

the PULSE

United Steelworkers Local 9460

the Northland's Healthcare Workers' Union



Summer 2018

www.uswlocals.org/local-9460

USW Condemns Supreme Court Janus Ruling

by United Steelworkers International
President Leo W. Gerard



The United Steelworkers union strongly condemns the split decision by the U.S. Supreme Court to side with big-money interests and harm the ability of public sector workers to collectively bargain.

The 5-4 vote in *Janus v. AFSCME* drastically curtails the rights of public sector workers under the law and could trigger a downward spiral in union membership and finances, which is exactly what *Janus*' backers hope will happen.

Make no mistake, this case was an attack on unions, working people and the causes that the labor movement fights for every day. But no court case will stop unions and their supporters from fighting back against efforts to weaken and divide us.

This assault on workers was financed by conservative, right-wing billionaires and the organizations they support, including the National Right to Work Legal Defense Foundation, to undermine labor and the quality fami-

ly-sustaining jobs that have developed over decades of collective bargaining.

At issue was the ability of unions in the public sector to collect agency or fair share fees from non-members who benefit from the higher negotiated wages, benefits and working conditions in unionized workplaces.

No worker was required to join a union under this system, and both union members and non-members could opt out of political and other costs not directly associated with bargaining.

Yet unions are required to represent those non-member free riders in bargaining and settling work-related problems with employers. If this [*cont. on page 3*]

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"The most important word in the language of the working class is SOLIDARITY!" ~Harry Bridges

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- Kathy Wauzynski, *EH Hibbing*
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- Deanna Hughes, *EH Hayward*
- Steve Maida, *EH Red Book*
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- Kathy Campbell, *St. Luke's Tech Unit*
- Stacy Spexet, *former SMUMS*
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- Lane O'Connell, *LSCHC Prof. Unit*
- Melissa Johnson, *Midwest Medical*

[Articles, photos or letters to the editor may be submitted to the Pulse newsletter by emailing them to adamritscher@gmail.com or mailing them to the Local 9460 Office.]

Update From Your Local Union President

by Stacy Spexet



It has been a very busy Spring for Local 9460. Here are a few highlights from the past few months.

In March USW Local 9460 and 9349 went to arbitration over Essentia Health's mandatory flu shot. There was 2 days of testimony to include expert witnesses and impacted employees (current and former). We are expecting a ruling at the earliest at the end of July.

In April we had our Local Union Election and now have new Officers, Unit Presidents and Stewards.

Adam has been spending time updating our newly designed webpage, you can find it at www.USW9460.org.

July 10th the Local will have new Steward Training, we will update the webpage with the names once completed.

Essentia Health Technical workers' new contract is almost done. We just finished reviewing it and it is being prepared for signatures before it is sent off to the printer. Once complete you will receive the contract from your manager.

Greenbook is still in negotiations. Things are moving slowly but we are discussing economic proposals.

I was able to volunteer with fellow Union Reps at Stamp Out Hunger and the Rhubarb Festival. It fun spending the day with fellow union members and it felt great doing something for those in need.

Do you donate your time to those in need? Share your stories with us and we'll feature them in upcoming editions of the Pulse!

Do you have questions about your pension? Contact:

Steelworker Pensions & Benefits

60 Boulevard of the Allies, Pittsburgh, PA 15222
1 (800) 848-1953 phone; (412) 562-2275 fax

Janus Ruling (cont.)

sounds like an attack to defund unions, that's because it is.

The ruling overturned precedent established in a 1977 case known as *Abood v. the Detroit Board of Education*, which basically affirmed that a union shop, then legal in much of the private sector, was legal in the public sector.

For more than 40 years, through Republican and Democratic administrations, the law has recognized that unions and employers have the freedom to negotiate agreements under which everybody contributes his or her fair share.

This attack on public sector workers, including teachers and emergency service personnel, must be a wakeup call for all union members and their supporters to stand with our brothers and sisters.

Now that the anti-union movement has gotten its way in the Janus case, the next likely step for Republicans and the conservative rich is to propose a national right-to-work (for less) law.

