



# WHITE COLLAR

Work Connects Us All!

Summer 2014 Issue

## Local 153 Contract Brings Jobs Back to Buffalo

A hard-fought contract battle has resulted in increased wages and 40 new jobs that had been subcontracted to Pennsylvania to be brought back and added to the bargaining unit at BlueCross BlueShield of Western New York in Buffalo, New York, members of Local 153.



At the BlueCross BlueShield contract ratification on April 26, 2014, are bargaining committee members (left to right, front row) Chief Shop Steward Brenda St. John, International Vice President and Local 153 Secretary-Treasurer Richard Lanigan, Local 153 Representative Robert McLennan, (back row) Donna Amos, Lynn Brooks and Roberta Novak.

Three years ago, nearly 400 members of Local 212 – which later merged with Local 153 – were locked out of their jobs at BlueCross for three months. A major point of contention was the company’s proposal for unrestricted outsourcing and subcontracting.

During this struggle, OPEIU assigned staff; assisted with the contract campaign; provided much-needed strike benefits to members; and launched a citywide campaign that included government officials, AFL-CIO unions, community and faith-based

organizations, consumers and the general public.

Because of the strength of the membership and the efforts of the International Union, Local 212 members returned to work with a three-year contract that limited outsourcing or subcontracting and provided full job security protection for the members. The contract also included wage increases, a ratification bonus, and no concessions to the benefit package and working conditions.

In April 2013, just one year before the contract at BlueCross was again to expire, the merger with Local 153 occurred. According to International Vice President and Local 153 Secretary-Treasurer Richard Lanigan, the negotiations began in February of this year with the committee volunteering its time in the evenings and on weekends. “The committee engaged management approximately 18 times,” Lanigan said, “and the sides were very far apart, with management proposing a five-year contract with lump-sum payments and a significant change in healthcare benefits the committee was not prepared to accept.”

With the contract expiring on April 25, the employer began to prepare itself for the worst. “Private security forces and wooden sawhorses began to appear outside of the employer’s headquarters, and that was the setting for bargaining on April 24 and 25,” said Lanigan, who joined the negotiations. “We bargained until nearly 4 a.m. on Friday, and when we returned to the table a few hours later on Saturday, we settled

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**America Needs a Raise**  
Raise the Federal Minimum Wage to \$10.10 an Hour



# Union Plus Credit Card – Among the Best

By Michael Goodwin, International President

Twenty-eight years ago, the AFL-CIO created Union Privilege to provide union members and their families with valuable consumer benefits. With “Union Plus” benefits, your union membership pays at work and at home.

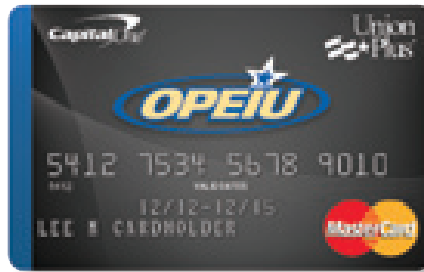
By using the collective power of the AFL-CIO membership, totaling more than 10 million members, the Union Plus program is able to offer valuable, discounted products and services exclusively to working families. Among these benefits is the Union Plus credit card.

Currently, more than 8,700 OPEIU members carry the Union Plus credit card and benefit from all the economic advantages associated with the card. The card offers competitive rates, with a 0 percent introductory APR on purchases and balance transfers for 12 months.

Union Plus has recently established a new Credit Access Card, which offers unlimited 1.5 percent cash back on every purchase to members with average or limited credit who want to build credit through responsible use. This card is in addition to options for a Cash Rewards Card, which offers 1.5 percent cash back on every purchase for members with excellent credit who pay their bills in full every month.

There is also a Rate Advantage Card available, which offers a low introductory APR on purchases and balance transfers for the first 15 months for those who want to transfer a higher-rate balance and save on interest.

Cardholders are eligible for consideration for unique assistance benefits to help with financial hardships, including a \$300 job loss grant for members who have recently been laid off; a strike grant of \$300 for members who are on a union-sanctioned strike or experiencing a lockout; a disability



grant ranging from \$1,600 to \$2,700 for those who have lost significant income due to a long-term illness or disability; and a hospital grant of \$1,200 that aids those with large, unreimbursed hospital expenses.

All grants are paid by check and never have to be paid back. Cardholders should go to [www.unionplus.org](http://www.unionplus.org) to apply and click on the Assistance tab. If you don't have a Union Plus credit card, go to [UnionCardApply.com](http://UnionCardApply.com) to apply.

I am a Union Plus credit cardholder and have found it to be among the best. I've also had the privilege of serving on the Union Privilege Board of Directors since 1994. It's a wonderful program for union members, retirees and their families. I urge all OPEIU members to consider the Union Plus credit card.

There are more than 95,000 OPEIU members who do not have the credit card. In order to reach out to these members, OPEIU is considering launching a new program that will provide additional membership benefits to those who apply and/or are approved for the credit card. The new program will require approval by Union Privilege, Capital One Bank and the OPEIU Executive Board. Drafts of the

program are being considered by Union Privilege and Capital One, and the OPEIU Executive Board will be reviewing it at its June 2014 meeting. The program will be officially launched following the approval of all three entities. A brochure of the proposed program was discussed and distributed at the North Central-Erie/Northeast Area Educational Conference in May in Washington, D.C. We hope to get approvals as soon as possible.

