

THE UTILITY WORKER



UTILITY WORKERS UNION OF AMERICA, AFL-CIO

Volume LXII, No. 3 July/August/September 2017



**Fighting for
Good Jobs
and Strong
Communities**

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**Lineworkers Mobilize
for Hurricane Relief**



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ON THE COVER



UWUA members in FL.
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D. Michael Langford

We are First Responders!

Hurricanes Harvey and Irma caused massive destruction and upended the lives of untold millions of people. Our thoughts and prayers are with those who lost loved ones and the millions more who are still dealing with the aftermath of the storms.

Even before the hurricanes made landfall, our members, particularly our electric line workers, were mobilizing to restore and rebuild services for communities facing these natural disasters.

On behalf of all the officers, staff and our entire membership, I want to thank the hundreds of union brothers and sisters who answered the call to do what they do best, respond to emergencies both natural and man-made. Most left their families, traveled hundreds of miles south, and risked their lives to restore power under very dangerous conditions.

Pray for Tracy and his family

Our members know this work requires the utmost care, and safety is priority number one. The safety training they receive is second to none.

Still, accidents happen. One of our linemen, Tracy Slaughaupt, went to Florida, worked 16-hour days in 100-degree heat and for several nights slept on a cot in a tractor-trailer with 36 other linemen. Unfortunately, Tracy, a 25-year member from Local 102 at Allegheny Power, made contact with 7,000 volts and was severely burned. He is in critical condition. I am asking all of you to pray for Tracy and his family.

More and more people throughout the country understand the importance of the work our members, like Tracy, do. Many in the affected communities have expressed their gratitude to our members through random acts of kindness, such as delivering a few appreciative words, cookies, or a thank you card.

Now it's time for our elected leaders to recognize us as first responders as well. When disaster strikes, we are on the scene doing those things that make it

possible for other first responders, including police and fire personnel, to do their jobs. We are responsible for making disaster sites safe places to work so that others can do what needs to get done. Yet, we do not enjoy the same legal status as other first responders.

This must change. Now is a good time to talk to our elected leaders, tell them our stories, and push for the first responder protections only the law can provide.

In addition to highlighting the important work our members do, the disastrous hurricanes also reveal the need to fix our broken health care system. Survivors of these disasters, and everyone else, have the right to receive the care they need without concern for their ability to pay.

We support single-payer healthcare

The UWUA supports single-payer national healthcare legislation

that ensures every American has access to affordable and quality health care. This is not a Democrat or Republican issue. This is something that affects everyone.

Let your representatives in Washington know: now is the time for both parties in Washington to roll up their sleeves for the American people and fix our health care system!

Instead of considering legislation to reform the tax code to put more money in the hands of the wealthy few, Congress needs to pass legislation to reform our health care system to provide universal care to every American.

In this issue of *The Utility Worker* you will read about our many recent successes as we continue our long tradition of fighting for good jobs, safe work-sites, and strong communities. The development of tools to strengthen our position for the coming legislative battles is also covered. There is also information about the Oct. 18-20 Power for America National Conference.

Most importantly, get active in your union. You have the power to make positive change. Use it!

“When disaster strikes, we are on the scene doing those things that make it possible for other first responders, including police and fire personnel, to do their jobs.”

Two More Organizing Wins for Water Workers



Pictured here are officers of the newly chartered Penn Hills, PA Local 602, left to right: Secretary Pamela Smeaton, Vice-President Jan Austin, Treasurer Cheryl Collins, and President Mike Shullo.

The UWUA continues to build on a string of organizing victories bringing the benefits of a union contract to more and more water workers.

Welcome Belmont County, OH Sanitary Sewer District members

On August 25, the decision by Belmont County Sanitary Sewer District employees to join the UWUA was certified by the Ohio State Employment Relations Board. Water workers there overwhelmingly voted for the union, creating a

wall-to-wall union workforce. Preparations are now underway to negotiate a first contract as part of Local 492.

Penn Hills, PA water workers join the UWUA

Meanwhile, in a significant organizing victory just outside of Pittsburgh, PA, an independent union representing some 35 water workers has joined the UWUA.

The members of the Municipal Employees Organization of Penn Hills voted overwhelmingly to affiliate with the Utility Workers.

New Mexico Local 51 Makes Gains In Reopener, Ups Political Activity

Following an internal organizing campaign to increase the power of the local by activating members and mobilizing politically, UWUA Local 51 recently secured gains in a 2017 wage reopener.

“In 2016, the City of Roswell claimed poverty and refused to provide any increases in wages,” UWUA Local 51 President Patrick Lopez explains. “We decided to take this issue to arbitration and we won.”

Lopez continued, “We only represent the city’s blue collar workers, however, the city was forced to give these increases to white collar, police and fire personnel too. Our members mobilized and organized by attending city council meetings and creating a political alliance with other unions in the City of Roswell. These actions forced the city to restore these increases for this year’s budget. We also joined the New Mexico Federation of Labor to become more politically active as we prepare for contract negotiations next year when our entire agreement is open.”

While the City of Roswell refused to provide a cost of living adjustment



Local 51’s successful coalition shows there is strength in numbers! Left to right: Alfredo Dominguez, Local 51 vice president and founding member (retired); Eddie Burns, United Food and Commercial Workers Union Local 1564 vice president (retired); unidentified gentleman standing behind Burns; Jon Hendry, New Mexico Federation of Labor president; Patrick Lopez, Local 51 president; Denise Dawson, Roswell Education Association president; Mark Brooks, UWUA staff; Jerry Acosta, UWUA National Rep.; Vernon Molinar, Local 51 secretary-treasurer.

(COLA) increase, the union fought to restore the following:

- 3% increase for yearly step increases
- 3% bonus for those who are “topped out” in the step process
- And to preserve longevity pay that pays an extra \$5.00 a month for every year of service with no cap.

The contract reopener victory came after Local 51 led efforts to form a new

political alliance in Roswell that includes the Roswell Education Association and the New Mexico Federation of Labor.

“This alliance will serve to remind our elected leaders that, while corporations may own America, it is the workers who run America, guard America, and educate America,” President of the New Mexico Labor Federation, Jon Hendry, said.

CN Local 470-1 Inks Contracts with PSEG and Avangrid



It's been a productive period at Local 470-1, which represents members in electric generation and distribution in Connecticut. Two new contracts covering both groups protect jobs, raise wages, and preserve benefits.

