

MARINE ENGINEERS' BENEFICIAL ASSOCIATION (AFL-CIO)

"On Watch in Peace and War since 1875"



M.E.B.A. TELEX TIMES

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MATSON DELIVERING RELIEF TO TONGA

Matson will contribute about \$250,000 in goods and services toward Tonga disaster relief and diverted the KAMOKUIKI from Auckland, New Zealand to Tonga loaded up with company-donated relief goods. Two additional extra-schedule relief voyages are planned for departure from Auckland during the next three weeks.

Last Friday, Matson delivered the first shipment of goods to Tonga since the eruption of the Hunga-Tonga-Hunga-Ha'apai underwater volcano which resulted in a tidal wave that battered the island nation the next day.

"Our hearts are with the people of Tonga as they work to recover from the devastation caused by the eruption and tidal wave," said Matt Cox, Chairman and CEO of Matson. "We are committed to helping with recovery efforts in the way we know best -- by getting much needed supplies, equipment and donations to Nuku'alofa as quickly and efficiently as possible."

KAMOKUIKI normally operates in Matson's China-Auckland Express (CAX) service. It was scheduled to sail for Tonga today and arrive there at Nuku'alofa on Monday before returning to the CAX service.

Matson has also launched an employee drive that will match donations from its employees with equal contributions to New Zealand Red Cross' Pacific Tsunami Appeal fund for Tonga disaster relief. The program will run through February 15th.

DEC REPORT: M.E.B.A. GROUP II TO GROUP I LIST RELEASED

The Union issued its latest District Executive Committee report detailing 198 Group II individuals that have been admitted into Group I. Sailing time received by Headquarters by December 21, 2021 was used to determine eligibility. Only those in good standing were eligible. These individuals may apply for their Group I Seniority Card (shipping card) at their local branch office.

All members and applicants are reminded that it is the individual's obligation to complete the Group I application at their local Union hall or office. HQ does not obtain this information automatically. The DEC has set a ratio of two Group I Deep-Sea individuals to each Deep-Sea billet. Group status within other bargaining units is determined after Deep Sea Bargaining Group 1 status has been decided.

Reviews to determine if there are openings in Group I are done periodically and without notice. Generally it is done two times a year. If there are openings, applications of former Group I individuals and the sailing time for other Group II individuals is reviewed based on what is received at Headquarters on the review date. Names are available at the Union halls. Congratulations all!

NMC TICKS OFF COMMON REASONS MMC APPLICATIONS ARE DELAYED

The National Maritime Center issued a helpful advisory this week listing the top reasons why mariner applications for Merchant Mariner Credentials (MMCs) get delayed. The communication notes that about 50% of submitted applications are incomplete or are missing information that prevents a quick turnaround. A mind-boggling 66,796 reasons caused delays last year that prompted the NMC to issue “Awaiting Information” (AI) letters to the mariners. Though a good deal of applications contain more than one reason for the hold-up, the NMC has broken down the top five AI reasons that MMC applications are delayed.

They are: 1. Certificates and documents are missing or incorrect, such as proof of citizenship or required training. 2. An incomplete/incorrect application including signature and date problems, and/or unclear information. 3. Sea service/recency of service documentation is missing or incomplete. 4. Fees are not paid in full, or waiver requests are completed improperly. 5. Missing, incomplete or old drug test information (screening must take place within 6 months of application date).

NMC suggests you submit applications at least 90 days in advance to mitigate delays and noted that you can apply up to 8 months early for renewals that don’t affect your expiration and renewal dates.

For general questions, you can contact the NMC Customer Service Center by e-mailing IASKNMC@uscg.mil or calling 1-888-IASKNMC (427-5662). The full text of the NMC notice has been posted on the M.E.B.A. website (www.mebaunion.org) in the Documents & Member Notices section.

LABOR INTERESTS LOOK TO SHORT SEA SHIPPING COALITION

A number of labor and maritime organizations gathered at M.E.B.A. Headquarters this week for a “kickoff” meeting in furtherance of forming a short sea shipping coalition. AFL-CIO’s Metal Trades Department is spearheading the creation of the group to be comprised of labor, industry and other allies supporting maritime highway initiatives. The coalition would help represent the industry’s interests to the administration, Congress and the general public and advise and advocate on behalf of short sea shipping projects. Among many others attending the meeting in-person or virtually included the M.E.B.A., MM&P, SIU, ILA, AMP, AMC, TTD and MTD.

At the meeting, they also discussed budding new industries that will utilize and benefit from a robust short sea shipping system such as windfarms and other initiatives incorporating new technologies and supporting ongoing decarbonization efforts.

The Maritime Highway Coalition began making plans for its first formal meeting as an established entity which will tentatively take place sometime in March.

VIRGIN ISLANDS OPEN REGISTRY SOUGHT

The Northeast Maritime Institute – Center for Ocean Policy and Economics’ (NMI/COPE), a Massachusetts-based maritime college, is pushing ahead with the launch of an open shipping registry based in the U.S. Virgin Islands. The announcement is part of NMI/COPE’s implementation of a strategy looking to jumpstart U.S. shipping as laid out in its newly released “Revitalization Plan for U.S. Maritime Trade, Commerce, and Strategic Competition.” The plan aims to support and assist in resolving America’s supply chain crisis, ensure maritime sovereignty and security, and revitalize maritime commerce. Highlights include the formation of the first U.S. open registry, stepped-up development of short sea shipping, establishment of a maritime venture capital fund and other initiatives designed to make the U.S. more competitive as a maritime nation.