If the program is approved, OPEIU has agreed to provide a \$25 Restaurant.com gift certificate to the first 5,000 applicants who apply for the card. Also, the first 5,000 new cardholders or existing cardholders who transfer balances of \$1,000 or more will receive the following OPEIU benefits:

- **Two AMC Gold movie tickets** good at AMC Theatres, AMC Loews, AMC Showplace, Cineplex Odeon, Magic Johnson Theatres and Star Theatres nationwide
- **Reimbursement of \$50** toward the purchase of a visit to Disneyland or Disney World resorts
- **Reimbursement of \$20** toward the purchase of a Costco membership for one year
- **Reimbursement of \$25** toward professional liability insurance
- **\$5,000** accidental death and dismemberment insurance for three years
- **Reimbursement of \$80** for the purchase of an annual pass or up to \$20 for the purchase of a Lifetime Senior Pass to National Parks and Federal Recreational Lands
- **One-year membership** in the American Labor Museum/Botto House National Landmark in Haledon, New Jersey

Based on discussions between Union Privilege, Capital One and OPEIU, if the program is approved, the above benefits are subject to change. We will, of course, inform everyone of the outcome of those discussions.

Think about applying for the Union Plus credit card today and treat yourself to great benefits!

## OPEIU Makes Great Strides in Representation of Podiatrists

### New Jersey Podiatric Medical Society Affiliates with OPEIU

A number of podiatric medical groups are recognizing the benefits of affiliation with OPEIU, citing strong legislative and lobbying support as a key reason.

Among them are the New Jersey Podiatric Medical Society (NJPMS), which has affiliated effective June 1, 2014.

"The hard work of International Vice President and Guild 45 Podiatry President John Mattiacci, DPM; his son, Nick Mattiacci; and Pennsylvania Podiatric Medical Association Executive Director Michael Davis made this affiliation happen," said International President Michael Goodwin. "OPEIU has been pursuing this for nearly 18 years,

so we are extremely pleased that NJPMS has taken this step and that 650 new members will be joining our ranks.

"As thousands of other OPEIU podiatry members have seen, we are confident that NJPMS will see the very real benefits of affiliation over the next year, after which the agreement will be reviewed," Goodwin continued.

### American Board of Multiple Specialties in Podiatry Also Affiliates

Dr. Mattiacci and Davis won another huge victory at a recent meeting held in Jacksonville, Florida, when an agreement was reached to recommend that the American Board of Multiple Specialties in Podiatry (ABMSP), an 800-member organization, affiliate with Guild 45, effective July 1, 2014.

At the meeting, ABMSP President Dr. Earl Horowitz and Executive Director Joan Campbell met with Dr. Mattiacci and Davis, along with Goodwin and Director of Organization and Field Services Kevin Kistler. The team explained how OPEIU could help ABMSP broaden recognition by hospitals and insurance companies of the ABMSP certification and increase its membership.

The ABMSP will poll its executive board for approval, and the OPEIU Executive Board will consider the question of affiliation at its June 2014 meeting.

"Congratulations to Dr. Mattiacci and Mr. Davis, and we look forward to welcoming ABMSP to OPEIU on July 1, 2014," said Goodwin.

## OPEIU Supports Working Families United for New Jersey

International President Michael Goodwin and Local 32 officials, including International Vice President and Local 32 President Mary Short, Business Manager Sharon Eastwick, and Business Representative Karevin "KB" Barnes, attended Working Families United for New Jersey's first annual fundraiser and community awards event on April 17, 2014, to support the "Earned Sick Leave" campaign.

Monies raised will also support future initiatives, such as school repairs and immigration reform, all aimed at advancing social and economic justice for New Jersey's working families.



(Left to right) Nat Bender, communication director, AFT New Jersey, and a Local 32 member; International President Michael Goodwin; Sharon Eastwick, Local 32 business manager; Laurel Brennan, secretary-treasurer, AFL-CIO New Jersey; International Vice President and Local 32 President Mary Short; Local 32 Business Representative Karevin "KB" Barnes; and Seth Anderson-Oberman, political director, AFT New Jersey, and Local 32 member.

## American Labor Museum Director Recognized for Outstanding Leadership



(Left to right) Paterson Historic Preservation Commission Vice Chair Kenneth A. Simpson, Paterson Historic Preservation Commission Chair Martin M. Feitlowitz, Patersonian and American Labor Museum Member Morris Liss, Former Mayor of the Borough of Haledon James Van Sickle, American Labor Museum Director Angelica Santomauro, Ed.D., American Labor Museum President and OPEIU International President Michael Goodwin, Paterson Historic Preservation Commission Director Gianfranco Archimede and Paterson Historic Preservation Commissioner Harold Foster.

OPEIU is pleased to be a supporter of the American Labor Museum/Botto House National Landmark, the country's only museum dedicated to telling the story of the American worker. International President Michael Goodwin also serves as president of the museum and was recently pleased to attend an event honoring Museum Director Angelica Santomauro, Ed.D.

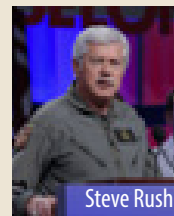
Santomauro received the City of Paterson's Historic Preservation Commission's 2013 Good Graces Award for a career of outstanding leadership, promotion and stewardship of the American Labor Museum and for this year's 1913 Paterson Silk Strike Centennial programs held in New Jersey.