Negotiations on the distribution side of the local were with Avangrid, which is owned by the multinational Iberdrola. On the generation side, UAWA members faced off with NJ-based PSEG, which is building a new gas plant to replace the coal unit where members currently work.

470-1/Generation Contract

Knowing the company's plans to open a new gas plant in 2021, the local decided to start negotiations almost a year before their contract expired. That way, issues that come with the closing of a coal plant and the opening of a gas facility could be addressed early.

The contract covers members in Bridgeport and New Haven, and members' seniority rights are shared between the two facilities.

The Bridgeport plant, which now employs more than 40 members, will be replaced by a gas facility that will require only 13 people to operate.

"The main goal for us was to create protections for people in this transition,"

explains Local 470-1/Generation President Kevin Cothran. "We stayed focused on the things we could control: to get the highest wages we could, protect all current members' pay and seniority — for those that change plants now and potentially in the future."

In order to negotiate a contract that both protects members during a decommission and in the staffing of a new plant, required negotiators to be "sharply focused, persistent and unwavering in our fight," Cothran says.

The result: a four-year contract expiring in 2021 that members voted overwhelmingly to ratify. It includes respectable raises every year, an increase in premiums that had been frozen for six years, pension improvements, and protection of health benefits.

Most importantly, an agreement was reached on a generous Voluntary Separation Package that will result in no layoffs.

There were some lessons learned for UAWA members facing similar circumstances, Cothran says: "If necessary, propose a voluntary severance, it can serve both the members and the company. Do not fear layoffs. In our case, layoffs would remove the younger workers who the company would prefer to keep at the new plant. So they could not use that as a threat. The company would rather not

Taking a moment to unwind after difficult, successful contract negotiations are, left to right: Local 470-1 Executive Vice President Tony Caffrey, President Kevin Cothran, New Haven Chief Steward Mike Keyes, Bridgeport Chief Steward Gino Lopez, Sergeant of Arms Tom Murray, and Recording and Financial Secretary Marc Lewandowski.

invest the training time and money in older short-term workers. And the severance can be a significant bonus for older workers ready to get out."

Local 470-1/Distribution Contract

UAWA Local 470-1 members on the distribution side recently ratified a new three-year agreement with Avangrid, the U.S. subsidiary of Iberdrola, a Spanish multinational that is one of the largest electricity companies in the world.

The contract, which covers 425 members of what was Connecticut's United Illuminating Company, includes 3% wage increases every year, a no layoff clause for the duration of the contract, and no givebacks.

"This contract guarantees employment for everyone for three years, that's big," says Local 470-1/Distribution President Moses Rams. "Our pension and our medical remain the same and we won some other improvements. This agreement will keep us competitive with the region."

What essential services do you provide to your community and what are the positive effects of those services on the larger community?



Adam Goodwin

President
Local 108

“We have an operation that is divided between treating wastewater prior to its return to the White River, providing the citizens of our great city, Anderson, Indiana, with clean drinking water, and monitoring utility usage throughout our city. All of these operations are essential factors in maintaining stability for a growing community such as ours.”



Beau Ryther

President
Local 582

“At Local 582, we are involved in many community services. These include: the United Way Day of Caring, a golf outing in memory of Alex Crum to raise awareness for Factor V; sponsoring fishing trips for wounded veterans; and partnering with the American Legion in Toys for Tots.”



Josh Gallo

Steward
Local 604

“As a Lineman at Lakeland Electric we have a responsibility to restore power to those who provide essential services to the community such as hospitals, police stations, and fire departments as well as providing reliable electricity to our customers especially during this busy storm season.”



Ben Wilkinson

President
Local 102

“We help with the Postal Food Drive in the Altoona, PA area every year. This year they delivered 35 tons of canned and non-perishable foods to six local food pantries. This is about a 6-month supply that helps local families who need assistance.”



Belinda Moreno

E-Board, Call Center Regional Officer
Local 132

“I am a bilingual call center representative. I take pride in servicing a very large Spanish speaking community. I put myself in their shoes and anticipate their needs. I go that extra mile to assess their service needs, especially when they are reporting gas leak emergencies. It’s important to me that a language barrier will never hamper servicing a diverse community.”



Juan Cisneros

Vice President
Local 205

“I often volunteer outside of working hours for company events in order to educate and reach out to customers on water issues and concerns. It helps to assure that first-hand information and services provided meet the needs of those for whom they are intended. It can increase understanding among community members about what is needed to create a healthy community in which to live and work.”



Nathan Gowell

President
Local 465

“Our members supply these essential services to citizens of the city of Hart, Michigan: generation of electricity, electrical distribution, water distribution, and wastewater treatment. The positive effects of these services on the community are: reliable electric power distribution, quality water for consumers, and proper treatment of wastewater.”



Mercurio Moore

E-Board, Metro South East Regional Officer
Local 132

“In the area I work in, most people don’t have much. I know this community well because I grew up in the same neighborhood. People can’t afford to pay for appliance repair so the service I provide is very much appreciated. They are assured that I leave them safe from gas leaks and harmful conditions that may exist in their gas appliances.”



Fighting for Good Jobs and Strong Communities

Community is something we all strive to be a part of. It is a term that has come to embody concepts both mythical and aspirational in today's increasingly post-industrial America. Many of us recall a time when we felt a greater sense of being part of a larger whole, and wonder whether we can regain that quality in the midst of trying modern times.

At the UWUA, we draw a straight line from those communities in which our members live and work to public policy choices that can be made to give those places a fighting chance to remain the center of healthy, economically stable life for middle-class families. The issues on which the union chooses to engage, and the reasons for doing so begin, first and foremost, with the answer to a basic question – will this affect the union's members and their communities and, if so, how?

A primary example of this can be found in southern Ohio, where communities are tied to the Dayton Power & Light powerplants in Adams County that are in danger of being closed, despite the willingness of an outside in-

vestor to step in and continue to operate at least some portion of those facilities. The leadership of UWUA Local 175 there has been engaged in a battle to save not only those high-quality jobs, but also the entire community that has been built on those jobs and plants. For their part, the national staff does its work at the bargaining table, and through work with elected officials to press the case for those endangered communities.

Supporting the RECLAIM Act

Looking around the broader Appalachian region, at communities scattered far and wide built on the historic economic juggernaut of the coal industry, the union works at the national level to support the RECLAIM Act – bipartisan legislation aimed at pushing mine reclamation money out to affected communities at a faster pace, and in a manner more closely designed to create economic development in many hard-hit areas.

