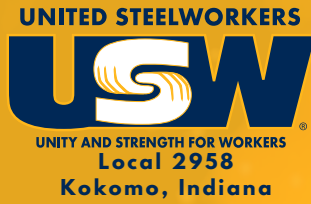


March - April 2025

Volume 11



# Forged Together

USW 2958 Newsletter



Communications Team:  
Zach Keller, Andrew Betzner, Paul Reehling, & Kurtis Cox  
Contributors: Paul Wines & Joe Fields

## **USW 2958 AWARD WINNERS: AND THE WINNERS ARE ...**

*By Staff*

After voting opened after Christmas, we're thrilled to announce the winners of our 2958-ies Awards! These fun and lighthearted awards were all about celebrating the unique personalities and talents that make our union brothers and sisters special. Each winner was selected by fellow co-workers, and voting was held online to ensure everyone got a say. Thanks to everyone who participated!

From the **Master of Mischief Award** (for the ultimate prankster and comic relief) to the **Breakroom Banter Champion**, each award highlights the quirks and talents that make our workplace, let's say, one of a kind.

These winners remind us that teamwork isn't just about getting the job done—it's also about creating an environment where we can all enjoy the journey. Please help us for next year by coming up with some new categories and let us know. Thanks again for voting and helping us recognize the people who make every shift a little brighter!



BILL GOSNEY



ROB PULLEN



JASON RUSSEAU



MIKE PITTMAN



JOSH LAPLACA



LAKISHA NIX



SCOTT MCKINNEY



TROY KING



Honorable MENTIONS

JEAN NIEBAUER  
Silent But Productive



DAVID DEIS  
Master of Mischief



# Honorable MENTIONS

Continued

JOHN BECK  
McGuyver Award



DONOVAN RENBARGER  
Shopfloor Storyteller



KELVIN VAZQUEZ  
When Do You Even Sleep?



JOHNNY ROBERTS  
Breakroom Banter



JOSH HOUSER  
When Do You Even Sleep?



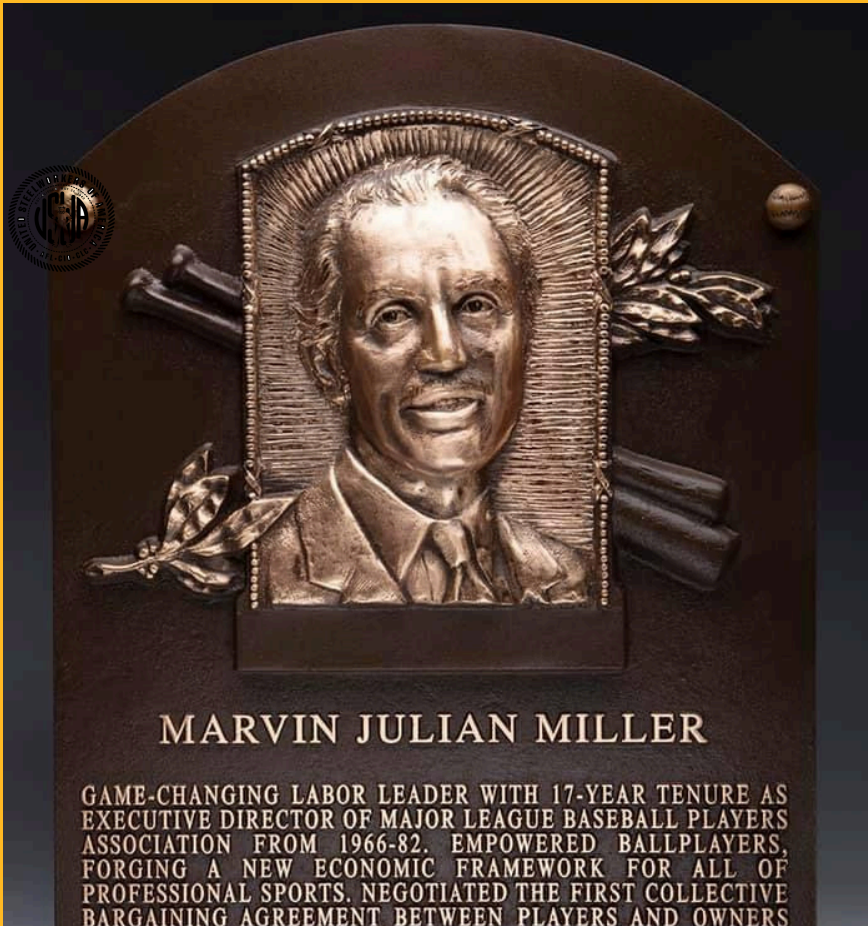
DAVE DIEDRICK  
McGuyver Award



JAMES BARNETT  
When Do You Even Sleep?