## Shriver Report Shows How Women Affect Nation's Economic Strength

For all the gains women have made in the workplace in recent years, one sad truth remains: Women still earn an average of 74 cents on the dollar compared to their male counterparts, reports OPEIU Representative on Women's Issues Theresa Kandt.

*The Shriver Report: A Woman's Nation Pushes Back from the Brink* reveals the sad truth about economic immobility and inequality through the eyes of women. The report examines "the rates of financial insecurity among American women and the children who depend on them, [investigates] the impact of it on our nation's institutions and economic future, and [promotes] modern solutions to help women strengthen their financial status." If you'd like to read more about this topic, visit [shriverreport.org](http://shriverreport.org) and click on Special Reports to download the full report.

## PHPA Elects Officers



Steve Rush

The Professional Helicopter Pilots Association (PHPA), an OPEIU council of Local Unions representing pilots and dedicated to improving air safety and protecting the interests of commercial helicopter pilots, has elected officers to lead the group until March 2016.

Former Local 102 President Steve Rush and Local 107 members Ken Bruner and Vice President James Talbot have been reelected as president, vice president and secretary-treasurer, respectively, for a new two-year term.

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MICHAEL GOODWIN <i>President</i>	MARY MAHONEY <i>Secretary-Treasurer</i>
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# OPEIU Grows Pilot Membership, Sets Standard for Wages in the Industry

## For the First Time, Jet Pilots Join OPEIU

OPEIU continues to grow in its representation of pilots, mechanics and engineers and has expanded its reach by, for the first time, signing a memorandum of understanding to represent jet pilots employed at American Jets, Inc. (AMJ), a Florida corporation owned by Air Methods Corporation (AMC). OPEIU also represents helicopter pilots at AMC.

The 45-day understanding is in place while the union negotiates a new contract for the 12 air ambulance jet pilots, who voted to affiliate in January 2014. The pilots, members of Local 109, are based in Florida and California and frequently fly to Europe and South America.

"The union and the company both agree that the new relationship will help establish a solid foundation for pilot involvement in the safety culture at the company," said Director of Organization and Field Services Kevin Kistler. "We've established healthcare coverage, a retirement plan, a grievance procedure and pay increases, as well as established a new work schedule, which was a key issue with the pilots."

## Local 103 Pilots Secure 35 Percent Wage Increase

The 238 helicopter pilots of Global Helicopter Pilots Association (GHPA) Local 103 have secured a renewal contract that includes a 35 percent increase in salary over three years, a new tax plan to help keep more of that salary in the members' pockets and continuing dialogue through a labor-management committee to effectively resolve any problems as they arise.

These professional pilots employed at CHC fly transport helicopters in dozens of countries throughout the world in support of oil and gas exploration, search and rescue, and a variety of other tasks.



At a negotiations meeting in Vancouver, British Columbia, on April 17, 2014, are (left to right) Local 103 Second Vice Chairman Graham Poole, CHC Planning's Jim Bothwell, Local 103 First Vice Chairman James Whatley, CHC Director of Global Labor Relations Victoria Every, Local 103 Treasurer Curtis Humphrey, CHC Senior Manager of HR-Canada/Corporate Christa Flannagan, OPEIU International Representative Paul Huertas, CHC Director of HR Legal Gareth Carline, and OPEIU Director of Organization and Field Services Kevin Kistler.

"The first agreement was reached after two and a half years of negotiation and arbitration in 2011, and in the past three years Local 103 and the company have learned to really work together toward our common goals," said OPEIU International Representative Paul Huertas.

## CHC Engineers Join as DAG 403

In May 2013, the engineers employed at CHC joined OPEIU as Directly Affiliated Group (DAG) 403, strengthening the voice of the other members at the company. OPEIU is currently in negotiations for an initial contract for an engineering unit at Heli-One in Boundary Bay, British Columbia, Canada, a CHC repair facility, following a secret ballot election.

## Bristow Mechanics Ratify First Contract

A first contract has been ratified with Bristow U.S. LLC by 249 aircraft mechanics and technicians represented by OPEIU. The three-year agreement

provides for immediate substantial wage increases for the majority of the group and retro pay to December 2013. "The new wage schedule compresses a 30-year wage schedule down to 20 years, providing step increases each year for those who are not at the 20-year pay level," said Senior International Representative Paul Bohelski. "In addition, mechanics and techs will receive a 12 percent annual increase to the new wage schedule over the first 22 months of the agreement."

The contract also includes a job-bidding process, improved vacation selection and holiday pay, improved severance pay, a grievance procedure and seniority rights, among many other improvements.

"After four attempts to organize this group led by International Organizer Jeff Rusich beginning back in 1997, OPEIU was certified by the National Mediation Board on February 13, 2013, and bargaining began on July 10," said Bohelski.

## ITPEU Wins Election at Edwards Air Force Base

ITPEU has won a National Labor Relations Board election with JDD Inc.

on Edwards Air Force Base in California, with the employees voting overwhelmingly for ITPEU representation. The unit consists of 30 custodial workers. ITPEU Secretary-Treasurer Dennis Conley, Representative Diane Matinzo and OPEIU Project Organizer Green Lewis III led the election campaign, reported ITPEU President Dennis R. Arrington.



# ITPEU Convention Reflects New Wave of Labor

With the theme "The New Wave of Labor," the Industrial, Technical and Professional Employees Union (ITPEU)/OPEIU Local 4873 held its convention in San Antonio, Texas, March 24-26, 2014.