Unions have proven to be one of the most effective ways to move people from poverty into the middle class, especially for women and minorities. They sustain families and make communities stronger.

We must organize and demand that our elected leaders candidates enact public policies that will make it easier, not harder, for people to join unions.

Report on the “Engage & Unify USW Healthcare Workers” Conference

My name is Brenda Robinson and I am a steward at Lake Superior Community Health Center. I am from Local 9460 District 11 of the United Steel Workers.

I recently attended the Health Care Workers Conference that was held in Lexington, Kentucky on April 24-25. The conference was called “To Engage and Unify USW Health Care Workers”. Each day had an agenda. Classes were held from 8:30 AM to 5:30 PM. Classes were 2-2 ½ hours long.

Day one I chose to attend “Workplace Violence, Building a Union Identity, and New Hire Orientation”.

Day two classes were, “Union Approach to Solving Health & Safety Issues and Problems in the Workplace”, “How to talk to Elected Officials About Issues That Matter”, and “Best Practices for Facilitating a Meeting”.

Day three was a half day and the classes that I went to were, “Representing Our Members”, “Knowing Your Rights”, and “Employer Research: Get the dirt and Use it Strategically”.

The classes were all amazing, but there was a lot of information that they gave us in such a short amount of time. There was not enough time for them to finish because they only had 2 hours. The topics were very interesting and the presenters really knew what they were talking about. I feel that the classes could have had more paper handouts so that I could reread them at home/share with co-workers. I do wish that the conference had longer classes so that the speakers did not feel rushed. It would have been great if the conference was all week.

The class “Union Approach to Solving Health & Safety issues and Problems in the Workplace” really caught my attention because I got to hear other health care workers that were stressed and short staffed and that their safety was such a major issue. I guess I felt like that was only happening in my city, but it is happening all over the world. So many people from all over attended the conference. They were all so nice and welcoming. Many interesting conversations were happening and the atmosphere was so uplifting.

I am truly blessed to be in such an amazing organization. Being a member of the USW has been a huge eye opener to me. I have met so many inspiring people. Members from Local 9460 have been so open armed. The members have taught me so much about our union. I am excited about many more that are up and coming and I hope that I can be a part of it.



Plasma Centers Profit Off of the Working Poor

by Nicholas Scheffler,
WorkdayMinnesota.org

Claire has been donating plasma twice a week for 3 years. “My husband and I lost our cleaning-service business three years ago,” the fifty-six-year-old said outside of her local BioLife plasma center. “The money doesn’t cover the whole month, but we need it for extra things in the budget.” These extra things consist of her daughter’s softball fee and money towards a vacation.

Claire is far from the only person who is donating her plasma because she is stretched for cash. In fact, it seems the majority of people that we spoke with outside of the collection center donate plasma for the financial compensation.

Cody works jobs in construction and sales while also studying at Anoka Technical College. “I’ll do anything to make money as long as it’s legal,” Cody said outside of BioLife in Maple Grove.

Plasma donations supply a multibillion dollar industry that is designed to take advantage of stagnant wages and income disparity many of the poorest workers in the country endure.

While unemployment remains at historically low levels, wages have continued to stagnate.

Along with stagnant wages, income disparity is increasing. The average CEO to worker pay ratio among the first 225 of the Fortune 500 companies is 339:1.

This disparity coincides with the growth of the plasma industry. Looking at plasma centers offers a window into how the working poor are struggling to survive amid their pronounced economic struggle in the United States, while plasma protein corporations are profiting from desperation and misfortune.

The 5-billion-dollar global plasma protein therapeutic industry is expected to exceed 31 billion dollars by 2024 due to the growing amount of plasma-based medicines, along with the increased prevalence of over two hundred life-threatening diseases including hepatitis A&B, tetanus, and even rabies, according a market analysis done by Grand View Research. In addition to the increased demand of these medicines, commercial plasma protein therapeutic corporations are receiving a stark increase in supply.

More and more Americans are beginning to donate plasma for money to cover their everyday expenses. In 2016, private collection centers across the U.S. gathered nearly 40 million collections; the highest it’s ever been. Since 2005, the number of donations has nearly tripled.