CARLOS RODRIGUEZ  
Silent But Productive



*Congrats to everyone who won!*

**THANKS TO ALL WHO PARTICIPATED!!**

## LABOR HISTORY PROFILE: Game Changer: Marvin Miller's Impact on Labor History

By Zach Keller

With baseball season soon upon us, we should highlight a titan of the history of organized labor in professional sports. Marvin Miller revolutionized professional sports labor rights, particularly in Major League Baseball (MLB). Born in 1917 in the Bronx to Jewish immigrants, Miller grew up in a working-class neighborhood. He studied economics and labor relations at City College of New York and earned a master's from the University of North Carolina. His early career as an economist for labor organizations, including the UAW and our own USW, gave him deep insight into collective bargaining and the struggles of laborers seeking fair treatment and improved conditions.

## GAME CHANGER: MARVIN MILLER'S IMPACT ON LABOR HISTORY

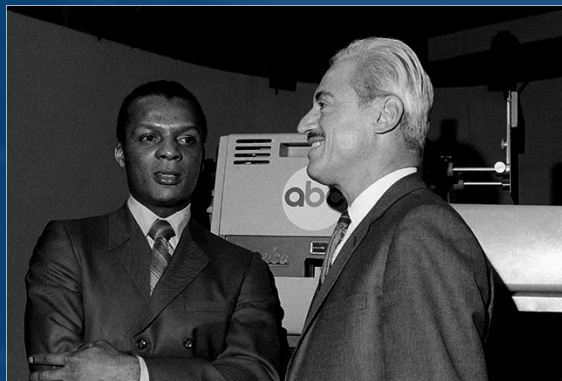
*Continued*

In 1966, the struggling MLB Players Association (MLBPA) recruited Miller as executive director. At the time, the union had little power, and team owners controlled salaries and contracts, often leaving players vulnerable to unfair treatment. Miller's expertise and working-class empathy fueled his mission to secure better conditions for players, who faced exploitative practices and limited bargaining power. Strengthening the union became his priority; he organized players, educated them on their rights, and expanded the MLBPA's influence, transforming it into a formidable force in sports labor relations.

A pivotal moment in this movement came in 1969 when star outfielder Curt Flood challenged MLB's reserve clause by refusing a trade, arguing that players should have the right to choose where they played. With Miller's support, Flood took his case to the Supreme Court, laying the groundwork for future free agency. Though he lost the case, his bold stance was instrumental in sparking change, and Miller later built upon Flood's efforts to successfully abolish the reserve clause in 1975.

Miller's leadership led to groundbreaking victories. In 1970, he negotiated MLB's first collective bargaining agreement, introducing salary arbitration and boosting players' leverage. This process allowed impartial arbitrators to decide salaries, ensuring fairer compensation. His greatest triumph came in 1975 when he dismantled the reserve clause, which had previously bound players indefinitely to one team. By securing free agency, Miller empowered players to negotiate contracts freely, leading to significantly higher salaries and improved working conditions across the league.

Beyond baseball, Miller's influence extended to labor movements in other professional sports, setting a precedent for collective bargaining and athlete empowerment. His work not only improved conditions for MLB players but also demonstrated the power of organized labor in sports. His contributions were immortalized with his 2021 induction into the Baseball Hall of Fame, solidifying his legacy as a game-changing labor leader whose impact continues to shape professional sports today.



Marvin Miller with another labor pioneer, Curt Flood (left)



## The Triangle Shirtwaist Factory Fire

*By Paul Reehling*

On March 25, 1911 the triangle shirtwaist fire happened in New York City killing 146 people. The Triangle Factory was a sweatshop and the deaths were preventable. Lots of things led up to the fire and new laws and regulations came into place because of it.

The owners of the factory were Max Blanck and Isaac Harris. They were known for having fires in their factories. They had three other factories that burnt and it was a known fact that they purposely set their factories aflame to collect insurance money. They would do this before workers were at the factory and this time they did not start the fire. But, because they wanted to be prepared to burn it all down, they had refused to put in a sprinkler system and neglected other safety precautions.

The owners were also very anti-worker. They had 600 women working for them. Most were immigrants that spoke little or no English and most were also still in their teens. They only paid \$15 a week and when the International Ladies Garment Union went on strike in 1909 they were one of the few factories that wouldn't work with them. They paid off politicians and police officers in order to keep the status quo.