"That phrase is much more to me than just a catchy slogan and a trendy logo," ITPEU President Dennis R. Arrington told delegates. "I truly believe we are on a new horizon. We are facing new challenges, pursuing new opportunities and setting goals to increase our collective bargaining power through organizing."

The convention featured prominent speakers from the labor movement, including AFL-CIO Executive Vice President Emerita Linda Chavez-Thompson and Tom Cummins, president of the Central Labor Council in San Antonio, as well as a number of OPEIU vice presidents, including Richard Lanigan, Walter Allen Jr., Dr. John Mattiacci, Becky Turner, Green P. Lewis II and Greg Blackman.

The convention also accomplished a great deal of business, including the

passage of resolutions that will help chart the union's agenda in the coming years.

"I want to congratulate the committees for putting the eight resolutions before the convention, calling upon Congress and federal and state governments to take action on critical issues, calling upon them to stop making it harder and harder for workers to feed their families," said International President Michael Goodwin in his address to the convention. "President Arrington, be assured that OPEIU will help ITPEU make these eight resolutions a reality. Thank you in particular for the resolution calling upon the ITPEU membership to support the J.B. Moss VOTE Fund, the foundation of our success on political issues."

To illustrate the importance of the VOTE Fund, Goodwin pointed to



**Left:** ITPEU/OPEIU Local 4873 President Dennis R. Arrington opens the ITPEU 2014 convention. **Right:** AFL-CIO Executive Vice President Emerita Linda Chavez-Thompson welcomes delegates to her hometown of San Antonio, Texas.



ITPEU/Local 4873 President Dennis R. Arrington (third from left) and International President Michael Goodwin (second from right) are joined by (left to right) International Vice Presidents Richard Lanigan, Green P. Lewis II, Dr. John Mattiacci, Becky Turner and Walter Allen Jr.

President Obama's difficulty advancing his agenda in Congress due to a lack of Republican cooperation. "President Obama has decided to fight back using his power to issue executive orders," said Goodwin. "In his State of the Union address in January, the president said, 'If you cook the food and serve the troops, you should not have to live in poverty.' He was talking about you, ITPEU members, who cook the food and serve the troops. ITPEU is the leading union representing food service workers on military installations in the United States."

Goodwin then told delegates that Obama has since issued an executive order requiring contractors doing business with the federal government to pay a minimum wage of \$10.10 an hour to workers covered by all contracts signed after January 1, 2015, and that ITPEU and OPEIU will be working with

## Obama issued an executive order requiring contractors doing business with the federal government to pay a minimum wage of \$10.10 an hour to workers covered by all contracts signed after January 1, 2015.

the Department of Labor to discuss how the order affects ITPEU members.

Goodwin finished his remarks by encouraging all ITPEU members to get out the vote in November to elect pro-worker candidates. "Don't let the Koch brothers and big money steal your right to vote. You have to join the fight and get out the vote on November 4," he said.

Arrington, who also serves as a vice president on the OPEIU Executive Board, expressed his confidence in ITPEU members to make a difference.

"The quality of our delegation would make any union leader envious, and I could not have been prouder of how interested the delegates were in tending to union business and how attentive they were in gleaning everything they could from the presenters and guest speakers," he said. "With the continued support of OPEIU, the ITPEU membership, and the vast network of brothers and sisters in the labor movement, I am confident the ITPEU will continue to be 'The New Wave of Labor,'" Arrington concluded.

# Educational Conferences Provide Fresh Insights

The OPEIU 2014 Area Educational Conferences are providing participants with insight into new modes of organizing, understanding past practice in the workplace and its effect on grievances and other workplace disputes, handling violence and bullying on the job, and the Affordable Care Act and its implications for union leaders, among several other topics.



The first of the three conferences planned for 2014, the Southeast-Southwest Area Educational Conference for Regions III and IV, was held March 27-30, 2014, in San Antonio, Texas. Members were given an overview of the AFL-CIO's Common Sense Economics program, a new initiative aimed at breaking down the myth that working people are powerless to change the economic inequality that exists in the United States.

"The AFL-CIO designed the Common Sense Economics program to help us understand that working people can and must change the direction of our national economy," said OPEIU Director of Communication, Education and Research Nicole Korkolis. "Economic outcomes are a result of political choices, and this program is helping us see how working people can impact those political choices through voting, volunteering and activism in our union and our communities."

International President Michael Goodwin told participants about the importance of the J.B. Moss VOTE Fund,



**Top Left:** At the Southeast-Southwest conference, Secretary-Treasurer Mary Mahoney leads a secretary-treasurers' training session, giving local leaders the tools they need to meet their Local Unions' financial reporting obligations. **Top Right:** The Southeast-Southwest conference host was Local 298 in San Antonio, Texas. Pictured are Local 298 Trustee Maria Krausz and Secretary-Treasurer Theresa "Terri" Ramos. **Above:** International vice presidents for Regions III and IV give an update of activities in the regions over the past year. Pictured are Local 277 President/Business Manager Becky Turner, International Representative Green P. Lewis II, ITPEU/Local 4873 President Dennis R. Arrington and GSAF/Local 100 President Greg Blackman.



“ I urge all OPEIU members to fully participate in the election process and work to get out the vote this November.”

urging Local Unions to ensure that a provision is included in all collective bargaining agreements permitting checkoff of contributions to the J.B. Moss VOTE Fund, as well as to use the authorization Form 35.

