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NEWS FOR THE UNITED STEELWORKERS IN

# DISTRICT 4

A LOOK AHEAD

## EXPANDING HEALTH AND SAFETY

Another new year is upon us and I'm looking to 2022 as a year of promise. While we've restarted in-person meetings and trainings, we're still faced with the reality of having to deal with COVID-19. We're still requiring masks and distancing in our offices and at our events, but that's a small price to pay to be able to meet with people in-person and safely.

We're having our LM trainings and Presidents meetings in person this year, but we've offered a virtual option for those who are still uncomfortable being around too many people due to the Omicron surge. It's important for us to be sure all who require training receive it.

The virus did force us to cancel our second District 4 Rapid Response Conference that we'd been planning for early March. We couldn't be sure that we'd be allowed to lobby the legislative offices in person and since that is the most important and educational part of the conference, we decided to wait and reschedule when we're certain that we'll have full access to our legislators. As soon as we have a new date set, we'll get that information out to all our locals.

On a positive note, we'll be expanding our District Health and Safety training significantly this year. Now that we have training centers at all of our Sub-District offices, training will take place every month from April to November at each office. This represents a more than tripling of our previous Health and Safety training

schedule and it will make training available closer to where our members are. This is an ambitious project but we're confident there will be sufficient interest to fill these classes.

Classes will include Hazard Mapping, Near Miss Investigation, Union Approach to Health and Safety, OSHA 10-Hour course, Incident Investigation, Industrial Process Safety Management and more. The schedule for the whole year has been sent to your local as well as instructions on how to register.

Health and Safety is the most important benefit we offer our members. Everyone wants to return home the same way they arrived at work. Statistics show that union workers are safer than workers who are not unionized. It is also generally accepted that the Steelworkers have the best Health and Safety program in the labor movement, and I believe District 4 has the best in the USW. With this new initiative, we're working to make our program even better. The level of participation by our locals will determine the success or failure of this initiative, so please fill these classes and the results will be safer workplaces.

Finally, by now all locals should have received the Official Convention Call letters regarding the upcoming USW International Convention in August. You may remember that the 2020 convention had to be cancelled because of COVID-19 so it will have been five years between conventions. Please remember to get your paperwork

in ahead of time and if you have any questions, please reach out to your Staff Representative or call your Sub-District office.

In closing, I'd like to take a moment to remember one of our members who recently passed away unexpectedly. Laura Jones was co-coordinator of our District 4 Next Gen program. More than that, she was a fierce union activist who was always there when the union called and she worked hard to help make our Next Gen program the success it is. Her energy and passion for the union was an inspiration and she'll be missed. Please remember Laura and her family in your prayers.

Stay Safe,  
Del



**DEL VITALE**  
DISTRICT 4 DIRECTOR

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

Greetings and Happy New Year from the Buffalo Sub-District. As we look on the past year and evaluate our progress, I am proud to say that while we had two strikes out of the Western New York area (at ATI and Unifrax) due to membership solidarity and the work of the staff and various departments at the International headquarters, our members were able to return to work with fair contracts and job protection that didn't exist in previous agreements. Additionally, we were able to negotiate many other new agreements that did not result in work stoppages, but which were overwhelmingly approved by membership of the various local unions.

We would have liked to have been more successful last year in organizing campaigns and bringing new members into the USW. I don't see a change in this area until each and every member of our local unions realize that organizing sits squarely on their shoulders. We all know relatives and friends who work in unorganized facilities. We must communicate

the advantages of being a member of a union to them and encourage them to meet with our organizing staff to create the leads necessary to grow our union. This isn't going after strangers; this is talking to friends and family, and that should come easily to us. Where leads have been provided to our District Organizing Coordinator, Brigitte Womer, (joinUSW4.org) they have been followed up on and some have led to campaigns. I encourage every one of our locals from the Buffalo office to make organizing a top priority in 2022. Each of our locals should have an organizing committee! With union density in your communities will come strength and power that you can use at the bargaining table.

I wish all of our members a safe and successful New Year! Additionally, I would like to thank the Buffalo Sub-District staff for all their hard work. In closing, I must repeat: In order to continue our success and improve in the future we must grow our union. The Buffalo Sub-District motto for 2022 will be "Organize, Organize and Organize!"

