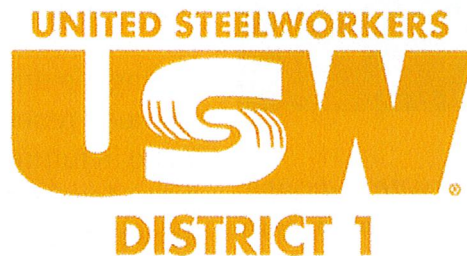


## Union Hall

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**From:** Donnie Blatt, USW District 1 Director <newmedia@uswhosting.org>  
**Sent:** Monday, April 1, 2024 1:01 PM  
**To:** golden@neo.rr.com  
**Subject:** District 1 Newsletter Spring 2024



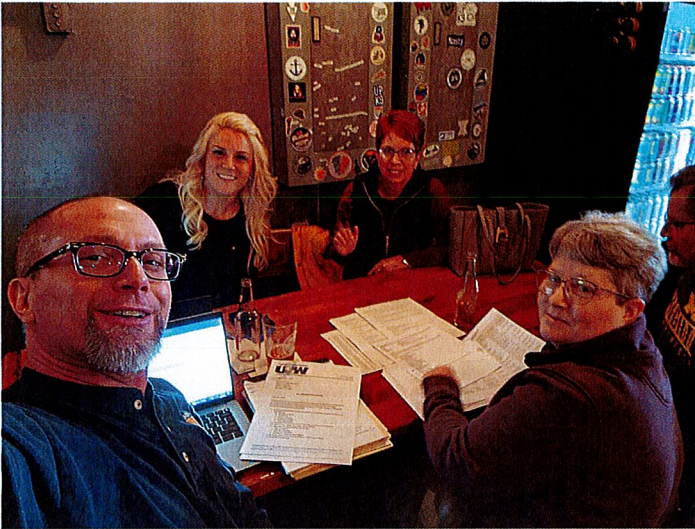
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## District 1 Welcomes New Members

USW District 1 welcomed 235 new members from Upper Peninsula Health Systems (UPHS), Marquette Hospital thanks to a successful organizing drive that relied heavily on teamwork and a strong in-house organizing committee. The new members are employed in the hospital's service unit as care aides, maintenance workers, clerks and central supply staff.

The organizing drive began with a call to District 1 advising staff that workers at the hospital wanted to form a union. District 1 Director Donnie Blatt assigned Northern Michigan International Staff Representative Bryan Fisher to meet with workers to determine if there was enough interest to start an organizing drive. After that meeting, Fisher and a group of hospital employees, led by Peggy Lineman, continued to gather on a weekly basis. During those sessions, they worked on gathering information about the unit and building an effective in-house organizing committee.

An in-house organizing committee is made up of workers from the facility that are attempting to form a union. Their role is extremely important because they become the face of the union for the duration of the organizing drive. As the boss's anti-union campaign progresses, they will also be needed to help strengthen supporters who may be wavering. Management's rhetoric is often very intense and causes workers to second guess their decision to join. According to Fisher, Peggy Lindeman was a stellar leader and helped keep the committee together during some very tough periods.



*Pictured: USW Staff Rep. Bryan Fisher with in-house committee Tamara Lefcowitz, Peggy Lindeman, Terri Marceau & Jeff Marceau.*

Once the committee was formed, the USW assigned Eric Licht from the USW International's Organizing department to lead the campaign. Steelworker authorization cards were released, and the committee collected signatures from more than 60% of the hospital workers. As a result of that effort, workers filed a petition with the NLRB seeking a union representation election. The election was held and a majority opted to join the United Steelworkers.

During the drive, several issues fueled the workers' resolve. Among the top were having a voice in future wage increases and fair leave time. As with many health care institutions, attracting and retaining workers is a major concern. UPHS workers felt that a strong labor agreement could help them reach those

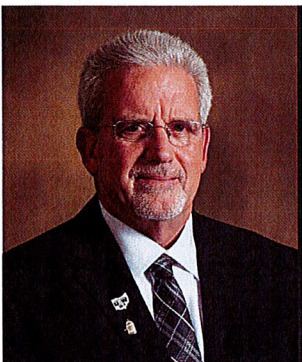
goals.