Even more broadly, the Union has been engaged with the Trump Administration, pressing for reforms to the Clean Power Plan, seeking to lessen

the burden that communities, already under tremendous economic pressure, are being asked to shoulder. Though many may see such issues solely in terms of headlines and national politics, for the UWUA, these issues turn on the question of local economics and seeking fairness for the people whose individual lives will be affected as a result of choices made by others, far from their communities.

POWERING Michigan communities

In 2016, the UWUA was instrumental in convening a discussion with community planners from across the State of Michigan and representatives from the Economic Development Administration (EDA), the U. S. Department of Labor, the Small Business Administration, the U. S. Department of Agriculture, the U. S. Department of Energy, and the White House to discuss community grant opportunities.

As a result, this summer, the communities of Trenton and River Rouge, and the counties of St. Clair and Huron, received funding from the Partnership



for Opportunity and Workforce Economic Revitalization (POWER) initiative sponsored by the EDA to provide planning and technical assistance in support of projects in communities that have been impacted by coal-fired power plant closures.

Carbon Capture and the FUTURE Act

Looking ahead, the Union sees opportunity for those communities where fossil energy production will continue to provide an economic foundation for decades to come. The FUTURE Act, another bi-partisan effort receiving our strong support in the U.S. Senate, along with its House counterpart, the Carbon Capture Act, is one simple step Congress could take that would tackle a significant energy challenge – carbon emissions – and do so in a manner calculated to provide additional revenue to power producers by supporting markets for the use or storage of carbon dioxide.

The UWUA sees this type of forward-thinking, innovative approach to national energy policy as being essential to the health and economic well-being of middle-class families and their communities. Unlike policy aimed at making it harder for fossil energy to continue operation, the FUTURE Act would actually make life more economically

The issues on which the union chooses to engage, and the reasons for doing so begin, first and foremost, with the answer to a basic question – will this affect the union’s members and their communities and, if so, how?

viable for these plants and, thus, for the families and communities that rely upon them for high-quality jobs and tax revenue.

Defending nuclear jobs

In the nuclear power industry, the union has most recently been engaged in the Ohio statehouse, advocating for a recognition of the value that these large, baseload power facilities bring to stabilizing the grid. Although such issues are often framed in terms of national energy policy, for the UWUA the question is very simple: what will be the impact on the union’s members and their communities in Ohio if the future of nuclear power is uncertain?

Going into the fall, as the nation continues clean-up and recovery efforts

Above right: Joe Schiavoni, center, the UWUA endorsed candidate for Ohio governor, is supporting efforts to protect nuclear jobs. He’s pictured here with: left, Bob Lewis, president, Local 492, AEP Mitchell plant, Moundsville, WV; and UWUA National Rep., Kelly Cooper.

in the wake of multiple hurricanes, UWUA members from around the country are there on the ground.

As first responders, UWUA members work around the clock to restore power and ensure safe gas and water services are up and running in those stricken areas because it’s their job but, also because one community helping another is the right thing to do.

Our communities are only as safe, healthy, and reliable as the often unseen, unremarked life support systems we collectively refer to as ‘utilities’ can make them. Once we also begin to frame the political issues of our times around helping people in our communities, the right thing to do is pretty obvious in that world as well. That’s why our fight for good jobs and strong communities is so important.

Politics affecting your UWUA community? Help us better speak out for you!
Lee Anderson, UWUA Government Affairs Director,
landerson@uwua.net

P4A on Track for Record Setting Training Year



2017 continues to be a record-setting year for trainings at the UWUA's Power for America Training Trust (P4A). As of July 1, P4A had trained over 2,000 UWUA members. "We are on target to train 5,000 UWUA members by the end of the year," said P4A Executive Director Jonathan Harmon. "Our Training Fund employers see the benefit of P4A training and continue to ask us to provide more."

One reason for the increase in training has been the emphasis on Health, Safety and Environment (HS&E) trainings. "There should never be an argument about our members' safety," said UWUA Executive Vice President Steven VanSlooten. "P4A continues to prove that they are the training experts in this

"We are on target to train 5,000 UWUA members by the end of the year. Our Training Fund employers see the benefit of P4A training and continue to ask us to provide more."

— P4A Executive Director Jonathan Harmon

area." Members working for American Water, Aqua Ohio, Consumers Energy, Con Edison, and Peoples Gas have benefitted from multiple safety trainings over the year.

Skills trainings continue for UWUA members as companies and the UWUA work toward updating the nation's energy infrastructure. Across the Midwest

Opened in 2014, the P4A training center in Potterville, MI is proving its worth every day.

and Northeast, P4A has worked with American Water to implement a new "utility worker" program to train new hires and individuals in their first two years of employment. These workers are given the necessary skills to safely operate and inspect fire hydrants as well as operate, inspect, and maintain valves.

This new program currently uses P4A instructors to share their expertise with these new workers.

While this year continues to break records for training individuals, P4A isn't satisfied. "We are currently in discussions to add more employer members as well as increase our selection of trainings with current employers," says Harmon. "It's an exciting time at P4A!"

UMAP Cohort 15-Bravo Graduates



Local 18007's P4A Utility Workers Military Assistance Program (UMAP) Cohort 15-Bravo recently graduated in front of family, friends, and guest speakers from as far away as Washington DC. To date, more than 350 veterans have graduated from the program. "I could not be more proud of this group, and every class before them. Six months offers extensive training, but its pay off is in a career as a union utility worker, which is like a golden ticket for these young men and women," said Local 18007 Business Manager and UWUA Veterans Committee Chair Richard Passarelli.



RECLAIM, RETRAIN, REPOWER REPAIR AMERICA

The Utility Workers Union of America, AFL-CIO

Join us October 18 – 20 in Las Vegas for the third UWUA P4A National Conference linking union brothers and sisters in the same industries, across professions, and with nationally recognized labor and utility experts.

With 15 interactive workshops, plenaries, and time to schmooze, every participant is sure to gain the skills, knowledge, and connections to return home energized and ready to tackle the challenges ahead.

For more information, contact your local union president or call the National Office at 202-974-8200. Updated information can be found on the UWUA website where you can also download registration forms – www.uwua.net.

Local 18007 Teams Up With P4A To Provide Safety Training To 1,100 Member

Local 18007 and Power for America (P4A) are continuing their partnership to raise awareness of struck-by and caught in-between hazards. Using funding secured by P4A from an OSHA Susan Harwood grant, 18007 members over the summer participated in peer-led discussions with the goal of raising awareness of these hazards in the daily workplace.

