

# MARINE ENGINEERS' BENEFICIAL ASSOCIATION (AFL-CIO)

*"On Watch in Peace and War since 1875"*



## **M.E.B.A. TELEX TIMES**

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### **TRANSPORTATION LABOR READY TO GET TO WORK WITH NEWLY-NOMINATED DOT SECRETARY**

Transportation labor is hopeful of a great working relationship with Pete Buttigieg pending his confirmation as the next Secretary of Transportation. President-elect Joe Biden nominated the former Mayor of South Bend, IN to helm the Department that will be central to the new President's plans for revitalizing the country's infrastructure for the ever-increasing demands of the future. Buttigieg was a Biden rival during the Democratic primaries but allied himself with the incoming President after dropping out of the race in late April just before "Super Tuesday."

President-elect Biden called Buttigieg a "leader, patriot, and problem-solver. He speaks to the best of who we are as a nation."

Greg Regan, Secretary-Treasurer of the Transportation Trades Department, AFL-CIO (TTD), congratulated the Secretary-designate and noted that Buttigieg "understands that working people keep America moving, and his desire to support working families, combined with his deep passion for policy, will serve him well in this role."

In accepting the nomination, "Mayor Pete" made note that this "is the time to build back better through modern and sustainable infrastructure that creates millions of good-paying union jobs, revitalizes communities, and empowers all Americans to thrive."

AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka noted that, "America's vast transportation network is largely operated, built and powered by proud members of the labor movement. During his historic campaign for the presidency, Pete Buttigieg pledged to strengthen unions, help grow our ranks and increase worker power across the board. He also advanced a robust agenda to invest in and modernize our nation's infrastructure...We are ready to build back better with Buttigieg to revitalize the transportation systems and workers who keep America moving."

### **CALLS FOR MORE ACUTE WORKER PROTECTIONS AFTER INCREASE IN JOB FATALITIES**

An average of 15 workers in America died on the job every day in 2019, the latest statistics from the Bureau of Labor Statistics' Census of Fatal Occupational Injuries reveal. Last year, 5,333 workers died on the job, the largest number since 2007, with workers of color especially at risk. The 2019 stats

obviously don't include COVID-19 numbers which are expected to contribute to grisly statistics in next year's report.

The newly-released report comes at a time when the number of Occupational Safety and Health Administration inspectors is at its lowest level since the agency was formed, the Mine Safety and Health Administration inspection force is shrinking and safety agency resources are scarce.

“Instead of increasing life-saving measures aimed at protecting working people at our workplaces, the Trump administration consistently rolled back existing safety and health rules and has failed to move forward on any new safety and health protections,” said AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka. “We look forward to working with the new administration to strengthen job safety protections and enforcement, rebuild workplace safety agencies, and prevent worker deaths, injuries and disease.”

The labor federation says that most of these job deaths were preventable, caused by well-recognized hazards that need immediate attention. In 2019, workplace violence deaths (841) increased and remains one of the top three causes of job deaths, and deaths from falls (880) increased by 11%. The number of deaths caused by unintentional overdoses of drugs or alcohol at work continued to surge to 313. This represents a staggering 380% increase since 2012, when 65 unintentional overdose deaths were reported. Job deaths increased in construction (1,061), the highest number since 2007. Deaths among older workers, those 65 and older, were at an all-time high with 793. These workers experienced a job fatality rate more than 2.5 times the national average. Deaths among Latino workers (1,088) increased for the third year in a row to its highest number ever. Deaths among Black workers (634) increased and remained at a higher overall rate for the second year in a row.

### **PHILLY SHIPYARD BEGINS WORK ON FIRST OF THE FIVE MARITIME ACADEMY MULTI-MISSION VESSELS**

U.S. shipping interests celebrated a long-awaited milestone this week as Philly Shipyard began work on the first of five multi-mission vessels slated to replace the aging training ships used by maritime academies around the country. As part of the initial stages of construction, the yard began cutting steel for the first of the National Security Multi-Mission Vessels (NSMV). In addition to providing training for America's future mariners, the NSMVs will be available to support humanitarian assistance and disaster relief missions.

Funding has been secured for the first three vessels and Philly Shipyard has received the orders for the first two ships. The first vessel in the series will replace the almost 60-year old SUNY training ship EMPIRE STATE VI. The second will replace the 53-year old TS KENNEDY at Massachusetts Maritime Academy. The yard said the first vessel will be ready for delivery by early 2023.

