

# MARINE ENGINEERS' BENEFICIAL ASSOCIATION (AFL-CIO)



*"On Watch in Peace and War since 1875"*  
**M.E.B.A. TELEX TIMES**  
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## **NEW LAMONT-DOHERTY MOA FOR COLUMBIA UNIVERSITY VESSEL**

M.E.B.A. engineers working for Lamont-Doherty Earth Observatory will receive generous wage increases and additional vacation days after the Union worked out a new five-year Memorandum of Agreement.

M.E.B.A. sails onboard the R/V MARCUS G. LANGSETH operated by Lamont-Doherty's Office of Marine Operations at Columbia University. The 235-foot LANGSETH is a general-purpose oceanographic research vessel that performs seismic research by mapping the earth's structure miles below the seafloor.

The new contract for the vessel runs through June 30, 2029. M.E.B.A.'s Atlantic Coast V.P. as well as NY/NJ Patrolman Nico Sermoneta negotiated the enhanced MOA with Lamont that also secures Training, JEC and Medical increases as well as boosts in daily subsistence and work shoe allowance, among other items. The M.E.B.A. team received invaluable support from rank-and-file members including Jay Butler, Sam Romey, and Vinni Rodriguez.

## **M.E.B.A. HOSTS OFFSHORE WIND GROUP AT CMES**

Last week, M.E.B.A. hosted Cadeler, a key provider of offshore wind installation services, on a tour of the Calhoun M.E.B.A. Engineering School to explore the possibility of employing U.S. union workers on their Wind Turbine Installation Vessels (WTIVs). This visit was arranged with the help of the Danish union Dansk Metal and the International Transport Workers' Federation (ITF).

During their visit, Cadeler representatives had the chance to observe the top-notch training programs and cutting-edge facilities at the CMES. They were notably impressed by the instructors' dedication and the students' high level of skill. The tour was led by CMES Director Bryan Jennings, who was joined by M.E.B.A. President Adam Vokac, Secretary-Treasurer Roland Rexha and Government Affairs Director Erick Siahaan.

M.E.B.A. Gulf Coast Vice President Adam Smith serves as our International Representative to the ITF and plays a key role in strengthening our ties with this global organization. Additionally, Roland Rexha chairs the ITF's North American Offshore Wind Task Force, underscoring our commitment

to ensuring strong U.S. labor standards and securing opportunities for our members in the burgeoning offshore wind industry.

Through potential collaboration with Cadeler, M.E.B.A. looks to create new job opportunities for the membership in the expanding offshore wind sector. This partnership would not only provide valuable employment but could also pave the way for further collaboration in the industry.

### **CIVMARs COMMENDED ON FIVE MSC SHIPS FOR RED SEA SERVICE**

The crews aboard five Military Sealift Command (MSC) support vessels received the Navy Unit Commendation Award for their efforts and professionalism in dangerous waters. Vessel crews, including those on the USNS SUPPLY, USNS ALAN SHEPARD, USNS KANAWHA, USNS AMELIA EARHART and USS LEWIS B. PULLER played a critical role supporting sustained operations as part of Operation Prosperity Guardian and carrier strike group self-defense attacks against the Houthis in the Red Sea. Additionally, the Commander of the Military Sealift Command, Rear Adm. Philip Sobeck, also presented awards to 15 crew members for their individual achievements. M.E.B.A. represents the engineers in MSC's Civilian Mariner fleet.

From October 2023 to May 2024, the USNS SUPPLY alone steamed more than 50 thousand miles over 247 days supporting the 5<sup>th</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> Fleets, while performing 143 underway replenishments with U.S. Navy and coalition ships from Great Britain, France, Italy, Denmark, the Netherlands and Canada. They transferred more than 87 million gallons of fuel and 14,928 pallets of critical cargo and supplies.

USNS SUPPLY Chief Engineer Eliza Pingree said, "It is actually very nice to be recognized for being a part of the operations that went on over there because as the admiral said, they can't complete that mission without us." SUPPLY Captain Pete Lenardson said, "I'd like to think those eight long months should put to rest any doubts of our commitment to the Navy, the carrier strike group and MSC's ability to carry out sustained underway replenishment in what can only be described as a difficult and hostile environment. From the bridge team, to the engine room, each crew member was challenged by this deployment like never before. Those challenges were met and surpassed."

### **IMO, WISTA LAUNCH "WOMEN IN MARITIME" SURVEY**

Members are encouraged to take part in the second "Women in Maritime" survey sponsored by the International Maritime Organization (IMO) and the Women's International Shipping & Trading Association (WISTA International). Conducted every three years, the survey gathers important baseline data about women's participation in the maritime and ocean fields. The aim is to analyze trends and support the creation of programs and policies to boost women's participation in maritime. The previous study, published in 2021, highlighted a male-dominated sector, with women making up less than a third of the overall maritime workforce, and less than 2% of seafarers.

The survey includes two streams – one for IMO member governments and one for industry, including companies, non-governmental and intergovernmental organizations, and private maritime training institutes or academies. It runs from September 2<sup>nd</sup> to December 31, 2024, with the final report to be published in May 2025.