“Congress is unwilling to work with President Obama to pass legislation that will move the country forward, and state governments such as those of Wisconsin, Michigan, Ohio and Indiana are being taken over by governors who are hostile to the rights of workers to collectively bargain,” said Goodwin. “The House of Representatives refuses to pass an extension of unemployment insurance and believes there should be no increase in the minimum wage.

“All of this demonstrates why it’s so important who is elected to represent us in Congress,” he continued. “They make decisions that affect our wages, benefits and right to bargain. There are three branches of government: the House, which is controlled by Republicans; the Senate, which could revert to Republican control in November; and the White House, which could go Republican in 2016. If this happens, it’s ‘lights out for labor.’

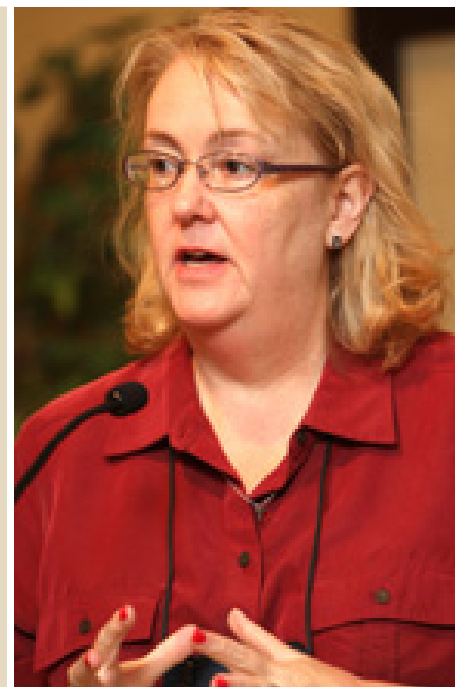
“I urge all OPEIU members to fully participate in the election process and work to get out the vote this November,” he concluded.

AFL-CIO Executive Vice President Emerita Linda Chavez-Thompson led a panel discussion, “Raising Wages: Making Change Through Community Partnerships,” which looked at how various union groups have joined forces with community partners to push for an increase in the minimum wage and other legislation aimed at improving the lives of working families.

*Continued on page 10*



**Top:** Chrissy Long (far left), the executive director of the National Employment Law Project, leads a panel discussion at the North Central-Erie/Northeast Area Educational Conference about raising wages through labor and community partnerships that included Minnesota AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Steve Hunter, M.L. King County Labor Council (Seattle, Washington) Executive Secretary David Freiboth and Massachusetts AFL-CIO Organizer Lindsay McCluskey. **Middle:** The Northeast conference host was Local 2 in Washington, D.C. Pictured are Local 2 Board Member Caniesha Washington, Second Vice President Carolyn Lewis and Organizer Lou Wolf. Local 2 treated the conference participants to a wonderful evening of musical entertainment by the Capitol Steps. **Right:** Local 1937 President Dottie Miller thanks participants of the Northeast conference for their support of her campaign for the Pennsylvania State House District 53.





**Top Left:** Members of OPEIU's Rising Stars youth initiative met several times throughout the Northeast conference, sharing ideas for getting young members more involved in their union. **Top Right:** International vice presidents for Regions II and VII shared their insights with conference participants. Pictured are Local 457 President Patricia Priloh, Local 153 Secretary-Treasurer Richard Lanigan, Local 32 President Mary Short, Local 512 President Aaron Sanders, Guild 45 President John Mattiacci, DPM, and Local 459 President Sharon Taylor. **Bottom Left:** Members of the UIET Local 1971 in Puerto Rico attend their first OPEIU educational conference with the Northeast region. Pictured are East Area Representative Juan J. Gomez Huertas, Metro Area Representative José I. Garcia Lopéz, International President Michael Goodwin, Director of Organization and Field Services Kevin Kistler, Senior International Representative/Organizer Iram Ramirez, West Metro Area Representative Josue Nadal Rodriguez, South Metro Area Representative Alexie Rodriguez and International Representative/Organizer Josue Montijo. Not pictured are Sergeant at Arms Gloria J. Casanova Berrios and Shop Steward Steven Andrew Saldana Ortiz. The UIET, which represents nearly 1,900 workers at the telecommunications company Claro Puerto Rico, affiliated with OPEIU in August 2013. **Bottom Right:** At the Northeast conference are Local 12 Recording Secretary Ron Phillips, Taylor, Local 12 Secretary-Treasurer Sue Malcom, Sanders, Local 12 Sector Representative Sheila Mancl, Local 12 Sector Representative Lisa Michalek and Local 12 Business Manager Lance Lindeman. Not pictured is Local 12 Vice President Terrie Bares.

*Educational Conferences continued from page 9*

A similar panel discussion was held at the North Central-Erie/Northeast Area Educational Conference, held May 15-18, 2014, in Washington, D.C. Participants from Regions II and VII enjoyed hearing from labor organizations in Massachusetts, Minnesota and Washington state that have had similar legislative successes through community partnerships.

"The programs for the 2014 educational conferences are designed to get members even more involved in their union

and the labor movement, to see beyond the traditional means of organizing, and to adjust their way of thinking to match the realities of today's economic and political environments," said Korkolis.

A third conference for the West-Northwest Area, Regions V and VI, will be held October 30-November 3, 2014, in Portland, Oregon.