The fire started in a rag bin. The manager tried to put the fire out but the fire hose was rotten and the valve was rusted shut. Safety was definitely not a priority. There was only 1 working elevator and it would only take 12 down at a time. Many of the workers tried to use the stairs but there were only 2 doors at the bottom of the stairs. One only

# THE TRIANGLE SHIRTWAIST FACTORY FIRE

Continued

opened inward and the other was locked. With no way out many of these women were burned alive. Workers dropped down the elevator shaft when the fire shut it down and some started jumping out the windows rather than being burnt up. Unfortunately, they were on the 8th floor and no way could anyone survive that fall.

Firefighters showed up and tried to use nets to catch the jumpers but there were too many and the nets broke. It only took 18 minutes, but 146 lives were lost. Some workers were above the fire and were able to make it to the roof to escape but too many were lost that should not have been. Tragically, the owners only paid the families of the victims \$75 dollars. And even though they were negligent they were not indicted for manslaughter.

Tragic events often serve as a wake-up call, forcing society to acknowledge pressing issues and implement change. The Triangle Shirtwaist factory fire was one such disaster that led to significant reforms. In response to the tragedy, new laws were enacted to improve workplace safety, making it a legal obligation for factories to prioritize worker protection. This pivotal moment in history helped establish lasting standards for labor rights and workplace conditions.

Safety is still an issue today and it is all our responsibility to work and stay safe. We should hold our bosses accountable and make sure that we never work in an unsafe situation. We have a safety committee and we should never be afraid to call them if we feel the working conditions are not safe. Let's all go home after our work day the same way we showed up to work.

## Summer School Class Information

Visit <https://uswlocals.org/local-2958/files/25-d7-summer-school> or scan the QR code on this page to download the forms or applications can be picked up at the hall (420 N. Main St.) Remember to make sure you have your meetings in if you'd like to attend! **Deadline for submission to the Hall is March 7th!**



### 2025 USW District 7 Scholarship Classes

\*\*\*ALL CLASSES ARE HELD MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY WITH A MANDATORY ORIENTATION ON SUNDAY\*\*\*

University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

JULY 1-6, 2025

- **Raymond G. Pasnick Alumni Class:** *This is for those members who have completed Summer School 1-4.* This class will deal with various subjects within our union and the labor movement.
- **Summer School Year 1:** The first year of the 4-year Summer School Program. College professors and USW Staff will teach classes. You will be in class all day.
- **Women of Steel Year 3:** *Prerequisites: Introduction to WOS, WOS Year 1, and WOS Year 2.* This class will focus on exchanging information, ideas, thoughts, feelings, and emotions through speech, signals, writing, and behavior. Participants in this class will also be coached on how to effectively communicate face-to-face, on the phone, and with social media.  
\*MUST BRING A LAPTOP TO CLASS\*

JULY 6-11, 2025

- **Advanced Arbitration Preparation:** This class will teach you how to prepare and present a case for arbitration. You will participate in a mock arbitration. Previous experience with grievance handling in your local is required to take this class.
- **Economics and Its Effect on the Labor Movement:** We will explore how the American middle-class job evolved, why workers (union and non-union) and their families today are finding it hard to hold onto the American dream. We will offer an overview of the American economic system, how it has historically evolved along with a contemporary analysis of why income inequality has grown so severe. We will discuss the labor movement's proposals for once again making the American dream possible for working people.
- **Labor History:** This class explores labor history and the history of the workers' rights movements in America.
- **New Steelworker Activists:** *This class is for new members only with fewer than six (6) years with the Union and have not started the Summer School 4-Year Program.* You will be introduced to District 7's Summer School Program, the USW, its history, principles and values, structure, dues, strike and defense funds, etc.  
\*MUST BRING A LAPTOP TO CLASS\*
- **Rapid Response:** Rapid Response focuses on current issues and legislation that involve our membership. This class will help provide the tools to improve education, communication, and action structure. Whether you are new to Rapid Response or a veteran of Rapid Response, this class is for you. Members will take part in role-playing exercises. This is a hands-on class and participation of the members is an absolute must.
- **Social Media Matters:** Participants will learn how the use of social media tools can enhance member involvement as well as learn social media practices, including video production. Students will then collaborate on a project to produce, shoot, and edit short videos.  
\*MUST BRING A LAPTOP TO CLASS\*
- **Trustee Training:** *This class is only for current and newly-elected Trustees of the local.* The class is taught by International auditors and is designed to make you a better trustee of the local.  
\*MUST BRING A LAPTOP TO CLASS\*

- Continued on back -

### 2025 USW District 7 Scholarship Classes

\*\*\*ALL CLASSES ARE HELD MONDAY THROUGH FRIDAY WITH A MANDATORY ORIENTATION ON SUNDAY\*\*\*

University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign

JULY 6-11, 2025, continued

- **Women of Steel (Introduction to):** Designed specifically for our women in the union. It will cover issues unique to women in the industrial setting, dealing with harassment, family/work issues, union activism, and child care.
- **Women of Steel Year 2:** *Prerequisites: Introduction to WOS & WOS Year 1.* This class will focus on grievance handling, becoming an effective grievor, the challenges female grievors face, and mentoring sisters in the labor movement. College professors, USW Staff, and Local Union Members will teach this class.

