

# Graphic Communicator



Volume 36 Number 4 | The Newspaper of the Graphic Communications Conference / IBT | www.gci.org | Oct.-Nov.-Dec. 2018

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## Court Verdicts Give Unions Split Decision



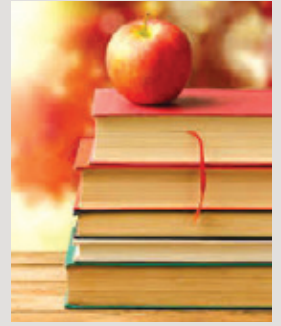
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## Tariffs On Newsprint Beaten Back



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## Star Students Win Hoffa Scholarships



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# Union Members Must 'Vote Smart' To Replace Labor Foes With Friends

By Zachary Dowdy  
Special to the Communicator



GAGE SKIDMORE

AS CRUCIAL MIDTERM ELECTIONS APPROACH, GCC/IBT AND OTHER UNION leaders are working hard to spread the word to rank-and-file members that they have a lot at stake on Nov. 6 – including job security, health care and basic workplace protections – and cannot afford to sit on the sidelines.

“My message to every one of our members is simple – vote and be smart when you do,” said GCC/IBT president George Tedeschi. “This is not a matter of Republican or Democrat. It’s a matter of putting into office elected officials who care about working people, see the great value of organized labor and will be there when we need them. We have plenty of enemies in Washington. We need more friends.”

Local officers like Steve Sullivan, president of Boston-based Local 3-N, and many political analysts say the midterms afford a rare opportunity to counter anti-labor poli-

cies advanced by the White House and Republican legislators and governors around the country.

“This is about trying to put some controls on President Donald Trump,” Sullivan said. “I think by taking back the House and or the Senate we’ll have a better opportunity to have some checks and balances.”

Rallying the union vote is vital, said Ralph Meers, president emeritus and secretary-treasurer of Local 527-S, Atlanta, who is running for the Georgia House of Representatives in hopes of bringing another pro-labor voice to the state legislature.

“We’ve got a lot to lose by not getting out and voting and changing the direction of the country,” Meers said. “These upcoming elections will be one of the most important

*continues on PAGE 8*

## Last Roar of Presses at Newsday

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PHOTO BY DAVID FOKRESS

Printed in the USA

## Unions Rally Support For Butch Lewis Act To Save Pension Plans

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TEAMSTERS PHOTO

## Political Loyalties Should Not Excuse An Assault on Truth

### REMEMBER HELSINKI?

President Donald Trump met – alone, except for translators – with Russian leader Vladimir Putin and then the fun began.

News coverage that followed reminded me of how upside-down things can seem these days – and how, as union members and Americans, we have to be engaged, informed and on guard.

At a joint press conference, Trump appeared to give as much weight to Putin's denial of interference with the 2016 U.S. presidential election as the word of American intelligence officials that Moscow had meddled.



I was watching on television – in disbelief. Had a President of the United States really made a comparison between an adversary and his own country? Incredible.

CNN reporters and anchors immediately noted the astounding nature of the story. No one could recall anything like it.

Out of curiosity, I switched channels to Fox – the cable network that prides itself on being “fair and balanced.”

Instead of questioning Trump's behavior on the world stage, Fox newscasters said the President had performed brilliantly and represented our country in admirable fashion. He had been poised and eloquent, Fox said – a tower of strength.

As too often is the case, Fox was serving as White House mouthpiece not an independent news agency.

Sure, you can complain about one story or another on any TV outlet or newspaper, and, yes, MSNBC favors a liberal point of view and draws an audience to match. But when it comes to tilting the table, Fox is the champ, no question.

Why do I mention this?



Because truth is in trouble.

Trump and his on-air enablers – Fox is the President's go-to news source – live in a kind of topsy-turvy universe where in is out, blue is green, fiction is truth.

So often does Trump fudge the facts that the Washington Post actually keeps a tally. By late summer, the Post reported, he had piled up more than 4,700 misleading statements since taking office – something like eight a day. Can you imagine the uproar if any other public figure assembled that kind of record?

Let's not kid around:

I know plenty of union members voted for Trump and still support him. And I know many get their news from Fox and complain about CNN and the New York Times and Washington Post – mainline news agencies Trump ridicules on nearly a daily basis.

Those are personal choices.

But loyalty to a political figure should not overlook, or excuse, outright lies.

It should not permit calling reporters – many of whom work in the same buildings with our production department members – “enemies of the people,” as Trump likes to do. It should not discount bad behavior and phony claims.

And it should not stop union people from taking a hard look at reality and voting for trustworthy, pro-worker candidates in next month's crucial midterm elections. Please get to the polls.

Bottom line: We have to depend on logic and common sense. Learn the facts. Ignore the spin.

If President Trump and his media pals won't deliver the truth, we'll get it on our own.

## OUTLOOK

## Janus Ruling a Threat to Labor: Battle Back!

INCREASINGLY, MILLIONS OF WORKERS are seeing their rights being chipped away and finding it harder to make ends meet. Nowhere was that more evident than in a decision handed down by the U.S. Supreme Court that curtailed their ability to join together and stand up for themselves on the job.

The ruling in “Janus v. AFSCME” was not surprising, but is still disappointing. The case dealt with an Illinois state government employee, Mark Janus, who didn't want to pay “fair share” fees covering contract bargaining and representation activities. As part of its ruling, the high court determined such payments are unnecessary, even though unions will still be mandated to represent these public sector workers going forward.

Luckily, the Teamsters aren't being caught flat-footed. In preparation of a legal loss, Teamster locals that represent public employees worked to convert fair-share payers into full union members. Beefing



up internal organizing is the key to combating this latest threat against organized labor.

But to be frank, it shouldn't be necessary. This case was not about the First Amendment, as the majority seemed to indicate in its decision. Instead, it was about the whole contributing to gains for all workers in a given workplace.

The Janus decision came about because anti-employee forces spent millions of dollars on lobbying and court challenges over four decades. Attacks from these outside groups, backed by secret donors, sought to eliminate the freedom of public employees to negotiate with their employer.

The middle class was built by everyday working people, standing together in union. The Teamsters honor that history by continuing the fight to give working people the promise of the American dream. That won't end with the Janus decision. The Teamsters will continue to organize, mobilize and do whatever is necessary to achieve prosperity through collective action.

But it is imperative for elected officials to look at how anti-worker policies are affecting the lives of their constituents. While corporations prosper, workers are struggling. The people must not be forgotten. ■



## Graphic Communicator

The Newspaper of the Graphic Communications Conference / IBT

Volume 36 Number 4  
Oct.-Nov.-Dec. 2018

(USPS 410-750)

Official organ of the Graphic Communications Conference/International Brotherhood of Teamsters

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GRAPHIC COMMUNICATOR (ISSN 0746-3626)

is published quarterly in January-February-March, April-May-June, July-August-September, October-November-December for a total of four issues a year for \$12 per year in the United States and Canada and \$15 for all other countries by the Graphic Communications Conference/International Brotherhood of Teamsters, 25 Louisiana Ave. NW Washington, D.C. 20001. Periodical postage paid at Washington, D.C. and additional mailing offices.

### POSTMASTER:

Send address changes to the GRAPHIC COMMUNICATOR, 25 Louisiana Ave. NW Washington, D.C. 20001.

Publications Mail Agreement No. 41461512.

### CANADA POST:

Return undeliverables to P.O. Box 2601, 6915 Dixie Rd, Mississauga, ON L4T 0A9.

## Not on the Ballot but Trump Hovers Over Midterms

### WHAT IS THE DUTY OF AN AMERICAN CITIZEN?

As members of a free society, our obligations should be clear – stay informed, engage the great issues of the day, express opinions with respect and, most of all: **Vote**.

In this edition of the Communicator we devote extensive coverage to the Nov. 6 midterm elections – contests for House, Senate, state and local government that will have profound effect on the nation, and, make no mistake, on your bargaining rights, too.



Zack Dowdy's Top Story (**Page 1**) assesses the efforts of GCC/IBT leaders around the country to get out the vote. "These upcoming elections will be one of the most important – at least in my time – that we can ever have as far as correcting the direction of the country," Ralph Meers, president emeritus of Local 527-S, Atlanta, told Dowdy.

Why the sense of urgency?

Let's not kid ourselves. The answer is Donald Trump.

He's not on the ballot but – brash and often bombastic – the President hovers over every election debate. Trump's daily

tweets dominate the news and White House controversies seem endless. Credible reports say staff members work 24/7 to spare the nation harm from his erratic behavior and impulsive decision-making.

Lots of union members went for Trump in 2016 and may have put him over the top in midwestern states. For many, it was a vote against the status quo and politics as usual. But if working people were hoping for an economic miracle, they still are waiting for relief.

Yes, the stock market is up and so are corporate profits (**Page 8**) but – despite a modest rally – wages are lagging and the Republican tax package Trump often celebrates does so little for most middle class families that GOP candidates barely mention it on the campaign trail.

Meanwhile, the President's picks for the U.S. Supreme Court – Neil Gorsuch and Brett Kavanaugh, both pro-business jurists – seem certain to turn the tribunal toward the right for decades and that is bad news for labor.



Our story on the controversial "Janus" decision (**Page 4**) notes that Gorsuch joined the majority in a 5-4 decision that bans public service unions – including those in the Teamsters domain – from collecting fees from non-members despite a legal obligation to represent those workers. GCC/IBT President George Tedeschi said the ruling was "an all-out attack on collective bargaining" and denounced it as "illogical" and "just plain unfair."

Likewise foolish and unjust was a Trump administration decision to levy tariffs on Canadian newsprint – a policy that threatened to put small newspapers out of business and cause even large publications to cut back on coverage. Strong union and industry opposition (**Page 14**) led to the order being overturned by the U.S. International Trade Commission. "Our collective voices were heard," said GCC/IBT secretary-treasurer/vice president Kurt Freeman.

Elsewhere in this issue, we update attempts to find justice for wronged workers at the Santa Barbara News-Press (**Page 10**), take a look at the Butch Lewis Act aimed at protecting pensions (**Page 4**) and salute the latest round of James R. Hoffa Scholarship winners – diligent students who represent some of the best and brightest of their generation and make the entire GCC/IBT family proud (**Page 16**).

### COMMENTARY JIM HIGHTOWER

## Zero Tolerance on Border Shuns the 'Tired and Poor'

In early June, I traveled to "The Valley," as the McAllen-Brownsville area of Texas is called, down where the Rio Grande empties into the Gulf of Mexico. The river long has fostered a rich culture, uniting generations of Americanos with our Mexicano neighbors. As it flows 1,250 miles from El Paso to the state's semi-tropical tip, the river serves more as a connector than divider.

While I had gone there to talk politics at a union conference, I wasn't about to pass up the rich Tex-Mex experience. I took an extra half day to savor shrimp just-plucked from the Gulf, swig a couple or three good Mexican cervezas, let my mind drift to the lazy tempo of palm trees swaying in the sea breeze and generally absorb the area's unique spirit, character and centuries-old sense of place.

But while I was floating in blissful reverie, Donald Trump's sadistic time bomb of an immigration policy was ticking a short distance away. Only a couple of days later, the border would explode with media attention as the public learned that our tempestuous president had decided The Valley would be ground zero for his political mugging of border-crossing families. Suddenly, his agents mounted a full-scale attack on thousands of migrant children – some as young as two months.

Many of these tykes had trekked hundreds of miles with parents and other adults along the dangerous route to El Norte. Others migrated alone in an urgent attempt to escape rampaging gang violence and life-crushing poverty stalking them in El Salvador, Guatemala, Honduras, and parts of Mexico.



Hoping for humanitarian refuge in the Land of the Free, these vulnerable people instead were met at the Rio Grande by Trump's newly fabricated "zero tolerance" policy against Central American asylum seekers.

Customs and Border Protection agents separated distraught children from their parents – mostly moms – and hauled the adults to a McAllen detention jail run by the Immigration and Custom Enforcement agency. Some of the terrorized children were taken 60 miles away to Brownsville for placement inside a windowless, 77,000-square-foot converted Walmart Supercenter run by a private corporation under contract to Trump's Office of Refugee Resettlement. Other «alien children» ended up in facilities as far away as New York City.



There's no need for me to chronicle each step in this Trump-induced saga. Round-the-clock TV coverage provided shocking videos and photos of government agents tearing families apart. Again and again, we heard recordings of bewildered, anguished, and sobbing children. And we heard the bizarre twists, turns, and tweets of Trump and administration officials trying to rationalize their intentionally cruel policy.

The deeper issue of their heartless approach is what it says about us.

Although deportation injustices have long been a blot on our country's "Give me your tired, your poor" pretensions, Trump has turned immigration policy into a nightmare of presumed guilt, mass incarceration, and deportations. The policy of "zero tolerance" violates the rights of immigrants, while undermining our own rights and, in the process, shriveling the basic value of fairness that binds democratic societies together.

*Populist author, public speaker, and radio commentator Jim Hightower writes The Hightower Lowdown, a monthly newsletter chronicling the ongoing fights by America's ordinary people against rule by plutocratic elites. Sign up at HightowerLowdown.org.*

# To Protect Pensions, Support Lewis Act

**E**stil “Butch” Lewis was a Vietnam veteran, local Teamster president in Ohio and devoted champion of pension rights that he knew were in jeopardy. When Lewis’s own Central Pension Fund benefits were cut a year into retirement, the crisis became personal.

Lewis lost sleep and worried about family finances. On Dec. 31, 2015, the former truck driver and leader of IBT Local 100, Cincinnati, suffered a fatal stroke at age 64. His wife, Rita, said the two – money problems and sudden illness – were related.