# OPEIU Meets with Nation's Lawmakers

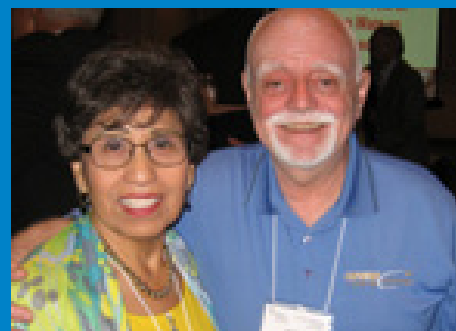
International President Michael Goodwin had the opportunity to meet with New York Governor Andrew Cuomo at a recent New York State AFL-CIO Executive Council meeting in New York City. "I was glad to have the chance to discuss some of the critical issues facing us in the coming months," Cuomo said in a note to Goodwin following the meeting. "I'm proud of the historic work we have done in creating jobs and revitalizing our communities, providing an important, far-reaching example of how much can be accomplished through partnership and shared commitment. I look forward to building on our achievements in the months ahead and thank you for your ongoing support and leadership."



**Top Right:** International President Michael Goodwin greets New York Governor Andrew Cuomo at a recent New York State AFL-CIO Executive Council meeting in New York City. **Above:** International President Michael Goodwin and Director of Communication, Education and Research Nicole Korkolis meet with Senators Mark Udall (D-Colorado) and Kay Hagan (D-North Carolina) at OPEIU's headquarters in New York City to discuss key legislative initiatives of importance to OPEIU members.

## Local 153 Attends Alliance for Retired Americans Convention

Local 153 President Emeritus Juan Alvarez, who now helps administer the Local 153 Retirees Association, and AFL-CIO Executive Vice President Emerita Linda Chavez-Thompson pictured at the Alliance for Retired Americans National Membership Convention held in Las Vegas, Nevada, April 28-May 1, 2014.





## Local 2 Settles Five-Year Contract Dispute with Washington Metro

Local 2 members have voted 840 to 30 to accept an agreement with the Washington Metropolitan Area Transit Authority (WMATA) in Washington, D.C., settling unresolved contracts for the years 2008-2012 and 2012-2016 and capping more than five and a half years of struggle for a fair contract. Local 2 represents 1,000 salaried WMATA employees.

Local 2 members received a long-overdue raise of 13.7 percent and a retroactive lump sum of up to 37 percent of annual pay. An estimated \$25 million was paid out as retroactive pay for the contract settlement.

Additional 2 percent across-the-board raises are scheduled for July 1, 2014, and July 1, 2015. Health, insurance and retirement benefits are locked in from the previous contract until a new contract is settled after July 1, 2016, except for the loss of retiree medical benefits for members hired after 2009. Members gained two additional pay grades, boosting the hourly rate of the top grade and step to \$77.41 as of July 1, 2015. The new contract prohibits the layoff of members whose work is contracted out, and requires that members who have been laid off be rehired if their work is contracted out within two years of their layoff.

So why did it take more than five years to achieve a fair contract?

According to International Vice President and Local 2 President Dan Dyer, unlike most employers, WMATA is not covered by the National Labor Relations Act (NLRA). It is governed only by the Acts of Congress that established it; a compact between the State of Maryland, the Commonwealth of Virginia and the District of Columbia; and federal court and arbitration decisions. Consequently, WMATA is only loosely bound to "good-faith bargaining." The compact mandates final and binding arbitration to resolve labor disputes and prohibits lockouts. The existing contract would continue in force until it was replaced by a new contract, but WMATA employees had no right to strike.

From its inception in October 2007, the bargaining team of Rachel Brown, Gerry Cepaitis, Dan Johnson, Edith Lowden and Lance Lupis, led by Chief Steward Eric Starin and Dyer, knew they were in for a fight. The new general manager of WMATA had an anti-union record and had been hired with the express goal of cutting costs.

"From the start of negotiations on March 24, 2008, management delayed," said Dyer. "They bargained over ground rules, though none were ever agreed upon. They would take weeks to come to agreement over a particular issue, then refuse to ratify the verbal agreement in writing. They proposed draconian cuts to health and pension benefits coupled with no raises over the life of the contract." As one member put it, management's position "didn't sound like a proposal, it sounded like a punishment." By the onset of arbitration hearings on July 8, 2010, more than two years into the contract fight, management had moved only slightly from their initial position and were still proposing no raises and huge cuts to benefits.

After arbitration and continued delays, an award was issued almost four years after the start of bargaining. The company appealed the arbitration award to federal court, and after much legal wrangling, on September 20, 2013, a tentative agreement was signed by both parties, overwhelmingly approved by secret-ballot vote of the members on September 26, and ratified by the WMATA Board of Directors on October 24, five and a half years from the first bargaining session.

"It was a long struggle, during which two members of the bargaining

committee retired and another left WMATA employment," Dyer said. The bargaining unit grew from 700 members to almost 1,000 members. "In spite of management's efforts to demoralize the bargaining unit, members stayed committed to a fair contract, through two years of negotiation, two years of arbitration and more than a year and a half in court. Through it all the bargaining committee stayed united, and Local 2 as a whole and the International Union backed the bargaining committee's efforts 100 percent.

"Yet the struggle continues," Dyer said. "Management has refused to pay former employees, other than retirees, who were Local 2 members during the contract period but were laid off, quit or were fired before the contract raise was implemented." On February 20, 2014, a grievance to secure their retroactive pay was referred to arbitration.