“The commitment by 18007 to train over 1,100 members is impressive,” said P4A Executive Director Jon Harmon. “OSHA Susan Harwood officials can’t believe the commitment to safety that 18007 has shown.” 18007 began training peer led sessions in early May and plan to be finished by the time this issue of *The Utility Worker* goes to press.

“Training means more when it is led by a union brother or sister. They know that the trainers are in the field with them everyday and know the hazards that exist.”

— 18007 Business Manager Richard Passarelli



“Training means more when it is led by a union brother or sister,” said 18007 Business Manager Richard Passarelli.

“They know that the trainers are in the field with them everyday and know the hazards that exist.” During each ses-

sion, 18007 members and management from Peoples Gas sit together to discuss hazards that exist in their workplace. The goal is to raise awareness and begin working to eliminate those hazards.

Building a Culture of Safety

Courage to Change Brings Success



“It is better to be careful 100 times than to get killed once.”

— Mark Twain

Aqua Ohio Safety Committee members at a recent meeting.

“Dig in the dirt, fix water mains and stuff like that every day, I’m a union worker,” says Rick Dunham, chair of the Local 428 Safety Committee at Aqua Ohio. “I’ll be the first to say that I was skeptical about the participation we would have in our Systems of Safety training classes. I’m one of the guys. I know how we often push things away that are out of the ordinary. What we’re doing here is out of the ordinary. And it’s history-making!”

‘Doing this as a team’

Dunham is commenting on the recently implemented Power for America Systems of Safety (SOS) training that is, in the words of the President of Aqua Ohio, Ed Kolodziej, “Building a culture of safety at the company.” He adds, “It doesn’t make a difference if you’re working in distribution, a treatment plant or an office, we’re doing this as a team. By working together we give all workers the

authority to correct unsafe situations when they see them because we all care about each other.”

Traditional safety programs involve lecture-style presentations of rules and regulations, the deployment of proper safety equipment, and the training to use it. While all of that is good, it fails to address the root cause of most accidents: workers not following safety procedures.

Changing behavior

“To effectively address the underlying reason for most accidents, workers’ behavior must change,” explains UWUA National Safety Director Scotty MacNeill. “In order to do that, a culture of safety must be built in each company to support and encourage the practice of proper safety measures.”

That’s exactly what’s happening at Aqua Ohio, thanks to management’s willingness to work with the union to adopt and implement the UWUA’s Power for America P4A SOS training. As in all P4A programs, utility workers are the trainers because they know best how to get the job done correctly, safely, and on time.

Making a difference

The training is ongoing with refreshers taking place throughout the year. Participants include Aqua Ohio union and non-union employees from all departments. They are all intermingled because, in Dunham’s words, “A supervisor is going to have a different outlook than a distribution worker. A distribution worker is going to look at something different than a plant mechanic.” Those different outlooks and experiences are important when tackling safety issues.

at Aqua Ohio

“I’ve been an advocate of safety training throughout my 25 years with Aqua,” says President of Local 425 Cliff Deem, who is a member of the Safety Committee and now an SOS trainer. “Aqua management has jumped in with both feet and is working closely with Rich Cossell, our National Rep. We’ve moved light years in just a few months. We’re getting a lot of positive feedback and everyone is excited about this new way of safety training.”

Cossell worked closely with MacNeill and Aqua Ohio Director of Operations, Pete Kusky, to get the program started.

Workers provide solutions

“There are three legs to the stool we are building,” Kusky explains. “The first leg is a joint management/union Safety Committee where frontline workers and management meet monthly and work

collaboratively toward identifying areas to improve solutions. The second leg involves peer-to-peer safety rides where individual members of the Safety Committee conduct surprise safety inspections of their peers. This information is funneled back to the committee in the form of anonymous reports. The third leg is P4A training, which is lead by front-line workers.”

As a result, solutions to safety issues do not come from top managers and supervisors; rather, they come from the workers themselves, who collaborate with management to make improvements.



UWUA Aqua Ohio Safety Committee trainers, left to right: Cliff Deem, Rick Dunham, and Jacques Berie.

“To be a success requires relationship building, trust, partnership, and the courage to change,” Cossell says.

“The SOS’s behavior based training is very important to all of us now,” Deem says. “When we’re healthy and able to come to work and go home safely to enjoy time with our family, everybody benefits.”

What is Systems of Safety Training?

The SOS basic structure uses the Small Group Activity Method where people are given specific tasks requiring the groups to use their experience to tackle problems, and make judgments on key issues. For each task there is a report back to the larger group. The trainer, always a seasoned utility worker, then provides a summary highlighting the key points and raises any problems that might have been overlooked in the report-back.

The Small Group Activity Method is based on the idea that every workshop is a place where learning is shared; it is not a one-way street that runs from trainer to worker. As a result, three learning exchanges take place: worker-to-worker, worker-to-trainer, and trainer-to-worker.

Most people learn best from their co-workers. The SOS training is set up to make this worker-to-worker learning exchange a key element of all workshops. Oftentimes, a group of workers will have as much, or more, collective knowledge than any one trainer. Knowing this, SOS trainers learn as much as possible from the workshop participants. The worker-to-trainer learning exchange genuinely respects the workers’ knowledge and helps build confidence among those being trained. The trainer-to-worker exchange is traditional and, because it comes after the summary section, allows instructors to know more about what people need to learn so they can drive home key points.

In Memory of Our Fallen Brother Doug (JD) George



Jen and JD.

JD started a family tradition when, at the age of 18, he followed in his father's footsteps and became a lineman working out of IBEW Local 1319. After an extended time there, JD, who had already married his high school sweat heart, Jen George, found a new job with the Borough of Ellwood City, PA, where he would continue to do line work and could better start his family.

After 10 years at the Borough, JD took another job in the line industry, this time with Penn Power, a First Energy Company. This job gave JD the opportunity to become a member of UWUA Local 140. JD loved his job as a troubleshooter, he had a solid work ethic and went above and beyond

when customers needed him the most. JD spent many holidays in the field troubleshooting and restoring power to those in need. He was a selfless person who always put others before himself.

JD not only was a solid performer on the job, he was an outstanding husband, father, and uncle. JD loved spending time with his family, especially with his daughter Jamie. To his nieces and nephews, JD was like a father, sometimes talking on the phone on a daily basis. JD enjoyed taking trips to Pymatuning State Park, where he was successful at fishing for walleye off of his pontoon boat with his family. Not only did JD fish, he was a successful deer hunter as well. JD was an avid guitar collector who taught himself to play.