JULY 20-25, 2025

- **Summer School Years 2, 3, & 4:** *Classes must be taken in consecutive order.* These classes are the continuation of the Summer School 4-Year Program at the University of Illinois. College professors and USW Staff will teach these classes.
- **Women of Steel Year 4:** *Prerequisites: Introduction to WOS, WOS1, WOS2 & WOS3.* This class will focus on creating a plan of action on how to use your developed leadership skills to create an organizational structure that will educate all sisters on the WOS Committee and women's issues while embracing resistance. This will give you an idea of "Where do I go from here?"

AUGUST 3-8, 2025

- **Collective Bargaining:** This class will cover costing out contracts, preparing for bargaining, the laws of collective bargaining, understanding contract language, and will include mock negotiating sessions.
- **Financial Officer Training:** This class is for current and newly elected financial officers of the local only. It is taught by our International Auditors and is designed to help you properly handle and record the local's finances (and keep you out of jail).  
\*MUST BRING A LAPTOP TO CLASS\*
- **Latino Leadership:** Esta clase se impartirá íntegramente en Español. Esta clase se centrará en la tutoría de los latinos en el movimiento obrero. (This class will be taught entirely in Spanish. This class will focus on mentoring Latinos in the labor movement.)
- **Women of Steel Year 1:** *Prerequisite: Introduction to WOS.* This class will cover Women's History in the Labor Movement. College professors, USW Staff, and Local Union Members will teach this class.
- **SOAR:** You will receive a lot of excellent information that you will be able to take back to your SOAR Chapters.

Linden Hall – Dawson, Pennsylvania

AUGUST 24-29, 2025

- **Director's District 7 Leadership:** Agenda TBD
- **Health & Safety:** Agenda TBD



**New Shirts Are In!! Available at the Union Hall for \$18**



# Our New Website: Connecting Members, Strengthening Solidarity

By Zach Keller

We’re excited to introduce our newly updated website (and finally enter the 21st century) part of the official United Steelworkers International website system. This new platform is designed to keep you connected with Local 2958 and provide quick access to important updates, resources, and union news.

By moving to this new system, we’re joining a broader network of USW locals, making it easier than ever to stay informed and engaged with the issues that matter most to our members. We’ll be updating the site regularly with information about upcoming meetings, contract negotiations, events, and other essential content to keep you in the loop.

Here’s what you’ll find on the site:

- News and Announcements: Stay current with the latest happenings in Local 2958 and across the labor movement.
- Meeting Schedules and Events: Never miss an important date — we’ll keep you posted on general meetings, special events, and training opportunities.
- Resources for Members: Access forms, agreements, and helpful tools to navigate your rights and benefits.
- Contact Information: Get in touch with union leadership and find ways to get involved.



This website is for you — our members — and we welcome your ideas and feedback! Let’s use it to strengthen communication, build solidarity, and make our union even stronger.

Check back often for updates, and stay connected with United Steelworkers Local 2958 as we continue fighting for fair treatment, safe working conditions, and a better future for all.

visit us at <https://uswlocals.org/local-2958>

# Taco Tuesday, Solidarity Everyday

By Andrew Betzner

There's no wonder that crunchy, salty and most of all, portable snack is a fan favorite. Make them traditional with cilantro, onion, and lime, or get funky with fish. No matter how you like them, tacos turn a boring event into a fiesta. Everyday many of you chose the workers at Taco Bell to bring the magic to the table. In the spring of 1999, some of those workers in Tipton, Indiana were looking at us in Local 2958 for help when they were "Looking outside the bun."

That year Local 2958 represented three shops in Tipton: Wabash Alloys, Acra-Line Products, and Small Parts. Taco Bell employees facing challenges saw the strength of Local 2958 and sought our help. Workers claimed their employer, KirTac Inc. of Noblesville, was violating child labor laws by forcing teenage workers to clock out, but continue working, sometimes up to 8 or 9 hours. It was said those affected were afraid to speak out in fear of termination. When asked what fast food employees had in common with steelworkers, local president at the time, Greg Goodnight, was quoted in the Kokomo Tribune as saying, "It's not like we need the KFC-Taco Bell employees, but we've got a responsibility if people are being exploited."

