



Label Letter

Vol. XLIV, No. 3
MAY-JUN 2019

Union Label & Service Trades Department, AFL-CIO

Changing Health Care at Local Unions

Four years ago, the United Association's Local 166 in Fort Wayne, Ind., opened a health and wellness center that is attached to its union hall and training facility. The facility serves the 960 members of Local 166, as well as their spouses and children.

The facility also serves an Operating Engineers Local, a Teamsters local, a small branch of Old National Bank, a lumber yard and a teachers' union. It is funded by the Local Union's health and welfare fund and run by a group called Activate Healthcare.

Workers in the construction industry suffer a disproportionate share of health issues. Some are occupational issues, but others are chronic health problems that are ignored. Injury and ill health shorten lives, and also push up healthcare costs. In an effort to keep down costs, a number of local unions like Local 166 across the country are turning to a new healthcare model – healthcare clinics specifically for members and their dependents.

Activate Healthcare and others like them work with organizations to set up and manage primary care clinics as a benefit for their members and their families. The organizations pay into the clinic, a fixed amount per month, typically, to cover costs. Activate will staff the clinics with primary care physicians, nurse practitioners and other employees that meet the needs of the organizations' membership or employees. Part of the set up can include labs and a pharmacy stocked with generic medications.

According to Activate, Teamsters Local 135 set up an Activate clinic in their area and realized a net cumulative savings of \$4.9 million and an 84 percent return-



investment over a period of three years. Prior to the clinic, each prescription cost the organization \$27 and members \$10. Now, the same prescriptions cost Local 135 less than \$6 and are free for members. On-site lab work also helps reduce costs for both parties. Since the clinic's inception, members and their dependents have saved an estimated \$791,000 on out-of-pocket costs.

According to UALocal 166 President Ken Prosser, the Fort Wayne clinic was opened because, he said, "We discovered in a survey that only seven percent of our apprentices had a primary care physician. It was easier for them to go to an emergency room for treatment or to one of the walk-in clinics, then to spend time with a primary care doctor to prevent issues."

"They went straight from the ready med [walk-in clinic] to specialists," said Prosser. "If they were really working with their primary care physicians, they wouldn't need the specialists, necessarily."

Prosser said Northeast Indiana also had a crisis of coverage because of its geography.

"We don't have enough family doctors in the area. So, after going to a ready clinic, they weren't following up with their family doctors."

Prosser said that the leadership decided that they needed to change things.

"Before we started this, we evaluated what was going on in our organization.

Our first-year apprentices were fairly healthy and financially independent, but by the time they got to year four, they were grumpy, using tobacco or alcohol in unhealthy ways. We thought, 'We've got great pensions and great wages, but none of that matters if you are foolish and blow it with your health.'"

Local 166's clinic opened with two doctors, a nurse practitioner and two assistants. The nurse practitioner also acts as a "health coach" to help members set goals for improving their health. The union gives a \$100 stipend to members who get physicals and a follow-up stipend for meeting health goals later.

LOCAL SEES IMPROVED HEALTH SINCE CLINIC OPENING

Since opening the clinic, the union has seen their membership's overall health improve a great deal. At the opening, 44 percent of the membership had high blood pressure, a high body mass index or were pre-diabetic. Now, it is just 14 percent. A large number of the members have stopped using tobacco. And, one of the biggest success stories is the drop in opioid use.

"Pain management is different. We used to have opioid use that was two and a half times higher than the average in our area, but we worked with our clinic's doctors to ensure that they were offering up alternative pain management," said Prosser.

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HAPPY Father's Day



Is Dad your go-to grill master? A hunter or fisherman? Maybe he enjoys a good beer or bourbon? Is your favorite gift for dad the tried-and-true neck tie? Which ever gift you give, make sure it is union-made.

We've compiled a list of union-made gifts for the special father in your life.

ANCHOR HOCKING COOKWARE FOR ON THE GRILL AND IN THE KITCHEN

United Steelworkers Local 512T in Rochester, PA.

