

# MARINE ENGINEERS' BENEFICIAL ASSOCIATION (AFL-CIO)

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



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

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In this issue//Seafarer Workforce Report Warns of Officer Shortage//U.S. Ferries Carried 132 Million Passengers in 2019//More Room in August BST Revalidation Courses//Seafarer Vaccinations Strongly Urged//WHO Prioritizes Seafarers//Agreement Ends Frito-Lay Strike//Apply for Union Plus Scholarships//M.E.B.A. Chief Earns MSC Award//Sign Up Now for Wednesday's Online HQ Meeting//

### **SEAFARER WORKFORCE REPORT WARNS OF SERIOUS OFFICER SHORTAGE**

A new Seafarer Workforce Report warns that the shipping industry must significantly increase training and recruitment levels to avoid a serious shortage in the total supply of officers by 2026. Given the growing demand for STCW certified officers, the report, issued by BIMCO and the International Chamber of Shipping, predicts that there will be a need for an additional 89,510 officers by 2026 to operate the world merchant fleet. The report estimates that 1.89 million seafarers currently serve the world merchant fleet, operating over 74,000 vessels around the globe.

The new report also highlights a current shortfall of 26,240 STCW certified officers, indicating that demand for seafarers in 2021 has outpaced supply.

ICS Secretary General Guy Platten said, "To meet the future demand for seafarers it is vital that the industry actively promotes careers at sea and enhances maritime education and training worldwide, with a focus on the diverse skills needed for a greener and more digitally connected industry. This is especially important as we recover from the effects of the pandemic, and we will need to address the real concerns that we could see seafarers turning away from careers in shipping." You can see the report at [www.ics-shipping.org/](http://www.ics-shipping.org/)

### **U.S. FERRIES CARRIED 132 MILLION PASSENGERS IN 2019**

New data issued by the U.S. Department of Transportation's Bureau of Transportation Statistics (BTS) reveals that 131.6 million passengers were carried on ferries in the U.S. and its territories in 2019. The findings come from the 2020 National Census of Ferry Operators (NCFO) that compiled data response from 246 ferry operators.

Ferry operators reported that they provided service through 760 terminals on 1,106 unique route segments in 40 states, three U.S. territories, and two Canadian Provinces, using a fleet of 839 active vessels. 67% of operators reported passengers using ferries to go to work and 59% of operators transport passengers to recreational destinations. You can view the report at [www.bts.gov/NCFO](http://www.bts.gov/NCFO)

### **MORE ROOM IN AUGUST CMES BST REVALIDATION COURSES**

The Calhoun M.E.B.A. Engineering School announced that it still has available space in its upcoming Basic Safety Training (BST) Revalidation courses next month. There are openings in the August 23-27 class as well as the course running from August 30-September 3, 2021.

Applications can be sent via the CMES website, fax (410) 822-7220, or email to [applications@mebaschool.org](mailto:applications@mebaschool.org)

### **ITF, IMEC STRONGLY URGE SEAFARER VACCINATIONS**

The International Maritime Employers Council (IMEC) and the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF) are strongly urging seafarers to join the global fight against the pandemic by getting vaccinated against COVID-19. They recognize that the U.S. has led the way in their mass vaccination campaign and inoculating foreign seafarers in their ports, but other countries have made great strides with their efforts.

Throughout the pandemic, seafarers have ensured that the global supply chain remains open and continue to deliver goods despite restrictions. ITF/IMEC noted that it is essential that these key workers are prioritized when it comes to lifesaving vaccines. They note that additional vaccines have now been authorized in various countries and more are coming on line. They provide the following links from International Christian Maritime Association (ICMA) and North American Maritime Ministry Association (NAMMA) where vaccines may be available for seafarers: ICMA: <https://icma.as/vaccines/> and NAMMA: <https://namma.org/vaccines/>

### **WHO SEAFARER PRIORITIZATION HAILED**

International maritime groups are hailing the decision by the World Health Organization (WHO) to prioritize seafarers for COVID-19 vaccinations. On July 16, WHO released updated guidance for the organization's vaccine roadmap to provide a framework for overall program priorities, listing seafarers on cargo ships as a key group that should be prioritized in the case of limited supplies. The International Maritime Organization (IMO) – which had repeatedly advocated for a fair global distribution of vaccines as to include seafarers – praised the WHO recommendations.

Seafarers all over the world are still facing severe restrictions which are forcing many of them to be stuck at sea, risking serious issues to their physical and mental well-being that might impede ships' operations. Yet, global seaborne supply chains supply the world with 90% of everything we consume as well as so much needed medical equipment, personal protective equipment, medicines and vaccinations to combat COVID-19.