Once the election results are certified, the new unit will select members to form a negotiating committee to represent them in bargaining. When a new contract is reached, they will be assigned a Local Union and will begin functioning on their own with help from the USW International Staff Rep assigned to service them.

To our new USW siblings at UPHS Marquette Hospital, welcome to the USW District 1 family. Good luck as you continue your journey to become an active and successful Local Union!

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## DIRECTOR'S REPORT



Last year at this time, I was happy to announce that the Michigan legislature had taken bold action to repeal the state's Right to Work laws, becoming the first state to repeal Right to Work in over 60 years. It was a historic occasion. This year, I am as equally pleased to tell you that the repeal is in full effect and workers in USW-represented workplaces can no longer opt out of the union for no reason and get the benefits of our negotiated collective bargaining agreements.

As we move forward under the new law, it is important to bring the members who opted out back into the union. Prior to the repeal of RTW, our local unions represented and



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bargained for workers that have never paid dues. The employers used those workers to impact our ability to negotiate the best possible contracts and resolve day-to-day grievances. Now we can bring everyone together and use our solidarity to leverage our power to improve the lives of all of our members.

Having more members paying their fair share will strengthen us financially and give us the needed resources to bargain good, fair collective bargaining agreements and administer them throughout the term.

Over the next few months, patience and education will be needed to bring former members back to the union. We must also keep in mind that some have never paid dues, so educating them on the benefits of the union will be critical. If you need resources, talk to your International Staff Representative. Working together, I am confident we can put together a program to help you reach 100% membership.

At this time, most of our locals are busy preparing to hold local union elections. It's an important process that allows Steelworkers the opportunity to elect the folks that will lead them into the future. It is a very serious responsibility that each member should approach thoughtfully. The individuals you select will negotiate your next labor agreement, represent you in grievance and arbitration procedures and ensure you have a safe and healthy workplace. Make sure you exercise your right to be a part of the democratic process.

Also, current officers planning elections should keep in mind it is their responsibility to hold fair elections that are easily accessible to all local union members. Our union works best when everyone can participate.

As I write this article, it is "Super Tuesday", when voters in 16 states will go to the polls to select which candidate will be their party's nominee for president of the United States. Unlike other unions, the Steelworkers have opted to remain neutral during the primary election process.

Once candidates are in place, you will start to see more activity from our Political department. As we did last year, we will ask members to take part in the Your Union Your Voice program, which will include attending town hall meetings, taking part in election surveys and running member-to-member programs at your local union. This election is critical, with the White House, Senate and House of Representatives up for grabs.

This year has been a great time for our movement. Unions have reached historic contracts with many major employers, workers at places like Starbucks and Amazon are voting to join our ranks, and the American public is backing us at record high levels. We need to keep that momentum going by electing candidates who will not only support us, but help us build our movement. To accomplish this, I hope you will all participate in our Your Union Your Voice program.

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## **Steelworkers Giving to the Community**



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USW Local 5050 and AMG Vanadium (AMGV) Co. recognize being part of the community means more than just going to work each day. It includes sharing our blessings with people who may not be as fortunate. That's why management and union activists got together to host a nonperishable food drive to benefit the Salvation Army, GRACE Pantry, and Feed MY People in the Cambridge, Ohio area. Local 5050 also contributed \$8,000 to the cause. Representing Local 5050 during the charitable drive were Lynn Jakubisin and Merritt Flood, while Kayla Helser and Colleen Heacock represented management.



*Pictured above from right to left: Colleen Heacock (AMGV), Captain Ed McMillen (Salvation Army), James Johnson (LU 5050), Lynn Jakubisin (Feed My People), Shannon Shatto (Grace Pantry), Merritt Flood (LU 5050) and Kayla Helser (AMGV)*

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## **We are Family!**

Last November, members of Local 15157 in Bay City, Mich., learned that a member was facing a challenging medical issue. Some of the treatments related to the disorder were not covered and adding up to quite an expense. To help the family bear those costs, Local 15157, an amalgamated local union with units located across Bay County, got to work taking up a collection among members. The effort netted \$1,200 to defray treatment expenses.

