

MARINE ENGINEERS' BENEFICIAL ASSOCIATION (AFL-CIO)



"On Watch in Peace and War since 1875"
M.E.B.A. TELEX TIMES
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AFL-CIO APPLAUDS NOMINATION OF SU FOR DOL TOP JOB

The White House nominated Julie Su this week as the next Secretary of Labor to replace the outgoing Marty Walsh. Walsh departed suddenly to head up the National Hockey League's player union as Executive Director.

The nomination of Su, who currently serves as the Deputy Labor Secretary, hit the right notes with the AFL-CIO which released a statement lauding the White House pick. AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler noted that, "From her beginnings protecting immigrants and other vulnerable workers, to fiercely combatting wage theft and the abuse of low-wage workers in California, to her leadership of the U.S. Department of Labor with Secretary Marty Walsh, Su has distinguished herself as a principled fighter for the basic rights of every worker, no matter where we're from or what kind of work we do. At this pivotal moment in history, that's precisely the leadership America's working people need in their next Secretary of Labor."

She will need to be confirmed in a Senate vote before installation as the new Labor Secretary.

Before joining the DOL, Su was the secretary for the California Labor and Workforce Development Agency. The LWDA enforces workplace laws, combats wage theft, ensures health and safety on the job. She was the California labor commissioner from 2011 through 2018, enforcing the state's labor laws and previously served as the litigation director at Asian Americans Advancing Justice-Los Angeles, the nation's largest non-profit civil rights organization devoted to issues affecting the Asian American community.

UPDATED NOTICE ON MARINER PASSPORT RENEWAL PROCEDURES

The State Department has issued an update to its provisions governing passport renewals for mariners. This is part of the effort to expedite passport renewals for mariners who urgently need them for international voyages. They are applicable to mariners with passports that either have expired or have less than seven months' validity remaining.

The procedures are effective as of late January 2023 and is an update to the previous notice issued in January 2022. The new notice is largely the same, but there is a new address to send applications as well as a slight fee increase.

The notice has been made available in full on the M.E.B.A. website in the “Documents & Member Notices” section.

M.E.B.A. SUPPORT AT WOMEN OFFSHORE EVENT

M.E.B.A. is a strong supporter of diversity on the job and the Union took part in a recent Women Offshore event. Formed in 2017, Women Offshore is dedicated to propelling women into good maritime industry jobs and bettering their circumstances.

The organization’s 2nd annual Women Offshore Benefit Gala took place in Houston, TX at the Petroleum Club last month with M.E.B.A. support and participation. M.E.B.A.’s Gulf Coast Vice President Adam Smith was in attendance as well as members Stephanie Blummer, Serena Webber-Bey Martin, and retiree Erin (Bertram) Oradesky, among others. The dinner and auction benefited the Women Offshore Foundation in its mission to support women and careers on the water around the globe.

Serena Martin was singled out in front of attendees for her support and promotion of the organization and she was presented with their “Volunteer of the Year” award. The Union’s Secretary-Treasurer Roland Rexha said of the M.E.B.A. Chief Engineer, "We are grateful for Serena’s leadership and the example she sets every day for all mariners in our industry." Congratulations!

HEINDEL TAPPED TO LEAD MTD

New Seafarers International Union President David Heindel became the sixth president in the history of the Maritime Trades Department, AFL-CIO when the MTD Executive Board unanimously elected him during its meeting February 17 in Lake Buena Vista, FL. Former SIU President Mike Sacco, who recently retired, had previously headed up the MTD. The MTD is a coalition of port councils and unions, including the M.E.B.A., that battles on behalf of U.S.-flag shipping.

M.E.B.A. President Adam Vokac and Secretary-Treasurer Roland Rexha were part of the Executive Board meetings and cast an enthusiastic vote for Heindel.

AFL-CIO SPORTS COUNCIL SWELLS AS MLSPA AFFILIATES WITH FEDERATION

The AFL-CIO has picked up another professional athletes’ union as an affiliate, after the Major League Soccer Players Association (MLSPA) announced its decision to join the Federation. The MLSPA union represents almost 900 men’s professional soccer players on the League’s 29 teams. The AFL-CIO’s Executive Council approved the affiliation at its meetings in early February. The affiliation became official after the MLSPA’s Board unanimously voted to join the Federation.

This is the second players association to join the AFL-CIO within a month. AFL-CIO picked up the Women’s National Basketball Players Association (WNBPA) as an affiliate in early February. WNBPA, in its 25th year, represents the players in the Women's National Basketball Association (WNBA).

“When we speak with one voice, when we're united in solidarity, our collective power is undeniable,” said AFL-CIO President Liz Shuler. “This affiliation is about building that power for workers and ensuring professional soccer players have the strength of the entire labor movement behind them every single day. We're thrilled to welcome the MLS Players into the AFL-CIO. This is historic— joining together in this pivotal moment in our economy will raise standards for all working people and the communities where we live, work and play.”

The MLSPA will be part of the AFL-CIO's recently-formed Sports Council which also includes the NFL Players Association (NFLPA), the United Football Players Association-USW, the National Women's Soccer League Players Association (NWSLPA), the U.S. Women's National (Soccer) Team Players Association (USWNTPA), United Soccer League Players Association-CWA (USLPA-CWA), Major League Baseball Players Association (MLBPA) and the WNBPA.

MORE CATHOLIC INSTITUTIONS LOOKING TO UNIONIZE

As reported by the Catholic Labor Network, workers at two institutions hope to join the more than 600 Catholic hospitals, colleges, schools and other organizations that already enjoy union representation.