BROOKS BROTHER NECK TIES

New England Joint Board UNITE HERE—Southwick is a manufacturer of tailored clothing. Members at Local 187 in Haverhill, Mass., make custom tailored men's suits and clothing for such brands as **Brooks Brothers** and **Orvis**. Additionally, Local 187 members proudly make dress uniforms for the US Navy. Notable customers of Southwick include Stephen Colbert and Former Vice President Joe Biden.

WEBER GRILLS (SUMMIT, GENESIS AND WEBER Q LINES AND RELATED GRILL ACCESSORIES)

International Union of Allied, Novelty and Production Workers.

CUTCO CUTLERY

Pride in craftsmanship takes on an entirely new meaning when it comes to knives, blades and other products manufactured by members of USW Local Union 5429 at Cutco.

BOURBON

Though Jim Beam is most known for the familiar **Jim Beam Original Bourbon**, the men and women of UFCW Local 111D in Clermont and in Boston, Kentucky, also make other well-known bourbons, including **Knob Creek**, **Booker's**, and **Basil Hayden**.

BEER

There are many brands that are union-made including Bud, Bass Ale, Beck's, Blue Moon, Butte Creek, Coors, Dundee, Genesee, Goose Island, Hamm's, Icehouse, Killians, Leinies, Lionshead, Mendocino, Michelob, Miller, Molson, Natural, Pabst, Red Dog, Schlitz, Shock Top, and more.

HUNTING AND FISHING

Union Sportsmen's Alliance: For the Dad that likes to hunt and fish, how about a Union Sportsmen's Alliance membership? The exclusive union memberships offered are Silver, Gold and Platinum levels and include access to money-saving discounts, chances to win prizes and trips, and free gifts. Visit <http://unionsportsmen.org/> for more information.

A DAY AT THE BALL PARK

No matter where you live, most Major League Ball Parks are unionized. Everyone from vendors selling food and drinks, the staff maintaining the fields, the camera men and broadcasters, the Umpires officiating the game, and the players on the field are union. Treat Dad to a day at your home team ball park to support union workers across industries.

The Union Label and Service Trades Department, AFL-CIO, does its best to verify products are union-made. If you find a product listed is no longer union-made, please email unionlabel@unionlabel.org Always check the label as many products are made in both union and non-union facilities.

Walk in My Shoes

Quick-Thinking Local 2507 EMT Saves a Man's Severed Arm



PHOTO: CLARENCE ELIE-RIVERA

BY DIANE S. WILLIAMS

A fast-acting Emergency Medical Technician in AFSCME Local 2507 (New York) saved the severed arm of a man who was struck by a train on Staten Island.

EMT Francis Jost usually works in Sunset Park, Brooklyn, but on that chilly February night, he was working an overtime assignment in his Staten Island neighborhood when the call came over the radio around 10:30 p.m. that a man was struck by a train at the Pleasant Plains station.

"When I reached the train tracks someone handed me the arm and my mind went to ice. I need ice fast. ICE HOSPITAL GO!" recalled Jost. "I knew there was a bar nearby where I would go to shoot pool sometimes. If we could get ice and pack the limb, maybe we'd save it."

Turns out his idea worked. The call went out for ice.

Jost ran down the station steps with the limb in his arms and met another EMT holding the trash bag filled with ice from Hot Shotz, the neighborhood bar. They packed the limb in ice and raced to Staten Island University Hospital in an ambulance with the air conditioning on full blast and the windows wide open in hopes of doing all they could to keep the severed arm cold.

Jost, who lives near the Amboy Road watering hole, credits his training as an EMT that helps him to think quickly and act fast to save lives.

Because the EMTs kept the limb alive by preserving it on ice for the trip to the hospital emergency room, doctors were able to reattach the man's arm.

A close brush with disaster inspired Jost to become an EMT. "Years ago I witnessed a huge pileup on the Pennsylvania Turnpike," he said. "So many people were injured, some were walking around like zombies – they were in shock. I felt helpless. I determined then and there to get medical training as a first responder."