### Local 2 Officers Sworn In



International President Michael Goodwin swears in the newly elected officers of Local 2 on February 19, 2014, including President Dan Dyer, Secretary-Treasurer Michael Cowan, First Vice President Linda Bridges, Second Vice President Carolyn Lewis and Third Vice President Eric Starin. Fifteen executive board members and eight delegates to the Washington Metropolitan Council, AFL-CIO, were also sworn in.



## Local 106 Secures 16.5 Percent Wage Increase in New Contract

Local 106, as part of the Metal Trades Council of New London County in Connecticut, has ratified an agreement with Electric Boat Corporation that provides significant improvements in wages, pension and other fringe benefits while protecting priorities such as seniority, medical and dental coverage.

The 65-month contract provides “outstanding wage improvements,” with an immediate 3 percent increase and total increases of 16.5 percent over the life of the agreement, according to Local 106 President and Chief Steward Paul A. Bruno Jr. The agreement also includes a company contribution to the 401(k) program and a voluntary severance package.

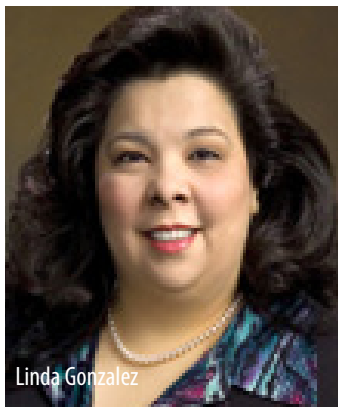
“The contract substantially exceeds the wage and benefits packages of the major shipbuilding companies as well as major industrial agreements negotiated nationally,” said Bruno, “and it provides greater job security and stability for our membership.”

## Local 277 Swears in Two New Officers

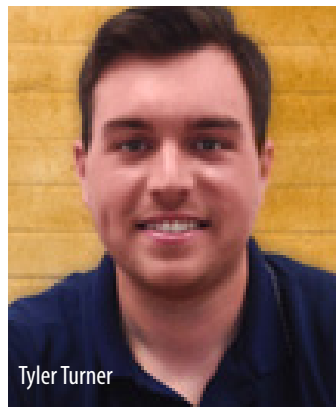
The Local 277 Executive Board has appointed two members to fill vacancies on the board, according to Local 277 President and Business Manager Becky Turner.

Upon the announcement of Secretary-Treasurer Margo Peel’s intent to retire by the end of 2014, the Local 277 Executive Board voted to appoint Linda Gonzalez to finish Peel’s unexpired term. Peel requested to step down from the secretary-treasurer position at the end of February but to continue as office manager, and the board agreed this would enable her to train Gonzalez and ensure a smooth transition.

Gonzalez has been a member of Local 277 since 1988 and served as the elected steward in the Contracts and Estimating Department at Lockheed Martin Aeronautics Company from 1993 until 1995, when she was appointed as chief steward in that same department. She also represented Local 277 at Lockheed Martin on the Diversity Council and Hispanic Heritage



Linda Gonzalez



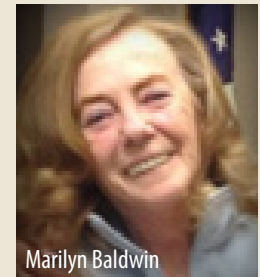
Tyler Turner

Committee. She has a B.S. degree in business.

Gonzalez’s appointment vacated her previously held position as recording secretary, so the board appointed Tyler Turner to finish the term. Turner has been a member of Local 277 since 2007, starting his career as a member while working for Kaiser Permanente and then joining the staff of Local 277. In 2011, he was promoted to business representative, with the responsibility of representing the agents, public relations representatives and marketing specialists at American Income Life Insurance Company (AIL). Tyler is a graduate of the University of Texas in Arlington with a B.A. degree in finance.

## Local 537 Mourns Loss of Marilyn Baldwin

Members of Local 537 in Pasadena, California, are mourning the untimely loss of Marilyn Baldwin, a member of the Local 537 Executive Board for many years.



Marilyn Baldwin

“Marilyn was one of our most beloved members,” said Local 537 Business Manager/Secretary-Treasurer Jacqueline K. White-Brown. “Her extensive history in the labor movement was one we can all be proud of, and her loss is deeply felt.”

Baldwin was a member of OPEIU for 50 years, “whose tireless efforts on behalf of labor in general, and Local 537 in particular, defined the true meaning of what it means to be a union member,” continued White-Brown. “As an advocate in support of working families, Marilyn volunteered her time during election seasons, at labor events and marches, including at the history-making, three-day *Hollywood to the Docks* march and rally in April 2008. She continued to fight for the cause of labor after her retirement in 2004 and even during her illness. The sadness we feel at Local 537 is tremendous, and we mourn the loss of this great lady.”

In addition to her service on the Local 537 Executive Board, Baldwin was also a delegate to the Los Angeles County Federation of Labor, a political director and a FORUM member.

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## Local 29 and 3 Members Settle Contract at ATPA

After 11 months of negotiation and a five-day strike, approximately 160 health and pension plan customer service representatives and support staff have settled their contract dispute with Associated Third Party Administrators (ATPA), located in Alameda and Contra Costa County, California. The employees are members of Local Unions 29 and 3.