“The doctors all said the stress he was living with because of the impending destruction of our financial future contributed to the stroke,” she said. The couple’s monthly payment was set to be slashed by more than \$1,350 – so severe Lewis’s widow said she would have to sell their house.

The Central Pension Fund and other multi-employer programs remain in deep trouble. But the GCC/IBT, their Teamster partners and allies on Capitol Hill say there is a fix: the Butch Lewis Act.

“This is a plan that will provide a path to financial health for troubled pension plans and ensure that retirees and future retiree receive all the benefits they earned,” said Kurt Freeman, GCC/IBT secretary-treasurer/vice president, who is leading the GCC’s drive for passage of the proposal. “Contact your elected officials and tell them to support the Butch Lewis Act.”

GCC/IBT president George Tedeschi also called for members to back the legislation. “Don’t delay,” Tedeschi said. “Let your senators and representatives know where you stand. We have to make certain the Lewis Act passes.”

Introduced by Sen. Sherrod Brown, Democrat of Ohio, the proposed legislation seeks to protect the benefits of 1.5 million workers and retirees and strengthen the federal Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation.



Rita Lewis, wife of Estil ‘Butch’ Lewis, told a Congressional committee that stress from pension cutbacks led to her husband’s fatal stroke. Union members around the country are contacting elected officials to urge passage of the Butch Lewis pension protection act.

Specifically, the measure – and companion legislation in the House – would establish an agency through the U.S. Treasury Department called the Pension Rehabilitation Administration authorized to finance loans to distressed retirement plans.

Meanwhile, a recently formed joint bi-partisan Congressional select committee is looking for ways to ensure the solvency of multi-employer plans. Teamster officials have briefed political leaders on the Lewis Act and devastating effects of a faltering pension system.

“Workers and retirees are worried for good reason,” said Teamster General President James Hoffa. “Many worked for decades and contributed to their pensions under the understanding they would be supported in their golden years. That is now being called into question, and it’s not right.”

Rita Lewis, who has continued her husband’s campaign to protect pension recipients, also describes the fight in terms of basic decency. “This is an issue of fundamental American values of keeping earned promises to this nation’s retirees,” she said during testimony at a Senate committee hearing. Benefit cuts, she said, were “shameful and unfair.”

At the GCC/IBT, Freeman said the need for action is urgent.

He said as many as 100,000 GCC/IBT families served by three national pension funds and a number of local retirement programs were in “harm’s way.”

To protect those families, Freeman said, Congress must provide the federal Pension Benefit Guaranty Corporation the support it needs. He said the PBGC, which protects members of private sector defined benefit pension plans – could be insolvent by 2025 and that cuts to monthly payments could be as high as 90 percent.

“Pensions checks that are being collected by GCC/IBT retirees were promised to them and we cannot allow that promise to be broken,” he said. “Our active and vested members deserve the pensions they worked for all their lives. Allowing the PBGC to fail should not be an option.”

Bottom line, he said: “We need a legislative fix.”

Freeman urged members to contact elected representatives and sign an online petition calling for passage of the Butch Lewis Act in order to protect pensioners and strengthen the PBGC.

“We cannot allow the pension system to fail,” Freeman said. “We can fix this. Act today.”

## Tell Congress: Pass This Bill

To sign an online petition calling for passage of the Butch Lewis Act, go to [http://salsa4.sal-salabs.com/o/50740/p/dia/action4/common/public/?action\\_KEY=24488](http://salsa4.sal-salabs.com/o/50740/p/dia/action4/common/public/?action_KEY=24488)

Another petition can be found at:

<https://www.change.org/p/congress-support-the-butch-lewis-act-of-2017>

In addition, it is possible to access the petition by scanning the QR code (right) with a cellphone. QR scanners are available at no cost through app stores.



# Supreme Court Janus Decision Puts Labor in Crosshairs

**A**fter Janus, what?

The Teamsters say: Get busy, fight back.

Stung by a controversial Supreme Court decision allowing public sector workers to duck union dues, outraged labor leaders warned hostile forces would press their advantage and that private industry could be next.

“By backing the plaintiffs... the high court’s decision is an attempt to limit the collective voices of not only government workers, but those in the private sector as well,” said a Teamsters statement following the decision.

In a 5-4 ruling, the court’s conservative jurors sent a clear message, union officials said – organized labor is in the crosshairs.

GCC/IBT President George Tedeschi denounced the ruling as an “all-out attack on collective bargaining” and IBT General President James Hoffa said the court made it more difficult for workers “to join together and stand up for themselves on the job.”

The court’s decision favors powerful interests at the expense of workers, said Michael Filler, director of the IBT’s public services division.

“By overturning 40 years of judicial precedent, conservative judges endorsed an agenda supported by corporations and the wealthiest in our society to take away the right of public employees to negotiate over wages, benefits and working conditions,” Filler said.

But, vowed Hoffa, the union will respond. “The Teamsters aren’t being caught flat-footed,” he said.

Teamster locals are increasing efforts to bring aboard non-union members who, as a result of Janus, may be tempted to stop paying dues, Hoffa said. “Beefing up internal organizing is the key to combating this latest threat against organized labor.”

GCC/IBT leaders have stressed internal organizing – recruiting within existing union shops – for some time. Tedeschi said the Janus ruling makes such efforts even more important. “We should be organizing everywhere, every day,” he said.

At the same time, labor-friendly elected officials are taking steps to blunt the effect of Janus.

Governor Andrew Cuomo of New York signed an executive order barring state agencies from disclosing contact information for workers at risk of being “shamelessly” intimidated by anti-labor forces.

At the federal level, House and Senate Democrats introduced the Public Service Freedom to Negotiate Act that would protect the rights of public sector workers to bargain collectively.

Decided in late June, the Janus case involved an Illinois state worker and non-union member, who claimed his free speech rights were compromised because he was required to pay an “agency fee” to the American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees (AFSCME).

A 1977 Supreme Court ruling in a case called *Abood* vs. Detroit Board of Education held that non-member public employees were obligated to help defray the cost of union representation. Anti-labor forces immediately sought to undermine the decision.

They got nowhere – until Janus.

Backed by an alliance of conservative groups and right-to-work activists, Mark Janus, the Illinois worker, and his attorneys persuaded a Republican-appointed Supreme Court majority to abandon precedent and overturn *Abood*.

Four conservative jurists – including Neil Gorsuch, President Donald Trump’s first court nominee – were joined by Justice Anthony Kennedy, an occasional swing vote who recently retired from the court, to allow “free riders” the right to union benefits without paying a fair share.

As a result, labor organizations can no longer collect service fees from government workers – a punishing blow at a time when union membership is a fraction of what it once was and costs are mounting.

With fewer funds, union leaders fear they will be less able to hire experts during negotiations and provide robust defense during arbitration hearings.

“Labor organizations are obligated by law to represent everyone in the bargaining unit, member or not,” said Tedeschi. “Now unions have to provide services to non-members but get stiffed when it comes to paying the bill. The ruling is illogical – and just plain unfair.”

# For a Final Time, the Presses Roar

By George Tedeschi  
GCC/IBT President

**O**n June 9, I was at Newsday to see the last edition of the paper printed by its own employees – proud members of Local 406-C – come off the press.

It was one of the saddest days of my life as I am sure it was for many others. My association with the paper goes back nearly 60 years.

Like me, most of my co-workers started as young adults. Some began just out of high school.

We worked with the same people for decades. We became close friends and brother and sister union members – a family.

The jobs were terrific and workers had confidence they could stay at Newsday until retirement.

Circumstances beyond the control of Newsday changed that – faster than anyone might have believed. The Digital Age arrived. Newspapers faced unimaginable challenges. Suddenly, the future was uncertain.

At Local 406-C and the international GCC/IBT, we did everything possible to save jobs and keep Newsday profitable. Working together with our Newsday management partners, we delayed the inevitable for years.

But, finally, the paper determined it had no choice but to close the Melville plant and outsource production and distribution to the New York Times.

It broke my heart.

Thankfully, through productive and amicable negotiations, we were able to make the plant closing less painful for Local 406-C members.

Union president Mike LaSpina, secretary-treasurer Lou Nicosia and the 406 leadership team came to a fair and reasonable agreement with owner Pat Dolan and co-publishers Debby Krenek and Ed Bushey.

But there is no getting around the fact that we suffered a terrible blow: More than 200 full-time workers and 300 part-timers lost their jobs.

Through the efforts of John Heffernan, president of GCC/IBT Local 2-N, New York, and other New York City union leaders, many pressroom employees, truck drivers and other union members found work at the Times, New York Post and New York Daily News. That helped – a lot – and we are grateful to John and the other unions for their help.

Still, it hurts. Newsday's presses no longer roar. The loading docks are empty. Trucks do not head out early each morning to deliver a great daily paper to readers from Queens to the twin tips of Long Island.

I am sad, but proud.

Working at Newsday, and representing its employees, was my privilege.

I want to say thanks – to the friends I made over the years, to the men and women of Local 406-C who devoted themselves to turning out one of the nation's best newspapers, and to the management representatives who showed a spirit of compassion and cooperation in these last difficult days.

Good luck to all, and God bless.



Old friends embraced and reminisced as Newsday presses rolled for the last time – a sad occasion but one that summoned pride. For decades, Local 406-C members produced and delivered one of the nation's top newspapers serving readers from New York City to the North and South forks of Long Island – and became a close 'family' of print industry professionals in the process.



Lou Nicosia, secretary-treasurer of Local 406-C, left, and pressroom foreman Richard Lizzi, were on the floor when Newsday published its final edition. Many Newsday pressroom employees, truck drivers and other union members have found work at the New York Times, New York Post and New York Daily News.

*George Tedeschi is a former journeyman press operator at Newsday and served as president of Local 406-C, Long Island, from 1972 to 2000 when he was elected president of the Graphic Communications International Union. After the GCIU merged with the International Brotherhood of Teamsters in 2005, Tedeschi assumed duties as president of the newly formed GCC/IBT and remains in that post. He also serves as an IBT international vice president-at-large.*

Union and management officials worked for years at Newsday to avoid the cost-cutting and consolidation that became inevitable as readers abandoned the print product and turned to online sources for news.



At one point, employment at Newsday meant a secure job until retirement. Then, faster than anyone might have expected, the world changed and the future suddenly was uncertain. 'It broke my heart,' said GCC/IBT president George Tedeschi, a former Newsday pressman and longtime leader of Local 406-C.

Photos by David Pokress, a Newsday photographer for 35 years and former Local 406-C recording secretary and an editorial unit steward. Pokress retired in 2008 but continues as a free lance photographer whose work appears in Newsday and other publications.

# Midterm Elections Will Set Country's Direction

Every election is important – from school board to the U.S. presidency – but next month's midterms ought to be marked "Top Priority."

On Nov. 6, voters will have their first opportunity to grade the performance of Donald Trump.

The President is not on the ballot but has nationalized the election by campaigning widely and promising to stump "six or seven days a week" for favorite Trumpian candidates.

Could the stakes be higher?

Polls say that with decent voter turnout, Democrats could flip the House of Representatives but victory is far from a sure thing. Seizing the Senate is a long shot.

If the GOP manages to keep its majorities in House and Senate, Trump is sure to claim a mandate.

He will declare a great personal triumph, brag that Americans approve of his swaggering style, turn up the divisive rhetoric and double down on pro-business, anti-worker policies. In other words, things could get a lot worse.

Hasn't this guy done enough damage already?

Trump's tax policy – celebrated as a great break for the middle class – turns out to be a boondoggle for the wealthy. Working class Americans may see a few extra bucks each week. Rich folks are hauling away their rewards in wheelbarrows.

Meanwhile, lost tax dollars have exploded the debt and deficit – and provided Republicans an excuse to target social programs they'll say the country can't afford.



Because of Trump's assault on Obamacare, health costs are ballooning. Republicans even want to eliminate protection for patients with pre-existing conditions. How does that help the little guy?

On the labor front, union members have reason for alarm.

Trump named conservatives to the National Labor Relations Board, wants to slash the Labor Department budget by 20 percent and has his eye on overturning a host of workplace safety regulations.

His picks for the Supreme Court – Neil Gorsuch and Brett Kavanaugh – have long anti-worker records.

Kavanaugh has decided against back pay for employees, ruled that AT&T workers should not be allowed to wear union t-shirts on the job and sided with Verizon when the company sought to ban employees from displaying union signs in their cars.