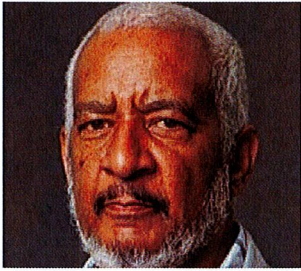
Robert Rosekrans, the Local's Rapid Response Coordinator, got the ball rolling and was assisted by Eliza Noyola, Melinda Mareno, Chad Milkowski, Jennifer Delorge, Lisa Davis and Pam Herman.

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## Steelworker Honored in Columbus



David Butcher of Stewart, Ohio, is a proud member of USW Local Union 2116, a Civil Rights activist and a historian in the Columbus area. On Jan. 11, he was presented with the Ohio Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Commission's Individual Award at the organization's annual MLK Commemorative Celebration.

Established by an executive order in 1985, the Commission's ongoing mission is to recognize Ohio residents whose service to their communities are consistent with the late Civil Rights leader's teaching.

Butcher is the executive director and curator of the Tablertown People of Color Museum in Stewart. He also serves as the museum's historian. The nonprofit center is dedicated to preserving the cultural history of Tablertown, which is called Kilvert.

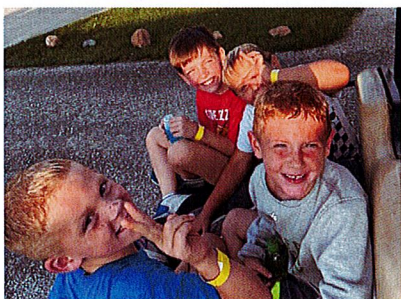
During a lifetime of work in the civil rights arena, David is best known for his commitment to raising awareness of southeast Ohio's cultural heritage and for addressing inequality in rural areas. In addition to his work, Butcher is also a direct descendant of Hannah and Michael Tabler. After emancipation, the couple crossed the Ohio River, where they bought land and started a settlement that eventually bore their name.

He is also the nephew of the famed journalist and Ohio University alumnus, Alvin C. Adams. Adams was one of the first Black graduates of Ohio University's E.W. Scripps School of Journalism. He has reported for the Chicago Defender newspaper and Jet Magazine. In those roles, he covered stories like Governor George Wallace standing in the doorway of the University of Alabama to prevent integration of the school in 1963.

In accepting the award, Butcher said, "I am honored beyond belief. The timing of this award is perfect because it confirms all of the good work our board members and I have been doing at the museum."

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## Steelworker Fun Under the Sun and Stars

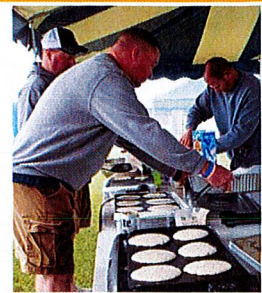


If you are interested in some good, old-fashioned outdoor union fun, this next item just might be what you are looking for. The District 1 Sportsman's Committee is busy planning the 2024 District 1 Camporee. This year's event will be held September 26-28 at the Huggy Bear Campground in Middle Point, Ohio. The cost of admission is \$20 per car load.



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According to several members who attended the event for their first time last year, Camporee was something they are eager to do again. The weekend includes free breakfasts prepared by the District 1 Sportsman's Committee, lunch, chili night and a pig roast. In addition to plenty of food, there are games and activities for kids, bingo, raffles and lots of fellowship with your Steelworker brothers and sisters. Event goes spent nights in campers, RV's and tents, which they provided for themselves.



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## Next Generation – “The Future of Our Union”

As union activists, we dedicate ourselves to the work of building our union. It is a seven days per week, 24 hours a day job that we happily accept. In addition to collective bargaining, grievance processing and organizing new members, building our union includes working to ensure our Locals and International have top-notch leadership which is needed to guide our movement into a successful future. One of the best tools we have in achieving this goal is the Steelworkers' Next Generation, or “Next Gen” program.

