

MARINE ENGINEERS' BENEFICIAL ASSOCIATION (AFL-CIO)

"On Watch in Peace and War since 1875"



M.E.B.A. TELEX TIMES

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UNION RE-EMPHASIZES VITAL IMPORTANCE OF SAFETY AT SEA, FREE FROM HARASSMENT

The Union and other industry entities, as well as several lawmakers this week, re-emphasized the necessity that at-sea workplaces be respectful, free from sexual harassment, assault, and other unwanted behavior. A recent horrifying allegation of unacceptable actions directed at a sea year cadet onboard a deep-sea vessel in 2019 has instigated an investigation into that alleged incident as well as onboard safeguards and procedures affecting conduct at-sea.

The Union underscored that sexual assault and sexual harassment is unacceptable in any context and will not be tolerated in M.E.B.A.-represented workplaces. Cadets, and everyone onboard, *must* be treated with respect.

News of the disturbing allegations made in an anonymous blog posting reached lawmakers who expressed concern and made inquiries with the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy and others about the culture aboard vessels and safety issues for sea year cadets.

The Chairs of the House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure Rep. Peter DeFazio (D-OR) and Coast Guard and Maritime Transportation Subcommittee Rep. Salud Carbajal (D-CA) declared that, "We must have zero tolerance when it comes to sexual assault...Enough is enough. Our committee is currently considering any and all options regarding the U.S. Merchant Marine Academy, along with the Sea Year program."

Other lawmakers including Senator Maria Cantwell (D-WA) are seeking answers from the academy and industry partners to ensure the protection of midshipmen.

The Union is promoting a full investigation of the alleged incident in question and any other such incidents and stressed that it is "committed to working with our partners to ensure that our vessels are free from sexual assault, harassment, retaliation, or other forms of discrimination."

L.O.U. WITH PASHA/SUNRISE IN ADVANCE OF NOV. 1 VACCINE MANDATE

As shipping companies continue to institute 100% vaccine requirements, the M.E.B.A. has been working with our companies to protect our members and reward them for contributing to the success of this effort.

Mariners sailing on Pasha vessels and port relief will be required to be fully vaccinated as of November 1, 2021 as part of their fitness-for-duty. This week, M.E.B.A. reached a Letter of Understanding with Sunrise Operations covering M.E.B.A.-contracted vessels in the Pasha fleet. The LOU ensures that our members are properly incentivized to support the new policy while also confirming that the execution of these mandates don't encroach on specific circumstances of our mariner force.

Members already serving on a Pasha vessel on November 1 will be allowed to complete their assignments regardless of vaccination status. Members currently on a company vessel will be allowed time off in port during their work day to go to a COVID-19 vaccination appointment.

The LOU also secures an avenue for medical and religious exemptions and codifies a monetary incentive program for permanent, rotary, or relief crewmembers in the company's fleet who get vaccinated or who are already fully inoculated against COVID-19. The LOU has been sent to each of the M.E.B.A. Union halls and offices.

MEETING WITH LIBERTY

The Union met with Liberty Maritime representatives this week in a negotiating session held online in furtherance of a follow-on agreement with the company. The parties began discussions on economic terms and conditions in an all-day bargaining session that included rank-and-file members that supplemented the M.E.B.A. negotiating team. The Union was represented by President Adam Vokac, Secretary-Treasurer Roland Rexha, and Contracts Officer Mark Gallagher along with rank-and-file members C/E Nick Wojcik, Capt. Rafal Sluborski and 2nd A/E Emma Crandall. The parties are looking to shore up dates for future talks.

REAR ADM. ANN PHILLIPS NOMINATED AS NEW MARAD LEADER

Late this afternoon, the President announced his intentions to nominate Rear Adm. Ann Phillips (Ret.) as the next Maritime Administrator, a position that has been vacant since Rear Admiral Mark Buzby stepped down in early January.

Phillips spent 31 years on active Navy duty, and among many achievements and responsibilities, commanded a Destroyer, Destroyer Squadron and Amphibious Strike Group. On the Chief of Naval Operations' Climate Change Task Force she helped implement climate change strategies for the Navy. She retired from the Navy in 2014 with a slew of commendations and achievement medals and continued to work on climate security issues as an independent consultant.

The Administrator position is subject to Senate confirmation. Lucinda Lessley has been serving in the top spot at MarAd in an Acting capacity until a new Administrator can be confirmed.