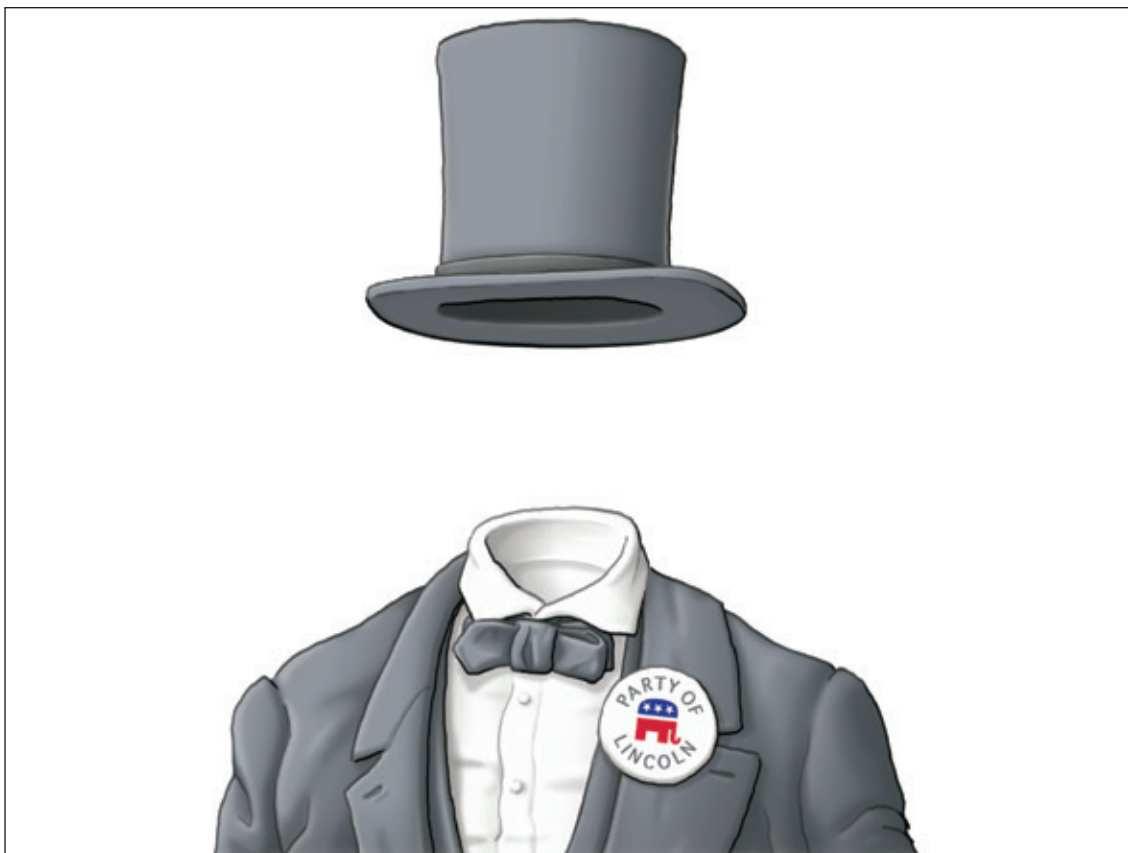
But, Trump fans will say, look at the economy – isn't it booming?

For some, sure.

But funny thing. While Wall Street celebrates, wages for regular folks are barely rising. At the same time, Trump's ill-advised tariffs and hint of a trade war are putting pressure on consumer prices. Who gets the short end? Not Trump's billionaire buddies.

Plenty of union members voted for Trump in 2016 hoping he would be an ally. But his "populist" claims were phony, as the record shows. Trump does what's best for Trump.

Only a solid voter turnout for pro-worker candidates next month will allow Democrats to win back the House and check the excesses of this self-absorbed President. We have to take care of ourselves. Donald Trump won't. ■



CLAY BENNETT - WASHINGTON POST WRITERS GROUP - CARTOONIST GROUP

## Point of View

BY HAROLD MEYERSON

# Economy is Roaring Along In Case You Didn't Notice

America is booming and Americans can't afford it.

We know the good news but experiencing the bad.

As everyone has heard, the economy keeps roaring along. The recovery that began in late 2009 is the longest in modern memory. Unemployment hovers around 4 percent. The sun rises in the East.

That's the big picture.

Closer to earth, the *Wall Street Journal* reports, homes sales are declining, the boom notwithstanding.

Though economists are predicting that the economy in the quarter just ended will have grown by 4 percent, home sales have declined for five of the past six months when compared to their totals one year ago.

A particular weakness in the home-buying market is millennials, whose rate of home-ownership is well below that of previous generations when they were under 35.

Apparently, when you saddle millennials with record levels of student debt and strip them of the kind of employment security their elders experienced, they don't buy houses as their elders once did, either.

The decline in home sales is of a piece with the news that average hourly wages actually declined between June 2017 and June 2018—despite all the new jobs created, despite the unemployment rate continuing to fall.

What should be clear from all this—and this should have been clear for many years—is that low unemployment is a necessary but



insufficient condition for broadly shared prosperity.

To attain that kind of prosperity, where people start buying houses again, we need to make some fundamental changes to our economy—like changing labor law so workers can collectively bargain again, like raising the federal minimum wage, like raising taxes on capital and the rich so that the government can begin investing in public works that bring with them good-paying jobs, like raising the taxes on corporations that funnel all their profits to shareholders instead of paying their employees or investing in productive enterprises, like requiring corporations to give their employees a number of their board seats equal to that of shareholder representatives—like making our capitalism more social, and thereby more functional.

Who knows? Maybe Americans will be able to buy homes again. ■

*Harold Meyerson is a Los Angeles Times columnist and executive editor of The American Prospect magazine. This piece first appeared on The American Prospect website and is published with permission of the author.*

## GOP: Back Off Social Security



Worried that Washington will mess with your Social Security?

Better make sure you vote on Nov. 6.

Republicans have been looking for an excuse to cut the program forever.

Now that the GOP tax bill – mainly favoring the rich – is boosting the debt and deficit, Republicans may have found what they need.

House Speaker Paul Ryan already has hinted that Social Security may have to be slashed to make up for lost federal revenue.

He wants to raise the age for full benefits from 67 to 69 starting in 2030 and change cost-of-living-adjustments to reduce benefits by \$13.9 trillion over that time.

The Speaker is retiring after this year, but his ultra-conservative economic policies are baked into the GOP agenda.

Public interest advocates are on full alert.

“What we continue to worry about is that the next shoe to drop will be Congress saying, ‘Now we have to look at Social Security and Medicare because now we have the ballooning deficit,’” Max Richtman, president of the non-profit National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare, said in the AARP Bulletin magazine.

Republicans also are pushing a balanced budget proposal – one considered unworkable by most economists and another threat to Social Security.

Legislation introduced last spring by the GOP went nowhere but if Republicans hold onto the

House and Senate after next month’s midterm elections, they’ll no doubt try again.

Keep in mind: There’s always a ton of right-wing propaganda claiming Social Security is going broke.

It isn’t – not anytime soon, and, most likely, never.

The system has until 2034 before it has to reduce benefits to 77 percent of what they otherwise would be.

Certainly, it is a worry that 10,000 people a day are reaching retirement age and there are fewer workers supporting them.

But there are solutions like raising the income cap on contributions – now \$128,700 – that, predictably, Republicans won’t consider for fear of offending wealthier Americans.

Instead of taking obvious steps to protect the fund, Republicans want to eliminate taxes on Social Security for affluent retirees – another gift to those who need it least. That move, alone, would decrease revenues drastically and allow the GOP to call again for a reduction in benefits.

Don’t be fooled by the scare-mongering or GOP hype. The party wasn’t in favor of Social Security when Franklin D. Roosevelt signed it into law in 1935. And they still are itching to do damage.

Paul Ryan soon will be gone but his allies remain. Making sure they are in the minority is the best way to protect Social Security. ■

## Guest Spot

BY MIKE HUGGINS

## Duty Calls: Be Sure to Vote Nov. 6

I have been sending emails with one-word messages: Vote.

In conversation with union friends and colleagues, I say the same thing: Vote.

The Nov. 6 mid-term elections will be here before you know it: Vote.

Every election is a call to citizenship. For many reasons, this one is especially important – particularly for union members.

It’s no secret that many in organized labor voted for Republicans and Donald Trump in 2016. I’m not here to second-guess that decision or insult the President or his party.

But I want to be upfront, too. From where I sit, these are dangerous times for organized labor.

We have a situation now where basic workplace safety rules are under attack. Washington wants to undercut the National Labor Relations Board and give companies a break on reporting injuries.

Missouri voters recently killed a right-to-work law but, around the country, politicians tied to big business continue chipping away at collective bargaining rights. There is even talk about a national right-to-work law designed to weaken unions.

Anti-labor judges in federal courts have been installed nationwide at what the Washington Post called “a record pace.” Neil Gorsuch, a jurist with a long pro-business record, now sits on the Supreme Court. Brett Kavanaugh, who has similar views, is likely to be confirmed for the remaining open seat on the nation’s highest tribunal.

In my travels around the country, I see plenty of people under pressure. They are tired of the

status quo and searching for government leaders who take them seriously and offer realistic solutions to their problems.

As union members, we have it better than most. Our contracts guarantee decent pay and workplace conditions. Often, the high standards we demand force non-union employers to treat their employees better.

But for everyone, this is a tense time. We are swamped by upsetting news bulletins and there is a lot of partisan bickering. Sometimes it seems like we are two countries always yelling at one another.

That’s why I try to show respect for every person – union member or unaffiliated, and no matter how a person votes. We are all Americans who want the best for our families and our great country.

So, I’ll repeat my message. As Nov. 6 approaches, live up to your civic responsibilities. Read about the issues and get to know the candidates for local, state and national office. Ask yourself who has your best interests at heart – and who will be a friend of labor and working people.

Make an informed decision and, most important, when Election Day comes: Vote. ■

*Mike Huggins is an international representative of the GCC/IBT.*



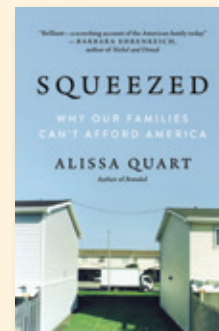
## All the Best

### Print

#### Squeezed: Why Our Families Can't Afford America

Alissa Quart

You wouldn’t know by listening to Republican hype about boom times and a great economy but the American family is hurting – “squeezed” so hard it hurts, according to Alissa Quart, executive editor of the nonprofit Economic Hardship Reporting Project. Good jobs are hard to come by even with low unemployment. Wages are barely budging. Adult children are living with their parents. College grads are driving for Uber. Round-the-clock day care centers serve parents with weird schedules. With sensitivity and a justifiable sense of moral outrage, Quart tells the story of earnest folks who labor day and night but can’t get ahead. Make America Great Again? Start with them. *HarperCollins, \$27.99*



### Video

#### Spotlight

Tom McCarthy, director

With an American president ranting almost daily about “fake news” and “disgusting” reporters, it’s worth remembering the essential role the press plays in U.S. democracy. “Spotlight” recounts how a group of devoted journalists at the Boston Globe bucked local religious and political authorities to reveal years of sexual abuse of young people by members of the Catholic clergy. The movie is informed, authentic, inspiring – and testament to the power of the First Amendment and necessity of an independent press. With outstanding performances by Liev Schreiber as editor Marty Baron and Mark Ruffalo as tireless reporter Mike Rezendes, this 2015 film is a lesson in American values always worth re-learning. Someone should book it for the White House family theater. *Universal Pictures, \$9.99, Amazon.com*



### Music

#### Fly Me to the Moon: The Great American Songbook, Volume 5

Rod Stewart

Americans can be a boastful bunch – sometimes a tad over the top. But no one need apologize for crowing about our music, and particularly the sort interpreted by Rod Stewart on his latest collection – the fifth! – of classics from the American Songbook. Tunes include Cole Porter’s, “I Get a Kick Out of You,” Harold Arlen’s, “I’ve Got the World on a String,” Henry Mancini’s, “Moon River,” and the album’s soaring namesake number, “Fly Me to the Moon,” written by Bart Howard. There’s a swell version of “Beyond the Sea,” too, that shows Stewart at his most endearing – stretching for upper register notes just out of reach, as we all might for the days sweetly recalled by this wondrous music.



### Internet

#### Library of Congress

<https://www.loc.gov/>

From local annex to main branch, libraries are great places but the Library of Congress is something else, again. Not surprisingly this magnificent public institution has a website to match – one offering many riches and a few surprises, too. Among recent offerings were the papers of Frederick Law Olmstead, designer of Central Park in New York and other famous public spaces; a blog on the influence of Latin players in Major League baseball; a piece about musical accompaniments to silent films and an “Ask a Librarian” link that revealed its own bounty of wonders. A public service of such high quality makes you want to shout “hooray” – and tell those who gripe about government to pipe down, grab a seat and take a look.



# 'We're Telling Every Rank-and-File Member

**B**IG ELECTION COMING UP? YOU BET.

All 435 U.S. House seats and 35 in the Senate will be decided Nov. 6. There are gubernatorial contests in 36 states. Around the country, voters will cast ballots in thousands of legislative and local races.

Democrats hope to win back the House and break Republican control of Congress – essential if there is to be a check on the often-unpredictable presidency of Donald Trump

For union members, voting is critical. Organized labor is under attack from right-wing elements in Washington and nationwide. The remedy: Choose worker-friendly candidates and get to the polls on Election Day.

“Apathy is our worst enemy,” said GCC/IBT president George Tedeschi. “Make sure you vote.” Of Special Interest:

Particularly important are Senate battles in four pro-Trump states where Democrats seek re-election. Claire McCaskill (Missouri), Joe Manchin (West Virginia), Heidi Heitkamp (North Dakota) and Joe Donnelly (Indiana), face tough challengers. Any incumbent losses in these contests would make the long-shot chance for Democratic takeover of the Senate even more distant.

## RACES TO WATCH:

**NEVADA:** GOP incumbent Sen. Dean Heller has been considered vulnerable since Hillary Clinton carried Nevada in 2016 thanks to

huge turnout from members of the Culinary Workers Union in Las Vegas. Heller faces first-term Rep. Jacky Rosen, a former computer programmer, who is a member of

Problem Solvers Caucus, a group of Washington legislators working across party lines in hope of finding common purpose and easing partisan tensions.

**ARIZONA:** U.S. Representatives Martha McSally (Republican) and Krysten Sinema (Democrat) are running to succeed retiring GOP Sen. Jeff Flake, whose outspoken criticism of Trump angered his own party members and ended hopes for a re-election bid. Thanks to recent arrivals from Democratic states and a burgeoning population of Hispanic-American voters, Arizona is turning from red to purple and the McSally-Sinema race is a tossup.

**CALIFORNIA:** Here is where a Democratic “blue wave” might be most awesome. Lieut. Gov. Gavin Newsom (Democrat) seems certain to succeed retiring governor Jerry Brown and it looks like several GOP House seats could go to Democrats, too. Because of the state’s peculiar primary system, incumbent Sen. Dianne Feinstein is facing another Democrat, Kevin de Leon, former president of the California state senate, who is running to Feinstein’s left. Both are strong on unions: a no-lose situation for labor.

