanto a actividades y la dirección que tomará el Consejo con respecto a los planes para el futuro. Todo esto fue con la intención de hacer crecer el programa y aumentar la participación a nivel local y de distrito.

El Concilio de Veteranos del Acero del Distrito 4 es para veteranos y sus familias, así como para aquellos que apoyan a los veteranos. Si aún no tiene un Comité de Veteranos del Acero en su local comuníquese con Cary Eldridge para obtener información sobre cómo hacerlo, así como un ejemplo del lenguaje de los estatutos. Quienes han defendido a nuestro país merecen nuestro apoyo.

Para terminar, permítanme decir que Mujeres de Acero y el Concilio de Veteranos son solo dos de los muchos concilios y comités en los que nuestras locales y miembros pueden participar. Apoye a estos y a todos los demás involucrándose y participando. Recuerde, esta es su Unión.





## DISTRICT 4 SOAR

SOAR members in Barrington, N.J., were honored to recently have their SOAR Chapter 4-19 officially chartered by the Steelworkers Organization of Active Retirees (SOAR). The new chapter will be home to retirees from USW Local 4-380. The local represents a variety of different workers from International Paper, GCUA, Gloucester City Public Works, National Gypsum, Briggs Co., GULF Oil, Matheson, GCIA and Express Scripts. USW International Secretary-Treasurer John Shinn is also a member. Serving as the first SOAR President is Edward Vogel, who was our local union financial secretary. Our first SOAR Vice President is James “Jimmy” Regan, who served as our local union Vice President. He also hasn’t had a jam up since 1994, which is still the IP record! Both of these men were vital parts of our local while working, and as retirees will now be a vital part of our SOAR Chapter. Joining them as elected officers for SOAR Chapter 4-19 is Recording Secretary Scott Chisholm, Financial Secretary Amanda McNulty Stayton, Treasurer Jamone Murray, and Trustees Butch Multanski, Bruce LaMarra, and Justin Fields. We are honored and grateful that all positions were accepted by well-rounded individuals and we know they will all do great things within our SOAR Chapter. The Chapter plans to meet every third Sunday at 9 a.m. at American Legion Post 370 in Magnolia, N.J.

## HEALTH, SAFETY & ENVIRONMENT

The USW Health, Safety, and Environment initiative is conducting four Health and Safety classes in the district per month in the Buffalo, Syracuse, Milford and Edison offices. Thank you to all our health and safety activists in the district who conduct these valuable trainings. Their time and dedication are key to the success of our Health and Safety program, and without them it wouldn’t be possible. These training programs are critical to helping us to prevent serious accidents and loss of life to our union siblings. Contact your Sub-District office to learn more about the upcoming trainings being offered: August – Two-Day Train the Trainer; September – Crane/Forklift Safety; October – Two-Day OSHA 10-hour Training; November – Industrial Process Safety Management.

## VETS OF STEEL

The Central NY Veterans of Steel, lead by Coordinator Cary Eldridge, recently took part in a flag giveaway during Memorial Day celebrations held by the Syracuse NY Labor Council.



# WOMEN OF STEEL

**D**istrict 4 Women of Steel recently held a Level 1 training in Albany, N.Y. (Details can be read about in District Director Del Vitale’s article elsewhere in this insert). Many people and guest speakers attended, and all the sisters there left with a great degree of enthusiasm and renewed commitment.

## NEW ENGLAND COUNCIL

On June 11, 2022 the New England Council of Women of Steel once again participated in the Relay for Life of Greater Braintree. The NE Council has had a team in Relay for Life since 2008 and was very excited to be “relaying” again in person. Relay for Life is a fundraising event which benefits the American Cancer Society. It is held on a track where at least one member of each team must be on the track at all times while the other members of the team tend to the fundraising duties at the team’s site. Our team’s theme was “Cancer Sucks in Every Color.” Team members Laurie Carlson, Tina Fortes, Jacquie Sanders and Marie McGinley stepped up and raised a total of \$2,758! We were assisted at the relay by several family members including Steven Carlson, Jimmy Hazelton, Gail Marie Sweezey and Patti and John Daigle.



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Kim Kephart



John Savage

# NEXT GENERATION

Please join us in congratulating our newly appointed Next Gen regional coordinators Kim Kephart in the Southern Tier, N.Y., region and John Savage in the New England region.

Kim comes from a union background and has several family members who are current or retired union workers.

Kim is the recording secretary for Local 1000, and has worked at Corning Inc. in Corning, N.Y., since February 2006. She previously served for two years as a shop steward and three years as a guard on the local's executive board. Kim has been involved for years with both WOS and Next Generation. Kim was instrumental in assisting with the success of both programs.

John is the Next Gen coordinator for Local 12012 and works for National Grid. He has been a union member for six years and is a third generation Steelworker. John is also involved in the Local 12012 Rapid Response program, with which he helped fight and defeat the "Right to Work" legislation in New Hampshire last year. John also helped to spread information with the Bat Light.

When asked why he was proud to be a Steelworker, John replied, "I am honored and proud to serve my union as D4's New England Next Gen Regional Coordinator. I am proud to be a Steelworker because I can see the good they do for their members and members' families, along with the benefits for the working class and their families."

Welcome to our team of regional coordinators here in D4, Kim and John! We look forward to all the skills and knowledge you both bring to the table!

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