For those who weren't around or were too young to remember, in 1999, a fast food restaurant trying to organize would have been a BIG deal. This was 15 years before "Fight for 15" and over 20 years before the first organized Starbucks. According to current 2958 President Dave Tocco, this story made national news, including CNN and the New York Times. It was said that if they voted "yes", it would become the first organized Taco Bell in the nation.

A lot of the same false narratives thrown around to discourage those workers are still being used today. An article ran right beside those fighting for dignity implied that food industry workers were somehow "lesser" than those at Chrysler or GM, even going as far to say that unionization could cause the entire restaurant industry to

collapse. It's worth noting it was calculated that the average area fast food worker in Howard County was making below the poverty line at \$8,215 annually. Critics seemed to offer up no remedy for the child labor violations, or acknowledged union representation would protect the workers who felt they couldn't safely report it, focusing instead on the future of 79-cent tacos.

What started as a national news story ended with little fanfare. A three paragraph sidebar in the Tribune three days before the vote stated a fax had been sent to the NLRB by the union to withdraw its request to vote. Later we would learn according to Local President Goodnight the reasoning wasn't due to a lack of votes, but that some of the employees felt the owners were going to start treating them better. It's uncertain how things turned out in the long run for the Taco Bell workers in Tipton. If it followed the trajectory of fast food workers in this country as a whole I would say things didn't get a whole lot better.

To this day portions of our taxes go to supplement the workers of large corporations like McDonald's and Taco Bell who's employees rely on government safety nets. A large percentage of this country still feels that because a job is deemed "unskilled" or "not a career" that those workers are not entitled to fair compensation. Or that "those" workers don't need protection from unfair treatment or exploitation, like the alleged child labor law violation in this story. When factory workers first tried organizing at McCormick Harvesting in the late 1800s, owner Cyrus McCormick called factory workers like us "unskilled labor", too. For those on that side of the fence I ask you this: If you aren't willing to accept those things for yourself, or your children, why should they?

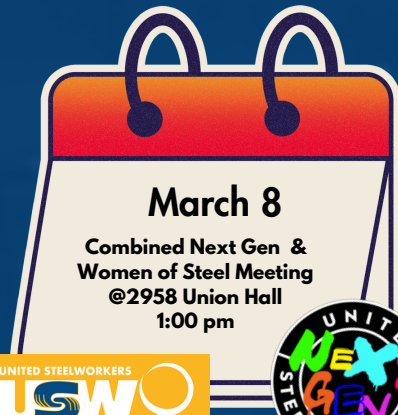


**THE ELECTED DELEGATES**

to the Constitutional Convention



# LOCAL 2958 CALENDAR OF UPCOMING EVENTS



**March 8**  
 Combined Next Gen &  
 Women of Steel Meeting  
 @2958 Union Hall  
 1:00 pm



**March 20**  
 Regular Membership Meetings  
 7:30 am  
 1:00 pm  
 3:30 pm



**April 12**  
 Combined Next Gen &  
 Women of Steel Meeting  
 @2958 Union Hall  
 1:00 pm



**April 17**  
 Regular Membership Meetings  
 7:30am  
 1:00pm  
 3:30pm

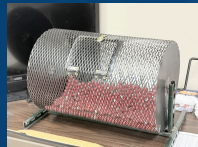


**April 18**  
 Union Hall Closed  
 for Good Friday

*Good  
 Friday*

## Raffle Results

January -  
**Brandon Fleming**  
 (not present, prize rolled over)



February -  
**Josh Manriquez**  
 (not present, prize rolled over)



Do you have a graduate this spring? If so, let us help celebrate them. Visit <https://uswlocals.org/local-2958/graduation-submission> to have them featured in an upcoming edition. Scan the QR code with your phone to submit!