## The Trump Economy

### Corporate Profits vs. Wages



**T**he economy is booming, right?

Stock market soaring, unemployment down, and President Donald Trump promising even better days ahead.

But the Center for American Progress (CAP) says most Americans have little reason to cheer as midterm elections draw near.

“Trump’s economic agenda has been relentlessly aimed at helping big corporations, the wealthy, and Trump himself at the expense of the rest of us—and it’s succeeding wildly,” said the center.

While Republicans and the White House claim to be the friend of working men and women, CAP reports that “real wages are stagnant and even declining because consumer prices...are rising.”

The GOP tax package – that does so little for ordinary people that Republicans barely mention it anymore – was an outrageous giveaway to business interests, the center said. “...big corporations are stuffing their pockets...and making sure not one drop trickles down.”

For proof, take a look at the CAP chart above – and remember whose pockets are filling up when you vote on Nov. 6.

## Union Members Must ‘Vote Smart’

*Continued from page 1*

– at least in my time – that we can ever have as far as correcting the direction of the country.”

Threats to organized labor are many, GCC/IBT officials warned.

In the Janus “free rider” case, the U.S. Supreme Court’s conservative majority – including Trump appointee Neil Gorsuch – ruled that public employees are not required to pay agency fees to unions. The National Labor Relations Board is dominated by pro-business members. Regulations once enforced by the Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) are being watered down. There are 27 right-to-work states and Trump backs a GOP move to pass a national RTW law.

“Our unions are having a tough time with the current White House resident in office,” said GCC/IBT international representative Mike Huggins.

Analysts generally give Democrats a solid chance of retaking the House of Representatives – if the party can rally voters on Election Day – but winning the Senate represents a far more difficult challenge.

“Make no mistake about it, organized labor understands how crucial it is to get out the vote,” Terry Madonna, a political analyst at Franklin & Marshall College in Lancaster, Pennsylvania, told the Christian Science Monitor. “It’s a crucial element for the Democrats ... to reach out to their working-class voters, voters that they lost in 2016.”

Most worrisome for Democrats – and unions – is the possibility that Republicans hold the House and increase their Senate majority. In that event, analysts say, Trump and the GOP’s zealous Tea Party faction will be emboldened and more anti-labor policies a near certainty.

“The stakes are high on both sides of the aisle,” said an analysis in Bloomberg News. “If Democrats win control of one or both chambers, they can slow the Trump administration’s agenda on a wide range of policy fronts. That could include determining which bills reach the president’s desk for signature and acting as a gatekeeper on judicial and other nominations.”



# How Important This Midterm Election Is'

**MINNESOTA:** Hoping to keep the state house in Democratic control after the retirement of Gov. Mark Dayton is U.S. Representative Tim Walz, a former teacher and union member. He faces pro-Trump Republican Jeff Johnson.

**OHIO:** With anti-Trump governor John Kasich retiring and perhaps considering a 2020 GOP primary bid, state attorney general Richard Cordray, a Democrat, faces current AG, Republican Mike DeWine (R). Organized labor solidly favors Cordray.

**ILLINOIS:** Right-wing GOP governor Bruce Rauner faces Democrat J.B. Pritzker, an heir of the Hyatt Hotel family. Pritzker has maintained a comfortable lead in the polls but undecided voters could remain a factor. Pritzker is endorsed by the Illinois AFL-CIO and several other labor organizations.

**NEW YORK:** Incumbent Democratic senators Chuck Schumer and Kirsten Gillibrand should have no trouble keeping their jobs and, despite a vigorous primary run by former TV actress Cynthia Nixon, a star of "Sex and the City," Gov. Andrew Cuomo looks like a safe bet, too. Far less certain is whether Democrats can pick off Republican House seats on Long Island – where the impact of the GOP tax bill is hitting homeowners hard – and upstate communities that may be tiring of Trump's frequently outrageous antics.

**MARYLAND:** Democratic Sen. Ben Cardin and six of the state's seven U.S. House Democrats likely will coast to re-election. The intrigue is in the governor's race where former NAACP president Ben Jealous is vying with Larry Hogan, the popular and moderate GOP incumbent.

**GEORGIA:** When he was looking for votes in the GOP gubernatorial primary, Brian Kemp, the Georgia secretary of state, bragged he was proudly "politically incorrect," and promised to round up "criminal illegals" in his pickup truck. Now he campaigns as a relative moderate against former house minority leader Stacey Abrams, who is betting that her progressive, pro-education, anti-gun agenda will energize the state's growing Democratic base and make her the first black Georgian – and first woman – to serve as governor. Meanwhile, Ralph Meers, president emeritus of Local 527-S, Atlanta, is running for the state House of Representatives to advance the interests of working people. "Duty dictates that I fight for our values," Meers said.

**FLORIDA:** In a race drawing national attention, Andrew Gillum, the Democratic mayor of Tallahassee backed by progressive icon Bernie Sanders is battling Rep. Ron DeSantis, a Trump loyalist who looked like a sure loser in the GOP primary until – you guessed it – the President tweeted on his behalf. Widely viewed as a referendum on Trump, the contest between right-wing DeSantis, who resigned his Congressional seat to spend more time on the Florida race, and a dynamic black reform candidate could provide a hint of what to expect in this crucial swing state if the President makes good on his vow to seek a second term two years from now.

*Mark Gruenberg of PAI Union News Service contributed to this report.*

Will Brucher, a labor history professor at Rutgers University, told Bloomberg that labor had a lot on the line. "Democratic control in Congress and Democratic control in state houses is very important to many unions," he said. "With Congress, they want to mitigate the damage the Trump administration does to working people with legislation."

At the national convention of the American Federation of Teachers (AFT), president Randi Weingarten made clear the stakes were high in November.

"These elections won't just determine whether Republicans or Democrats prevail, but whether cruelty or decency prevails," she said. "We must be a check and balance for our democracy and for a society that is safe, welcoming and sane." She added: "So when it comes to November 2018, we must be together and we must be all-in..."

Michael LaSpina, president of Local 406-C, Long Island, agreed the election is critical – and that he is urging members to vote for pro-labor candidates.

"We've got to change what's in there," he said. "There's no doubt about it. We're going to talk to the rank and file and convey it to every member how important it is."

He said union members should be reminded that the economic success for which Trump frequently takes credit was set in motion by President Barack Obama, who inherited an economy on the brink of collapse largely because of predatory Wall Street investment practices.

"I think unfortunately members have to see for themselves," Sullivan said of union members who voted for Trump in 2016 against the advice of labor leaders. "I think there's a lot of buyer's remorse. He's done lot of damage here and on the world stage."

Sullivan said it was essential that members remain alert and involved. "We just got to get the vote out," he said. ■

*Zachary Dowdy is a Newsday reporter and editorial unit vice president of Local 406-C, Long Island.*

# IBT and Union Allies Gain Victory for Public Workers

In May, President Donald Trump issued executive orders limiting federal union rights and making it easier to dismiss government employees – a move sure to appease far-right supporters and advance unproven “deep state” conspiracy theories.

But the former reality TV star soon found that hollering, “You’re fired,” may not suit his new role in the White House.

A coalition of unions – the Teamsters and 12 others – challenged the President and, in August, federal Judge Ketanji Brown Jackson threw out key provisions of his orders and ruled that Trump had no authority to “eviscerate the right to bargain collectively” or trample union-negotiated protections.

“It appears that the Heritage Foundation and other like-minded groups misled the President into thinking they could rig the rules and ignore 40 years of labor law,” said Michael Filler, director of the IBT’s public services division which represents 225,000 workers. “This is a victory for all unionized federal workers and we applaud Judge Brown’s ruling.”

Trump’s executive orders – there were three – limited the issues unions could subject to negotiations, restricted the so-called “official time” union officers are allowed on the job, and, perhaps most unfair, reduced from 120 to 30 days the period during which employees could fight disciplinary action or improve performance before dismissal.

A President who for years delighted in knocking contestants off “The Apprentice” may have enjoyed doing the same to government workers but Judge Jackson said Trump had gone too far.

In her 122-page decision, Jackson, of Washington, D.C. district court, said Trump’s orders, “conflict with congressional intent in a manner that cannot be sustained.”

The ruling was hailed by GCC/IBT president George Tedeschi, who emphasized the importance of an independent judiciary.

“In this case and a number of others, President Trump’s worst instincts were met by a strong system of checks and balances,” Tedeschi said. “He’s not running a TV show any more. This is real life and the courts are holding him accountable.”

With a “very well reasoned” decision, Judge Jackson underscored the importance of public sector unions and protections gained by workers through collective bargaining, according to GCC/IBT attorney Peter Leff.

“We are pleased that the court, in striking down most of President Trump’s executive orders... recognized the intent of Congress to grant federal employees the right to bargain collectively and the Trump administration’s attempt to destroy those rights,” Leff said.



Though Trump portrays himself as a friend of working people, Leff said, he frequently acts in contrary fashion.

“The Trump administration says it supports workers but then systematically seeks to destroy their ability to improve wages, benefits and working conditions,” he said. In regard to Trump’s assault on organized labor, Leff pledged: “The GCC and the IBT will remain vigilant.”

In his first State of the Union message in January, Trump said he wanted to “remove federal employees who undermine the public trust or fail the American people.”

The statement was widely interpreted as a reference to what Trump and far right conspiracy theorists call the “deep state” – a shadowy federal bureaucracy that Trump and his most ardent backers claim, without proof, is plotting to destroy his Presidency.

“Very clearly the administration is trying to do all it can to weaken the role of public employee unions,” Donald F. Kettl, a public policy professor at the University of Texas at Austin, told the New York Times. “It’s part of a far broader strategy, that’s in many ways bubbling up from the states, to turn the civil service into at-will employment.”

Judge Jackson’s verdict is not likely to be the last word. The White House seems certain to appeal – all the way to the Supreme Court, if necessary.

“This is why we urge people to study the issues and vote,” said Tedeschi. “You are not only selecting a senator or House member or President when you go to the polls but, in effect, judges at every level including the Supreme Court.” The midterms are almost here. Vote! ■

## NLRB Seeks \$2.2 mil News-Press Judgment

By Dawn Hobbs  
Special to the Communicator

The National Labor Relations Board has scheduled a hearing Nov. 5 to obtain an order requiring that the embattled Santa Barbara News-Press pay \$2.2 million to compensate newsroom employees for unfair labor practices the paper’s owner and management repeatedly committed over the last decade.

It was the latest development in an ongoing effort by the GCC/IBT to gain justice for News-Press editorial workers following a successful union drive in September, 2006.

Eight newsroom staffers were fired for union activities during the campaign but the NLRB’s demand for damages will not benefit those individuals.

Standing to gain if the NLRB recommendation for damages survives a likely company challenge are other workers affected by additional unfair labor practices committed by the News-Press and multi-millionaire owner, Wendy McCaw.

The NLRB ruled in favor of the employees and last year the U.S. Circuit Court of Appeals in Washington, D.C. upheld the board’s ruling. Now an administrative law judge must decide on what penalty – the \$2.2 million, or any part of it – should be assessed.

Included in the complaint are charges that the company unlawfully fired two more employees, bargained in bad faith, halted its practice of granting annual merit raises, and used temporary and freelance employees to deny newsroom employees work.

“We are pleased with the latest NLRB determination but regret that eight brave people who suffered for their union activities 12 years ago still have not been fairly compensated for their losses,” said GCC/IBT president George Tedeschi. “We are forever grateful to them for their courage and determination.”

The eight reporters were found by the NLRB to have been victims of unfair labor practices and to be entitled to back pay and reinstatement, but that finding was overturned by three Republican judges on the District of Columbia Court of Appeals in 2012.

This meant the case of the original eight, which made national headlines and inspired a documentary film called, “Citizen McCaw,” was over and that they would receive no money from the current case.

“We were fighting for basic job rights and byline protections, and we had organized a community-wide boycott to force McCaw to recognize the union,” said Melinda Burns, a newsroom union leader who had worked at the paper for 22 years before she was terminated



for union activities. “McCaw falsely claimed we were trying to take over the newsroom, in violation of her First Amendment rights as publisher.”

The recent NLRB recommendation that \$2.2 million be paid in compensation provides some satisfaction to those involved in the initial case, according to Burns.

“We’re pleased that some current newsroom employees and many of our colleagues who left the paper will finally be compensated in some measure for what they lost,” Burns said.

The board wants McCaw to pay \$936,000 for her illegal practices of hiring nonunion temporary workers and freelancers; \$705,000 in back pay for two employees laid off or fired; \$222,000 for employees

whose merit pay she suspended in reaction to the union’s election victory, and \$186,000 to reimburse employees for any tax increases linked to these one-time paybacks.

Finally, the board wants McCaw to reimburse the GCC/IBT for \$183,000 in expenses that the union incurred during what the board determined was bad faith negotiations on the part of the News-Press from 2007 to 2012.

“The remedies the NLRB is now pursuing would go a substantial distance toward correcting – albeit belatedly – some of the wrongs committed by News-Press management, restoring hundreds of thousands of dollars in lost wages and costs that the employees and the GCC/IBT should not have incurred due to its monumental wrongdoing,” said union attorney Ira Gottlieb.

Nick Caruso, a GCC/IBT international representative who serves as chief negotiator in the News-Press contract talks, said the NLRB’s latest recommendation was a welcome development.

“The union is pleased that the NLRB is finally moving forward toward actually getting relief into the hands of workers who have been harmed by multiple unfair labor practices over many years,” Caruso said. “This is a positive step toward addressing the mistreatment inflicted on several current and former News-Press employees.”

In accordance with the March 2017 court order, the News-Press and the GCC/IBT returned to the bargaining table and have narrowed the disputed issues down to a handful of economic items.