There are 601 plasma donation centers in the United States and 80 percent of these are located in America’s poorer neighborhoods. Since 2005, the number of donation centers has more than doubled.

The industry is one that helps millions of people worldwide, but it seems to also be one that

relies on cash-hungry people to thrive. Between the years of 2006-2008, there was a 43 percent increase in the number of donations.

Plasma donation centers, like BioLife or CSL, are run by private, for-profit corporations which produce plasma protein therapies (PPTs). PPTs are a group of essential medicines extracted from human plasma through processes of fractionation. They are used to treat a number of rare, chronic diseases resulting from inherited or acquired protein deficiencies. Examples of these diseases include hemophilia A and B and immunodeficiencies. PPTs are also used to treat burns, severe blood loss and sepsis.

Plasma is the fluid part of the blood and is harvested by donors through a process called plasmapheresis. A needle goes into the donor’s arm and blood pumps from his or her vein into a device that separates plasma from the blood cells. The plasma is stored, and the blood cells return back into the body, usually accompanied by saline.

This process yields noticeably higher volumes of plasma compared to the other method of separating plasma from whole-blood donations; a method commonly used by nonprofits such as the American Red Cross. Plasmapheresis also allows donors to donate more frequently and in larger quantities.

The U.S. is one of few countries that permits biweekly donations. Canada and some European countries have taken a “better

safe than sorry” approach for the amount of donations, allowing people to donate once every 28 days in some cases.

The threshold to become a donor is low, attracting many people. There are only a few requirements to become a donor; you must be 18-years-old, weigh at least 110 pounds, pass some medical examinations, have identification and proof of residence. The process takes no more than an hour and a half in most cases and is relatively pain-free. For the working poor in need of cash, the weekly, non-taxed compensation received from two hours of “work” is a bargain.

“Where are you going to get a part-time job that can pay that kind of money,” said Mike, a 57-year-old who uses the money he gets from donating plasma to fund his vacations. Mike said he was skeptical at first about giving plasma for money, but, after his first donation two years ago, he’s been making biweekly trips to BioLife in Maple Grove.

The plasma protein therapeutic industry booms while working conditions and wages of America’s poor and average laborers remain substandard. Therefore the plasma industry functions as an indicator of the quality of jobs available in the economy. The success of the industry indicates that more people are being treated for life-threatening diseases, in turn saving millions of lives. But, the correlation between struggling Americans and the industry’s increasing profits is undeniable. ~THE END

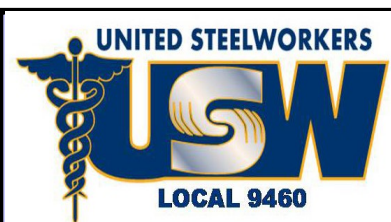
“Bridges Out of Poverty” Conference Report

by Adam Ritscher

On June 4 & 5 the United Way hosted a conference called “Bridges Out of Poverty”. The featured speaker was Jodi Pfarr, a writer and community activist. Our local’s president and vice president participated in the conference to see what we could learn that could of use to our organization.

Over 100 people attended, representing a wide range of social services, schools and other community organizations. The thrust of the conference was helping participants better understand the life circumstances of those in different classes, and the priorities, decision making styles, and even ways of communication that flow from those different circumstances.

While our culture likes to sometimes pretend that class isn’t a big deal in this country, it very much is. The class we are born into determines, more than anything else, what kind of opportunities and choices we are likely to have. Each class has a different set of values and norms, a set of hidden rules if you will. Most institutions in our [cont. on pg. 7]



GET INVOLVED IN YOUR UNION!

Your union is what you make it. So be sure to attend your monthly membership meetings and make your voice heard.

**Every 3rd
Tuesday
@ 5:30pm**

Labor Temple, Rm 202
USW Local 9460 Office,
2002 London Road
Duluth MN 55812

The meetings are open to all members, and everyone has the right to speak and vote. Afterwards we hold a drawing for a \$20 gas card.