## — HAPPY — Retirement



Bryan Ashburn Sr.  
 WG11 / Clock # 25584

30 YEARS - EFFECTIVE APRIL 15<sup>TH</sup>



Randy Tennent  
 WG2 / Clock # 25602

29 YEARS - EFFECTIVE MARCH 15<sup>TH</sup>



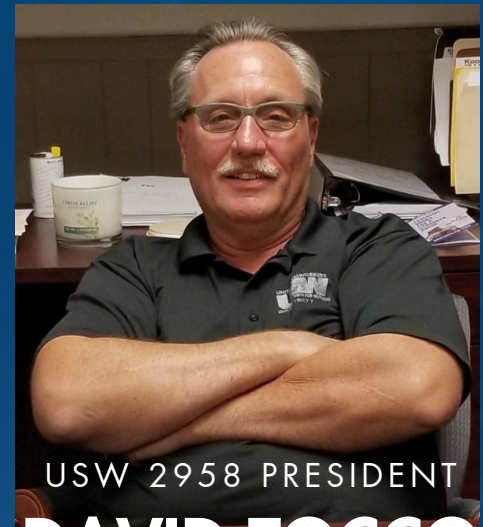
Demetris Johnson  
 WG1 / Clock # 25843

26 YEARS - EFFECTIVE APRIL 15<sup>TH</sup>



## YOUR LOCAL OFFICERS & OFFICIALS

VICE-PRESIDENT - STEVE LEMING  
FINANCIAL SECRETARY - ROBERT CRULL  
TREASURER - DAVE HUNT  
RECORDING SECRETARY - ZACH KELLER  
GUIDE - TROY JOHNS  
OUTSIDE GUARD - JOHN BECK  
INSIDE GUARD - WILLIE JACKSON  
TRUSTEE - BUD LABIG  
TRUSTEE - KATT MCNEIL  
TRUSTEE - JIM ELLIOTT



USW 2958 PRESIDENT  
**DAVID TOCCO**

## YOUR LOCAL OFFICERS & OFFICIALS

Continued

EAP REPRESENTATIVE - KELLY SILVERS, FIRST SHIFT  
EAP REPRESENTATIVE - DANNY SHELTON, THIRD SHIFT  
EAP REPRESENTATIVE - DAVID TOCCO, FIRST SHIFT  
EAP REPRESENTATIVE - JIM ELLIOTT, FIRST SHIFT  
EAP REPRESENTATIVE - ERIC HAINLEN, THIRD SHIFT  
EAP REPRESENTATIVE - STEVE LEMING, FIRST SHIFT  
EAP REPRESENTATIVE - ERIC GIBSON, SECOND SHIFT  
EAP REPRESENTATIVE - LISA BRYANT, SECOND SHIFT  
EAP REPRESENTATIVE - BRAYDEN MOTE, THIRD SHIFT

HUMAN RIGHTS CHAIR - WILLIE JACKSON, FIRST SHIFT  
HUMAN RIGHTS ASSISTANT - HENRY YOUNG, SECOND SHIFT  
RAPID RESPONSE COORDINATOR, JIM ELLIOTT, FIRST SHIFT  
**NEW SAFETY & HEALTH CHAIR - KELVIN VAZQUEZ**, FIRST SHIFT  
SAFETY & HEALTH (ALT) - **JIM RADER**, FIRST SHIFT  
2ND SHIFT SAFETY & HEALTH - DENNIS TUCKER, SECOND SHIFT  
SAFETY & HEALTH (ALT) - KEVIN SMITH, SECOND SHIFT  
3RD SHIFT SAFETY & HEALTH - **DANNY SHELTON**, THIRD SHIFT  
CONTRACTING OUT CHAIR - SCOTT PUSLIPHER, FIRST SHIFT  
CONTRACTING OUT ASST. - KEVIN SMITH, SECOND SHIFT  
SKILLED TRADES CHAIR - JOHN BECK, FIRST SHIFT  
SKILLED TRADES COMMITTEE - DENVER REEVES, FIRST SHIFT

AGC- Brandon Thomas WG 1 - Department 170; 1st shift  
ALT - Mason Ingram WG 1 - Department 170; 2nd shift  
ASSISTANT- Jeremy Ingold WG 1 - Department 170; 3rd shift  
ASSISTANT -Johnnie Roberts WG 1 - Department 170; 1st shift

AGC- Eric Gibson WG 2 - Department 190; 2nd shift  
ASSISTANT - Alvah Copeland WG 2 - Department 190; 1st shift  
ASSISTANT - Brandon Phelps - WG 2 Department 190; 3rd shift

AGC- Kasey Mitchell WG 3 - Department 145; 1st shift

AGC- Michael Wright WG 4 - Department 143; 1st shift  
ASSISTANT- Craig Musgrave WG 4 - Department 143

AGC- Scott Pulsipher WG 5A - Department 154; 1st shift  
ALT - Zach Keller WG 5A - Department 154; 1st shift

AGC - Austin Thorpe WG 5B - Department 168; 3rd shift  
ASSISTANT- Trey Shane WG 5B - Department 168; 1st shift  
ASSISTANT- Brandi Harmon WG 5B; Department 168; 2nd shift

AGC- Matt Mince WG 6 - Department 172; 1st shift  
ALT- Marion 'Bud' Labig WG 6 - Department 172; 1st shift  
ASSISTANT- Mike Barker WG 6 - Department 172; 1st shift

AGC- Bryan Meagher WG 8 - Department 427; first shift  
ASSISTANT- Craig Bambrough WG 8 - Department 427; 3rd shift  
ASSISTANT- Jim Elliott WG 8 - Department 427; 1st shift