If these matters are resolved, the parties will reach a settlement on terms for a first-time contract after more than a decade of intense and bitter fighting, which began in September 2006 when the employees overwhelmingly voted for the union in a representation election. ■

## STEWARD TRAINING: 'EVERYONE LEARNS'

A "fast-paced and educational" shop steward training seminar recently held at the IBT headquarters in Washington, D.C., provided valuable instruction on how to succeed as effective union representatives – and left participants inspired and energized.

"Stewards are the front line in protecting the rights our members have and it's training like this that gives them the knowledge and ability to do just that," said GCC/IBT Secretary-Treasurer/Vice President Kurt Freeman.

Shop steward training cannot be overvalued, Freeman said. "Some were new in this role and some were veterans, but they all walked away having learned something."

The popular seminar was held in August and attended by 25 shop stewards from four GCC/IBT locals whose members work at the U.S. Government Publishing Office and Bureau of Engraving and Printing in Washington, including 1-C, 4-B, 285-M, 713-S.

The program was put together by Myron Sharp, IBT training director, and facilitated by Bill Munger, IBT eastern region training coordinator.

Discussions focused on the roles and responsibilities of the shop steward



GCC/IBT stewards working at government printing offices met for training at IBT headquarters in Washington, D. C. 'All walked away learning something,' said Kurt Freeman.

IBT PHOTO

and breakout sessions emphasized techniques for handling grievances..

Tyler Longpine, IBT political director, brought the group up to date on federal and state legislation and the importance of the upcoming elections.

If you would like to host a steward training event at your local, contact Freeman at [kfreeman@gciu.org](mailto:kfreeman@gciu.org) or 202-508-6662.

## MEERS PRESSES GEORGIA HOUSE BID

Ralph Meers, who served 50 years as a GCC/IBT local president in Atlanta, is showing the sort of fortitude in his bid for the Georgia House of Representatives that he did as a fearless union organizer in the South.

Though he continues to play an active role in Local 527-S as president emeritus and secretary-treasurer, Meers announced last spring that he was running for office – a sign of commitment to the common good and belief that his state and country are in crisis.

"These upcoming elections will be one of the most important elections – at least in my time – that we can ever have as far as correcting the direction of the country so that we can protect humanity," Meers said.

If elected, Meers wants to push for a livable wage; clear a pathway to immigrant citizenship; free education at public colleges and technical schools and stricter gun laws.

His progressive agenda might be a tough sell in a Republican, right-to-work state but Meers is undaunted.

"We need livable wages and a social net to help people when they get knocked down," Meers said.

GCC/IBT locals, other labor unions and Georgia's Democratic Party are working tirelessly to turn out the vote Nov. 6, Meers said.

"We've got to change the direction of the country," Meers said. "We deserve better."

Donations to the Meers campaign may be sent to Ralph M. Meers, P.O. Box 2585, Dallas, Georgia 30132. For more information, check [www.ralphmeers.com](http://www.ralphmeers.com) or email [ralph.meers@gmail.com](mailto:ralph.meers@gmail.com)



Ralph Meers

## 'FAKE NEWS' – FOR REAL!

Reporters are supposed to be impartial observers at news events but what happens when roles are reversed?

As the North American Newspaper Conference meeting in Scottsdale, Arizona, drew to a close earlier this year, GCC/IBT president George Tedeschi, who serves as editor of the Graphic Communicator, summoned his city room "staff" to the dais.

That meant Fred Bruning, the paper's managing editor, general assignment reporter and utility infielder who was covering the NANC event.

Tedeschi presented Bruning a plaque that once hung in the GCC/IBT's old headquarters on "L" Street in Washington, D.C. that said, "Graphic Communicator Information Department."

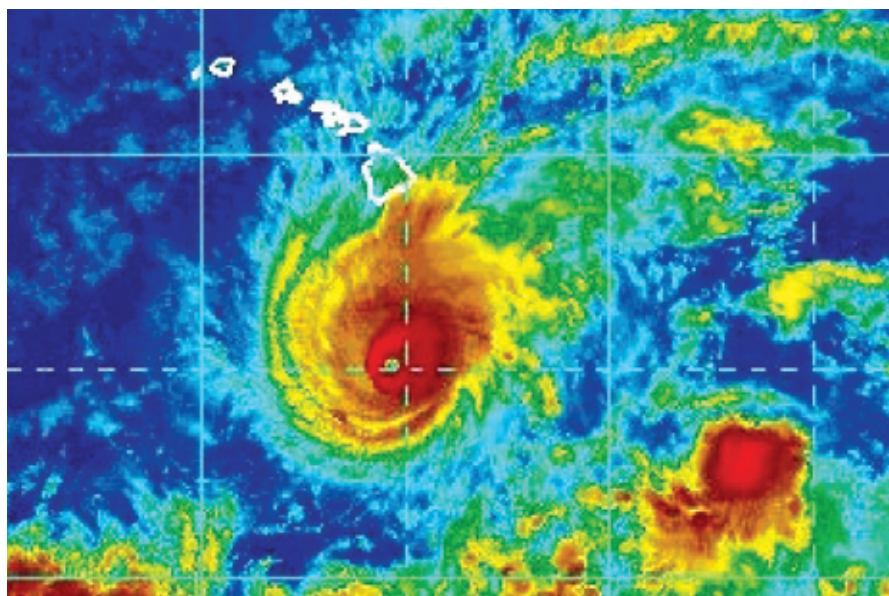
An inscription thanked Bruning for his work on the paper since taking over in 2006 following the retirement of managing editor Herald Grandstaff, who had been in charge for 18 years.

Bruning gave credit to reporters Zack Dowdy of Local 406-C and West Coast freelancer Dawn Hobbs who regularly contribute to the paper, and returned to the one-man press gallery.

The NANC meeting continued.

"No fake news," Tedeschi ordered.

"Only the facts," promised Bruning.



## HELP FOR 'BIG ISLAND' HURRICANE VICTIMS

Only days after the destructive Kilauea Volcano eruption settled over the summer, the Hawaiian Islands were hit by Hurricane Lane.

When James Kimo Laroya, Jr., learned the Red Cross needed help, he threw on his Teamster 996 T-shirt and headed to the high school gymnasium in Honolulu where an evacuation center had been set up.

But this wasn't any ordinary evacuation center. It was for the homeless who had been displaced from the area shelter and brought in from the streets due to the threat of the Category 4 hurricane.

By 7:30 p.m., the lights were dimmed and the 150 or so evacuees were drifting off to sleep. But the piercing sound of fire alarms sent everyone scrambling. The high winds had knocked down a transformer that started a fire.

The center had to evacuate briefly before hurricane victims were able to return.

"It was a little much, but we did it," Laroya, business agent for Local 996 which absorbed members of GCC/IBT Local 501-M a few years ago.

Damage to Honolulu on the island of Oahu was minimal but Hilo, on the eastern side of the island of Hawaii and known widely as the "Big Island," endured 52 inches of rain, floods and mudslides in its rain forest.

Laroya volunteered at the evacuation center, along with his wife and two children and said it's important for labor to get involved in their communities.

"I wore my union t-shirt because I wanted to be recognized out there and for people to see that I'm affiliated with the Hawaii Teamsters," he said. "It's important to volunteer and to try to keep people safe and sane."

Local Stops wants to hear from you. If your GCC/IBT local has been involved in organizing efforts, community outreach or volunteer work, e-mail a brief summary to reporter Dawn Hobbs at [dawnhobbs@cox.net](mailto:dawnhobbs@cox.net) or call 805-284-5351.

## Les chefs syndicaux évoquent le grand enjeu des élections « cruciales » de mi-mandat

Par Zachary Dowdy  
Collaboration spéciale au Communicator

À l'approche des élections « cruciales » de mi-mandat, les dirigeants de la CCG-FIT et d'autres syndicats s'activent pour faire comprendre à leurs membres l'importance de l'enjeu du 6 novembre – notamment la sécurité d'emploi, les soins de santé et les protections fondamentales des travailleurs – et leur dire qu'ils ne peuvent se permettre de se tenir à l'écart.

« Le message que j'adresse à chacun de nos membres est simple : votez et avec intelligence, explique George Tedeschi, président de la CCG-FIT. Cela n'a rien à avoir avec le fait d'être républicain ou démocrate. Il s'agit d'élire des gens qui se soucient des travailleurs, qui ont conscience de la grande valeur du travail syndiqué et qui seront là quand on aura besoin d'eux. Nous avons beaucoup d'ennemis à Washington. Il nous faut plus d'amis. »

Selon les responsables locaux, comme Steve Sullivan, président de la section locale 3-N de Boston, et de nombreux analystes politiques, les élections de mi-mandat offrent une occasion unique de faire obstruction aux mesures antisyndicales prônées par la Maison-Blanche ainsi que les législateurs et les gouverneurs républicains du pays.

« Il faut essayer de contrôler dans une certaine mesure le président Donald Trump, indique S. Sullivan. Je pense qu'en reprenant la Chambre ou le Sénat, nous serons mieux à même de faire contrepoids. »

Le vote des syndiqués est crucial, selon Ralph Meers, président émérite et secrétaire-trésorier de la section locale 527-S d'Atlanta, qui est candidat à la Chambre des

représentants de la Géorgie dans l'espoir d'introduire une autre voix pro-syndicale au sein de l'Assemblée législative de l'État.

« Nous avons beaucoup à perdre en nous abstenant de voter pour changer l'orientation du pays, précise R. Meers. Les prochaines élections seront parmi les plus importantes – du moins en ce qui me concerne – pour corriger la direction que le pays a prise. »

Les dirigeants ont mis en garde contre les nombreuses menaces qui planent sur les syndiqués.

Dans l'affaire des « resquilleurs » Janus, la majorité conservatrice de la Cour suprême des États-Unis – dont Neil Gorsuch qui a été nommé par Trump – a décrété que les fonctionnaires ne sont pas tenus de verser des cotisations aux syndicats. Le Conseil national des relations du travail est dominé par des membres pro-affaires. Les règlements instaurés à une époque par l'Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) sont en train d'être éliminés. Il y a 27 États partisans du droit au travail et Trump appuie un mouvement républicain visant à faire adopter une loi nationale sur la question.

« L'actuel locataire de la Maison-Blanche mène la vie dure à nos syndicats », estime Mike Huggins, représentant international de la CCG-FIT.

D'une façon générale, les analystes pensent que les démocrates ont de bonnes chances de reprendre la Chambre des représentants – si le parti arrive à rallier les électeurs le jour de l'élection – mais ce sera bien plus difficile de gagner le Sénat.

« Les travailleurs syndiqués savent à quel point il est essentiel de voter,

fait remarquer Terry Madonna, analyste politique au Franklin & Marshall College à Lancaster, Pennsylvanie, au Christian Science Monitor. C'est crucial pour les démocrates... de rejoindre les travailleurs, des électeurs qu'ils ont perdus en 2016. »

Les démocrates – et les syndicats – craignent surtout que les républicains puissent dominer la Chambre et accroître leur majorité au Sénat. Si cela devait arriver, estiment les analystes, Trump et le Tea Party, la faction zélée du parti républicain, auront les coudées franches et sont quasiment assurés d'instaurer d'autres politiques antisyndicales.

Selon une analyse parue dans Bloomberg News, « les enjeux sont grands de part et d'autre. Si les démocrates gagnent le contrôle d'une ou des deux chambres, ils vont pouvoir freiner le programme de l'administration Trump en ce qui concerne de nombreuses politiques. Cela pourrait consister notamment à décider des projets de loi qui aboutissent sur le bureau du président pour être ratifiés et à contrôler les nominations des juges et autres. »

Will Brucher, un professeur d'histoire syndicale à l'Université Rutgers, a indiqué à Bloomberg que le mouvement syndical a du pain sur la planche. « C'est très important pour de nombreux syndicats que les démocrates contrôlent le Congrès et les chambres des États. Le Congrès leur permettra d'atténuer les torts que l'administration Trump cause aux travailleurs par le biais des lois. »

Lors du congrès national de l'American Federation of Teachers (AFT), la présidente Randi Weingarten a clairement fait savoir l'importance de ce qui est en jeu en novembre.

« Ces élections vont décider qui, des républicains et des démocrates mais aussi de la cruauté et de la décence, l'emportera. Nous devons faire contrepoids pour notre démocratie, et pour une société sécuritaire, accueillante et saine. En novembre 2018, il nous faudra donc faire corps et nous impliquer tous... »

Michal LaSpina, président de la section locale 406-C de Long Island, est aussi d'avis que ces élections sont cruciales – et il exhorte les membres à voter en faveur de candidats pro-syndicats.

« Nous devons changer l'état actuel des choses. Cela ne fait aucun doute. Nous allons parler aux syndiqués et faire comprendre à chacun à quel point c'est important. »

Selon lui, il faut rappeler aux syndiqués que la réussite économique dont Trump s'approprie souvent le mérite a été mise en branle par le président Barack Obama, qui avait hérité d'une économie sur le point de s'effondrer surtout à cause des pratiques prédatrices de Wall Street en matière d'investissements.

« Je pense que les membres en ont malheureusement fait le constat, explique S. Sullivan à propos des syndiqués qui ont voté pour Trump en 2016 contre l'avis des dirigeants syndicaux. Je crois que beaucoup regrettent leur choix. Il a fait beaucoup de dégâts ici et sur la scène mondiale. »

Selon lui, c'est essentiel que les membres restent vigilants et impliqués.

« Il faut simplement voter. »

Zachary Dowdy est journaliste à *Newsday* et vice-président de l'unité de rédaction de la section locale 406-C à Long Island.