NSMVs will feature numerous instructional spaces, a full training bridge, and have space for up to 600 cadets to train in a first-rate maritime academic environment at sea. Each ship will feature modern hospital facilities, a helicopter pad, and the ability to accommodate up to 1,000 people in times of humanitarian need. Adding to the NSMV's capability, they will provide needed roll-on/roll-off and container storage capacity for use during disaster relief missions.

### **MARITIME COMMUNITY SALUTED DURING VIRTUAL AOTOS AWARDS**

The 51<sup>st</sup> installment of the annual Admiral of the Ocean Sea (AOTOS) awards last week was an abbreviated affair, thanks to the pandemic, though no less sincere in its praise of the American maritime community. The 36-minute ceremony, hosted by the United Seamen's Service (USS), took

place online and focused on honoring the four pillars of the maritime community – identified as the Maritime Administration, merchant mariners, U.S.-flag shipping companies and longshoremen.

The program can be viewed on YouTube at <https://youtu.be/U0GDXzG2GJo>

On behalf of the “four pillars,” Secretary of Transportation Elaine Chao accepted the silver statuette of Christopher Columbus, which will be permanently housed at MarAd headquarters. She said, “The men and women of the US Merchant Marine pull together to keep our country on course and do so much to protect our country in wartime and in peace.”

Maritime Administrator Rear Adm. Mark Buzby said, “some jobs cannot be done smoothly, but the seafarers worked long and tirelessly helping the industry cope during this crisis...We needed every one of them to get the job done...and they got it done.” He also lauded the role of USS in “being there for our seafarers.”

### **SAILORS’ SNUG HARBOR LOOKING FOR RETIRED MERCHANT MARINERS THAT CAN USE HELP**

The Trustees of the Sailors’ Snug Harbor in the City of New York (SSH), one of the oldest secular charities in the United States, continues to help retired career mariners in financial need. They no longer operate a retirement home for mariners, but instead help mariners across the country in their home communities. SSH helps mariners live more comfortably by assisting them with their living expenses as well as helping them find other assistance and local services.

SSH was incorporated in 1806 as the result of a bequest made by Captain Robert Richard Randall. Not much is known about Captain Randall. He spent much of his life managing the family shipping company. By far his most famous deed—and the one by which he is remembered today—occurred on June 1, 1801, when he signed his Will. It is rumored that Alexander Hamilton helped Capt. Randall create his Will days before his death. Captain Randall dictated that The Sailors’ Snug Harbor be created and maintained in perpetuity to support aged sailors.

In 1833, SSH opened their first retirement home in Staten Island, NY. At its peak in the beginning of the twentieth century, more than 1,000 sailors were in residence together at the facility. The decades following, enrollment declined while costs to maintain the historic buildings to current codes rose. The facility was closed in 1976 and 105 mariners residing at the facility moved to SSH’s newly built facility in Sea Level, NC.

SSH realized the majority of retired mariners in need of assistance did not want to move to Staten Island or Sea Level, but would rather stay in their home communities with their spouses, families and friends. In the early 1990s, SSH started to assist mariners in their home communities and gradually moved away from operating a retirement home. In 2005, the Sea Level home was sold.

Today SSH helps mariners across the country. In 2020, SSH has helped more than 350 mariners. This was the most mariners assisted by SSH since the early 1950s. In 2015, SSH lowered its seetime requirement from 3,650 days at sea, to 2,555 days at sea and will now accept inland seetime to help meet this lowered requirement. The other requirements of the program are that the mariner must be 65 years of age or older. Younger mariners may apply if they are disabled. The last requirement is that an applicant must be able to show a need for financial assistance. Applicants with over \$50,000 in savings will not be eligible.