At issue was the company's refusal to offer a viable union pension plan for the Local 29 employees. The members had sacrificed much on behalf of the company, accepting an 80-cent hourly wage deduction and loss of holiday pay for three years beginning in 2009, and yet the company wouldn't recognize the legitimate demands of its Local 29 employees until the members went on strike, according to Local 29 President/Business Manager Tamara R. Rubyn. "The members' voice was loud and clear," she said. "They wanted a contract, so we were left with no choice but to strike."

The members rejected the company's offer and modified offers, voting on three different occasions and rejecting them each time. The last proposed modifications were voted to be accepted. Even after Local 3 voted to accept their contract offer, they honored the Local 29 picket line and marched in



Local 29 and 3 members on strike against Associated Third Party Administrators.

solidarity, according to Local 3 Secretary-Treasurer/Business Manager Natalie Naylor.

The new agreement includes economic increases each year of the agreement. Local 29 contributions into the Local 3 pension plan will begin on September 1, 2014. A new work-at-home program will be available for eligible employees.

Contract negotiations began on June 30, 2013. Additional OPEIU Local Unions represent members employed at ATPA, including Local 11 in Portland, Oregon, and Local 537 in Southern California. Local 537 settled its contract with ATPA earlier this year.

## Local 129 Secures NASA Contract

Local 129 has reached a three-year agreement providing for wage increases of 3.5 percent in the first year and 3 percent each of the following years for employees at NASA's Johnson Space Center in Houston, Texas.

In the last months of 2013, Local 129 conducted government entity bargaining at NASA with the employer, G4S Government Solutions, Inc. The group joined Local 129 in early 2013 via a bridge agreement to the CBA with the existing employer, The Diamond Group. The bridge agreement was signed due to a successor clause in the agreement.

Local 129 was assisted in bargaining by OPEIU Senior International Representative Paul Bohelski and was able to settle in one day with the wage increases and no benefit concessions.

"This was a huge success for the employees at the Space Center," said Local 129 President Sherry Patton.

## Local 6 Members Raise Funds to Help One of Their Own

Local 6 members employed as EMTs at American Medical Response in Massachusetts recently demonstrated the true union spirit by contributing more than \$5,000 to a fellow EMT and Local 6 member after her husband died unexpectedly.

Joe Komendecki worked for more than 30 years as an EMT and passed away while on a business trip working as a respiratory therapist in North Dakota. "He taught EMS at the local college and was always available and very knowledgeable to everyone he worked with and was around," said Rock Thibeault, a paramedic and Local 6 steward.

His wife, Deb Black-Komendecki, "is definitely one of the nicest, most pleasant, kindhearted people you'd ever meet," Thibeault said. She is known for always helping others, so the members of Local 6 are now helping her by establishing a GoFundMe page. "All the money is going to defray the costs that Deb and her family will face," said Thibeault.



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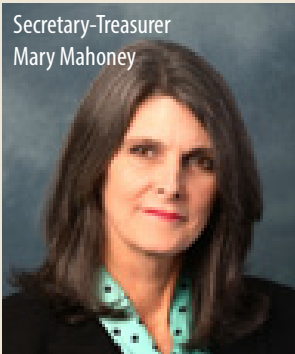
AFL-CIO, CLC

OFFICE AND PROFESSIONAL EMPLOYEES  
INTERNATIONAL UNION, AFL-CIO, CLC

# WHITE COLLAR

## Secretary-Treasurer Mahoney Honored by NAACP

Secretary-Treasurer  
Mary Mahoney



Secretary-Treasurer Mary Mahoney was honored by the New York Branch of the NAACP at its 103rd annual Freedom Fund Gala on June 6, 2014. The New York branch is the first one chartered by the national NAACP.

Mahoney was recognized for her tireless efforts to ensure equality and justice and to improve the quality of life of workers and their families.

Other honorees included AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka, Laborers Local 77 Business Manager Carl E. Styles, and Metallic Lathers Union and Reinforcing Ironworkers Local 46 Business Agent Michael Anderson.

*Continued from page 1*

## Local 153 Contract Brings Jobs Back to Buffalo

on a contract that provides for 40 new good-paying administrative jobs that had been contracted to Pennsylvania to be returned to Buffalo and added to the existing bargaining unit and covered under the agreement," said Lanigan. The contract was ratified by an overwhelming majority in a vote held on April 26.

The contract also provides for wage increases of 1 percent in the first year plus a \$1,000 ratification bonus, wage increases of 2 percent in each of the second and third years, a voluntary retirement package that will be offered during the life of the agreement, \$10,000 paid life insurance for retirees, an increase in paid time off for part-time workers, an increase to five days of bereavement time, and the addition of a union bulletin board in the workplace.

"The union maintained its health benefits, no layoff clause and other provisions where management had sought givebacks," said Lanigan. The unit employees are mostly customer service, administrative and clerical staff who work at the Buffalo headquarters.

"Congratulations to Local 153 Secretary-Treasurer Richard Lanigan on reaching this agreement," said International President Michael Goodwin. "The 'insourcing' of more than 40 jobs is a tremendous victory, so much so that a press conference was held to announce the agreement and was attended by the CEO of BlueCross BlueShield of Western New York David W. Anderson, Mayor Byron Brown, City Comptroller Mark J.F. Schroeder and labor leaders from throughout Buffalo. The local leader of the AFT was so impressed with the achievement that he announced he was transferring AFT members in Buffalo to BlueCross BlueShield of Western New York for coverage."

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**Raise the Federal Minimum Wage to \$10.10 an Hour**