## Urgen voto laboral masivo en las 'cruciales' elecciones de noviembre

Por Zachary Dowdy  
Especial para *The Communicator*

Se aproximan unas elecciones a mitad de mandato que van a ser cruciales y los líderes de GCC/IBT y de otros sindicatos se están esforzando porque sus membresías sepan bien que, entre otras cosas, el 6 de noviembre están en juego la seguridad en el empleo, la atención médica y las protecciones básicas en el lugar del trabajo, y que no pueden permitirse el lujo de no participar.

«El mensaje que tengo para todos y cada uno de nuestros miembros es sencillo: vote y vote inteligentemente», dijo George Tedeschi, presidente de GCC/IBT. «No es una cuestión de republicanos o demócratas. Se trata de que ocupen los cargos funcionarios elegidos que se preocupen por la gente, que aprecien el gran valor de los sindicatos y que respondan cuando los necesitamos. En Washington tenemos muchos enemigos. Necesitamos más amigos».

Funcionarios locales como Steve Sullivan, presidente de la Local 3-N basada en Boston, y muchos analistas políticos dicen que las elecciones a mitad de mandato ofrecen una rara oportunidad de contrarrestar las políticas antisindicales que están propulsando la Casa Blanca y los legisladores y gobernadores republicanos en todo el país.

«Se trata de intentar imponer algún control al presidente Donald Trump», dijo Sullivan. «Creo que si recuperamos la Cámara o el Senado tendremos más oportunidad de aplicar mecanismos de control y contrapeso».

Es importantísimo que voten los miembros de los sindicatos, dijo Ralph Meers, presidente emérito y secretario-tesorero de la Local 527-S, Atlanta, que se está postulando para la Cámara de Representantes de Georgia con la esperanza

de añadir una voz pro-sindical más a la legislación del estado.

«Tenemos mucho que perder si no salimos a votar y cambiamos el rumbo del país», dijo Meers. «Estas elecciones que vienen serán unas de las más importantes que vamos a tener nunca, al menos a lo largo de mi vida, en cuanto a poder enderezar el rumbo del país».

Son muchas las amenazas que pesan sobre los sindicatos, advierten los funcionarios de GCC/IBT.

En el caso Janus, sobre el cobro de cuotas a los 'free riders' (trabajadores no sindicalizados pero representados), la mayoría conservadora de la Corte Suprema de Estados Unidos (incluido Neil Gorsuch, nombrado por Trump), decidió que los empleados públicos no tienen obligación de pagar cuotas de representación a los sindicatos. La Junta Nacional de Relaciones Laborales está dominada por miembros que apoyan a las empresas. Se están debilitando las regulaciones que anteriormente hacía cumplir la Administración de Salud y Seguridad Ocupacionales (OSHA). Hay 27 estados que reconocen el derecho a trabajar y Trump está apoyando una propuesta de ley para su institución a nivel nacional.

«Nuestros sindicatos están librando una dura batalla con quien preside desde la Casa Blanca», dijo Mike Huggins, representante internacional de GCC/IBT.

En general, los analistas dicen que los demócratas tienen buenas posibilidades de recuperar la Cámara de Representantes, si el partido puede movilizar los votos el día de las elecciones, pero ganar en el Senado es un reto mucho más grande.

«Que no nos quepa duda, el movimiento sindical sabe bien lo importante que es

que los votantes vayan y voten», le dijo Terry Madonna, analista político de Franklin & Marshall College en Lancaster, Pennsylvania, al Christian Science Monitor. «Es crucial que los Demócratas tiendan la mano a sus votantes de la clase trabajadora, a los votantes que perdieron en 2016.»

Lo más preocupante para los Demócratas, y para los sindicatos, es la posibilidad de que los Republicanos sigan dominando en la Cámara y aumenten su mayoría en el Senado. En tal caso, dicen los analistas, Trump y el Tea Party, la facción extremista del Partido Republicano, se envalentonarán, lo que con casi seguridad resultará en más políticas anti-sindicales.

«Los riesgos son altos para ambos partidos», indica un análisis en Bloomberg News. «Si los Demócratas toman control de una o ambas cámaras, podrán frenar la agenda de la administración Trump en una gran variedad de frentes y políticas. Por ejemplo, en la determinación de cuáles leyes llegan a la mesa del presidente para su firma, o controlando la puerta de paso en las nominaciones para jueces y otros cargos.»

Will Brucher, profesor de historia laboral de Rutgers University, le dijo a Bloomberg que los sindicatos se estaban jugando mucho. «El que los Demócratas controlen el Congreso y controlen las cámaras estatales es muy importante para muchos sindicatos», dijo. «Con el Congreso, quieren mitigar el daño que la legislación de la administración Trump les causa a los trabajadores».

En el congreso nacional de la Asociación Americana de Maestros (AFT), la presidenta Randi Weingarten dejó bien clara la importancia de lo que está en juego en noviembre.

«Estas elecciones no solo van a determinar

si ganan los Republicanos o los Demócratas, sino también si gana la crueldad o la decencia», dijo. «Tenemos que ser una fuerza de control y contrapeso en nuestra democracia y para tener una sociedad segura, acogedora y cuerda». Añadió: «De modo que cuando llegue noviembre de 2018, es necesario que estemos todos unidos y comprometidos...»

Michal LaSpina, presidente de la Local 406-C, en Long Island, estuvo también de acuerdo en que estas elecciones son críticas, y dijo que está urgiendo a los miembros a votar por candidatos que apoyen a los sindicatos.

«Tenemos que cambiar lo que hay ahí», dijo. «No cabe la menor duda. Vamos a hablar con la membresía y a dejarle claro a cada miembro lo importante que esto es».

Dijo que a los trabajadores sindicalizados hay que recordarles que las mejoras económicas por las que Trump a menudo se atribuye el mérito fueron impulsadas por el presidente Barack Obama, que heredó una economía a punto del colapso debido en gran medida a las prácticas de inversión depredadoras de Wall Street.

«Lamentablemente, creo que los miembros necesitan sufrir las consecuencias en carne propia», dijo Sullivan aludiendo a los miembros que votaron por Trump en 2016 en contra de lo recomendado por los líderes sindicales. «Creo que hay muchos arrepentidos por ahí. Ha hecho mucho daño, aquí y en el escenario internacional».

Sullivan dijo que era esencial que los miembros se mantuvieran alertas y comprometidos.

«Sin remedio, tenemos que movilizar los votos», dijo.

Zachary Dowdy es reportero de *Newsday* y vice-presidente editorial de la local 406-C, Long Island.

# In Memoriam

Listed here are GCC/IBT members for whom death benefits were paid, according to the Membership Department of the office of the GCC/IBT secretary-treasurer. Locals wishing to list members who died but did not participate in the death benefits program should contact the Graphic Communicator.

| Local                                               | Date of Death | Local                                             | Date of Death |
|-----------------------------------------------------|---------------|---------------------------------------------------|---------------|
| <b>Death Benefit Claims Paid<br/>September 2016</b> |               |                                                   |               |
| 1B Doris B Kelm                                     | 11-19-15      | 508M John Roark Jr                                | 08-10-16      |
| 1C Paul J Moore                                     | 05-20-16      | 518M Frances A Ballew                             | 12-04-15      |
| 1L Charles V Barkowski                              | 08-07-16      | 518M Robert J Masters                             | 08-23-16      |
| 1L Herbert Bokser                                   | 06-27-15      | 518M Nell L Reynolds                              | 08-15-16      |
| 1L Lillian M Brighton                               | 05-26-16      | 518M Kedric A Robinson                            | 07-17-16      |
| 1L Phillip A Cecere                                 | 08-21-15      | 543M Daniel C Pettengill                          | 06-25-16      |
| 1L Eva J Conway                                     | 04-11-13      | 546M William A Aquino                             | 10-09-15      |
| 1L Nicholas J Diruzzo                               | 02-10-16      | 555M Marthe Carrier                               | 03-22-15      |
| 1L Gilbert F Heckel                                 | 08-07-16      | 555M Micheline St-Jean                            | 07-14-16      |
| 1L William E Hoesten, Sr                            | 08-21-16      | 568M Earl G Hagaman                               | 08-04-16      |
| 1L Richard V Maino                                  | 05-28-13      | 572T Robert S Ziemer                              | 07-19-16      |
| 1L Ruby Ragin                                       | 11-20-15      | 577M John K Blackburn                             | 12-08-15      |
| 1L Charles J Roback                                 | 07-08-15      | 577M Martin J Cimbalknik                          | 07-27-16      |
| 1M Claude A Saari                                   | 07-26-16      | 577M Dale D Jelinek                               | 08-07-16      |
| 2N John Collins                                     | 08-05-16      | 577M James O Kofler                               | 03-21-16      |
| 2N Joseph F Heyer                                   | 07-10-16      | 577M William R Page                               | 07-10-16      |
| 2N Joseph M Loftus                                  | 06-22-16      | 853T Margarito V Enriquez                         | 02-18-16      |
| 3N John R Arrigo                                    | 07-25-16      | 853T Anthony E Martin                             | 07-06-16      |
| 3N Francis A Delage                                 | 08-03-16      | 853T Walter H Petrini                             | 01-20-16      |
| 3N George W Dupuis Jr                               | 06-08-16      | 853T John P Swan                                  | 06-04-16      |
| 3N David W Kelley                                   | 07-04-16      | 853T Charles O Ulbrich                            | 06-19-16      |
| 4B Vincent E Washington, S                          | 05-25-16      | 999ML Charmaine Angierski                         | 03-07-16      |
| 4C Emilio E Marcolongo                              | 08-08-16      | 999ML Earl R Balyeat                              | 07-03-16      |
| 13N Walter B Bragg                                  | 07-14-16      | 999ML Jeannette B Barciniak                       | 07-26-15      |
| 13N James J Bruder                                  | 08-10-16      | 999ML Max W Betz                                  | 08-12-16      |
| 13N John C Edgeworth                                | 08-01-16      | 999ML Robert L Brush                              | 02-11-16      |
| 13N Robert J Roy, Sr                                | 06-09-16      | 999ML Betty M Buchanan                            | 02-26-16      |
| 14M Thomas A Dawson                                 | 08-04-16      | 999ML Joseph J Cvrkel                             | 08-04-16      |
| 14M Thomas J Meshanic                               | 07-18-16      | 999M Tommy Damon                                  | 08-15-15      |
| 24M Fontaine E Devictor                             | 03-18-16      | 999ML Frederick A Frasco                          | 08-09-16      |
| 24M John V Piechocki                                | 07-20-16      | 999ML Donna J Hogan                               | 08-18-16      |
| 58M Marie I Finley                                  | 12-04-15      | 999ML James A Long                                | 06-26-16      |
| 77P Harold C Breaker                                | 08-13-16      | 999ML Joseph T Murphy                             | 10-26-15      |
| 77P Shubert A Everts                                | 07-03-16      | 999ML John Schechterle                            | 11-02-15      |
| 77P Frank L Giebel                                  | 09-21-15      | 999ML Florence Wesolowski                         | 10-03-15      |
| 77P Kathleen L Oehlke                               | 08-14-16      | 2289M Ronald L McAuliffe                          | 08-12-16      |
| 100M Ralph S Humphrey                               | 10-14-15      | 2289M Susie Bell Waterman                         | 07-07-16      |
| 119B George E Cummings                              | 05-13-16      | 6505M Matthew A Alfano                            | 08-12-16      |
| 197M Joseph C Stephenson                            | 05-21-16      | 6505M Robert H Brodski                            | 06-22-15      |
| 235M Leon R Cueni                                   | 08-13-16      | 6505M Bernard J Honigfort                         | 04-02-15      |
| 235M Mary L Stadler                                 | 08-11-16      | 6505M Dwayne Madison                              | 08-28-15      |
| 355T Dale L Houtz                                   | 08-22-16      | 6505M Johnny McGlone, Jr                          | 07-28-16      |
| 458M Albert V Buffa                                 | 04-14-16      | <b>Death Benefit Claims Paid<br/>October 2016</b> |               |
| 458M Roy B Hiera                                    | 05-20-16      | 1B Bonnie J Dickinson                             | 07-10-15      |
| 458M Michael F Izban                                | 07-01-16      | 1B Janice M Nesvig                                | 06-25-16      |
| 458M Joseph Karas                                   | 08-08-16      | 1B Helen Pruitt                                   | 09-12-16      |
| 458M Donald J Lovetere                              | 10-05-15      | 1B Thomas A Smith                                 | 04-09-16      |
| 458M Ronald O Nelson                                | 06-04-16      | 1B Audrey V Walters                               | 01-28-16      |
| 458M Tony T Permanian                               | 08-02-16      | 1B Marion L Westphal                              | 09-05-16      |
| 458M Eugene A Prindle                               | 08-01-16      | 1L Joseph T Bellina                               | 08-21-16      |
| 458M Richard D Zindrick                             | 08-18-16      | 1L William F Boehmer, III                         | 08-22-16      |

