

MARINE ENGINEERS' BENEFICIAL ASSOCIATION (AFL-CIO)

"On Watch in Peace and War since 1875"



M.E.B.A. TELEX TIMES

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M.E.B.A. INKS AGREEMENT WITH KEYSTONE SMOOTHING WAY FOR RESEARCH VESSEL WORK

The Union has finalized a Memorandum of Understanding with Keystone Ocean Services, Inc. to provide covered employment for M.E.B.A. marine officers augmenting positions aboard commercial U.S.-flag research vessels. The new agreement is similar to a contract M.E.B.A. has in place with Keystone to provide augmenting engineers for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) fleet. That NOAA contract was recently awarded and has a term of five years.

The new MOU with Keystone, signed this week, expands employment opportunities for M.E.B.A. officers aboard commercial research vessel(s) when Keystone acquires work for a third-party client. M.E.B.A. has performed such work through Keystone for various entities such as the University of Hawaii, but this newly inked agreement formalizes the wages, benefits, and terms and conditions of employment when Keystone is successful in acquiring this third party work.

M.E.B.A. President Adam Vokac signed the MOU that remains in force through the end of September, 2026. M.E.B.A. Headquarters Contracts Officer Mark Gallagher, who assisted the process, will send the MOU to the Union halls this week where it will be available for review by members in good standing.

AMP, TTD APPLAUD INFRASTRUCTURE SPENDING

The American Maritime Partnership (AMP) as well as the AFL-CIO's Transportation Trades Department (TTD) are enthused that maritime transportation as well as other transport sectors will receive an infusion of long-overdue funding following the passage of the \$1.2 trillion infrastructure package. As detailed in last week's *Telex Times*, the bill, that was signed into law on Monday, reauthorizes existing transportation programs and provides new spending for roads, bridges, electric vehicles, broadband, and water & port infrastructure.

AMP President Mike Roberts applauded the infrastructure package "that invests in our nation's maritime ports and inland waterways and supports American offshore wind development, which will provide greater opportunities to build new American vessels and employ mariners." AMP is a broad-based coalition representing U.S.-flag vessel operators and allied interests which includes M.E.B.A. and the American Maritime Congress.

TTD President Greg Regan said the package “provides historic levels of funding for ports and waterways, airports, and air traffic control facilities, which, along with other unmet infrastructure needs addressed in the bill, will finally help expand and modernize our entire transportation network.” M.E.B.A. is a founding member of the TTD which represents 33 unions in the maritime, aviation, rail, transit, trucking, highway, longshore, and related industries.

TTD TELLS CONGRESS ANTI-WORKER POLICIES, INDUSTRY PRACTICES HELPED UNLEASH SUPPLY CHAIN CRISIS

The AFL-CIO’s Transportation Trades Department (TTD) President Greg Regan told Congress this week that the current supply chain crisis, fueled by pandemic and supply/demand issues – was further enabled by short-sighted corporate decisions and anti-worker policies.

Regan testified before the House Transportation & Infrastructure Committee this week concerning ongoing supply chain challenges. “What we have today in our economy,” he told the Committee, “is the failure of employers to respond to market conditions and provide the incentives – wages, benefits, working conditions, that will attract the workforce needed. It is also appalling that some in this industry are so anxious to deflect attention away from their own culpability, that they are taking aim at workers’ bargaining rights and defending their low-road employment practices like misclassification abuses,” Regan added.

He targeted the “real culprits” of the current crisis: a historic surge in consumer demand coupled with disastrous industry practices that cut service, safety, and jobs while placing ever-increasing strain on workers.

“In the 5 years prior to the pandemic, Class I railroads cut 20% of their workforce, and they cut even deeper over the last 18 months,” Regan said. “Now they want to blame a workforce shortage. The tens of thousands of railroad employees who had their jobs eliminated disagree. By eliminating jobs and mothballing equipment, Class I railroads all but ensured that their operations would not be able to rapidly respond to economic shocks. The drastic spike in demand was unpredictable, but the results were inevitable.”

Regan also cautioned that the finger-pointing by industry and politicians, along with solutions that only focus on the short-term problem will leave us vulnerable to the same bottlenecks in the future unless real steps are taken to correct the practices of industry and improve our freight network. “Even when we are able to unload every ship anchored off our shores, and move every container out of the storage yards, we will not have truly solved this problem unless we have reckoned with the underlying practices that left the system so vulnerable to collapse in the first place,” said Regan.