The program is designed to educate and train interested young Steelworkers to become effective activists, with an eye on future leadership roles. Currently, District 1 is actively looking for Next Gen participants in each Ohio and Michigan Locals. Tiffany McKee coordinates those efforts in Ohio, while Stacey Benson is charged with heading up the process in Michigan. If you would like more information about NextGen, please contact the Columbus District Office.



*Pictured: Delegates to the NextGen conference in Toledo, Ohio, share a lighter moment over lunch.*

Since the last newsletter was published, District 1's NextGen program held its first conference. It was a weeklong affair held in Toledo, Ohio. It featured workshops on union basics, labor law, labor history, steward training, and the roles of various committees within our local unions. Coordinators from each of the District's active programs (Civil Rights, SOAR, Rapid Response and Women of Steel) gave presentations about the programs they head up and explained the work they do.

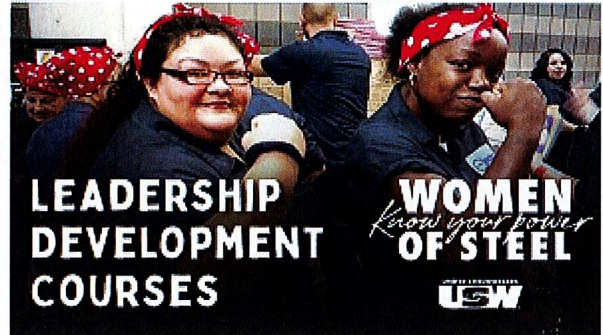
Lisa Jordan and Eric Angel from the Steelworkers' Education Department were on hand to facilitate the conference and assist in giving educational presentation to delegates. The conference was well attended and delegates expressed that the workshops were very informative.



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## Women of Steel Leadership Development Training Continues

District 1's Women of Steel (WOS) program is excited to announce the resumption of its four-level Women of Steel Leadership Courses. This year, WOS courses are scheduled to be held at the Holiday Inn Cleveland South located at 6001 Rockside Rd. in Independence, OH.



The dates of the courses are as follows:

Levels I and IV - March 17-24

Level III - April 21-26 and Level III - May 5-10

The Level I course is an interactive educational experience that encompasses topics of labor history, safety and health, public speaking, union structure, conflict/violence/discrimination issues, the legislative process and organizing. It also includes a tour of the USW's Headquarters in Pittsburgh and features presentations from various USW staff and guests.

The Level II course targets collective bargaining and grievance processing, while Level III focuses on building power in our local unions and important information dealing with strikes and lockouts. Finally, Level IV concentrates on communication, mentoring and organizing.

A Level V course is in the works and will be offered at a later date. It is an analysis of our political system and a look at current legislation and how it impacts workers.

Each course must be taken in the order they are numbered, and only one course level can be completed per year.

Keep watching the District 1 Newsletter for further WOS updates highlighting the good work Women of Steel are doing in our District.

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## Make Your Voice Heard! Attend District 1 Lobby Days!

As union activists, one of our responsibilities includes making sure our voices and those of our members are heard in the hall of power. Activists must continually remind elected representatives that union members outvote the general population and are a force to be reckoned with when it comes time to pass legislation that affects working families and their unions.



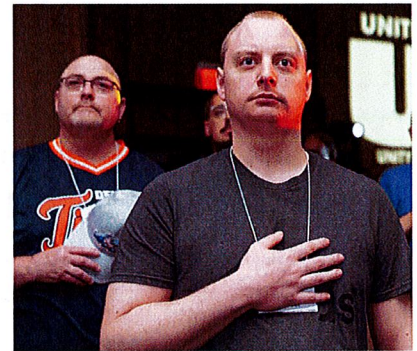
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Over the next several weeks, District 1 Steelworkers will have an opportunity to go to our state and federal capitols to introduce themselves to legislators and to weigh in on important legislative issues. Some issues are pending legislation and others need to be considered.

For Steelworkers in Michigan, District 1 Lobby Day will be held at the Hilton Double Tree Hotel in Lansing on April 23-24. Ohio will hold its Lobby Day activities on April 30 and May 1 at the Sheraton Columbus Hotel. Delegates will receive training on the legislative process and how to hold effective conversations with elected officials. The two-day event will wrap up with a day of lobbying elected representatives on key labor issues.