Labor Endorsed Candidates for the MN Elections

The following candidates have been endorsed by the Minnesota AFL-CIO for the 2018 election. Visit www.mnvotes.org to check your registration, register to vote, and find out where you vote.

United States Senate

Amy Klobuchar
Tina Smith

Secretary of State

Steve Simon

State Auditor

Julie Blaha

United States Congress

District 1: Dan Feehan
District 2: Angie Craig
District 3: Dean Phillips
District 4: Betty McCollum
District 6: Ian Todd
District 7: Colin Peterson

Minnesota Senate

District 13 (Special Election): Joe Perske

Minnesota House

District 1B: Brent Lindstrom
District 3A: Rob Ecklund
District 3B: Mary Murphy
District 4A: Ben Lien
District 4B: Paul Marquart
District 5A: John Persell
District 5B: Pat Medure
District 6A: Julie Sandstede
District 6B: Dave Lislegard
District 7A: Jen Schultz
District 7B: Liz Olson
District 8A: Brittney Johnson
District 8B: Gail Kulp
District 9A: Alex Hering
District 9B: Stephen Browning
District 10A: Dale Menk
District 10B: Phil Yetzer
District 11A: Mike Sundin
District 11B: Tim Burkhardt
District 12A: Murray Smart

District 13A: Jim Read
District 13B: Heidi Everett
District 14A: Aric Putnam
District 14B: Dan Wolgamott
District 15A: Emy Minzel
District 16B: Mindy Kimmel
District 19A: Jeff Brand
District 21A: Lori Ann Clark
District 21B: Jonathan Isenor
District 22A: Maxwell Kaufman
District 22B: Cheniqua Johnson
District 23A: Heather Klassen
District 24A: Joe Heegard
District 24B: Yvette Marthaler
District 25A: Jamie Mahlberg
District 25B: Duane Sauke
District 26B: Tyrel Clark
District 27A: Terry Gjersvik
District 27B: Jeanne Poppe
District 28B: Thomas Trehus
District 30B: Margaret Fernandez
District 31A: Bradley Brown
District 31B: Sue Larson
District 32A: Renae Berg
District 32B: Jeff Peterson
District 34B: Kristin Bahner
District 35A: Bill Vikander
District 35B: Kathryn Eckhardt
District 36A: Zack Stephenson
District 36B: Melissa Hortman
District 37A: Erin Koegel
District 37B: Amir Malik
District 38B: Ami Wazlawik
District 39A: Ann Mozey
District 39B: Shelly Christensen
District 40A: Mike Nelson
District 41A: Connie Bernardy
District 41B: Mary Kunesh-Podein
District 42A: Kelly Moller
District 42B: Jamie Becker-Finn
District 43A: Peter Fischer
District 43B: Leon Lillie
District 44A: Ginny Klevorn
District 44B: Patty Acomb
District 45A: Lyndon Carlson
District 45B: Mike Freiberg
District 46A: Ryan Winkler
District 46B: Cheryl Youakim
District 47B: Donzel Leggett
District 48A: Laurie Pryor

District 48B: Carlie Kotyza-Witthuhn
District 49A: Heather Edelson
District 49B: Steve Elkins
District 50A: Michael Howard
District 50B: Andrew Carlson
District 51A: Sandra Masin
District 51B: Laurie Halverson
District 52A: Rick Hansen
District 52B: Ruth Richardson
District 53A: Tou Xiong
District 53B: Steve Sandell
District 54A: Anne Claflin
District 54B: Tina Folch
District 55A: Brad Tabke
District 56A: Hunter Cantrell
District 56B: Alice Mann
District 57A: Robert Bierman
District 57B: John Huot
District 58A: Maggie Williams
District 58B: Marla Vagts
District 59A: Fue Lee
District 59B: Raymond Dehn
District 60A: Diane Loeffler
District 61A: Frank Hornstein
District 61B: Jamie Long
District 62B: Aisha Gomez
District 63A: Jim Davnie
District 63B: Jean Wagenius
District 64B: Dave Pinto
District 65A: Rena Moran
District 65B: Carlos Mariani
District 66A: Alice Hausman
District 66B: John Lesch
District 67A: Tim Mahoney
District 67B: Jay Xiong

USW District 11 has also endorsed Tim Walz and Peggy Flannigan for Governor and Lieutenant Governor, as well as Jason Metsa for 8th Congress District.

