

TWU EXPRESS

TRANSPORT WORKERS UNION OF AMERICA, AFL-CIO • UNITED INVINCIBLE • JUNE 2018 • VOL. 70 • NO. 5



Ready For Takeoff

**JetBlue Inflight Crew Members
Vote To Join TWU**



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The Audacity to Fight

In every industry across our country, we continue to see the rights of working people chipped away again and again. For decades, management and politicians joined forces to try and break the backs of the trade union movement. They fear the power that working people have when we stand united, shoulder to shoulder. They repeatedly attack us. Slowly and methodically, they've degraded the gains our predecessors won to grant all of us a better life today. And if the trade unions do not recognize this right now and aggressively begin to take on our enemies, working Americans may very well be doomed.

At the TWU International Convention in September, I spoke in-depth about the necessity for the TWU to relearn the fightback culture that is part of our DNA. We were organized and chartered around the idea that workers could only beat the bosses if we joined forces and engaged in actions to defend our livelihoods. Let us never forget these truths: the bosses are not our friends – they never were and they never will be. The only ones looking out for our interests are us – ourselves alone. Not the Republicans, not the Democrats and certainly not the employers. It's all up to us and we must fight day and night to secure the protections we need for our families.

If we do not have the backbone to fight, we will lose. It's that simple. Whether it's the double threat of privatization and automation in the transit industry or the outsourcing and offshoring of our jobs in the airlines, we are facing several watershed moments. We must rise to the occasion, otherwise we will quickly sink. If we do not fight back and fight back smartly, robots will be driving our buses on city streets across America and unqualified mechanics making three bucks an hour will be maintaining our aircraft in foreign countries.

Some might say we are being dramatic. I would ask anyone who says that to go talk to the women and men of JetBlue who just joined the TWU. Ask them if they have to fight and claw to achieve what are basic workers' rights. And that's from a so-called benevolent employer. I would ask anyone who doubts the severity of the current political and economic climates to look at the consequences at Southwest when unqualified mechanics on foreign soil are given the task of keeping us and our families safe. If we ever hesitate, if we ever give the benefit of the doubt, if we ever for a moment think things will just work themselves out, the bosses will take away everything we have fought to earn. They certainly won't stop trying to plunder our jobs, so we can never stop fighting back.

When I took over leadership of this union, I made a promise to aggressively defend the membership of the TWU and take on the entities that endanger our livelihoods. I've spent the last 12 months fighting battles on several fronts and encouraging local unions to do the same. We proved with our contract victory at Allegiant and our organizing victory at JetBlue that incredible outcomes occur when working people come together and unite in pursuit of a common goal.

We must stay organized. We must stay united. Most importantly, we must have the audacity to fight back against those who would harm us.

"If we ever hesitate, if we ever give the benefit of the doubt, if we ever for a moment think things will just work themselves out, the bosses will take away everything we have fought to earn. They certainly won't stop trying to plunder our jobs, so we can never stop fighting back."



@transportworker

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In Solidarity,

John Samuelson
International President

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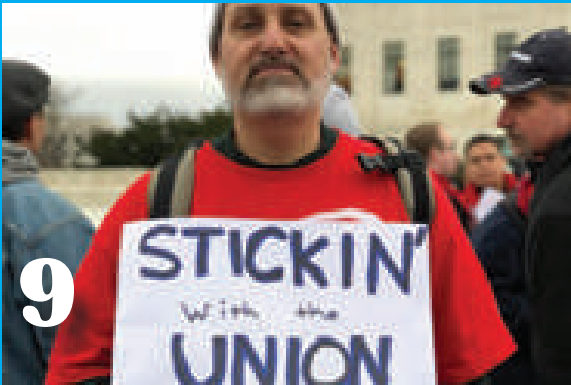
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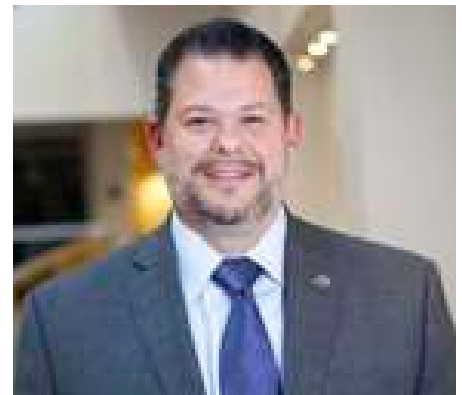
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International President



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International Administrative Vice President



MIKE MAYES

International Administrative Vice President

After Decades of Dedicated Service, Gary Maslanka and John Bland Retire

Gary Maslanka, former TWU International Secretary Treasurer and John Bland, former TWU International Vice President, have retired after decades of serving TWU members.