AGC- Henry Young WG 9, 10 - Department 447; 3rd shift  
ASSISTANT- Rob Ooley WG 9, 10 - Department 447; 3rd shift

AGC- Alexa Hartley WG 11 - Department 297; 1st shift  
ASST- Adam Henderson WG 11 - Department 297; 1st shift

AGC- Kacey Gibson WG 13 - Department 317; 1st shift

*Area Grievance Commiteepersons*

# February Next Gen Update

By Andrew Betzner



On February 8th, Tom Fischer Hall hosted the second meeting of the newly resurrected Next Gen program. Highly motivated attendees debated the pros and cons of the previously mentioned summer solidarity event ideas. Those present agreed the best value for our membership would be a family-friendly cookout utilizing one of our city's beautiful parks. Specific location and other details to be finalized later. Possible ideas included a bounce house, inflatable obstacle course, and fire truck spray down.

Other topics of discussion included ways to increase interplant solidarity such as weekly carry-ins, shirt days, and not being afraid to have tough conversations with your co-workers. Information was put out regarding educational opportunities the union offers such as summer school, International's online "Teaching Tuesdays", and the international Next Gen convention. Starting next month, each meeting will have a short teaching session on topics such as union structure, filing grievances, or labor law.

For those wanting to get involved in the summer event planning, or to see what else this committee has to offer, it's not too late to get in on the action. The Next Gen Committee is open to all ages and experience levels. Meetings are held the 2nd Saturday of every month, now combined with the Women of Steel meeting, at your union hall.

To our USW friends and family, it is with a heavy heart that we announce that we have had a tragic passing. Michael Scott Pope, son of USW Director of ERT Duronda Pope, has suddenly passed at the age of 36. Duronda Pope has been the backbone for everything good in our Union. Her leadership and dedication has made a huge impact on so many families during some of their worst times. It's now our time to be there for her and her family during this difficult time. Michael Scott Pope II is the son of Michael and Duronda Pope. Michael was a loving father to Logan Marcellus Pope. Any donations that you can offer are appreciated and will help the family immensely as they grieve. Thank you so much.

Sincerely,  
The ERT Family



Scan to  
donate to the  
family via  
GoFundMe



# Walk A Mile Fundraiser

By Andrew Betzner

Once again, 2958's Women of Steel (WOS) has exemplified what it means to be a good steward of our community. On February 22nd they hosted a team for this year's "Walk-a-Mile" for the Kokomo Rescue Mission. On that sunny 13° morning, the WOS team took to the streets to experience what it is like to be homeless in our city. Starting at the corner of Mulberry and Washington, our brothers and sisters made their way through downtown, taking a turn on to the Industrial Heritage Trail toward the Open Arms Shelter for women and children. There they received a tour of one of the facilities their donations helped fund. Afterwards it was back into the cold to make the half mile journey to Grace UMC where they were met with a hot breakfast.

With internet donations still coming in, they do not have an exact donation total at the time of printing, but estimates put it between \$1500-\$2000 for our locals team, and over a dozen in person walkers. Special thanks to Erin Kelly, Caitlyn Martinez, and all other members of WOS for their efforts in ensuring this fundraiser was a success.



# Local 2958 Member Highlight

Eric Gibson ~ Member Since 2022

**Tell us a little about yourself? What are your passions, and interests outside of the job?**

"When I'm not at work, I spend my time building my house, building custom motorcycles, and spending quality time with my family."

**Is there a particular accomplishment or achievement that you're especially proud of?**

"There are so many accomplishments and achievements it's hard to pick one, but most recently I would say revitalizing the NexGen for our local"

**If your life were a movie, which actor would play you, and what would the title be?**

"Vin Diesel, And Justice for All"

**What is your favorite part of being a Committeeperson?**

"I am proud to have been elected committeeman. My favorite part is helping my union brothers and sisters. It's always a good feeling when you are able to help."

**What do you wish people understood more about that role?**

"We are not miracle workers. There is a difference in a complaint and a grievable issue. (Although sometimes we can even fix complaints)"

**Can you share a piece of advice or a life lesson that you've learned and you believe is valuable for others to hear? What advice would you give to new members who are just starting their journey with the union?**

"Get involved! There are many opportunities and programs for everyone. You are the union and you're the future of the union. Also learn as much as you can from your senior brothers and sisters on the floor. They are a wealth of knowledge."



## The NLRB Explained

By Andrew Betzner



The NLRB, short for the National Labor Relations Board, is an important part of what allows organized labor to exist and function. Created in 1935 by the Wagner Act, the NLRB functions as a court, detective, and election administrator, specialized to handle the nuances of labor law. To better understand the NLRB is to better understand the framework that protects and limits the landscape unions operate in.