**SYRACUSE** JIM VALENTI, SUB-DISTRICT DIRECTOR

I hope everyone had a happy and healthy holiday season, and my best wishes for a happy New Year to all. On Dec. 9, 2021, we held our annual presidents meeting at the Sub-District office. There were 61 local union officers in attendance. A presentation was given by attorneys from Blitman and King on two developments of great concern: a new law legalizing marijuana here in New York, as well as the state paid sick leave law. I believe the presentation and the follow-up discussion with the leadership cleared up many questions as to application of the new laws in our places of employment, as well as the local union response to those employers who interpret these laws incorrectly. We will be offering, at our upcoming Sub-District LM educational conference, additional training by Blitman and King regarding these new state laws. The education conference will be held Feb. 9-11.

We are in the process of developing our 2022 Sub-District training schedule which will be distributed to attendees

at our LM education conference. We have approximately 21 contracts to be negotiated in 2022. Many of the local unions that will be at the bargaining tables in 2022 attended negotiation and bargaining training that was part of our 2021 education program. We believe this training will afford the local union bargaining teams the knowledge and resources to successfully achieve a fair and equitable contract for our members. We will include in our 2022 training schedule negotiation and bargaining training for those units that have contract negotiations in 2023. Please take advantage of this training.

On a very sad note, I regret to inform our Syracuse Sub-District membership of the passing of one of our own, Laura Jones, a sister who was a member of USW local 1000 in Corning, N.Y. Laura was a fierce activist of the labor movement. (See Page 8 of this insert for more about Laura.)

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

The holidays can be a joyous time for us and our loved ones as many of us enjoy traditional gift-giving and time spent with our families. But Christmas and the holiday season can also be a tough time for the less fortunate or those experiencing hardship.

In the true essence of what the holidays are about, we are proud to say as the holiday season approached, USW locals in the Milford, Mass., Sub-District stepped up to help the less fortunate with essential needs such as food and warm clothing. They were also able to collect monetary donations that allowed them to purchase non-essential, but much needed items to brighten their holidays.

Local 12004 members who are employed at Eversource Energy, as in the past several years, went full speed ahead by reaching out to local social service agencies to identify local families and their needs.

They partnered with Eversource Gas Ops Organization and solicited donations from all employees. Overall they were able to raise over \$13,000 for 45 families in the towns of Somerville, Hyde Park (Boston), Southborough and Worcester/Auburn.

Some of the gifts included bikes, laptops, clothes, books, toys, a sewing machine, gift certificates for food, new tires and oil change for a car, groceries and someone even donated a clothes dryer to a family of 12.

They also purchased warm hats, gloves, and more for local schools to give out to children in need. They purchased, wrapped and delivered the gifts for parents to give out to their children as Santa Claus.

Local 9 members who are employed by Sappi North America in Maine continued with a tradition they began 12 years ago. Patrick Carlton, President of USW Local 9, stated that while listening to a radio show about local food pantries that didn't have a lot of food left for the Christmas holiday after Thanksgiving, he had an idea to get together with



some friends and try to do "something." And it's grown into something really big, said Patrick. "Big, as in nine-and-a-half tons of food big."

A number of union members, many of whom work at the Sappi Somerset mill, were able to raise over \$27,000 this year for the 12th Annual Christmas Dinner Harvest.

That money was used to buy the nine-and-a-half tons of food and 150 ready-made Christmas meal boxes for needy Central Maine families.

They delivered the purchased goods to food pantries



District 4 Director Del Vitale and Assistant to the Director Dave Wasiura recently visited the Massachusetts Water Authority. Pictured are members from Locals 9358 and 9360, from left to right: Rick Martino, Staff Rep Mary Fusco, Wasiura, Richard Carter, Vitale, Mahnaz Mehr, Barbie Aylward, Sean Cordy. All the members are from Local 9360 with the exception of Aylward, who is from Local 9358.

in 11 Central Maine cities and towns. "This food will fill our shelves for the Christmas holiday, which were kind of cleaned out," said Nancy Marcoux, Director of the Fairfield Interfaith Food Pantry, which serves about 150 families every month.

Patrick Carlton's idea started off small and has grown to become one of the most important sources of food for these pantries during the holiday season. Patrick says he's driven to address the problem of food insecurity in Maine, and proud to have all of the support he gets from community and union

members and businesses in the area.

"It's pretty humbling," said Carlton. "To have all those people out there work as hard as they work in the mill every day and then to come out and take their time to spend that helping other families that might be less fortunate."

These are a couple of the many stories of caring by our local union members. It should come as no surprise that when people are in need, it's always the USW local union members who step up to help put a smile on the faces of people.



A recent visit to meet with members from the Wyman Gordon Company. Pictured from left to right: Local 2285 Vice President Jim Jacques; Staff Rep. John Buonopane; Local 2285 President Paul Bartholomew; D4 Director Del Vitale; and Assistant to the Director Dave Wasiura.