At a reception during the Transit, Universities, Utilities and Services Division Officers' and Presidents Conference in Boston in mid-May, Maslanka and Bland received warm praise and commemorative plaques for their years of dedicated union work.

"Thank you to a lot of people, can't mention everyone's name, staff, officers – it has truly been an honor and a pleasure to work with so many people," Maslanka said. "It has been an honor to represent the membership and engage in so many battles."

Maslanka became a TWU member in 1974. He said his decision to retire was "one of the most difficult" of this life.

"We go through different periods and different leadership. They say union politics is the worst kind of politics out there. But it is truly important for me to



Gary Maslanka

say, it was a difficult decision because I stepped away at a time when we have a leader like none we have

ever seen before," Maslanka said. "John Samuelsen brings so much to the table and is so committed with insight. He brings with him good, sound leadership. That's a good note to leave on."

Maslanka plans to spend his time off with Kathy, his wife of 37 years. He also leaves a living legacy in the union – his daughter, Catherine is a proud TWU member.

Maslanka gave a special thanks to the Railroad Division, where he served as Staff Representative from September 1998 to August 2004, and Division Director from August 2004 to November 2017.

"Brian Delucia and John Feltz. John's been with me for a lot of years, by my side and I could not find a better person to work with, he never fails."

Bland Honored

John Bland joined the TWU back when Mike Quill was leading the union. Bland has been a leader in civil rights since his youth, when he led a sit-in at Texas Southern University in March 1960.

"It's been a great journey," Bland said. "Took a few days off but [I] am now working as a consultant and am still Director of Civil and Human Rights."

"Your contributions have provided a permanent foundation for equality in our union," read a commemorative plaque. "Your accomplishments will be forever celebrated in the TWU."

Bland had a special message to his wife, "Thank you for allowing me to be away from you during the Lord's work," as well as current TWU members, "Anything you need, give me a call. Let's go!"



John Bland

Local 555 and TWU *Expand Fightback Training for Southwest Members*

In partnership with the International, TWU Local 555 in Dallas, Texas continues to expand its Fightback Training efforts in opposition to excessive discipline actions by Southwest Airlines. Discipline cases have almost doubled over the last four years, with Local 555's gate agents, provisioning workers, ramp workers and cargo workers reporting excessive and increasing discipline and harassment. TWU is the largest labor union at Southwest Airlines. Local 555 signed a five-year contract with the company in 2016.

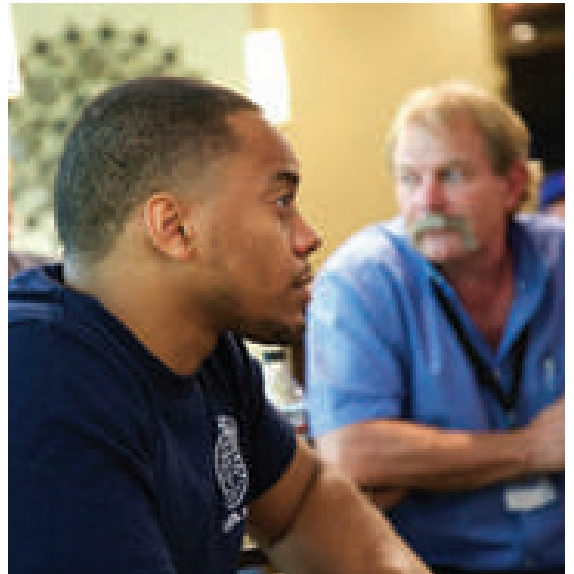
In July 2017, TWU International President John Samuelson and more than one dozen other TWU leaders wrote a letter to Southwest CEO Gary Kelly calling the company to task on "intolerable and cancerous" working conditions for the carrier's ground workers and denouncing mistreatment of groundworkers, including 2,700 disciplinary actions and 468 terminations since January 2015. According to the letter, this translates to Southwest writing up three workers per day and firing one worker every other day.