You can take the survey by following [this link](#).

## **GALLUP POLL: 70% OF AMERICANS SUPPORT LABOR UNIONS**

The latest Gallup poll reveals that Americans continue to hold labor unions in high regard, with 70% expressing approval in 2024. This level of support is close to a six-decade peak.

Gallup has been tracking public opinion on labor unions since 1936, and these results align with last year's AFL-CIO poll, which found 71% approval, including 91% of Democrats, 69% of independents, and 52% of Republicans.

The reasons for this support are clear: unionized workers earn 10-20% more and enjoy better working conditions compared to their non-union counterparts. Despite this widespread approval, many workers are still unable to join unions. In 2023, the Economic Policy Institute reported that over 60 million workers wished to unionize but lacked the opportunity.

## **TREASURY DEPT. REPORTS ON BENEFIT OF UNIONS TO U.S. ECONOMY**

The Treasury Department has released a comprehensive look at the role labor unions play in the American economy with a new report by the Department's Office of Economic Policy. The report found that unions play an important role in addressing longstanding challenges faced by the middle class – including stagnant wages, high housing costs, and reduced intergenerational mobility. In doing so, unions contribute to a more robust and resilient economy.

The report found that unions provide significant benefits to middle-class workers by raising wages by 10-15%, improving benefits like retirement plans and workplace policies, and making scheduling more predictable. It said these improvements enhance financial stability and worker well-being. Unions also positively impact non-union workers, as competition increases wages, workplace safety improves, and entire industries benefit from higher standards. Union members are more engaged in their communities, participating in civic activities like voting and charitable giving. The better pay and job security they enjoy benefit their families and communities through more stable housing and investment in education. The report points out that unions help create a fairer economy by reducing wage gaps across race and gender and promoting broad representation. They also support economic growth by reducing inequality, which opens up opportunities for disadvantaged groups. It found that unions can boost productivity by improving workplace conditions and allowing experienced workers to contribute to decision-making, resulting in more efficient operations.

## **LATEST MSC EPF LAUNCHED**

Austal USA has launched the latest expeditionary fast transport vessel (EPF) bound for the Military Sealift Command fleet. The USNS POINT LOMA is named after the San Diego seaside community that has a long-standing naval presence. 15 MSC EPFs. EPFs are designed to operate in shallow waterways and are capable of a wide range of activities. These versatile, non-combatant transport ships are used for the high-speed transportation of troops, military vehicles, and equipment. The POINT LOMA is now docked pier side in Mobile, AL for final outfitting and system activation in preparation for sea trials later this year.

## **BALLOTS HAVE MAILED**

The ballots for the District No. 1-PCD, M.E.B.A. officers' election were mailed out by the Impartial Administrator to all members at their address on file with M.E.B.A. Headquarters. TrueBallot, Inc. is serving as the Impartial Administrator for the 2024 M.E.B.A. Election.

In accordance with the M.E.B.A. By-Laws, “Ballots should be returned to the depository by November 30 and ballots not received in the depository when the ballots are collected, as provided in Section 4 hereof, shall be disqualified and not counted.”

The ballot collection and tabulation will take place on December 2, 2024. On that day, an elected rank and file Committee will collect votes returned to the depository and oversee the count.

Duplicate ballot information will be detailed in upcoming editions of the *Telex Times* as well as on the M.E.B.A. website. Be aware that the M.E.B.A. By-Laws state that if the original ballot and duplicate ballot are both cast, neither ballot shall count.

### **VOTERS MUST BE IN GOOD STANDING FOR BALLOT TO COUNT**

Members who are not in good standing by November 15, 2024 (dues paid in accordance with the M.E.B.A. By-Laws through the end of the Fourth Quarter, as applicable) are not eligible to vote in the ongoing M.E.B.A. election.

Members are strongly urged to ensure their dues status is secured through the end of the year to guarantee their participation in this year’s officers’ election.

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

Friday, September 6 – Honolulu@1100

Monday, October 7 – Boston@1200; Seattle (Fife)@1300.

Tuesday, October 8 – CMES@1430; Charleston@1400; Houston@1315; Oakland@1230.

Wednesday, October 9 – Jacksonville@1300; New Orleans@1315; Online HQ “Town Hall” Meeting@1300 (No Voting) – Register by emailing [mebahq@mebaunion.org](mailto:mebahq@mebaunion.org)

Thursday, October 10 – L.A. (San Pedro)@1230; NY/NJ@1300; Norfolk@1300;

Tampa@1300.

Friday, October 11 – 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](mailto: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](mailto:marco@mebaunion.org). Visit us on Facebook, follow us on Twitter and check us out on Instagram. The Calhoun M.E.B.A. Engineering School can be contacted at (410) 822-9600 or [www.mebaschool.org](http://www.mebaschool.org). M.E.B.A. Plans is at (410) 547-9111 or [www.mebaplans.org](http://www.mebaplans.org)*