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

**W**e make a difference! Despite the many conditions that affect our ability to do the work that we do and the challenges to perform that work, we make a difference in the lives of our members and their families nevertheless.

Constant changes in working conditions seem to keep us on our toes and OSHA and CDC guidelines seem more like moving targets, but that hasn't changed our strong belief that our members deserve a safe and healthy workplace.

Consider, if you will, one of the many struggles that we have faced: bargaining over the effects of COVID-19 and its variants. Omicron is the newest threat facing our communities, and we have risen to the call of essential industries from health care to pharmaceuticals and chemicals, to manufacturing and others. Even with manpower shortages we have worked overtime to meet the needs of the day!

Recently, we started an initiative to visit many of our facilities throughout the District, starting with locations in the Edison Sub-District. Director Del Vitale and Assistant to the Director Dave Wasiura, along with myself, visited and met with a number of USW locals, including Local 4-417 members at Thermo-Fisher Scientific at their Bridgewater, N.J., site, which provides components for the COVID-19 vaccines and other chemicals for the scientific industry; Local 637 members at Okonite, which makes power cables for PSE&G; and Local 381 members at International Paper, which produces corrugated paperboard containers. It was great to meet with the union members who work at these facilities and to hear their thoughts and concerns. I look forward to other visits elsewhere, as much as they are permitted under the current public health situation.

In closing, again allow me to share my deep appreciation to the working people, throughout our nation, and especially in District 4, Sub-District 7, which comprises the New York Metropolitan area, New Jersey, Delaware, and Puerto Rico.

Front row: Jeff Lo Sacco, LU 4-406, Chief Steward at OCUA; Jason Quelch, LU 145M Vice President; LaTrisa Davis, PFO/Trainer; Matt McCarty, Staff Rep.; Mike Ciano, LU 4-406 Vice President.  
Back row: Justin Overton, LU 4-406 Steward at OCUA; Justin Thompson, LU 145M President; Glenn Jordan, LU 145M Financial/Secretary; and Dan Irons, D4 PFO.



Dave Wasiura, Del Vitale, USW Local 637 President Shawn Paterson, and Michel Fisher at Okonite.

**HEALTH, SAFETY & ENVIRONMENT**

**50 YEARS OF  
WORKPLACE SAFETY  
AND HEALTH**



**L**ast year marked the 50th anniversary of the passage of the Occupational Safety and Health Act, which created the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA). We thought we would take the time to recognize where we came from, what has been accomplished, and goals for the future.

President Nixon signed the Occupational Safety and Health Act on Dec. 29, 1970, which was enacted on April 28, 1971.

In its first half-century, OSHA helped transform America's workplaces in ways that significantly reduced workplace fatalities, injuries, and illnesses. Learn more about the agency's five decades of progress and its efforts to continue fulfilling the promise of the Occupational Safety and Health Act.

laboratories. Workers begin to receive safety and health training through the first OSHA Education Centers, and the agency expands collaboration with employers through its Strategic Partnership Program.

**2000s**

Dedicated OSHA staff worked beside their federal, state, and local partners to protect the safety and health of the recovery workers after the unprecedented challenges America's workers faced following the 9/11 terrorist attacks and Hurricane Katrina. Workplace safety continues to improve through new standards to protect construction workers in steel erection and prevent exposure to hexavalent chromium.

**2010s**

OSHA helps protect workers performing response and cleanup activities in the aftermath of the catastrophic Deepwater Horizon explosion and oil spill. The agency issues standards for silica dust, cranes, confined spaces, and the classification and labeling of work-related chemicals. To address the number one cause of worker fatalities in the construction industry, OSHA launches the fall prevention campaign. And in 2020, OSHA launches a historic response to protect workers during the COVID-19 pandemic.

**2020 AND BEYOND**

The new decade began with a challenge unlike any other faced by the American workforce as the coronavirus pandemic impacted workplace safety and health in unprecedented ways. OSHA acted quickly to protect the nation's workers through outreach and education efforts, ensuring compliance with agency standards, and collaborations with federal, state, and local authorities. The agency continues to work tirelessly to address the demands of this evolving health crisis.

Even with the dramatic improvements to workplace safety over the last five decades - and now with the nation responding to a global pandemic - OSHA's mission is as important as ever. Please join OSHA in making a renewed commitment to keeping workers safe and healthy - it's every worker's right.

**1970s**

Established by the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970, OSHA opens its doors on April 28, 1971. During its initial decade, OSHA issued the first standards for asbestos, lead, carcinogens, and cotton dust. The OSHA Training Institute, safety and health training grants, the On-Site Consultation Program, State Plans, and whistleblower protections for workplace safety are also established.