Local 555 has worked in conjunction with the International to develop and launch a national campaign entitled "More LUV, Less Discipline," a play on Southwest Airline's LUV ticker symbol on the New York Stock Exchange. The program has offered fightback training to members at all Southwest Airline hubs, including (but not limited to) Houston, Orlando, Denver, Los Angeles, Oakland, St. Louis, Las Vegas and Dallas.

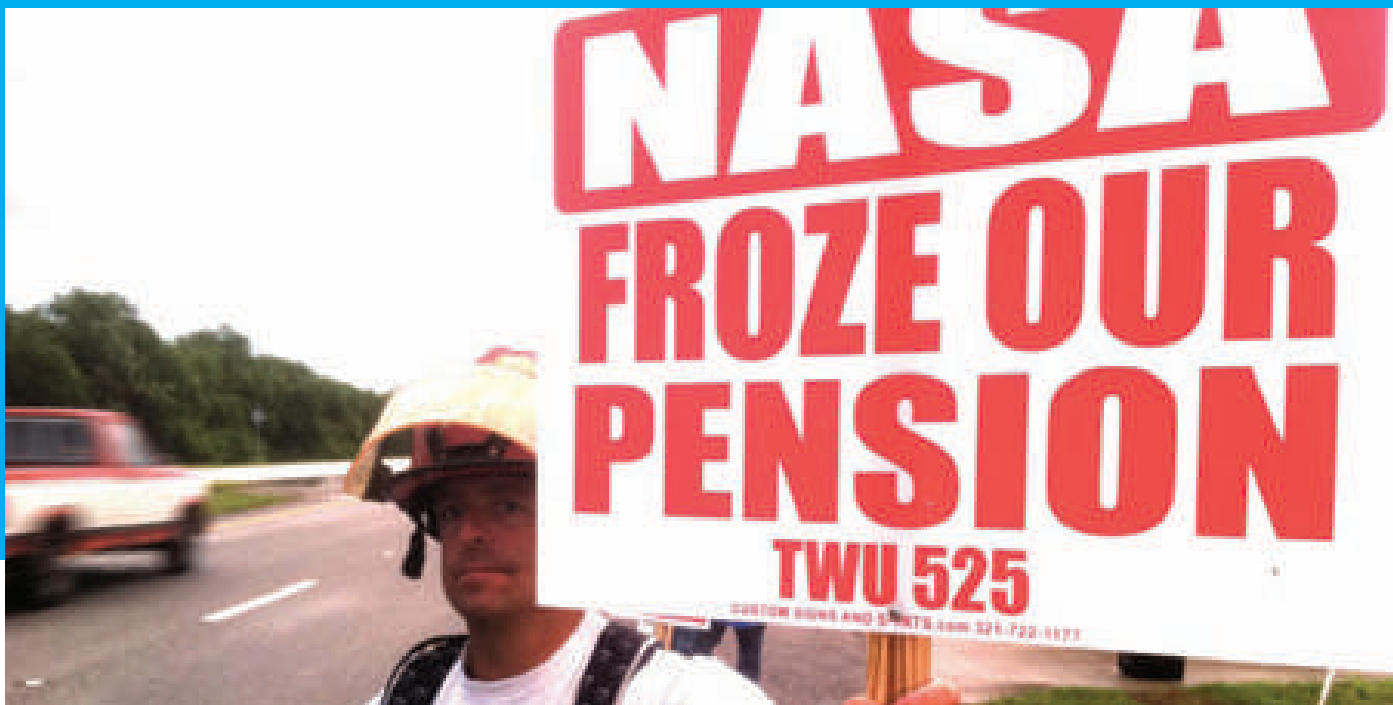
The mobilizer training courses cover workplace issues including safety, overtime, covered work and a whole series of mobilizations to ensure TWU members are working and respected when they are on the job. Central to the training is a union-wide texting system which sends updates to members' phones, alerting them to developments, events and key initiatives and mobilizing efforts in real-time. Trainings are planned for Dallas and Nashville in the coming weeks.