For more information on lobby days in your state and for details on registering, see District 1's mailing to your local union. You can also get information by contacting Rapid Response Coordinator Sue Browne or talking to your local's International Staff Representative.

Finally, the USW International Union will hold its annual Legislative and Policy Conference May 19-22 at the Hyatt Regency Hotel located at 400 New Jersey Ave. NW, Washington D.C. The conference is loaded with valuable information and is highly educational. Participations get to share input on important issues facing our union and hear about the latest legislation and policy issues in the nation's capitol. The week wraps up with a lobby day visit to Capitol Hill. During visits to Congressional offices, Steelworkers will talk to their Representative and Senator about important pending and future legislation.



All USW District 1 local unions are encouraged to attend these events. They are both educational and an opportunity to let our elected representatives know about our issues and how they impact working families.

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## Education News

USW District 1 Education Coordinator Cathy Ferguson has explained that the Education Committee is busy presenting and planning activities to help provide Steelworker activists the training they need to become successful union leaders. For example, throughout March, the District held labor-management review sessions in various sub-district areas. The sessions offered financial officers an opportunity to review their books and receive assistance filling out government reporting documents.

With local union elections being held this spring, we are likely to experience some turnover of officers. To help them get acquainted with their new roles and to learn what the job entails, the District will be offering "New Officer Training" in August. The event location, date and times will be announced. Keep an eye on your local union mail for more information.



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Finally, one of the biggest educational events of the year will be held October 21-25 at the Marriott at the Renaissance Center in Detroit, Mich. The District 1 Educational Conference is a must-attend event that offers local unions training in a host of local union issues. Workshops provide training in such matters as collective bargaining, grievance and arbitration handling, and other local union functions.

Please mark the dates on your calendar and make plans to attend. Check your Local's mail and the June District 1 Newsletter for more details and information on workshops being offered.

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## USW DISTRICT 1

### Calendar of Events

#### 2024 Calendar of Events

##### April

- April 21-26: District 1 WOS Leadership Course – Year 2  
Holiday Inn Cleveland South  
6001 Rockside Road – Independence, OH 44131
- April 23-24: District 1 Lobby Day Training – Michigan  
DoubleTree by Hilton Lansing  
111 North Grand Avenue – Lansing, MI 48933
- April 30-May 1: District 1 Lobby Day Training – Ohio  
Sheraton Columbus Hotel at Capitol Square  
75 East State Street – Columbus, OH

##### May

- May 5-10: District 1 WOS Leadership Course – Year 3  
Holiday Inn Cleveland South  
6001 Rockside Road – Independence, OH 44131
- May 9: Ohio AFL-CIO Legislative Conference  
Renaissance Downtown Columbus  
50 North 3rd Street – Columbus, OH
- May 19-22: [USW International Rapid Response Conference](#)  
Hyatt Regency  
400 New Jersey Avenue NW – Washington, DC

##### June

- June 9-12: [USW Civil and Human Rights Conference](#)  
Marriott at the Renaissance Center  
400 Renaissance Drive – Detroit, MI

##### July



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- July TBD: USW District 1 New Officers Training  
Location TBD  
TBD – OH & MI

## August

- Aug. 3-8: Paper Conference  
Hyatt Regency Austin  
208 Barton Springs Road – Austin, TX
- Aug. 18-23: [USW International Health, Safety & Environment Conference](#)  
Center/Westin/Omni/Wyndham  
TBD – Pittsburgh, PA

## September

- Sept. 4-6: District 1 Collective Bargaining Conference  
Holiday Inn Cleveland South  
6001 Rockside Road – Independence, OH 44131
- Sept. 15-20: USW International Oil Conference  
Sheraton Station Square  
300 West Station Square Drive – Pittsburgh, PA
- Sept. 26-28: District 1 Camporee  
Huggy Bear Campground  
300 West Station Square Drive – Pittsburgh, PA

## October

- Oct. 21-25: District 1 Education Conference  
Marriott at the Renaissance Center  
400 Renaissance Drive – Detroit, MI
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