His favorite quote was, "If something is worth doing, then it's worth doing it well." JD lived by his words and those who knew him would agree that he always gave his all. As rough and tough as JD was, he loved his dogs. On one occasion he surprised his wife Jen and daughter Jamie by bringing home a new puppy. JD liked the Maltese breed, a small dog that JD would carry on his side sling when mowing the lawn and doing other tasks around the house.

On April 30, 2017, we lost our beloved brother when the F-550 bucket truck in which he was working aloft tipped over, causing fatal injuries.

SAFETY ALERT FOR ALTEC BUCKET SYSTEM

Many of our utility vehicles are equipped with the Altec bucket system. Employers are responsible for placing the manufacturer's warning signage on the boom. It is imperative that everyone operating this equipment read



and follow **ALL MANUFACTURER'S INSTRUCTIONS AND FOLLOW THE ANSI/SIA 92.2 STANDARD.** All vehicles that are fitted with the Altec equipment must have the owners operating manual available and every operator must read and understand the proper operating procedures for this equipment.

Health & Safety Standards are Under Attack

President Trump's FY 2018 budget proposes major cuts to worker safety and health. It eliminates workers' health and safety training and chemical accident investigations, and slashes funding for workplace safety research, putting workers at greater risk of dying on the job.

If the budget is passed as is, it will affect the safety and health of our membership. When the government cuts funding, or changes or eliminates safety regulations in the name of helping business, they neglect to say how these changes will affect the health and safety of work-

ers. We have fought hard to get safety standards put into place. To change or remove them in the name of commerce is a crime.

*John "Scotty" MacNeill
UWUA National Safety Director*

Building Union Power at the P4A Conference



Steven VanSlooten
Executive Vice President

As you read this, final preparations are being made for our third Power for America National Conference. The event brings together several hundred UWUA members in a clear example of our union's commitment to continuous learning for union officers, stewards and rank-and-file members.

By offering learning opportunities — not just for new members coming into the workforce but for everyone — we provide the tools our members need to handle every workplace situation.

The P4A conference includes industry break out sessions that bring together union brothers and sisters from around the nation who work in the same industry — electric, gas, water, professional/technical, and call center/clerical — with experts to discuss trends and learn from each other.

The 15 interactive workshops cover everything from nuts and bolts union topics, such as contract negotiations, contract costing, and grievance handling, to other important issues ranging from right-to-work, to safety, and toxic exposures.

Nationally recognized experts will participate in plenaries and workshops covering diversity and inclusion, strategic communications, human resource development, and more.

Equally important is the bringing together of our members to share information, build relationships, and celebrate what we do day-in and day-out for our communities and our country.

Realizing the vision

The P4A Training Trust is on track to train more than 5,000 members this year, with even more in the pipeline. This is a remarkable achievement, given that P4A is relatively young. It was set up following the passage of the “Training to be the Best” resolution at our 28th National Convention in 2007.

We saw then what our experience now proves: to continue to be the safest, most productive, highest skilled workers in the world we needed to take on the responsibility of training the utility worker of the future.

At first, P4A was providing the resources, such as tuition and books, for others to do training. We quickly learned that this was not providing the results that we, and our participating employers, wanted.

We then took it upon ourselves to provide the hands-on-training and demonstrated that we could do it better, and

more economically, than anyone else. In hindsight, it's really a no brainer. Who better to train utility workers than utility workers themselves?

Since then, P4A leased a building in Potterville, Michigan with classrooms and space for hands-on training. We quickly ran out of room and added an addition to accommodate various training programs. We are also now doing hands-on and classroom training in Chicago and New York.

As P4A continues to grow, we will expand our training centers to different parts of the country and to involve more employers. All of this started with just one employer just a few short years ago.

Shortage of skilled workers

By assuming the role of providing training for our members, future members, and employers, we are filling the void created when investment in training dried up all across the country. There is widespread recognition now that the shortage of skilled labor is hurting our country. This is a real problem that is holding back progress everywhere.

We have proven that we have the answer. We are the ones who can train the new workforce. This is not a new role for the Utility Workers and other labor unions. Skilled labor is about having hands-on training where you can learn from someone who has done the work.

If you look back at history, unions, particularly those in the building trades, created the skilled workforce. Employers did not do that.

Not coincidentally, it was organized labor that also built the middle class.

As investment in training declined, the number of skilled workers declined. Combine that with the corporate attack on labor over the last 50 years and it's no wonder that the middle class has taken a real beating.

And so has the nation. Employers now realize the importance of training in building their companies. Businesses are attracted to areas that have the utility infrastructure to support them. A better trained workforce is good for business. It's that simple.

And no one is better at training than we are. P4A is proving that every day.

“By offering learning opportunities — not just for new members coming into the workforce but for everyone — we provide the tools our members need to handle every workplace situation.”

Education/Communication/ Implementation



Michael Coleman
Secretary-Treasurer

Our National Union represents thousands of utility workers in the electric, gas, and water industries with a diverse workforce that includes physical and clerical classifications. While this is the norm that we have grown accustomed to, many now say that DATA is becoming the newest utility. With that in mind, the National Office is excited to introduce a new database, the UnionAXS system, that will improve efficiencies, enhance our communication methods, and make doing business easier.

Change brings opportunity

As stated in earlier communications, as we build the bridge for new utility workers and our upcoming leadership, we recognize that there is a generational and technological change in how we learn and communicate. We, as utility workers, recognize that change is inevitable and can be quite an opportunity for improvement. Change and opportunity must also embrace inclusion and communication, vital to remain viable and powerful in today's work environment.

We have been actively engaging our membership, as well as local and national leadership, to find the best ways to communicate, educate, and share information. Your suggestions have been well received, helpful, and insightful. UWUA President Langford has repeatedly stated that we need an all-inclusive energy policy regarding the use of coal, nuclear, gas, hydro, wind, and solar power. Similarly, we need an all-inclusive plan regarding communication with our membership. It is a fact that participation at monthly union meetings has declined while the thirst for information via social media and the internet has risen. Many of our members want to maintain the quarterly *Utility Worker* magazine while others prefer the e-blast or the mobile App. We will do all three. However, we need to do more.

Now and then, it is important to remind ourselves of the fundamental importance of labor unions. Unions are strength. To best harness our collective power, unions must have the information necessary to equip our leadership and membership with the tools needed to accomplish such core missions as negotiating rights and benefits, advancing member interests with elected officials, and promoting safe and healthy workplaces. A major feature of the new database is mass communi-

cation abilities that can reach all, or a select group, of UWUA members depending on the issue.