HOLD THE LINE! ROCK AXE-MAN THRASHES THROUGH LABOR TRIBUTE

Proud union member and “Rage Against the Machine” guitarist Tom Morello has put out a blistering new anthemic song celebrating solidarity and urging workers to fight for their rights. “Hold the Line” is a white-hot, headbanging tribute to the labor movement that Morello full-throatedly supports. A member of the American Federation of Musicians, Local 47, Morello pointed out that he writes songs “because I want to change the world and fight injustice...I wrote “Hold the Line”...for every single person kicking ass and holding the line.”

Dedicated to working people who rage for change on the picket line, the song, which features the Canadian-American singer “grandson,” appears on Morello’s recent solo album “The Atlas Underground Fire.” You can rock out to the “Hold the Line” music video by visiting this link. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=61gHyyGZyXU> Make sure you turn it up loud – (Volume 11 suggested).

There are a multitude of ongoing strikes (or strike authorizations) throughout the U.S. right now. Check out this “strike map” to find a labor action near you that you can support: <https://tinyurl.com/y87s477y>

“For those of you out there risking it all for a better future,” Morello said, “we are with you! I encourage everyone else to join a strike near you and give these workers the support they deserve.”

BACK TO WORK! MACHINISTS, JOHN DEERE, FILM & TV WORKERS ACCEPT NEW CONTRACTS

The shows will go on! Members of the International Alliance of Theatrical Stage Employees (IATSE) averted a strike this week when they ratified new contracts that win some relief from grueling hours, unsafe conditions and cut-rate wages. A strike by the behind-the-scenes film and television workers would have shut down numerous Hollywood productions. Two newly negotiated agreements passed by razor-thin margins in an online ratification vote with many members grumbling that the contracts didn’t go far enough to alleviate punishing workdays for set workers.

Both three-year contracts contain provisions that guarantee rest at the end of the workday and on the weekend for those employed on film and TV productions along with meal breaks during the workday and stiff financial penalties if the break periods are violated. In addition to across-the-board wage increases, the new agreements lift those at the bottom of the pay scale “from poverty to a living wage.” New provisions also will significantly improve wages and working conditions for IATSE members employed on streaming productions. A combined 63,209 IATSE members were eligible to vote on the two agreements with 45,402 members casting ballots.

10,100 UAW workers at 14 different John Deere locations have a new contract following a successful ratification vote. An earlier tentative agreement was rejected by members necessitating the parties to go back to the table and try again. The improved agreement won favor from voting members by a 61% to 39% margin.

The new six-year contract includes an \$8,500 signing bonus; 20% increase in wages over the lifetime of the agreement with 10% this year; return of Cost of Living adjustments; three 3% lump sum payments; enhanced options for retirement and enhanced performance benefits. Healthcare remains the same for the life of the agreement.

UAW Vice President Chuck Browning said, “Our members’ courageous willingness to strike in order to attain a better standard of living and a more secure retirement resulted in a groundbreaking contract and sets a new standard for workers not only within the UAW but throughout the country.”

The 300 International Association of Machinists & Aerospace Workers (IAM) (District 141) members working for Spirit Airlines ratified a new five-year labor contract by a dominating 98% margin rewarding workers who have been on the frontlines during the pandemic.

The ratified pact includes wage increases that, on average, would be 30 percent higher than current earnings. It also includes more opportunities for double-time pay, new trainer positions and paid vacation for part-time agents. It also includes a ratification bonus of \$100 per year of service, with a \$500 minimum.

“This strong contract is a win for our hard-working members who have had to weather a lot during the COVID-19 pandemic,” said IAM’s Richard Johnson. “They stood strong, and this contract rewards that hard work and dedication with provisions like higher wages and respect in the workplace.”

APPLICANTS REMINDED OF REQUIREMENTS FOR MEMBERSHIP

Last month, the M.E.B.A. Headquarters Membership Department sent each M.E.B.A. applicant a letter detailing outstanding requirements needed to be met in order to qualify for – and to be accepted into membership. Such letters are sent two times a year in the weeks preceding the release of the twice-a-year District Investigating Committee Report. DIC Reports contain a list of qualified applicants who have fulfilled the obligations in their application packet (including sea service documentation and initiation fees) and are current on their service charges. The reports are put before members for a vote at the June and December meetings. Once members approve the report, listed applicants become members and the Membership Department informs them of their new status.