The SSH website, [www.thesailorssnugharbor.org](http://www.thesailorssnugharbor.org), has a link to the program's application. If you are interested in learning more about SSH, please contact: The Trustees of the Sailors' Snug Harbor in the City of New York; Toll Free: 1-888-257-5456 or 646-465-8585; Fax: 212-513-0243; [info@thesailorssnugharbor.org](mailto:info@thesailorssnugharbor.org)

### **UNION-MADE GIFTS FOR THOSE ON THE "NICE" LIST**

As they do every year, Labor 411 has compiled some gift ideas that will not only reward the people on your "nice" list – it will help union-supported companies. Labor 411 is a research organization that raises awareness of worker-friendly goods and services. Here are a few Labor 411 suggestions (listed along with the union) to give you some ideas and help steer you in the right direction:

**For the Men (and some Women)** - Black & Decker Tools (UAW); Wilson Sporting Goods (Workers United); Brooks Brothers (UNITE HERE!); Jack Daniel's (UAW); Harley Davidson (USW). **For the Women (and some Men)** - Bosca Fine Leather Goods (IBT); Timex Women's Watches (IAM); Ralph Lauren (UNITE HERE!); Pyrex (USW); Revlon Cosmetics (UAW). **For the Kids** - Hasbro Toys (RWDSU/UFCW); Milton Bradley Toys (RWDSU/UFCW); Pictionary (RWDSU/UFCW); Star Wars (RWDSU/UFCW); Tonka (RWDSU/UFCW). Visit the Labor 411 Directory at <https://labor411.org> for more union-made products.

### **NOTICE OF NATIONAL M.E.B.A. ELECTION/NOMINATIONS**

The National M.E.B.A. will host its 113th National Convention on March 16, 2021, an event held every four years. The National M.E.B.A. is an administrative umbrella organization of M.E.B.A. Districts. Currently there is only one District under the N.M.E.B.A. (District No. 1-PCD, M.E.B.A.).

The Convention Delegates elected during the 2020 District election will meet on March 16, 2021 – likely at the Calhoun M.E.B.A. Engineering School - to conduct the business of the N.M.E.B.A. These Delegates will also elect four of the five National Executive Committee (NEC) positions. The NEC consists of a National President, National Secretary-Treasurer, National Vice President and two NEC Members. The Constitution affirms that the incoming District President Adam Vokac will serve on the NEC as the National M.E.B.A. President. Any member in good standing may submit their name or the name of another member in good standing for nomination to the NEC aside from the National President position. To be timely, nominations must be received at National Headquarters during the month of February 2021. Nominations received after February 28, 2021 (or before February 1, 2021) will not be considered valid nominations. Nominations must contain the information specified in Article Five, Section 4(b) of the National M.E.B.A. Constitution. Nomination qualifications and procedures are outlined in the Constitution, particularly in Article Five, Sections 1-9 as well as in Article Seven.

### **APPLY FOR VACATION & PORT RELIEF BENEFITS**

• **FILING DEADLINE:** *The deadline for issuing checks dated in 2020 in the M.E.B.A. Outports and the Plan Office was today, Thursday, December 17, 2020.*

• **DIRECT DEPOSIT:** *The final Direct Deposit Transfer for 2020 will be made on 12/18/2020 and the funds will be deposited into bank accounts on 12/22/2020.*

• **Any requests for Port Relief and Vacation checks received after 12/17/20 at 12:00 PM EST will be paid in the order received beginning 1/4/2021.**

Any member who requires that his/her check be dated in 2020 must file before this deadline. Remember, Friday December 25, 2020 and Friday January 1, 2021 are holidays and the Outports and the Plan Office will be closed. It is always wise to plan ahead, so you should verify the specific holiday schedule with the Plan Office Representative.

### **Split Your Vacation Payments between 2020 and 2021**

You can submit an Application for Vacation Pay prior to the end of the year and request that the payment of your vacation benefits be split. Two checks will be issued to you, one in 2020 and a second in 2021. The 12/17/2020 deadline applies to split claims also. The vacation benefits paid in this manner MUST be a continuous vacation period.

Please contact the M.E.B.A. Vacation Plan staff in Baltimore at 800-811-6322 or 410-547-9111 if you have any questions.

### **ONLINE JANUARY MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS – (All times are local)**

*(Registration Period is December 24-December 31)*

**Monday, January 4** – Boston@1200; Seattle (Fife)@1300;

**Tuesday, January 5** – CMES@1430 (*CMES Meeting will likely be conducted in-person*); Charleston@1400; Houston@1315; Oakland@1230;

**Wednesday, January 6** – Jacksonville@1300; New Orleans@1315;

**Thursday, January 7** – L.A. (San Pedro)@1230; NY/NJ@1300; Norfolk@1300; Tampa@1300;

**Friday, January 8** – Honolulu@1100.

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*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](mailto: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](mailto:marco@mebaunion.org). Visit us on Facebook, follow us on Twitter and check us out on Instagram.*