For example, as stewards of the membership's contributions to the union's COPE Fund, it is critical that the National Union have complete, accurate data regarding our members in order to best hold their elected government officials accountable. Calibrating political giving at all levels – federal, state, and local – requires deep knowledge as to who our members are, where they are working, and in what industries, in order to know who their respective elected officials are and, more importantly, to gauge whether those officials – of whatever political persuasion – are, or are not, looking out for their best interests.

Maximizing our power

Further, to maximize the union's political leverage through issue advocacy by the members themselves, it will also be possible to provide the membership with high quality information, to direct them towards opportunities for positive advocacy, and to alert them of attacks on their interests. Such coordinated efforts are only possible, however, if the National possesses a deep database of contact information for the membership in order to reach them with educational materials, advocacy opportunities, and action alerts. These types of 'rapid response' efforts do not simply happen – they must be built using comprehensive knowledge of the union's membership in order to empower the members to take their own actions in concert with one another.

While still a work in progress, the UnionAXS database that we have built includes the following information: local-specific information, bylaws, member information, employer identification, job site locations, utility sector identification, contracts, history of wage increases, and up to date local officer information. In the future, it will be possible to quickly share results and strategies from bargaining tables all over the country so that all locals can benefit from lessons learned elsewhere. In the unfortunate event of accidents or risks to safety and health being identified, we will be able to alert members everywhere to be on the lookout for similar hazards in their workplaces. The core concept – that we are more powerful working together – is what makes trade unionism successful.

“The core concept – that we are more powerful working together – is what makes trade unionism successful.”

“Tax Reform:” Just Another Giveaway to the Rich



John Duffy
National Vice President

Television ads are now running in support of an as yet unseen so-called tax reform bill. One of the ads focuses on a laid off blue collar worker. The laid off worker states that he lost his job due to foreign competition and that if the corporate tax code was lower, and more competitive, previously lost jobs would begin to return to the United States.

The notion that the corporate tax rate is the reason for U.S. corporations offshoring jobs is a false one. In the years following World II, the United States was the only major industrialized nation whose infrastructure remained intact, leaving no serious manufacturing competition.

Tax cuts do not create jobs

It would be decades before Europe and Japan would fully recover. And through those years, the United States would see a rise in union membership which, in turn, would create the great middle class. In fact, the percentage of workers belonging to a union in the U.S. peaked in 1954 at almost 35%. The total number of union members peaked in 1979 at an estimated 21 million.

As trade unionists we know that jobs are not enough to provide a decent standard of living, it takes *good paying jobs*.

Within 10 years of that 1979 peak, the cold war would end, and new markets would open. China, a communist country with a population of over one billion, would become a major trading partner. China, a country that was found to be using prison labor, was now a manufacturing competitor.

So, the idea that the U.S. corporate tax rate is the reason jobs are being shipped overseas, and by lowering it, jobs will come rolling back to the U.S., is simply a scheme to further line the pockets of rich stock holders of major corporations and boost the pay of CEOs.

According to the Institute on Taxation and Economic Policy (ITEP) a non-profit, non-partisan research organization, profitable Fortune 500 firms collectively pay far less than the 35% federal corporate tax rate. Two hundred and fifty-eight profitable Fortune 500 corporations paid an average effective tax rate of 21.2% on their U.S. profits over the eight years between 2008 and 2015.

Of the 258 profitable Fortune 500 companies the ITEP sampled:

- 18 paid ZERO in taxes over the full eight-year period
- 100 paid zero, or less, in at least one profitable year during the same period
- 58 of those companies had multiple zero-tax years
- 24 companies zeroed out their taxes in at least four of the eight years

- 48 companies paid a rate between 0 and 10% over eight years.

Another study blows apart the argument that tax breaks are directly related to job creation by reporting that:

- America's 92 most consistently profitable tax-dodging firms registered median job growth of negative 1% between 2008 and 2016. The job growth rate over those same years among U.S. private sector firms as a whole, 6%.

- More than half of the 92 tax-avoiders, 48 firms in all, *eliminated* jobs between 2008 and 2016, downsizing by a combined total of 483,000 positions.

“Collectively, American businesses are currently sitting on \$1.9 trillion in cash. Giving them more money to sit on won't create a single job. Long before Donald Trump ran for President, the UWUA advocated for the rebuilding of our infrastructure. ... We can't rebuild America by making the rich richer and shrinking the U.S. Treasury.”

Don't believe the hype

House Speaker Paul Ryan wants to cut the current 35% rate to 20%, and President Trump wants to cut it to 15%, with the argument it will create jobs. Don't buy it. The facts speak for themselves.

Collectively, American businesses are currently sitting on \$1.9 trillion in cash. Giving them more money to sit on won't create a single job. Long before Donald Trump ran for President, the UWUA advocated for the rebuilding of our infrastructure. One only need look at our 2015 convention theme: **Reclaim, Retrain, Repair, Repower America!** We can't rebuild America by making the rich richer and shrinking the U.S. Treasury.

UWUA National Committees Central



The Human Rights Committee and the Young Workers Initiative Committee at a recent joint meeting with UWUA National Secretary-Treasurer Michael Coleman, third from left, and National Staffer, Mark Brooks, far left.

Members of the UWUA's three national committees – Human Rights, Young Workers, and the Women's Caucus – will host numerous activities at the Power for America's third National Conference on October 18-20.

The important perspectives and expertise the three national committees bring to the conference will help meet the conference goal of helping to re-energize careers of seasoned veterans, train emerging new leaders, and move the union forward.

Human Rights Committee

The important work done by the Human Rights Committee to bring the membership together will be highlighted by the conference keynote speaker, Mary Frances Winters, whose most recent book is titled, "We Can't Talk about THAT at Work! How to talk about Race, Religion, Politics and Other Polarizing Topics."

"As trade unionists, we can't afford to let anything such as race, color, creed, religion, whatever, separate us," says Human Rights Committee Chair Clint Carson. "We all want the same

things and, working together as union brothers and sisters, we can get them."

Carson says the Human Rights Committee wants everyone to understand that, "There are powerful forces in our country that want to keep us divided. So we must ask, 'Why do they want to divide us?' The answer is easy," he says. "If we are separated, we cannot accomplish our goal. We must unite and fight together to protect our jobs and our communities!"

to P4A Conference



Young Workers Initiative Committee

The Young Workers Initiative Committee (YWIC) will give a presentation entitled “The Effective Use of Social Media to Promote the Union Brand.”