| Local                     | Date of Death | Local                                              | Date of Death | Local                      | Date of Death | Local | Date of Death |
|---------------------------|---------------|----------------------------------------------------|---------------|----------------------------|---------------|-------|---------------|
| 1L Vincent Lacorte, Jr    | 05-23-16      | 518M Marjorie A Bybee                              | 08-24-16      | 17M Joseph Rivera          | 10-19-16      |       |               |
| 1L Clyde F Mcmurdy        | 12-03-15      | 518M Robley Joseph Green                           | 07-20-16      | 17M Ethel M Stevenson      | 10-06-16      |       |               |
| 1L Eric G Pedersen        | 03-07-15      | 546M James T Dyer                                  | 09-09-16      | 77P Thomas P Kasten        | 09-12-16      |       |               |
| 1L Irvin E Sherwood       | 05-12-16      | 546M James L Melcher                               | 07-30-16      | 77P Bonnie R Peterson      | 10-15-16      |       |               |
| 1L Leo W Smolinsky        | 09-08-16      | 550M Charles G Brailey                             | 09-13-16      | 119B Frank Destefano       | 01-01-15      |       |               |
| 2N Edward J Chiarelli, Sr | 08-06-16      | 555M Monique Giard                                 | 08-27-16      | 135C Douglas A Good        | 09-13-16      |       |               |
| 2N Jeremiah Mahoney       | 08-01-16      | 555M Rodrigue Soucy                                | 05-16-16      | 197M Glenn A Stinebaugh    | 02-08-16      |       |               |
| 2N Charles F Quigley      | 08-17-16      | 555M Ange-Albert Thibert                           | 09-25-16      | 235M Grant H Arnold Jr     | 02-28-15      |       |               |
| 2N John Valek             | 09-02-16      | 555M Albert E Whitteron                            | 08-25-16      | 285M Stanley L Grove       | 02-26-16      |       |               |
| 3N Robert L Arel, Sr      | 05-14-15      | 571M Joseph A Conner, Sr                           | 09-12-16      | 285M Bernard P Voith       | 09-09-16      |       |               |
| 3N Paul R Barry           | 06-02-16      | 572T Felix P Castillo                              | 08-29-16      | 355T Jack A Flynt          | 09-22-16      |       |               |
| 3N Theodore C Bartlett    | 09-20-16      | 572T Robert G Lee                                  | 08-13-16      | 388M William P Garrison    | 09-22-16      |       |               |
| 3N George F Oliver Jr     | 05-11-06      | 572T Donald L Rehfeldt                             | 09-03-16      | 458M Richard J Bahr        | 10-02-16      |       |               |
| 3N Thomas E Sullivan      | 08-29-16      | 572T Robert S Ziemer                               | 07-19-16      | 458M George J Bakiares     | 10-09-16      |       |               |
| 4C Mercedes Vazquez       | 06-10-15      | 577M Robert Foti                                   | 03-30-16      | 458M Dieter W Eisenstaedt  | 03-24-16      |       |               |
| 8N Arthur M Shine, Jr     | 08-25-16      | 577M Robert L Philopulous                          | 01-06-16      | 458M Philip Forman         | 10-31-15      |       |               |
| 13N Elden L Dean          | 06-24-16      | 612M Irene Barnett                                 | 09-02-16      | 458M Donald A Franks       | 09-23-16      |       |               |
| 13N Thomas J Kozlowski    | 09-08-16      | 612M Maurice T Perilli Jr                          | 03-22-16      | 458M Billy G Gammon        | 09-28-16      |       |               |
| 13N Robert L Wilson       | 03-15-16      | 853T Benjamin K Carson                             | 09-05-16      | 458M James Gonzalez        | 12-25-15      |       |               |
| 16N James F Austin        | 08-23-16      | 853T Marion Dale Harris                            | 04-20-16      | 458M Richard A Jensen      | 09-14-16      |       |               |
| 16N Larry A Magarace      | 09-15-16      | 853T Harry B King                                  | 08-01-16      | 458M James J Lullo         | 08-18-16      |       |               |
| 17M Arthur L Kronewitter  | 04-18-16      | 853T James P Mcevoy                                | 09-20-15      | 458M Leroy C Maday         | 10-11-16      |       |               |
| 24M Mildred A Gernat      | 09-13-16      | 999ML Lawrence G Clark, Jr                         | 05-25-16      | 458M Charles E Mohr        | 10-24-16      |       |               |
| 27C Gerald North          | 04-06-16      | 999ML Jack W Lanier                                | 10-25-15      | 458M John H Ortmann        | 09-24-16      |       |               |
| 72C Melvin Ogle           | 05-13-16      | 999ML Harry J Metzidakis                           | 05-30-16      | 458M John E Rzeszotko      | 10-10-16      |       |               |
| 72C Deiter P Reins        | 08-07-16      | 999ML Robert T Young                               | 04-28-16      | 458M Edward L Sullivan     | 10-30-16      |       |               |
| 77P Frederick C Arno      | 09-01-16      | 2289M Robert J Cope                                | 09-15-16      | 458M Reynaldo T Villagomez | 02-17-15      |       |               |
| 77P William A Beyer       | 09-10-16      | 2289M Helen May Kabacinski                         | 12-10-13      | 458M William R Zlatos      | 09-14-16      |       |               |
| 77P Stanley E Miller      | 08-25-16      | 2289M Adolph J Kuhn                                | 08-31-16      | 508M Harry L Bunning       | 09-26-16      |       |               |
| 77P Lester D Seefeldt     | 09-06-15      | 2289M Kenneth Kurkowski                            | 08-26-16      | 508M Harry A Schopp Jr     | 09-07-16      |       |               |
| 100M Gary B Holt          | 07-28-16      | 2289M Craig R Millard                              | 09-10-16      | 508M Stanley A Stemm Jr    | 10-18-16      |       |               |
| 119B Gertrude Frankel     | 12-23-15      | 4535M Jack S Torrence                              | 08-29-16      | 514M Donald W Bright       | 09-02-16      |       |               |
| 119B James Lizzio         | 06-21-16      | 4535M Robert Loy Weeks                             | 09-08-16      | 514M David E Hibinger      | 12-04-15      |       |               |
| 119B Daniel W Young       | 05-03-16      | 6505M Edward T Amass, Sr                           | 07-25-16      | 518M Robert L Morrison     | 10-16-16      |       |               |
| 137C Thomas P Dundas      | 08-09-16      | 6505M Robert J Chapie                              | 07-13-16      | 527S Margaret L Harris     | 08-05-16      |       |               |
| 197M James M Caruthers    | 08-16-15      | 6505M Robert P Jansen                              | 11-14-14      | 546M Lefe Elwood Kirby     | 09-28-16      |       |               |
| 235M James H Rogers       | 08-22-16      | 6505M James H Rosswoog                             | 09-24-16      | 546M Nancy G Schulz        | 03-14-13      |       |               |
| 241M Donato C Alu         | 09-12-16      | 6505M Robert C Schmidt                             | 09-06-16      | 550M Martin J Schnur       | 08-13-07      |       |               |
| 241M Betty J Loomis       | 10-05-16      | 6505M Herbert P Schopp                             | 09-16-16      | 568M Betty R Wasson        | 07-30-16      |       |               |
| 261M Clyde E Kieh         | 07-18-16      | <b>Death Benefit Claims Paid<br/>November 2016</b> |               |                            |               |       |               |
| 261M Clarence E Maher     | 07-08-16      | 1B Sandra K Freeman                                | 09-21-16      | 572T Kenneth E Mcpherson   | 07-06-16      |       |               |
| 285M Jo Anne Morris       | 09-15-16      | 1L Donald E Cottrell                               | 09-21-16      | 575M Allan W Pendleton Jr  | 09-14-16      |       |               |
| 355T Henry F Michel       | 08-25-16      | 1L Walter H Jobst, Sr                              | 05-10-06      | 612M Antoinette Spiotto    | 10-23-16      |       |               |
| 388M Frederick H Hill     | 07-24-16      | 1L Peter T Kowalczyk                               | 10-05-16      | 670C Phillip N Joyner      | 09-12-16      |       |               |
| 388M Armando P Lopez      | 08-29-16      | 1L Julius J Kulikowski                             | 09-23-16      | 670C Vance D Perry         | 10-06-16      |       |               |
| 388M Grady I Willis       | 09-12-16      | 1M Gregory J Brunes                                | 09-04-16      | 853T Vallie M Flanders     | 08-01-16      |       |               |
| 406C John L Consolatore   | 11-23-15      | 1M Albert J Mangine                                | 07-11-16      | 853T Dolores R Gabbert     | 04-29-16      |       |               |
| 406C Howard M Mouzakes    | 09-12-16      | 1M Lloyd D Schneider                               | 07-31-16      | 853T Kenneth D Jeffords    | 09-23-16      |       |               |
| 432M Gabriel Fernandez    | 05-19-16      | 1M Ivan H Snyder                                   | 07-22-16      | 999ML Jacqueline E Boston  | 10-05-16      |       |               |
| 458M Robert E Barger      | 08-08-16      | 1M Albin M Zaverl                                  | 04-05-16      | 999ML Pearl M Guy          | 11-24-15      |       |               |
| 458M Frank A Bilo         | 08-16-16      | 3N Robert T Connolly                               | 07-04-16      | 999ML William S Hall       | 10-21-16      |       |               |
| 458M Hubert D Campbell    | 03-21-16      | 3N James P Kilroy                                  | 10-07-16      | 999ML Alice Kawaler        | 06-20-16      |       |               |
| 458M Henry T Dyszel       | 09-19-16      | 3N Hilda C Latessa                                 | 09-06-16      | 999ML Byron C Slavens      | 09-29-16      |       |               |
| 458M Joseph N Guerra      | 09-10-16      | 3N Gerald M Patla                                  | 10-16-16      | 2289M Harlan R Wells       | 10-03-16      |       |               |
| 458M Joseph L Judge       | 09-13-16      | 3N Edward T Ryan                                   | 09-23-16      | 4535M Daniel L Olle        | 09-26-16      |       |               |
| 458M Steven G Karlovits   | 08-18-16      | 4B Ernest H Wines, Jr                              | 01-27-10      | 6505M Richard J Hayes, II  | 04-28-15      |       |               |
| 458M Norman U Miller      | 12-24-15      | 8N Frank Baeli                                     | 10-07-16      | 6505M Joseph W Rotty       | 09-28-16      |       |               |
| 493M Lyle J Dixon         | 09-11-16      | 14M Catherine Hunter                               | 10-21-16      | 6505M Wilburn E Yarbrough  | 01-25-16      |       |               |
| 493M David D Gallaher Jr  | 09-24-16      | 14M James W Toogood Jr                             | 10-05-16      |                            |               |       |               |
| 508M Alfons Bertig        | 08-23-16      | 16N Robert Dougherty, Sr                           | 04-23-16      |                            |               |       |               |
| 508M James B Daniels      | 09-05-16      | 16N William J Hearn                                | 10-04-16      |                            |               |       |               |
| 508M Eugene R Kenney      | 05-27-16      |                                                    |               |                            |               |       |               |
| 508M Joseph R Weber       | 09-13-16      |                                                    |               |                            |               |       |               |
| 514M Robert E Johnson     | 09-04-16      |                                                    |               |                            |               |       |               |

## NOTICE ON WORKER OBJECTIONS TO AGENCY FEES

Annual notice is hereby given of the policy on worker objections to agency fees which has been adopted by the General Board in response to the United States Supreme Court's 1988 decision in Beck v. CWA. The policy sets forth a formal procedure by which an agency fee payer may file an objection to the payment of that portion of his or her dues which is attributable to expenditures for activities which are not germane to collective bargaining. The policy applies only to agency fee payers who work in the United States. The policy applies to the Conference, district councils, and local unions.

Agency fee payers (also referred to as "financial core members") are those individuals covered by a union security agreement who meet their financial obligations by paying all dues, fees, and assessments, but elect not to become or remain actual members of the union. Agency fee payers may not exercise the rights of membership such as running for union office, electing union officers, ratifying contracts, and voting on strikes. They may be eligible to receive strike benefits if they are participants in the Emergency and Special Defense Fund, but they are not eligible to receive benefits from the Graphic Communications Benevolent Trust Fund whose benefits are for members only.

The policy adopted by the General Board includes the following elements:

1. The agency fee payable by objectors will be based on the expenditures of the Conference, district councils, or local unions for those activities or projects normally or reasonably undertaken by the union to advance the employment-related interests of the employees it represents. Among these "chargeable" expenditures are those for negotiating with employers, enforcing collective bargaining agreements, informal meetings with employer representatives, discussing work-related issues with employees, handling employees' work-related problems through the grievance procedure, administrative agencies, or informal meetings, and union administration. Based upon an independent audit by the Conference's auditors, it has been determined that seventy-six and eight-one hundredths percent of the Conference's expenditures for the year ending December 31, 2017 were for such activities. Because at least as great a proportion of district council and local union total expenditures are spent on "charge-

able" activities as are spent by the Conference, in calculating the amount of local union dues to be paid by objectors, district councils and local unions may exercise the option of presuming that the Conference's percentage of chargeable activities applies to the district council or local union also. Alternatively, district councils or local unions may calculate their own percentage of chargeable activities.

2. Objectors will be given an explanation of the basis for the fee charged to them. That explanation will include a more detailed list of categories of expenditures deemed to be "chargeable" and those deemed to be "nonchargeable" and the accountants' report showing the Conference's expenditures on which the fee is based. Objectors will have the option of appealing the union's calculation of the fee, and a portion of the objector's fee shall be held in escrow while he or she pursues that appeal. Details on the method of making such a challenge and the rights accorded to those who do so will be provided to objectors with the explanation of the fees calculation.

3. Objections for the year 2019 must be filed on or before December 31, 2018 for current agency fee payers unless a prior objection was filed on a continuing basis. Timely objections are for one year and will expire on December 31, 2019 unless they are filed on a continuing basis. Objections filed on a continuing basis will be honored until they are revoked. If an employee is not an agency fee payer, the employee must assume non-member status and file an objection to be eligible for a reduction of dues for the period beginning with the timely receipt of the objection. New employees who wish to object must not obtain member status and must file an objection within thirty days of first receiving notice of this policy for a reduction of dues for the period beginning with receipt of a timely objection.

Objections should be sent to the attention of the Agency Fee Administrator, Office of the Secretary-Treasurer, Graphic Communications Conference/IBT, 25 Louisiana Avenue NW, Washington, DC 20001. The objection should be signed and contain the objector's current home address, place of employment, and district council and/or local union number. Copies of the full text of the procedures for worker objections to agency fees are available upon request from the Agency Fee Administrator.