Now an FDNY EMT for five years, Jost is always ready to respond using his life-saving skills and ingenuity. He said, "It's all part of the job, I really don't consider myself a hero."

"Every day dedicated EMTs like Francis Jost work alongside Firefighters and Police as first responders to give life-saving medical attention to New York's sick and injured," said Uniformed EMTs, Paramedics, and Inspectors FDNY Local 2507 President Oren Barzilay.

"This is a small glimpse of the work our EMTs, paramedics and fire inspectors do on a day-to-day basis. Jost's quick actions have unequivocally positively changed the

victim's quality of life by saving his arm," Barzilay said. "There's simply no value to put on that."

WHAT'S YOUR STORY?

In 150 words or less—accompanied by a picture of you at work...Help us walk in your shoes. We're open to all union members, active, retired, laid off.

"We want rank and file members to help us to illustrate the rich, diverse tapestry of hard working men and women who make up the American labor movement. They are proud of their work and proud of the contributions they make to their communities," explains Union Label Department President Richard Kline. "We want to demonstrate to American consumers and businesses that union labor gives added value in quality and reliability to products and services that are bought and sold."

The pictures and stories we get will be published in the Label Letter and posted on the Department's website—and perhaps in posters and other promotional materials. E-mail a Walk in Your Shoes to: union-label@unionlabel.org; or send by regular mail to:

Walk In My Shoes

c/o Union Label Dept. (AFL-CIO)
815 16th St. NW,
Washington, DC 20005 ■

NALC, APWU Leadership Participates in Congressional Hearing on Financial Conditions of the U.S. Postal Service

Since 2006, the United States Postal Service (USPS) has been forced to pay nearly \$5.6 billion per year into its retiree health fund to fund health benefits for retirees 75 years into the future. Think about that. Some of those retirees that they are required to fund benefits for haven't even been born yet.

The mandate, which was part of the Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act (PAEA) of 2006, is believed by many to have been instituted in an effort to force USPS privatization. Since its passage, the PAEA has accounted for nearly 92 percent of the USPS' reported financial losses since 2007, and 100 percent of its losses in recent years. The Grand Alliance, a coalition of labor and community organizations, established to push back against the PAEA and other efforts to destroy the USPS, believes that many, including some postal executives, have been complicit in the drive toward the destruction of the Postal Service and ultimate privatization. "They have slowed mail service, closed community based Post Offices and mail processing facilities, slashed hours of

operations, tried ceaselessly to end six-day service as well as door-to-door delivery, and eliminated hundreds of thousands of living wage jobs," reads the Alliance website mission statement. "The U.S. Postal Service belongs to 'We, the People.' But the USPS and postal jobs are threatened by narrow monied interests aimed at undermining postal services and dismantling this great public institution."

Understanding that something has to be done to ensure that the USPS doesn't go broke over the next few years, the House Committee on Oversight & Reform (COR) held a hearing on April 30 to examine the financial conditions of the Postal Service. The committee invited Postmaster General Megan Brennan, Postal Regulatory Commission (PRC) Director of the Office of Accountability and Compliance Margaret Cigno, President and CEO of Quad/Graphics Joel Quadracci, National Association of Letter Carriers President Fredric Rolando, and Cato Institute Director of Tax Policy Studies Chris Edwards to testify.

American Postal Workers Union President Mark Dimondstein also submitted a statement for the record ahead of the hearing.

Both Rolando and Dimondstein, in their testimony, called for the repeal of the 2006 Postal Accountability and Enhancement Act.

"Although we will continue to adapt and evolve to meet the changing needs of America's businesses and households in the years ahead, only Congress can address our biggest financial challenge: the unique and unsustainable burden to massively prefund future retiree health benefit premiums decades in advance. No other enterprise in the country faces such a burden..." Rolando testified.