The presentation will focus on ways to improve the perception of unions both with the general public and, more importantly, with UWUA members. The YWIC will discuss how, by highlighting member skills and the important role they play in keeping the lights on and the water running, a sense of pride and honor in being a UWUA member can increase the power of the union.

The presentation will also address changing the perception of unions with the general public. To this end, the committee will show the benefits and value in building strong allies through community partnerships.

Finally, as the title of the presentation suggests, the use of social media can be a very effective tool in promoting the union agenda to improve the lives of its members, their families and their communities.

Women's Caucus



Jodi Duffield, a gas line worker and member of the Michigan State Utility Workers Council, shows her skills as part of a Consumers Energy ad.



Kristen Baldwin, a gas line construction fuser and member of the Michigan State Utility Workers Council.

The National Women’s Caucus will feature a workshop on “Women in Non-Traditional Jobs.” The workshop will begin with an introduction of phenomenal women who have shaped the labor movement and the impact that the Women’s March on Washington had on re-energizing women in the public and private sectors around the injustices that still prevail regarding women’s rights.

Grassroots activism fueled the march, in which UWUA members participated. This sent a clear message to politicians

that women will not stand down in the face of attacks on their fundamental rights, and that they will hold anti-choice and anti-women politicians accountable.

Panelists will include exceptional women that work in non-traditional jobs, such as gas laborer, gas line worker, millwright journeyman, and electric technician. The purpose of identifying non-traditional options will foster interest in, and access to, careers with the goal of opening up professions to women, the under-represented gender.



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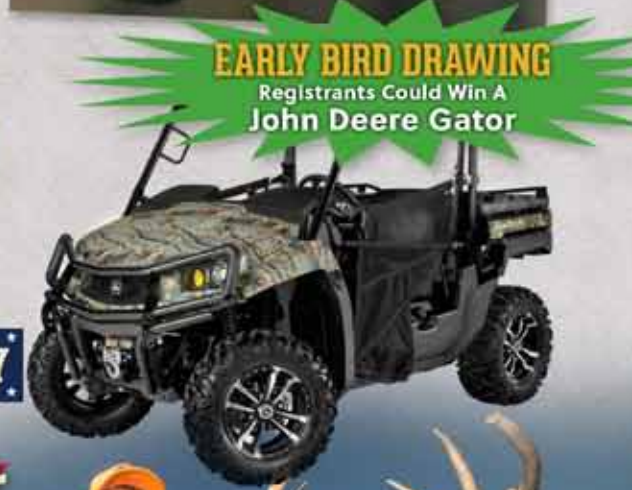
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Meet this Year's UWUA Scholarship Winners

Each year, two UWUA members' children are awarded college scholarships through the National Merit Scholarship Corporation (NMSC).

The Scholarship Program maintains the legacy started by a group of delegates at the 10th Constitutional Convention in 1959. The delegates proposed that scholarships be reserved only for children of UWUA members in good standing, and only to those high school students graduating and starting college in the same year that award recipients are selected.

Since the annual award runs four consecutive years, eight scholarships are always active.

The amount per year can be a minimum of \$500 and a maximum of \$2,000. NMSC decides the yearly stipend, depending on the school the student is attending, the family financial situation, and other factors they take into consideration.

This year's winners are:

Samantha Alaimo is the daughter of Alfonso Alaimo, a Local 1-2 member who works in Energy Services at Con Ed. Samantha is now attending the University of New Haven, CT, where she will major in Marine Biology and minor in mathematics. She enjoys outdoor activities such as fishing and biking. She would love to eventually settle down in Italy where her family is from.

The other winner of the UWUA scholarship is **Julia Codere**, the daughter of Michael Codere from Local 470-1. Julia is attending the University of Maryland, in College Park, MD.

Union Plus Scholarship winner

In addition to the UWUA Scholarship, the children of members in good standing are eligible to apply for the Union Plus Scholarship Program. Offered through the Union Plus Educa-



Reggie Davis, UWUA National Rep., parents Michelle and Alfonso, Samantha, and Local 1-2 President James Slevin.

tion Foundation, which is sponsored by Union Privilege, the scholarship is open to undergraduate and graduate students of U.S. accredited colleges, universities, community colleges, technical or trade schools. This program provides scholarships ranging from \$500 to \$4,000 for winning candidates.

This year, **Mark McGreal**, son of John McGreal from Local 246, won a Union Plus Scholarship.

Congratulations to all the winners.

Local 335 Volunteers Rebuild Boat Ramp Destroyed in Spring Floods

UWUA Local 335 volunteers teamed up with the Union Sportsmen's Alliance and Missouri American Water in August to complete construction of a non-motorized boat ramp at Minnie Ha Ha Park in Sunset Hills, MO, for the second time this year.

The ramp was less than a week old when catastrophic flooding destroyed the newly poured concrete in May. Undeterred, the three project partners devised a design they believe will stand up to flood waters from the Meramec River.

During the original project, Union Sportsmen's Alliance volunteers spent



UWUA Local 335 volunteers from Missouri American Water, Nick Aulbach, left, and Dave Turner, reconstructed a boat ramp at Missouri's Minnie Ha Ha Park that was destroyed by flooding last spring.

approximately 250 hours tearing out the original ramp, which was built in the 1940s and in poor condition, and then grading, framing, laying rebar and pouring new concrete. The project was

finished in late April. Mere days later, historic flooding damaged 90 percent of the structure beyond repair.

Volunteers returned to Minnie Ha Ha Park in early August and spent another 260 hours completing the project once again. To help the ramp weather future flooding, volunteers poured a deeper footing all the way up the ramp and placed larger rocks on its upriver side.

"A lot of people kayak and canoe the Meramec River, and the old boat ramp at Minnie Ha Ha Park was in pretty bad shape for the past 10-15 years," said UWUA Local 335 President Allan Bathon.

Saluting Our UAWA Retirees

The UAWA wishes all our retirees health and happiness during your "golden years." Enjoy it — you've earned it!