# Show-me State Voters Declare Right-to-Work is Wrong

Corporate executives in Missouri and their Republican partners made passing right-to-work legislation a long-time priority. Last year they succeeded. Victory was fleeting.

By a 2-1 margin, Show-me State voters rebelled and nixed the measure in August sending GOP lawmakers scrambling for answers and drawing cheers from labor leaders.

"Voters across Missouri let anti-worker lawmakers know they won't be pushed aside so these elected officials can continue to line their pockets with corporate campaign dollars," Teamsters General President James Hoffa said. "Working Missourians understand the power of unions and how they help bring a better quality of life to union and non-union workers alike."

For organized labor, it was an inspiring win after recent setbacks.

Particularly worrisome was a Supreme Court decision in June finding that public employees could not be forced to pay union dues even while benefiting from collective bargaining contracts – the so-called Janus "free rider" case.

Janus added to woes brought by passage of right-to-work laws in several states – the total now is



Voters nixed Missouri's right-to-work law by a wide margin. "Truth drove this campaign," said IBT leader Jim Kabell.

27 – and a move led by GOP governor Scott Walker to limit collective public sector bargaining rights in Wisconsin.

But the Missouri vote – in a red state where Donald Trump beat Hillary Clinton by more than 18 percentage points in 2016 – offered hope that the fortunes of organized labor were improving.

"We needed this one," said GCC/IBT President George Tedeschi. "What the Missouri outcome showed is that by sticking together, never losing faith

and fighting hard, we can overcome the conservative campaign against unions and working people."

Missouri voters gained an opportunity to nullify a measure passed by the legislature and signed by then-governor Eric Greitens, a Republican, because state law allows a referendum if, in timely fashion, approximately 100,000 residents sign petitions demanding public review.

A story in the New York Times echoed the idea that Missouri's rejection of right-to-work may have broader implications for organized labor.

"The victory in Missouri aligns with other tentative signs of a labor revival," the Times said. "Among them are polls showing rising popular support for unions and an uptick in membership in teachers' unions after walkouts in several states during the past school year."

Teamsters, union activists and supporters gathered 310,000 signatures and the "right-to-work-for-less" law was headed for an Aug. 7 showdown.

"People weren't fooled by right to work," said Jim Kabell, president of the Missouri-Kansas-Nebraska Conference of Teamsters and Joint Council 56. "The truth drove this campaign. People understood the truth and voted."

## 'Tremendous Victory' on Tariffs

Struggling with deep losses in advertising revenue and circulation, American newspapers took another major hit when the Trump administration imposed tariffs on Canadian newsprint early this year – a move that threatened to put smaller papers out of business and force larger publications to cut back on coverage.

Then unions – including the GCC/IBT and its Teamster partners – began fighting back. It worked.

In a 5-0 decision, the United States International Trade Commission ruled in late August that Canadian newsprint does not threaten American industry and nixed a Commerce Department order imposing tariffs as high as 20 percent on coated groundwood paper imported from Canada.

"We should celebrate a tremendous victory for workers in the newspaper and commercial printing industries," said GCC/IBT president George Tedeschi. "Tariffs affected a range of businesses – from weekly papers to job shops – that employ our members. Good sense has prevailed."

If Trump's penalties had been allowed to stand, newspapers would have had little choice but to "cut production, print fewer pages and shift more of their content – and subscribers – to digital platforms," said Kurt Freeman, GCC/IBT secretary-treasurer/vice president. Some commercial plants also would have been in peril, he said.

The ITC ruling avoids that disastrous outcome, Freeman said, and illustrates the power of the IBT and its allies in organized labor. "Our collective voices were heard," he said.

Tariffs were imposed in January after North Pacific Paper Company (NORPAC), located in Washington State but owned by a New York hedge fund, complained that Canadian paper companies were undercutting the market.

Union leaders spoke out strongly, members signed online petitions and, on Capitol Hill, a bipartisan group of legislators introduced a measure aimed at stalling the tariffs. In a letter to David Johanson, the ITC chairman, Teamsters general president James Hoffa urged that the tariffs be reviewed and warned of the "potential adverse effect" on the print industry and its workers.

As part of the pushback, Tedeschi, IBT international vice president George Miranda and Joe Molinero, director of the Teamsters newspaper, magazine and electronic media workers conference, sought help from one of NORPAC's biggest investors – the New York State Common Retirement Fund.

In a letter to New York State Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli, the GCC and IBT officials said tariffs initiated at the request of North Pacific Paper threatened thousands of Teamster jobs in New York and posed a potential "investment risk" to the state retirement fund, which is a limited partner of One Rock Capital Partners, owner of NORPAC.

The union leaders asked DiNapoli to contact One Rock and urge that the NORPAC tariff request be withdrawn. DiNapoli said the retirement fund could not influence One Rock's policies but promised to "monitor the situation" and asked that the Teamster officials remain in touch.

"We got our point across," Tedeschi said.



## It Pays to be the Boss

Guess who got a really nifty raise last year? While earnings for average workers hardly budged, annual pay for CEOs took off like a corporate jet.

Taking into consideration bonuses, stock grants and incentive payouts, bosses at the 350 largest U.S. firms made \$18.9 million on average, according to the Economic Policy Institute – a 17.6 percent increase over 2016.

That means top executives earned 312 times more than workers, EPI noted. In 1965, the ratio was 20-to-1. In 1989, bosses made 58 times the pay of regular employees.

Some bosses did even better – big time.

The Guardian newspaper reported that McDonald's CEO Steve Easterbrook earned \$21.7 million while his hamburger helpers earned a median wage of \$7,017 – a ratio of 3,101-to-1.

Average pay for Walmart workers was \$19,177 in 2017, the Guardian said. Meanwhile, CEO Doug McMillon copped \$22.8 million – 1,188 times the reward of folks stocking the shelves.

Especially perplexing is that there appears no connection between executive pay and corporate performance, EPI says.

"CEOs are getting more because of their power to set pay, not because they are more productive or have special talents or more education," EPI said. "If CEOs earned less or were taxed more, there would be no adverse impact on output or employment."

Lower rates for execs might mean a little more for everyone else.

"Exorbitant CEO pay... means that the fruits of economic growth are not going to ordinary workers," said EPI.

Last year, it was a bumper crop for bosses. Workers faced slim pickings – again.



# Welcome Home



Whether you are in the market to purchase a home or refinance an existing mortgage, **Union Plus offers two mortgage providers** designed to help union families. Every mortgage provides hardship assistance in case of disability, layoff, lockout, or strike.

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Isaac Long



Ryan Flanigan



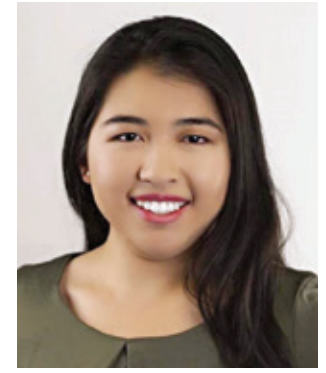
Catherine Guckert



Thomas Nguyen



Natalie Prusovic



Emily Ramirez

# Scholarship Winners Have All the Right Stuff

All the impressive young people from GCC/IBT families awarded James R. Hoffa Memorial Scholarships this year are shooting for the stars – and one means it literally.

**Isaac Long**, stepson of Stacy Marshall, Local 508-M, Cincinnati, a paper cutter and baler at National Church Solutions, Chester, West Virginia, is majoring in physics at Ohio Northern University with a concentration in astronomy.

“He wants to be an astrophysicist and work for NASA,” said Isaac’s mother, Michele Marshall.

And, she says, Isaac, 18, who won a \$1,000 award, has all the right stuff.

“He’s very driven to do well academically and in life,” said Marshall. “I never had to tell him to do his homework. He’s just very determined.”

Persistence and dedication characterize the Hoffa winners.

“They are the sort of terrific kids who make their parents and the whole union family proud,” said GCC/IBT President George Tedeschi. “Congratulations to all.”

In addition to Isaac Long, these GCC/IBT students were scholarship recipients:

**Ryan Flanigan**, 18, son of Michael Flanigan, Local 508-M, Cincinnati, a graphic designer at Stevenson Color Inc., is a finance major at the University of Kentucky and hopes for a career as a hedge fund manager. At Newport Central

Catholic High School, in Newport, Kentucky, Ryan was on the baseball team and pep club, served as captain of the mock trial team and was selected for the Governor’s Scholars Program. Ryan, a \$10,000 scholarship winner, said he is grateful to his father’s union for providing “great benefits” that aid the family’s financial security.

**Catherine Guckert**, 18, daughter of Thomas Guckert, a journeyman press operator at the Pittsburgh Post-Gazette and member of Local 24M/9N, is studying at Mercyhurst University in Erie, Pennsylvania. Her major is intelligence studies, with a second major – this one in cybersecurity – to come next year. Catherine, a \$1,000 award winner, wants to work in the field of counter-terrorism for the FBI. She says her dad’s GCC/IBT membership has been important to her family and that organized labor can lift non-union workers, too. “It sets the standards for other jobs,” she said.

**Thomas Nguyen**, 18, the son of Thanh Ha Nguyen, Local 14-M, Philadelphia, a material handler at Sharp Corporation, Conshohocken, Pennsylvania, said he was really “surprised” to learn he had won a \$10,000 Hoffa award. Thomas has an outstanding portfolio by any measure: At Upper Darby High School he was a member of the robotics team, lunar planetary research club, and medical research club. A freshman at Pennsylvania State University, Thomas is majoring in astronomy and hopes

for a career in research. Hard work pays off, Thomas said. “No matter what, keep trying.”

**Natalie Prusovic**, 19, who won a \$1,000 scholarship, is pursuing chemical engineering at the University of Dayton in Ohio. Her father, Nickolas Prusovic, Local 546-M, Cleveland, works as a machine operator at CCL Industries in Strongsville, Ohio. Natalie, a member of the marching band and captain of the girls bowling team at Padua Franciscan High School in Parma, Ohio, also is interested in drama. “She’s a perfectionist,” said her mother, Barbara Prusovic. “She wants to do well and is working hard for it.”

**Emily Ramirez**, 18, earned the highest honor in Girl Scouting – the Gold Award – while keeping pace with a packed schedule at Royal High School in Simi Valley, California. The daughter of Gustavo Gonzalez Ramirez, Local 388-M, Los Angeles, a shipping clerk at International Paper in Camarillo, California, Emily was in the Air Force Junior ROTC and drama club and participated in the United States Academic Decathlon competition. She also served on the Simi Valley Youth Council advisory board. Emily, winner of a \$10,000 Hoffa scholarship, is a freshman at Pomona College, Claremont, California, and intends to major in mathematics or economics. She is grateful to be in a GCC/IBT family. “It helps my father sleep at night knowing he will go to work the next day and the union is there to protect him.”

# Stars and Stripes Forever at Booming Union T-shirt Shop

By Dawn Hobbs  
Special to the Communicator

It all started about two decades ago when Mark Grover, a truck driver and member of Chicago-area IBT Local 703, began selling t-shirts out of the back of his maroon 1996 Chevy Camaro.

The curbside business turned into Stars and Stripes, a union silk-screen and embroidery shop in Bridgeview, Illinois in 1997.

But a couple years ago, Grover and his wife, Elizabeth Bauer-Grover, had trouble getting enough domestically produced t-shirts to fill orders for their 9,000 customers nationwide.

That’s when they decided to start American Manufacturing, which makes t-shirts from scratch and where employees – like workers at Stars and Stripes – are members of GCC/IBT Local 458-M, Chicago.

The industrious couple didn’t stop there.

American Manufacturing, which opened in 2016, now designs and produces more than 60 items, including high-visibility jackets and safety vests, police jackets and hats, heavy-weight bib overalls, insulated construction and duck jackets, and medical scrubs.

And, if they don’t have it, they’ll custom make it.

“This is what unions are based on – keeping Americans working and not buying foreign products made in sweatshops that are killing our jobs in the U.S.,” Grover said. Sometimes, he said, even labor unions buy apparel from overseas. “People have to stop buying imports,” he said.

When outsourcing began, Grover said, jobs were mainly going to Mexico. But now, he said, companies send work to many countries where employees make pennies compared to the \$9.50 hourly starting pay apparel industry workers typically earn in the United States.

Grover hired his seamstresses from a company that was closing, he said, upped their pay to \$13 per hour and signed a three-year GCC/IBT contract with them. He started with eight and now has 16 seamstresses on top of about 20 other employees who do office and marketing work. They anticipate having more than 100 employees by 2020.



PHOTOS BY ALFONSO SALINAS



PHOTOS BY ALFONSO SALINAS

Former IBT trucker Mark Grover and his wife, Elizabeth Bauer-Grover, launched American Manufacturing in Bridgeview, Illinois, when demand for their Stars and Stripes t-shirts outpaced supply. With production workers represented by GCC/IBT Local 458-M, Chicago, business is expanding and Grover plans to nearly triple his labor force by 2020. The owners say offering American-made goods is the ‘key’ to success.



PHOTO BY MARK GROVER

“We offer dental, medical, pension, sick days, holidays, you name it,” he said. “We try to take care of our employees and show them there’s a light at the end of the tunnel.” His wife, who is founder and president of the company, agrees.

“The key to our country’s success is to continually support the American workforce which drives the economy,” said Elizabeth Bauer-Grover. “Taking away jobs stateside will not only weaken our economy but can ultimately destroy our future,” she said.

GCC/IBT leaders said they are proud to be representing the shop.

“Local 458-M is honored to be affiliated with a shop that can produce 100 percent American made goods,” said Mike Consolino, president of District Council 4 and vice-president of Local 458-M. “All local unions should strive to use a company like American Manufacturing to support American union workers when purchasing items.”

For more information or to order items, visit [www.amfgi.com](http://www.amfgi.com) or <https://ss-ink.com/>