CONGRESS INTRODUCES BIPARTISAN BILL TO REMOVE MANDATE

A bipartisan group in Congress agree. Representatives Peter DeFazio (D-OR-04), Tom Reed (R-NY-23), Xochitl Torres Small (D-NM-03), and Brian Fitzpatrick (R-PA-01) introduced H.R. 2382, the USPS Fairness Act, on April 29. The bill calls for a full repeal of the prefunding mandate.

"NALC applauds Reps. DeFazio, Reed, Torres Small and Fitzpatrick for introducing this bipartisan legislation as a crucial first step toward bringing financial stability to the most trusted and highest-rated agency in the federal government," said Rolando. "The USPS is a national treasure and an essential part of the nation's economic infrastructure. Congress caused this crisis when it passed the PAEA in 2006 and Congress can begin to fix it by passing the USPS Fairness Act."

"This legislation is a necessary step to solving the disastrous prefunding mandate that is dragging down the Postal Service," said Dimondstein.

Call 844-402-1001 to contact your member of Congress and ask them to cosponsor H.R. 2382, the USPS Fairness Act. Be sure to also promote H.R. 2382 on social media using #repealprefunding #HR2382 #peoplebeforeprofit and/or #unfairburden.

Reach out to your family, friends, and neighbors and ask them to call their representatives as well. This legislation affects every American household. ■

HEALTH CARE

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

"They now suggest physical therapy, weight loss, and other pain management techniques first."

At first, health care costs skyrocketed because "people were really sick and weren't seeing their physicians," said Prosser, "but now we're seeing it has stabilized and costs have gone down."

Some of the changes in their membership's health can be attributed to the Local's growth. They were only 550 members when they opened the clinic, with an average age of 52. They now have 960 members with an average age of 41.5, but, they're still saving money, says Prosser. The union is conducting an audit with an outside organization to determine the true dollar-to-dollar savings.

Approximately 76 percent of the membership are using the clinic. Over half of the eligible spouses and dependent children are also using it.

UA Local 5 in the Washington, D.C., has followed suit this year and opened its own clinic near its membership's primary residences. They opened with Activate, as well.

UA Local 5 Business Manager Jim Killeen visited the Fort Wayne facility to see how it operated and brought the idea back to his group. They placed their facility within a 30-minute drive of most of its members.

Killeen said his group "wanted to have a healthier membership."

They have no copays for generic prescription medicines available in the clinic. They offer flu vaccines and they offer sports physicals.

"We want to catch hypertension, diabetes, and cancers early," said Killeen. "We want to educate our members to change their lifestyles, stop smoking, etc."

So far, said Killeen, the members seem very happy with it. ■

PRO Act Seeks to Strengthen Workers' Right to Organize

In early May, House and Senate Democrats introduced the Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO) Act—comprehensive legislation designed to strengthen protections for workers' right to organize a union and bargain for higher wages, better benefits and safer working conditions.

The legislation, backed by 40 Senate Democrats and 100 Representatives, would also ban employers from forcing employees to sign away their right to pursue collective or class-action litigation and from permanently replacing workers who go on strike. It would require employers to begin bargaining a contract no later than ten days after a union has been certified.

In the House, the legislation was introduced by Congressman Bobby Scott (VA-03), chairman of the House Committee on Education and Labor; Congresswoman Frederica Wilson (FL-24), chairwoman of the Health, Employment, Labor, and Pensions Subcommittee; Congressman Andy Levin (MI-09), vice chair of the Education and Labor Committee; Congresswoman Pramila Jayapal (WA-07), co-chair of the Congressional Progressive Caucus; and Congressman Brendan Boyle (PA-02).

The Senate companion was introduced by Senator Patty Murray (D-WA), ranking member of the Committee on Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions; Senator Sherrod Brown (D-OH), ranking member of the Committee on Banking, Housing, and Urban Affairs; and Senator Jacky Rosen (D-NV).

In a statement on the PRO Act, Congressman Scott said, “[E]vidence and experience demonstrate that labor unions are one of the most powerful tools workers have to improve the standard of living for themselves and their families. However, there are currently no meaningful penalties for predatory corporations that use unlawful tactics to discourage workers from organizing a union. The PRO Act is a comprehensive proposal to ensure that workers have the right to stand together and negotiate for higher wages, better benefits, and safer working conditions.”