The U.S. Virgin Islands is not subject to the Merchant Marine Act of 1920 and the plan seems to have practical and legal hoops to jump through before fruition. While it is uncertain how the application of the first phase of the plan would affect the Jones Act fleet and the respective mariner workforce, its long-term implications could be deeply problematic.

The plan will be presented on Tuesday at a Washington DC National Press Club event featuring former Secretary of State and Ambassador John Negroponte, U.S. Virgin Islands Governor Albert Bryan, Jr. and many other academic, political and maritime industry luminaries who will attend and participate in a panel discussion. Governor Bryan is expected to sign the agreement between the U.S. Virgin Islands and Northeast Maritime Institute featuring the collaboration on the development of the first open U.S. registry. You can check out the plan by visiting this link: <https://tinyurl.com/nmicope>

FINAL CHANCE FOR UNION PLUS SCHOLARSHIPS

M.E.B.A. families only have until January 31, 2022 to apply for college education assistance money through Union Plus. Typically, a flurry of applications are submitted in the last three days of this great Union Plus program, so get yours in now! M.E.B.A. members, retirees and their families - as well as members of affiliated M.E.B.A. unions - are eligible courtesy of the Union’s enrollment in dozens of moneysaving U.P. programs ranging from life insurance to financing children’s educations.

Visit unionplus.org/scholarship for more. Families of M.E.B.A. members or affiliated members are among past scholarship money recipients. Union Plus Scholarship are granted to students attending a two-year college, four-year college, graduate school or a recognized technical or trade school. Recipients are selected based on academic ability, social awareness, financial need and appreciation of labor.

Applications can be submitted up until Monday, January 31, 2022, at noon (EST). Those arriving after the deadline will not be considered. The award date is May 31, 2022. During the first week of June 2022, award recipients will be notified. A GPA of 3.0 or higher is recommended. The required essays can account for up to half your total score. Scholarship applicants are judged by a committee of impartial post-secondary educators.

Amounts range from \$500 to \$4,000. These one-time cash awards are for study beginning in the Fall of 2022. Students may re-apply each year. Get the official application and all the details including eligibility criteria by visiting unionplus.org/scholarship Since 1991, the Union Plus Scholarship Program has awarded more than \$5 million to students of union families. Over 3,500 union families have benefited from the program.

GET SOUPED-UP, UNION-STYLE

January is the (unofficial) National Soup Month and there's nothing more satisfying on a crisp winter day than a steaming hot bowl of soup, stew, bisque or chowder. But if you're slurping up steamy soup – do it union-style!!

By the way, February 4, 2022 has been designated as “National Homemade Soup Day,” and “Chicken Soup for the Soul Day” is November 12, so this soup thing is not reserved to just January. Whether it's chicken noodle, clam chowdah, gazpacho or whatever, make sure you're sucking down soup made by a company who gives their employees a voice on the job and treats them with dignity. Here's a few suggestions:

Soups - Campbell (IBT); College Inn Soups (IBT); MC Soups (IBT); Snider Soups (IBT); San Francisco Soup Company (UNITE HERE, Local 2). **Of Course You'll Need Crackers** - Cheez-It (BCTGM); Cheese Nips (BCTGM); Keebler (IBT); Ritz (BCTGM, IBT); Triscuit (BCTGM); Wheat Thins (BCTGM, IBT).

YOU SHOULD SIGN UP FOR THE FEB. 9 ONLINE HQ MEETING

You should send an email to mebahq@mebaunion.org to announce your intentions to attend the upcoming online informational meeting held by M.E.B.A. Headquarters. The meeting will take place on Wednesday, February 9 at 1300 eastern time. This is not an actual membership meeting but it presents a terrific opportunity for Members, Applicants and Retirees to discuss M.E.B.A. business, exchange information and learn more about the latest Union initiatives. Attendees need to register in advance for this meeting by sending an email to mebahq@mebaunion.org You should provide your full name and proof of good standing - such as your last dues receipt/service charge number or statement that you are enrolled in Dues Check-Off (DCO) with a particular bargaining unit. Retirees should provide their full name and indicate their status. Upon confirmation, the Zoom access link will be emailed to you shortly before the meeting.

MONTHLY MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS *(All times are local)*

Monday, February 7 – Boston@1200; Seattle-Fife@1300.

Tuesday, February 8 – CMES@1430; Charleston@1400; Houston@1315; Oakland@1230.

Wednesday, February 9 – Jacksonville@1300; New Orleans@1315; **Online HQ “Town Hall” Meeting@1300 (No Voting) – Register now at mebahq@mebaunion.org**

Thursday, February 10 – L.A.-San Pedro@1230; NY/NJ@1300; Norfolk@1300; Tampa@1300.

Friday, February 11 – Honolulu@1100.

-----FINISHED WITH ENGINES-----



*M.E.B.A. does not tolerate assault, or harassment of any kind.
If you see something, say something – The M.E.B.A. Emergency Hotline
can be reached at 1-888-519-0018.*