**1980s**

In a landmark decision, the U.S. Supreme Court affirms that workers have the right to refuse unsafe tasks. OSHA issues standards to give workers the right to know which chemicals they may be exposed to and require employers to provide worker medical and exposure records. The 1980s also see the creation of the Voluntary Protection Programs, new standards on safety testing and certification of workplace equipment, and important worker protections for combustible grain dust, trenching, noise, and hazardous energy.

**1990s**

OSHA issues the Process Safety Management standard and provides new and stronger protections for workers from falls, bloodborne pathogens, toxic substances, and working in confined spaces, longshoring and marine terminals, and

# DISTRICT 4 ORGANIZING TRAINING

Members of District 4 in Puerto Rico recently took part in a three-day organizing training seminar, where they learned to become the next generation of union organizers on the island. Armed with passion and the love of their union, these members took advantage of every bit of training that the sessions had to offer.

Together they learned how to have one-on-one conversations about their union, identify potential union supporters, work an organizing campaign, how to map the workplace and much, much more.

Each participant was full of energy and eager to learn. Our District currently has an organizing plan underway in Puerto Rico that involves multiple locations and sectors across the island.

With some of our best activists, leaders and organizers from Puerto Rico leading the charge, the future of the USW on the island couldn't be in better hands!

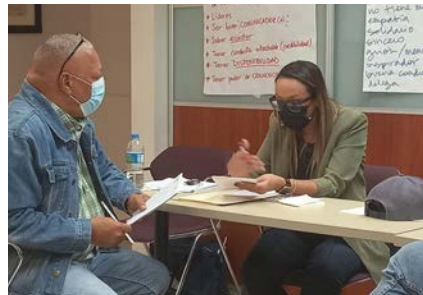
# DISTRITO 4 ENTRENAMIENTO DE ORGANIZAR

Recientemente, miembros del Distrito 4 en Puerto Rico participaron en un seminario de organización de tres (3) días donde se adiestraron para convertirse en la próxima generación de organizadores sindicales en la isla. Armados con la pasión y su amor por la unión, estos miembros aprovecharon al máximo todo el adiestramiento que las sesiones ofrecieron.

Juntos aprendieron a tener conversaciones de uno a uno sobre su unión, identificar a los partidarios de la unión, trabajar en campañas de organización, aprender a trazar un mapa del lugar de trabajo y mucho más.

Cada participante estaba lleno de energías y deseoso de aprender. Actualmente, nuestro Distrito tiene un plan de organización en Puerto Rico que involucra múltiples ubicaciones y sectores a través de la isla.

Con algunos de nuestros mejores activistas, líderes y organizadores de Puerto Rico liderando, el futuro de la USW en la isla, no podrían estar en mejores manos.



# INFORME DEL DIRECTOR DEL VITALE DISTRITO 4 DIRECTOR



## UNA MIRADA AL FUTURO EXPANSIÓN DE LA SALUD Y LA SEGURIDAD

Otro año nuevo está sobre nosotros y miro al 2022 como un año prometedor. Si bien hemos reiniciado las reuniones y capacitaciones en persona, todavía nos enfrentamos a la realidad de tener que lidiar con el COVID-19. Seguimos requiriendo mascarillas y distanciamiento en nuestras oficinas y en nuestros eventos, pero ese es un pequeño precio a pagar para poder reunirnos en persona y de manera segura.

Estamos teniendo nuestros entrenamientos de LM y reuniones de presidentes en persona este año, pero hemos ofrecido una opción virtual para aquellos que todavía se sienten incómodos con demasiada gente debido al aumento de Ómicron. Es importante para nosotros, asegurarnos de que todos los que necesitan capacitación la reciban.

El virus nos obligó a cancelar nuestra segunda Conferencia de Respuesta Rápida del Distrito 4 que habíamos planeado para principios de marzo. No podíamos estar seguros de que se nos permitiera hacer cabildeo en las oficinas legislativas en persona y dado que esa es la parte más importante y educativa de la conferencia, decidimos esperar y reprogramar cuando estemos seguros de que tendremos completo acceso a nuestros legisladores. Tan pronto como tengamos una nueva fecha establecida, enviaremos esa información a todas nuestras locales.

En una nota positiva, ampliaremos

significativamente nuestra Capacitación en Salud y Seguridad del Distrito este año. Ahora que tenemos centros de capacitación en todas nuestras oficinas de Sub-Distrito, la capacitación se llevará a cabo todos los meses de abril a noviembre en cada oficina. Esto representa más del triple de nuestro programa anterior de capacitación en salud y seguridad y hará que la capacitación esté disponible más cerca de donde se encuentran nuestros miembros. Este es un proyecto ambicioso, pero estamos seguros de que habrá suficiente interés para llenar estas clases.