In their 1986 pastoral letter *Economic Justice for All*, America's Catholic Bishops reaffirmed the right of workers to organize – and noted that employees of Catholic institutions, like any other, enjoy this right. In recent reports, workers at two Catholic institutions are doing just that: Nurses at Ascension Via Christi St. Joseph Hospital in Kansas have filed with the National Labor Relations Board for a union election. If successful they would join their brothers and sisters at Ascension Via St. Francis who recently voted for representation by National Nurses United (NNU). Meanwhile, a majority of the Resident Assistants at Fordham University have signed cards seeking representation by the Office and Professional Employees International Union (OPEIU) Local 153, which already represents Fordham office employees.

UPDATED MARITIME ADVISORY FOR PERSIAN GULF REGION

MarAd has updated its Maritime Advisory keeping civilian seafarers on the alert in waters near Iran. The Advisory covers the Persian Gulf, Strait of Hormuz, Gulf of Oman, Arabian Sea, Gulf of Aden, Bab al Mandeb Strait, Red Sea, and Somali Basin. MarAd said that regional conflict, military activity, and political tensions pose threats to commercial vessels operating in those areas.

Listed as the most pressing threats to U.S.-flag commercial vessels in these areas are potential explosive unmanned aerial vehicle (UAV) attacks such as the Feb. 11 incident on a Liberian-flagged ship; Potential boarding/seizure by Iranian forces in the Persian Gulf, Strait of Hormuz and Gulf of Oman - such as the incidents in May 2022 of two Greek-flagged tankers; and the threat of Limpet mines. Limpet mines have been used to damage vessels on multiple occasions in recent years and are primarily a threat to ships in the Persian Gulf, Strait of Hormuz, and the Gulf of Oman. Explosive boat attacks have also been a threat to vessels operating in the Red Sea, Bab al Mandeb Strait, and the Gulf of Aden. The conflict in Yemen also continues to pose a risk to U.S.-flag vessels in the Red Sea, Bab al Mandeb Strait, and Gulf of Aden.

In addition, there have been numerous incidents of GPS interference, AIS spoofing, bridge-to-bridge communications spoofing, and/or other communications jamming. Piracy and armed robbery continue to be threats in the Gulf of Aden, Western Arabian Sea, and Somali Basin.

The latest Advisory is in effect until August 22 of this year. Mariners with questions about it are urged to contact GMCC@uscg.mil

NLRB JUDGE CITES STARBUCKS' ANTI-UNION "EGREGIOUS & WIDESPREAD MISCONDUCT"

A National Labor Relations Board judge ruled that Starbucks displayed "egregious and widespread misconduct" with its union busting efforts to thwart organizing at its Buffalo, NY-area stores. Reviewing 32 unfair labor charges against Starbucks, NLRB administrative law judge Michael Rosas ordered the company to reinstate fired workers and pay damages to workers at 21 Buffalo-area [Starbucks](#). Starbucks is considering an appeal.

The vehemently anti-union Starbucks has been the subject of dozens of NLRB complaints alleging illegal efforts to intimidate, harass and fire workers who are forming unions. Once the first of the 9,000 Starbucks locations voted for a union in 2021, hundreds of its locations have since filed petitions to organize. Starbucks has responded by firing those leading the push and closing locations that vote for a union.

This week, Independent Vermont Senator Bernie Sanders announced that he is hoping to subpoena Starbucks CEO Howard Schultz to answer some tough questions before the Senate Health, Education, Labor, and Pensions (HELP) Committee. Sen. Sanders wants Schultz to go on the record about his company's apparent non-compliance with federal labor law.

MARINE HIGHWAY PROGRAM GETS FEDERAL DOLLARS

Over \$12 million was made available this week for U.S. short sea shipping efforts awhile the Federal program's [moniker](#) was slightly tweaked. The Maritime Administration (MarAd) announced that \$12,423,000 would be available for projects through the United States Marine Highway Program (USMHP), which was previously known as "America's Marine Highway Program."

The Fiscal Year funding level is down over last year's amount (\$39 million) that was awarded to 12 marine highway projects. Last year's boost was made possible by the additional funds made available by the Infrastructure law. The USMHP seeks to increase the use of America's navigable waterways, especially where water-based transport is the most efficient, effective, and sustainable option.

"Since the establishment of the marine highways program, MarAd has awarded more than \$91.6 million in competitive grants to eligible organizations for marine highway services," said Maritime Administrator Ann Phillips. "These grants have supported the development and expansion of marine highways, vessels, and landside ports and infrastructure, which are critical to building supply chain resilience."

USNS CODY JOINING THE MSC FLEET

Austal USA recently christened its 14th Expeditionary Fast Transport (EPF) vessel, the USNS CODY, which will serve as a floating medical facility. It is a Flight II EPF with medical capabilities which include basic secondary health care built around primary surgery, an intensive care unit, ward beds, and limited x-ray, laboratory and dental support. The shipyard says that the catamaran design of the vessel will provide enough stability to allow surgeons to perform underway medical procedures in an onboard operating suite.

Civilian Mariners onboard the vessel are represented by the M.E.B.A., MM&P and SIU.

“CODY represents the future of naval medicine afloat and the ability to provide critical combat care in austere and contested operating environments,” Austal USA President Rusty Murdaugh said. “With her medical capability, CODY will make a name for herself as a new asset to the global humanitarian cause very soon.”

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

Monday, March 6 – **Boston@1200; Seattle (Fife)@1300.**

Tuesday, March 7 – **CMES@1430; Charleston@1400; Houston@1315; Oakland@1230.**

Wednesday, March 8 – **Jacksonville@1300; New Orleans@1315; Online HQ “Town Hall” Meeting@1300 (No Voting) – Register by emailing mebahq@mebaunion.org**

Thurs. March 9 – **L.A. (San Pedro)@1230; NY/NJ@1300; Norfolk@1300; Tampa@1300.**

Friday, March 10 – **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.*

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. 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.