### **AGREEMENT ENDS FRITO-LAY STRIKE**

The Bakery, Confectionery, Tobacco Workers and Grain Millers International Union (BCTGM) announced that its Local 218 members at the Topeka, Kansas Frito-Lay facility ended a 19-day strike after ratifying a new agreement with the company. Workers had been seeking an end to poor working conditions and so-called "suicide shifts" at the plant. In many cases, employees were expected to work unsustainable consecutive-day 12 hour shifts with only 8 total hours-off in between. The union maintained that workers had to endure sweltering heat in the plant during summers, mandatory 80+ hour weeks in some cases, out-of-touch wages, and unrealistic demands fueled by the company's ramp-up of operations during the pandemic. As a result, the snack giant which makes Doritos, Ruffles and Cheetos among others brands, has enjoyed huge revenues.

The new agreement guarantees at least one-day off a week for workers, raises wages, and allows more union input for overtime and staffing decisions.

International BCTGM President Anthony Shelton said, "...Similar fights are happening across North America where union workers are standing up to employers and demanding respect on the job and a legitimate say over their working conditions. The BCTGM International will always stand with our union brothers and sisters in support of their fight for dignity, justice and respect on the job.

### **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](http://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](http://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.

### **M.E.B.A. CHIEF EARNS MSC AWARD**

The Commander of the Military Sealift Command, Rear Adm. Michael Wettlaufer, recently presented the MSC's Meritorious Civilian Service Medal to Senjamin Tai, M.E.B.A. member and Chief Engineer of the MSC hospital ship USNS MERCY, for his service during the ship's 2020 COVID-19 relief deployment in Los Angeles. Chief Tai was instrumental in preparing USNS MERCY's engineering plant and medical treatment facility, in preparation for the ship's COVID-19 deployment. He returned from leave the same day that MERCY received activation orders to deploy within 5 days. Under his supervision and leadership, the Engine Department was manned and ready to within 3 days, the steam plant was warmed up and brought online safely and efficiently, all main propulsion and auxiliary systems, including hospital services, were thoroughly checked, and MERCY deployed in accordance with the 5-day activation timeline.

MERCY spent nearly 50 days pierside at the Port of Los Angeles, serving as a referral hospital treating non-COVID-19 patients, and in effect as a 'relief valve' for local hospitals as they were able to focus their efforts on COVID-19 cases.

Once the ship was moored at the Port of Los Angeles, Chief Tai configured the ship's power plant and auxiliary systems to provide the hospital stable power, water, HVAC, and waste disposal services. Due to pier support limitations, MERCY remained on ship's power for the entire mission, and the

engineers kept the lights on and water running without a single failure, something the award citation noted as “a testament to Tai's outstanding leadership, professional knowledge, and intimate familiarity with the ship's systems.”

“I am honored to present Chief Tai with this award,” said Wettlaufer. “Recognizing the outstanding MSC CIVMARs for their hard work and dedication to their profession and the Navy is one of the best things I get to do. Chief Tai is a great example to not only the CIVMARs on MERCY's crew, but for CIVMARs throughout MSC. I am proud to have him working with us.”

Rear Adm. Wettlaufer also presented MERCY crewmembers with Civilian Armed Forces Service Medals for their outstanding support of the ship's L.A. deployment.

### **SIGN UP NOW FOR WEDNESDAY'S HQ INFORMATIONAL ONLINE MEETING**

The monthly town-hall style M.E.B.A. Headquarters informational meeting will be held online – with no voting and no resolutions introduced - on Wednesday, August 4<sup>th</sup> at 1300 (Eastern Time). This is not an actual membership meeting but it is an excellent opportunity for Members, Applicants and Retirees to discuss M.E.B.A. business, exchange information and learn more about the latest Union initiatives. Members, applicants and retirees need to register in advance for this meeting to [mebahq@mebaunion.org](mailto:mebahq@mebaunion.org)

When registering for the Online Headquarters Informational Meeting you must 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 retired status. Upon confirmation of your status, the Zoom access link will be emailed to you shortly before the meeting.

### **MONTHLY MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS** *(All times are local)*

**Monday, August 2** – Boston@1200; Seattle-Fife@1300;

**Tuesday, August 3** – CMES@1430; Charleston@1400; Houston@1315; Oakland@1230;

**Wednesday, August 4** – Jacksonville@1300; New Orleans@1315; Online Headquarters “Town Hall” Meeting@1300 (No Voting) – *You can register for the 8/4 HQ meeting at [mebahq@mebaunion.org](mailto:mebahq@mebaunion.org) – provide your details*

**Thursday, August 5** – L.A.-San Pedro@1230; NY/NJ@1300; Norfolk@1300; Tampa@1300;

**Friday, August 6** – 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.*