

Labor Leader Mike Sacco: 1937-2023

The Seafarers International Union announced that SIU President Emeritus Mike Sacco crossed the bar in St. Louis on Thursday, December 28 at the age of 86. It was reported that he passed of natural causes surrounded by family, ten months after his retirement from the union. Sacco had served as SIU's President for nearly 35 years and had been a tireless and vocal advocate for the US maritime industry.

Mike Sacco's association with the SIU dates back to 1958 when he shipped out on various vessels before transitioning ashore in the 1960s where he assumed various union roles, including patrolman, port agent, and headquarters representative. He was the longest serving SIU President, having taken over in 1988 following the death of President Frank Drozak. A Brooklyn, New York native, Sacco's commitment to service also included a stint in the U.S. Air Force from 1954 to 1958.

M.E.B.A. President Adam Vokac was saddened by the news but expressed his appreciation and admiration for Sacco's strong leadership during his long career battling on behalf of U.S. mariners and the labor movement. Extending the M.E.B.A.'s condolences to the SIU, Vokac noted, "Mike was a towering figure who had a profound impact on an industry that relies on the resilience and strength of its workforce. Beyond the boardrooms and negotiating tables, he recognized the interconnectedness of the maritime community and always guided his union steadily through turbulent seas and calm waters alike. His legacy looms large."

The family is requesting that in lieu of flowers, donations can be made to the [Tony Sacco Memorial Scholarship Fund-Charleston Port & Seafarers Society](#), or to [St. Jude Children's Hospital](#). An obituary is available [here](#).



M.E.B.A. President Adam Vokac (l) and Secretary-Treasurer Roland Rexha (r) with Mike Sacco in February. At that event, Adam and Rex thanked Mike for his tremendous service to the U.S. maritime industry and the labor movement.