Local 1-2

Cheryl Allen
Leung Chin
Clement Clarke
Larry Cotton
Rhonda D. Cyrus
Peter Farrell
Hector Fernandez
Peter Gunsch
Michael Malizia
John Maloney
John McNamara
Rosalyne Morton
Kevin Murphy
John Nicholes
Patrick O'Neill
Vincent Patti
James Sarandrea
Tom Scourtsis
Marvin Siegel
Gwendolyn Speller
Robert Spiconardi
Sonia Stephens
Clive Williams
Guy Zarrilli

Local 101

John A. Coval
Kellie J. Getter

Local 102-180

James J. Hammer
John M. Klock
William J. Kolar
Raymond J. Lutchko
Ronald G. Wess

Local 102-C

James A. Rickard Jr.

Local 102-D

Kerry E. Dietrich

Local 102-F

Richard E. Kopcak
Michael Lafferty
Jeffrey L. Smith

Local 102-Q

Barry Mercer

Local 104

Frederick Davis
Billy Leslie

Local 106

Maria Barnes
Randy Delong
Dennis Reed

Local 123

Daniel L. Davis

Local 123 cont'd

Thomas A. Lamb

Local 126

Larry Brawley
Willie Dickerson
Larry Hatala
Bill Lepley
George Lipscomb

Local 127

Kevin Bennett
Richard Blakeley
Mervin Boyer
George Case
Benny Gambrel
Benito Gomez
Barry Heaney
Ed Markham
Rick Mezger
William Nix
Leroy Schwartz
David Sheetz
Stephen Szewczyk
Dale Thompson
Tracy Vandina

Local 132

Beryl Bryant

Local 144

Richard A. Bjorem
George W. Bovin
Keith M. Corwin
Richard A. Crete
Donald L. Fry
James B. Hages
Kevin M. Hartley
James M. Herber
David L. House
Edward B. King
Daniel T. Kingry
Becky J. Matthews
Kimela A. Peck
James W. Plowdrey
Robert R. Purtell
Raymond D. Thibault
David B. Wojcik
Julian Zielinski Jr.
Lynelle K. Zielinski

Local 150

Michael Digon
Thomas Doan
Mickey Houchin
John Matthews
Scott Peters
Gordon Vanderploeg
Starr Waldron

Local 175

Timothy M. Anderson

Local 175 cont'd

Lyle K. Barnum
David R. Carlton
Susan J. Carlton
Paul R. Chase III
Thomas W. Conway
Kent L. Darding
John P. Derksen
Larry D. Dodge
Philip D. Hawkins
Janice M. Maddux
Allen C. Marshall
Gary L. Mason
Gary W. Norris
Sue A. Pierce
Thomas W. Reiss
Michael G. Rogers
Stephen S. Wilford

Local 223

Thomas Amrhein
Dennis Anderson
Dan C. Ballard
Roosevelt Banks
Gerald Beauvais
Michael Biro
Johnnie Boone Jr.
Alan Booth
Timothy Bowers
Timothy J. Britton
Judy Brunson
Gerald Wayne Caddell
Rochelle Caslin
Larry Chevrier
Floyd Clark
Brandon C. Clyne
Charles Evans
Charles Foote
John L. Frazier
Stanley Gadille
Dennis Gutierrez
Michael W. Harris
Walter Henson
Fred Hermans
Antonio Hernandez
John L. Hill
Ronald Hill
Ricky J. Hillock
Rose Hodges
Alan Jakel
Richard Jakubczak
Robert Kocsis
Mark Koski
Linda M. Lamond
Bill Lamont
Marshall Leathers
Ervin Lewis
Joseph E. Lewis
Lucille Livingston
Jon McCloud
Michael Menge
William Morrison

Local 223 cont'd

Larry D. Owens
Gary J. Payne
Robert C. Pettus
Bret Pfaff
Marie L. Pierson
Dale M. Poston
Fermin Puebla
Hugh G. Riach
David Riser
W. Dennis Savage
Terry Simmons
Robert Sionkowski
James Sorah
Linda K. Stewart-Rewalt
Norm Sutton
Lisa Taffalian
Emmett Traylor
Doug Upplegger
Linda Watkins
Roy Williams
Sue Turner Williams
Gerald Young

Local 254

Eric Atallah
Dave Bemben
Dennis Bemben
Harold Walsh

Local 258

Keith Mapes

Local 270

Peter J. Bradbeer
Paul G. Cannon III
David E. Critchlow
Thomas E. Delfing
Richard L. Floyd
Robert A. Gibbs
David B. Hartman
Edward J. Holstein
Mark Mohnney
Daniel Pera
Christopher J. Reardon
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Kelly L. Thayer
William L. Tobias Jr.
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Local 347

Alice Cooper
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Dennis Beaulieu
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Barry Rogers

Local 369 cont'd

Joseph Ronan
Kenneth J. Sejkora
Ron Sieger
Ed Varmette
Deborah Waugaman
Robert Will
Arthur Zaniboni
Richard Zmayefski

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Michael Pacheco

Local 388

Christopher John Bethke
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Local 470-1

Annette Cyr

Local 478

Frank D. Ballog
Robert E. Cooper
Jeffrey P. Jackfert

Local 506

Robin Mutnansky
Darryl Myers

Local 508

Daryl Grindeland
Chris Slusser
Bill Warfield

Local 522

Theodore G. Johnson

Local 522 cont'd

Hector Parocua

Local 525

Tom Irons
Ronald Picolet
Wayne Wylie

Local 582

Luke Raggl

Local B310

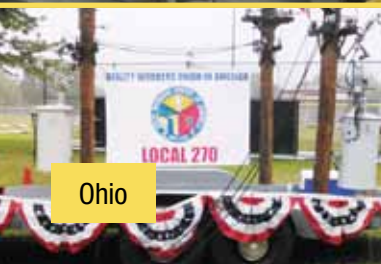
Ann Truppi

Local G-555

Cheri E. Allen-Tate
Terry B. Blevins
Gerald L. Buccioni
Ronald K. Casada
Janet D. Chappelle
Alan C. Claybrooks
Nancy L. Davis
Charles E. Deak
Susan E. Deeks
Cheryl A. Donovan
Inga Draudt
Donna S. Falatok
Seldon L. Farnsworth
Thomas S. Florian
Vanessa C. Fox
Karla J. Gadley
Deborah W. Godfrey
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Utility Workers Mobilize for Hurricane Relief



UWUA members from locals all over the country mobilized in support of hard-hit communities in Florida, Texas, and elsewhere, after hurricanes Irma and Harvey struck. They are proving once again, UWUA members are the safest, most productive, highest skilled workers in the world. Among the more moving moments: Journeyman Lineworker in Charge, Dave Grace, from Local 150 in Kalamazoo, MI, received a thank you card and doughnuts from a family in Boca Raton, FL, photo left.