The NLRB consists of 5 board members and a general counsel. These positions are appointed by the President and go through the Senate confirmation process. Board members serve a 5-year term, and general counsel serve a 4-year term. Below the Board and General Counsel are over 30 regional field offices. Most cases are handled at field offices, with less than 5% appealed to the national board.

The 3 primary types of cases handled by the board are Unfair Labor Practices (ULP), representation cases, and decertification cases. ULPs are cases such as an employer not following

labor law, not bargaining in good faith, or discriminating against union participation. To learn more about ULPs, check out our dedicated article "The ABC's of ULPs" in our Sept/Oct 2024 issue. Decertification cases are ones in which employees seek to remove representation. The third type is representation cases in which the board conducts and certifies elections in which workers seek to unionize.

Much like with Supreme Court vacancies, it is important that we elect politicians that will appoint and confirm pro-labor members to the board. In 2024, NLRB board members sided with labor on numerous cases, such as ending captive audience meetings and forcing Amazon to bargain with delivery driver subcontractors. In 2023, the union election win rate exceeded 70% for the first time in 15 years! On the other hand, a business-friendly board can lead to a narrow interpretation of protections and the removal of workers rights. Which board we get is completely up to members like you, voting in pro-labor candidates and taking action when Rapid Response issues a call to action.

**Notice** Haynes is advising you no longer use the blue and yellow Norton "Norzon" grinding wheels. We experienced an injury due to one of these wheels exploding in the face. This injury resulted even though he was wearing the proper face shield! Anyone who uses these probably knows somewhere around a year ago something changed in the manufacturing process that is causing them to throw large chunks of debris. I know several people have reported this issue but unfortunately it almost cost someone losing an eye for something to be done. If you work with these abrasive grinding disks and have any squirreled away somewhere please swap them out with their replacement (Norton Bluefire).



## Paralyzed and Powerless: Labor's Fight Without the NLRB



**CONTACT YOUR CONGRESSPERSONS VIA THE USW ACTION NETWORK BY SCANNING THE QR CODE OR VISITING:**  
<https://forgedtogether.link/RapidResponseActionNLRB>

**OR CONTACT YOUR CONGRESSPERSONS DIRECTLY AND LET THEM KNOW THIS IS UNACCEPTABLE**



**ACTIONCALL**

**Senator Todd Young:**  
<https://www.young.senate.gov/contact/email-todd/> or (202) 224-5623

**Senator Jim Banks:** <https://www.banks.senate.gov/> or (202) 224-4814

**Rep. Victoria Spartz:**  
<https://spartz.house.gov/services/general-contact-form> or (202) 225-2276

By Zach Keller

The recent changes of National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) members by the new presidential administration has left many leaders in the labor community deeply concerned. The firing of Gwynne Wilcox, along with that of NLRB General Counsel Jennifer Abruzzo, has effectively paralyzed the board, leaving it without the quorum needed to make decisions. Wilcox, the first Black woman to grace the NLRB since its inception in 1935, got an unexpected pink slip. They've been shown the door faster than a contestant on "The Apprentice".

This unprecedented action has been met with widespread condemnation from union leaders. Liz Shuler, president of the AFL-CIO, described it as "an outrageous and illegal attack on working people." Becky Pringle, president of the National Education Association (the largest union in America), stated that it "undermines the rights of workers across the country."

The NLRB is crucial in protecting our rights to organize and bargain collectively. With the board now unable to function, there's a real risk that employers may feel emboldened to violate labor laws, knowing that the NLRB cannot hold them accountable. Wilcox has vowed to challenge her removal legally, stating that it was "unprecedented and illegal." However, the legal process can be slow, and in the meantime, workers are left without the protections that the NLRB provides.

So, what's a concerned USW member to do? Well, we could start by sending strongly worded letters to our representatives. Or maybe we could all learn to communicate telepathically, since that might be more effective than a non-functioning NLRB. In all seriousness though, this is a stark reminder that our rights as workers are always just one unexpected move away from being in jeopardy. It's time to stand together, because if we don't, we might all end up sitting alone.

**ATTENTION PLEASE!**

We are looking for better ways to communicate happenings within our local, but also help build community amongst our members. We hope you find the content of the newsletter worth reading, and we are always looking for feedback. If anyone has general questions, articles they would like to submit, hobbies they want to highlight, comments, ideas of topics to cover, side hustles you want to promote, questions for officers, useful information, or even to volunteer, e-mail us at: [usw2958news@gmail.com](mailto:usw2958news@gmail.com)



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