Qualified applicants who are trying to make membership must provide Headquarters with required documentation to ensure their inclusion on the next DIC report. The DIC will meet before the December 2021 membership meeting to formalize their report. To make membership, an applicant needs the required sailing days or specified years of employment with a particular bargaining unit, must be current with service charges and must complete other necessary requirements which may include an initiation fee and/or letters of recommendation.

Applicants should know that they are responsible for providing their local Union hall/Headquarters with the documentation demonstrating their fulfillment of the application requirements. Once they submit the requisite amount of sea time (or documented years of service) to Headquarters and have otherwise fulfilled the needed requirements as stated in the application packet they signed, they may be eligible for membership. ***M.E.B.A. Headquarters does not, and cannot, update an Applicant’s record with sailing time/years of service unless that Applicant submits the required paperwork, i.e. discharges, sea service letters, documentation of employment, to HQ, by e-mail, fax, or mail or via your local Union hall.*** For further information you can visit your local Union hall or contact the HQ Membership Department at (202) 638-5355 or membership@mebaunion.org.

In addition, the DIC report will include a list of members or applicants that have been in dues or service charge arrears for two or more years. Once the membership votes on the report, those members and applicants will be DROPPED from the rolls. If you are in arrears and want to retain your membership or applicant status, you must contact Headquarters to make payment on your arrearage and return to good standing.

“FALL OPEN” 4MF DISC GOLF TOURNAMENT LATER THIS MONTH AT CMES

The M.E.B.A. Merchant Marine Memorial Foundation (4MF) will host a Disc (Frisbee) Golf tournament on Sunday, November 28th at 1 pm - open to everyone - with a \$25 entry fee. The 2021 Fall Open Disc Golf Tournament will benefit the Memorial which is located on School grounds. As

you know, the Memorial was created to honor fallen seafarers who have delivered the goods and answered the call of this country since 1775. The MMMMF is a 501(c)(3) entity, so contributions are tax deductible.

You can contact 4MF Chairman Bill Van Loo for additional information. He can be reached at (443) 676-6248 or bvanloo@bvlworks.org

UNION-MADE THANKSGIVING

When you buy union, you're supporting good jobs in American communities, jobs that provide living wages and benefits, safe working conditions, and dignity and respect for work. Look for these quality products, produced by union members, when preparing your Thanksgiving feast!

Unions listed below include United Farm Workers (UFW); United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW); Bakery Confectionery Tobacco and Grain Millers (BCTGM); International Brotherhood of Teamsters (IBT); International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAM).

Whole Turkey - Butterball (UFCW, IBT); Foster Farms (UFCW, IBT). **Potatoes/Sweet Potatoes** - Betty Crocker (BCTGM); Dole (IBT); Ore-Ida (UFCW, IBT). **Salad/Vegetables** - Andy Boy Broccoli, Cauliflower, Lettuce (UFW); Birds Eye Vegetables (UFCW, IBT); Del Fresh Mushrooms (UFW); Dole Salads (IBT); Fresh Express Salad (IBT). **Stuffing** - Stroehmann Bakery Products (BCTGM); Manischewitz (BCTGM). **Cranberries/Cranberry Sauce** - Dole (IBT); Ocean Spray (IAM). For more union-made products visit <http://labor411.org/listing-region/consumer-products/>

NOTE ON NEXT WEEK'S THANKSGIVING CLOSINGS

All Union halls and offices will be closed on Thursday, November 25 and Friday, November 26 next week for Thanksgiving. In addition there may be early closures on Wednesday – check your local hall if needed. The *Telex Times* will still publish on Thursday.

MONTHLY MEMBERSHIP MEETINGS *(All times are local)*

Monday, December 6 – Boston@1200; Seattle-Fife@1300.

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

Wednesday, December 8 – Jacksonville@1300; New Orleans@1315; **Online Headquarters “Town Hall” Meeting@1300 (No Voting) – Register at mebahq@mebaunion.org**

Thursday, December 9 – L.A.-San Pedro@1230; NY/NJ@1300; Norfolk@1300; Tampa@1300.

Friday, December 10 – Honolulu@1100.

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*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.*