THE LEGISLATION SPECIFICALLY AIMS TO:

1. Bolster Remedies and Punish Violations of Workers' Rights
2. Strengthen Workers' Right to Stand Together and Negotiate for Better Working Conditions
3. Restore Fairness to an Economy that is Rigged Against Workers

BOLSTERING REMEDIES AND PUNISHING VIOLATIONS OF WORKERS' RIGHTS

The PRO Act seeks to authorize the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) to assess monetary penalties for each violation in which a worker is wrongfully terminated or suffers serious economic harm. It would also permit the Board to impose liability on corporate directors and officers who participate in violations of workers' rights or have knowledge of and fail to prevent such violations.

Recognizing that workers who suffer retaliation for exercising their rights can endure long periods of unemployment while waiting for their case to be heard, the bill would require the NLRB to seek an injunction to reinstate the employee while their case is pending. And gives the NLRB the power to enforce its own rulings like other federal agencies, instead of waiting for a decision from the Court of Appeals.

The legislation would prohibit employer interference in union elections. No captive audience meetings designed to persuade employees against voting in favor of the union, the PRO Act would make those illegal and it would empower the NLRB to issue an order that requires the employer to bargain with the union.

STRENGTHENING WORKERS' RIGHT TO JOIN TOGETHER AND NEGOTIATE FOR BETTER WORKING CONDITIONS

The bill seeks to remove prohibitions on workers exercising their right to support boycotts, strikes or other acts of solidarity with workers at other companies. It protects workers who engage in peaceful protest actions and safeguards the right

“The PRO Act is an important effort to bring U.S. labor law into the 21st century — giving working people more power at a time when it is desperately needed,”

—Celine McNicholas,
EPI Director of Government Affairs

to strike by clarifying that “intermittent” strikes don't lose their federal protection and prohibits companies from permanently replacing workers who participate in a strike.

The PRO Act would overturn Justice Gorsuch's assault on workers in *Epic Systems v. Lewis* and would clarify that employers may not force employees to waive their right to engage in collective or class-action litigation.

It would ensure that unions can collect “fair share” fees to prevent free-riders from benefitting from the representation and services unions must provide without paying those services. And, it facilitates initial collective bargaining agreements by requiring mediation arbitration to settle disputes.

RESTORING FAIRNESS TO AN ECONOMY THAT IS RIGGED AGAINST WORKERS

The bill would prevent employers from exploiting loopholes in the federal labor laws preventing them from misclassifying their employees as supervisors or independent contractors, would prevent workers from being denied remedies due to their immigration status, and would ensure employees have the right to collectively bargain with all of the companies that control the terms of their employment.

Finally, the bill strives to increase transparency in labor-management relations. It would require employers to post notices that inform workers of their rights under the National Labor Relations Act, and to disclose contracts with consultants hired to persuade employees on how to exercise their rights. ■

Stop & Shop Strike Puts Solidarity on Display, Wins New Contract for Workforce



On April 11, some 31,000 United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW), members across New England walked off the job at Stop & Shop, a grocery chain owned by Ahold Delhaize. Ahold, a Dutch company that reported a \$71 billion in net sales over the past two years, had demanded that employees pay more for health care and pension benefits during its contract negotiations with the UFCW Locals representing the employees at their 163 stores.

Five UFCW locals represent members at the stores, Locals 328, 371, 1445, 1459 and 919. The group had been negotiating

with Stop & Shop since January 14, a little more than a month before their contract expired on February 23.

After unsuccessful negotiations, including claims from the union that the company was refusing to bargain in good faith, union members took to the picket lines to force the company to back off its demands.

The almost two-week work stoppage drew support from local and national politicians, clergy, and as well as widespread grassroots support. As well, about 1,000 members from Teamsters Local 25, truck drivers and warehouse workers for

the company, enforced picket line protection language in their own contracts, that allowed them to refuse to cross picket lines. The Teamsters action put added pressure on the company because they were forced to hire temporary warehouse workers and drivers.