VOTE!

Bridges Out of Poverty [continued]

society – from government agencies to health care facilities – operate with middle class norms and biases. This leads to miscommunication and other frictions when people coming from generational poverty try to interact and navigate them.

This conference, through numerous small group exercises, sought to help us to understand how all of this plays out in our work lives. Understanding how class affects us all, makes it easier for us not only to get where other people are coming from, but be in a better place to forge more meaningful relationships with people who come from different class backgrounds. As a union this is obviously important for us to think about. As health care workers, we serve patients who come from a variety of backgrounds. As a union of health care workers, we can also serve as a bridge out of poverty for people by helping them get and keep jobs that provide living wages and benefits.

Going forward we will be exploring how to bring some of the lessons of this conference into our Steward and other trainings. So stay tuned!



JOIN THE COMMUNICATION & ACTION TEAM!

Local 9460 is looking to assemble a team of members who are willing to serve as a transmission belt for getting information to our members during contract negotiations and other important times. The goal is to have coverage of all of the departments of our various worksites. We're looking for as many volunteers as we can get! So, if you're interested in finding out more of what this would entail, you can email the office, or Adam Ritscher at adamritscher@gmail.com

Your Union Stewards

Essentia Health Greenbook:

Renee Rautell
Cheryl Virta
Jennie Shovein
Cindy Anstett
Laura Vu
Roxane Boutin
Evelyn Dax
Brenda Simon
Jackie Leibel
Donna Mickelson
Jodi Andersen
Tim Visina
Darla Woodall
Sheri Mattson
Melodee Meyers
Micki Olson
Stephen Mapstone
Sven Johnson
Joni Hetrick
Marnie Schaffer
Janice Welsand

Essentia Health Bluebook:

Lindajeane Thompson
Kim Morton
Darren Johnson

Essentia Health Redbook:

Greg Gowan
Teresa Vigliaturo
Alyce Lenzen
Ben Anderson
Jennifer Horst
Tuan Vu
Tracy Averill
Aaron Allen
Ashley Goble
Ryan Reuter
Zac Tuominen
Cheryl Martell

Essentia Health Hibbing:

Kelli Ritz
Audry Chamberlin

Cindy Mihelich
Carol Johnson
Shelly Brownlee

Essentia Health Ashland:

Lynne Johnson
Lori Skaj
Yolanda Riley

Lake Superior Community Health Center Support Staff:

Shelly DeGraef
Brenda Robinson

Lake Superior Community Health Center Professionals:

Penny Waldum
Kaitlin Thompson

Chequamegon Clinic:

Elizabeth Zwetow
Alyssa Groom
Theresa Poppe

Essentia Health Spooner:

Tracy Osterhues

Essentia Health Hayward:

Penny Gustafson

St. Luke's Hospital Tech Unit:

Scott Guenard
Jack Foster

Midwest Medical Equipment & Supply:

Juanita Truax
Sue Wagner-Thomas
Steve Plasa
Misty Degeler
Heather Smith

Ecumen:

Cole Schorr

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WORKING CLASS HEROS: Ella Mae Wiggins

Ella Mae Wiggins was an organizer, speaker, and balladeer, known for expressing her faith in the union, the only organized force she had encountered that promised her a better life.

On Sept. 14, 1929, during the Loray Mill strike in Gastonia, NC, Textile Workers Union members were ambushed by local vigilantes and a sheriff's deputy. The vigilantes and deputy forced Ella Mae Wiggins' pickup truck off the road, and murdered the 29 year-old mother of nine. Though there were 50 witnesses to the assault, and five of the attackers were arrested, all were acquitted of her murder.

After her death, the AFL-CIO expanded Wiggins' grave marker in 1979, to include the phrase, "She died carrying the torch of social justice." Her best-known song, *A Mill Mother's Lament*, was recorded by Pete Seeger, among others.