NEW TRANSCOM LEADER CONFIRMED

Gen. Jacqueline Van Ovost, has been confirmed by the US Senate as the new Commander of the US Transportation Command (USTRANCOM). She relieves Gen. Stephen Lyons who had served in the position for the past three years. USTRANCOM is responsible for the global, joint movement of combat units and sustainment cargo.

For the past year, Gen. Van Ovost served as the Commander of Air Mobility Command (AMC). Prior to that, she was AMC's Deputy Commander. She has also commanded an air refueling squadron, flying training wing, and the Presidential Airlift Wing. She served as the Director of Staff for

Headquarters Air Force, Vice Director of the Joint Staff, the Director of Mobility Forces for US Central Command, and as the Vice Commander of the US Air Force Expeditionary Center. She graduated from the US Air Force Academy in 1988.

JUNEAU HALL RELOCATION INCLUDES NEW CONTACT NUMBERS

As previously mentioned in a past *Telex Times*, M.E.B.A.'s Union hall in Juneau at 229 Fourth Street is packing up and moving a few blocks away on November 1. The new hall is located at 130 Seward St. Suite 304 in the Goldstein Building.

While the email addresses will remain unchanged, M.E.B.A. recently ascertained that there will be new phone and fax numbers. The phone number at the new hall will be (907) 331-3123 and the fax number will change to (907) 202-5322.

APPLY FOR UNION PLUS SCHOLARSHIPS

M.E.B.A. families have until January 31, 2022 to apply for college education assistance money through Union Plus. 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.

FILM & TV WORKERS COULD STRIKE AS EARLY AS MONDAY

60,000 behind-the-scenes film and television union members could go on strike as soon as Monday if studios continue stonewalling overworked employees who are looking for a fair deal. The International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees (IATSE) is calling for relief from unsafe hours, unlivable wages and a lack of reasonable rest on set. When the Alliance of Motion Picture and Television Producers (AMPTP), which represents major film and television production companies, demonstrated that they were no longer interested in working toward a fair contract, IATSE leadership sought authorization from its membership for a strike. That authorization was given by over 98% of voting members. Most of the members are based in Los Angeles and include camera operators, wardrobe and other film and tv production crew.

The vote had the effect of restarting talks which have since reportedly produced a small degree of progress. However, the sides are apparently still far apart and the union announced that members will strike at 12:01 a.m. on October 18th if substantial progress is not made on a new agreement.

A strike would help shutter numerous ongoing tv and film productions, soon after the industry recently ramped back up to pre-pandemic levels.

You can support IATSE workers by signing an online petition that is available at: <https://tinyurl.com/353p9prn>

SIGN UP FOR M.E.B.A. VACATION PLAN DIRECT DEPOSIT

Designed for convenience, M.E.B.A. members can help themselves by taking advantage of the Vacation Plan Direct Deposit that will help save them time and ease Plans processing costs. Authorization forms are available from the Plans Office, Plans Outport Offices and at the Plans' website – www.mebaplans.org (Go to “Forms, Documents & Notices” (up top) then “Vacation Plan Forms”). Complete details are available on the Plans site as well. Contact (800) 811-6322 or vacation@mebaplans.org for more info.

MONTHLY MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS *(All times are local)*

Monday, November 8 – Boston@1200; Seattle-Fife@1300;

Tuesday, November 9 – CMES@1430; Charleston@1400; Houston@1315; Oakland@1230;

Wednesday, November 10 – Jacksonville@1300; New Orleans@1315; Online Headquarters “Town Hall” Meeting@1300 (No Voting)

Thursday, November 11 – Veterans’ Day – *All Halls Closed*

Friday, November 12 – Honolulu@1100; L.A.-San Pedro@1230; NY/NJ@1300; Norfolk@1300; Tampa@1300;

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



The M.E.B.A. is the nation's oldest maritime labor union, established in 1875. M.E.B.A.'s expertise and demonstrated track record of readiness, safety, and loyalty in answering America's call to action in times of both peace and war is unrivaled in the world. M.E.B.A. HQ – Phone: (202) 638-5355; mebahq@mebaunion.org. Visit us on Facebook. For publication and related inquiries (and to send photos & hot news tips) contact Marco Cannistraro, M.E.B.A. Special Projects & Communications – marco@mebaunion.org Visit us on Facebook, follow us on Twitter and check us out on Instagram.