Las clases incluirán Mapeo de Peligros, Investigación de Cuasi Accidentes, Enfoque sindical en Salud y Seguridad, Curso de 10 horas de OSHA, Investigación de Incidentes, Gestión de Seguridad de Procesos Industriales y más. El horario para todo el año ha sido enviado a su local, así como las instrucciones sobre cómo registrarse.

La salud y la seguridad es el beneficio más importante que ofrecemos a nuestros miembros. Todos quieren volver a casa de la misma forma en que llegaron al trabajo. Las estadísticas muestran que los trabajadores sindicalizados están más seguros que los trabajadores que no están sindicalizados. También es generalmente aceptado que los Steelworkers tienen el mejor Programa de Salud y Seguridad en el movimiento laboral y creo que el

Distrito 4 tiene lo mejor en la USW. Con esta nueva iniciativa, estamos trabajando para mejorar aún más nuestro programa. El nivel de participación de nuestras locales determinará el éxito o el fracaso de esta iniciativa, así que, por favor, llene estas clases y el resultado será lugares de trabajo más seguros.

Finalmente, a estas alturas, todas las locales deberían haber recibido las cartas de convocatoria oficial de la Convención con respecto a la próxima Convención Internacional de la USW en agosto. Puede recordar que la convención de 2020 tuvo que cancelarse debido al COVID-19, por lo que habrán pasado cinco años entre convenciones. Recuerde enviar su documentación con anticipación y, si tiene alguna pregunta, comuníquese con su Representante o llame a la oficina de su Sub-Distrito.

Para terminar, me gustaría tomarme un momento para recordar a uno de nuestros miembros que recientemente falleció inesperadamente. Laura Jones fue co-coordinadora de nuestro programa District 4 Next Gen. Más que eso, ella era una feroz activista sindical que siempre estuvo allí cuando el sindicato la llamo y trabajó arduamente para ayudar a que nuestro programa Next Gen fuera el éxito que es. Su energía y pasión por la Unión fue una inspiración y la extrañaremos. Recuerde a Laura y su familia en sus oraciones.

Manténganse seguros,  
Del



USW Local 5696 Treasurer Ronnie Vitale has been volunteering at Mi Amore in Winthrop, M.A., for the past four years, supporting families and children. In the photo shown, Ronnie and Donna Mattarazzo are presenting a donation of \$1,000 to Mi Amore.

# WOMEN OF STEEL

In Puerto Rico we have focused on creating a social impact in a virtual way, with one of the best tools that we have in our time... INTERNET AND SOCIAL NETWORKS.

To eradicate negativity in social networks, Women of Steel Puerto Rico decided to create a media campaign to be able to impact more

people highlighting the good that exists in each of us in this time of union and brotherhood. The campaign consists of taking a photo showing your positive skills (baking, dancing, sharing with the family, singing, working, fishing, showing support for our brothers and

sisters in their fight for better benefits, etc.) and posting them on social media with the #resaltatusdones. There is no better time like this to bring out the best in each of us in a healthy and positive way. At WOS PR we always count on you!

*¡Resalta tus dones!*

In order to eradicate negativity on social media, take a photo that showcases your positive skills and post it on your social networks with the hashtag

**#resaltatusdones**

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# NEXT GENERATION

It is with great sadness that we inform you that our sister, Laura Jones, was called home on Dec. 21, 2021.

Laura became a member of the USW in 2010 at local 1000 in Corning, N.Y. By 2014, Laura was involved with her local union through WOS and greatly assisted in getting the local union Next Gen program up and running, as well as served on her local's executive board.

Laura became the Next Gen coordinator of her local before moving on to be a regional Next Gen coordinator and her work in this role would lead to her being appointed by the District Director in 2020 as the District Next Generation co-coordinator.

Laura was a fierce activist of the labor movement, served on her area labor council, was showcased in a photo portrait at the Rockwell Museum in Corning, N.Y., and became a familiar face at many labor events. Laura was honored as District 4's Syracuse Sub-District "Activist of the Year" in 2018.

Laura later went on to step up her activism once again and showed an interest in organizing, eventually leading her to accept a position in the International Union Organizing Department in 2021.

Laura was a wife, a mother of three, and a friend to so many of us. Her contagious laugh and kindness were welcome to all who had the pleasure of meeting her. Our deepest condolences go out to Laura's husband Greg Jones, her children and her extended family during this most difficult time.

Laura will be greatly missed by so many. Until we meet again our sister.



Photo by Chris Walters

## GET INVOLVED