On Easter Sunday, representatives from the UFCW International said they had agreed on a tentative three-year contract with the company. The deal would keep employee health care and retirement benefits intact, provide wage increases instead of bonuses, and keep time-and-a-half pay for current employees who work on Sunday.

The contract was ratified by all five locals in early May.

HIGHLIGHTS OF THE CONTRACT INCLUDE:

- Increased pay and protected Sunday premium pay for all full- and part-time associates
- Health care costs will remain affordable with low deductibles and out-of-pocket maximums. Protected spousal coverage and all ancillary benefits for current and future part-time associates.
- Ten paid holidays for full- and part-time associates and holiday premium pay for all new hires.
- Protected and kept all vacation days for part- and full-time associates.
- Protected skilled meat department employees from layoffs.
- Guaranteed minimum of 20 hours per week for eligible part-timers.
- Protected pension benefits for current and future full-timers. Saved at least 10,000 part-time employees' pensions and protected a reduced defined pension plan for future part-time employees.
- Shoe allowance for work boots.
- Paved the way for career growth ensuring promotion from within from part-time to full-time status with an immediate \$2/hour increase. ■

Buy a Video Game System or Form a Union? Delta Tries to Quash Workers Efforts to Organize

About 42,000 employees at Delta Airlines are seeking representation with the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAMAW) and Delta's answer to their efforts is to advise them that their prospective union dues would be better spent on a new video game system.

This utterly thoughtless idea fell flat as workers and customers were outraged at Delta's tone-deaf attitude towards its workers.

Rep. Katie Porter (D-Irvine) called the campaign "a masterclass in corporate greed." She pointed out that the company collected \$800 million a year from the Republican tax cuts of 2017, "but you're aggressively undermining unions, which fight for fair pay and job security for your employees."

Delta flight attendants earn less on average (\$58,341 in 2017) than their counterparts at United (\$62,461), American (\$62,366) or Southwest (\$60,389).

The National Education Association said in an open letter that Delta was no longer one of the organization's "preferred airlines."

"When you turn your back on the values of your customers, they will certainly turn their backs on you," said NEA President Lily Eskelsen García.



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PERIODICALS
POSTAGE PAID
WASHINGTON, D.C.

TIME VALUE

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EndNotes



Label Letter

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Vol. XLIV, No. 3 • ISSN 0161-9365

Label Letter is published bimonthly by the Union Label & Service Trades Department, AFL-CIO. Subscriptions to members only. USPS #424-530. Periodicals postage paid at Washington, D.C. Postmaster: Send corrections of address to Room 209, 815 16th Street, N.W., Washington, D.C. 20006. Phone: 202-508-3700.

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By Rich Kline, *President, UL&STD*

Workers and Unions Face Crony Politics



It's nice to have friends and allies and supporters. But for some it's even nicer, if more costly, to have cronies. Cronies, not buddies, who have the political power to bestow favors on those who can fill their campaign war chests, fund their PACS and hire their spouses and family members.

What kind of favors can these cronies give? First and foremost: tax cuts that benefit the richest Americans and corporations; deregulation of safety and health, environmental and workplace standards; attacks on public education to gain more tax cuts and promote private education; and reducing financial safeguards to prevent another Great Recession or worse.

The cronies also reward their patrons with endless assaults on workers' rights and the unions that represent them. Some cronies support rolling back such social policies as protective child labor laws. And, of course, Social Security, Medicare, Medicaid, the Affordable Care Act and other programs that benefit the majority of Americans. Obliterating or limiting these programs would enable the richest, the so-called 1%, to become even richer. Cronies aim to please their donors.

But working people don't have cronies. We do have each other and our unions, if we are lucky enough to belong to one.

As the 2020 elections loom larger and larger, we have a chance to confront cronyism and find political leaders unattached to the oligarchs. We should evaluate all candidates closely before we adorn them with a Union Label. ■

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