Members have argued that they want a respectful, harassment-free work zone that is safe and allows them to do their jobs at full capacity using tools and equipment that are in good working order.

"Unfair firing and harassment only hurts workforce morale, which can impact productivity and have a trickle-down effect on passenger experience," said John Samuelson, TWU International President. "Southwest is essentially shooting itself in the foot. If this behavior continues, it won't end well for the company."







TWU Local 525 Firefighters In Battle for Fair Benefits

For more than 60 years, the Transport Workers Union Local 525 in Merritt Island, Florida has represented nearly 80 firefighters working at NASA's Kennedy Space Center (KSC). KSC serves as the country's preeminent facility for human space flight.

As first responders, these members – often referred to as the NASA firefighters – are on the front lines, offering emergency rescue services including ambulance and fire and hazardous materials response to emergencies ranging from fuel leaks on the launch pads to catastrophic and life-threatening events. The NASA firefighters work around the clock to ensure the safety of the more than 8,500 employees on the ground at KSC.

For the past eight months, members of Local 525 have been embroiled in a heated contract negotiation with the company, Chenega Infinity. The company became the new employer of TWU members in 2016, and the two entities have been unsuccessfully negotiating their first collective bargaining agreement since August 2017.

At the heart of the negotiations are Chenega Infinity's plans to drastically reduce retirement levels contributed to 401ks by 80 percent and to allow only 60 hours

of sick leave, which equates to only three days (since our firefighter members work 20-hour shifts). Previous to this contract, firefighters accrued up to 120 hours sick leave – equating to 6 days – under Chenega Infinity.

"Imagine being sick with the flu and still having to be ready to respond to emergency calls during your 20-hour shift, simply because you have zero paid sick leave. It could be a disaster for NASA and for our firefighters," said Kevin Smith – President, TWU Local 525 and International Staff Representative – Airline Division. "Chenega's penny-pinching pursuit of profits is unacceptable and will not be allowed to interfere with the safe and efficient emergency response that NASA expects and our members are proud to provide. This will not stand."

The result has been Local 525's unanimous rejection of Chenega Infinity's "best and final" contract, which ended negotiations and the filing of a federal lawsuit by TWU Local 525 for violating The Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA). The FLSA establishes minimum wage, overtime pay, recordkeeping and child labor standards affecting full-time and part-time workers in the private sector and in federal, state and local governments.

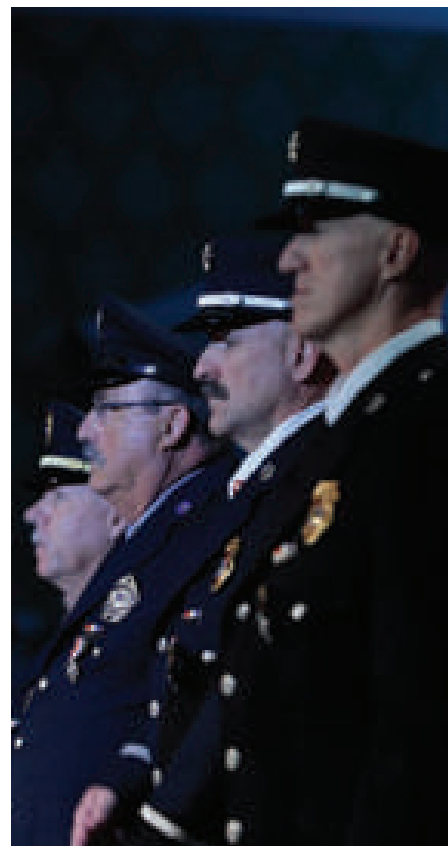
A Boston-based law firm has agreed to partner with TWU and represent Local 525 on contingency, meaning the firm only gets paid if the case is won. The case stipulates that under the FLSA, firefighters should collect nearly 1,400 more paid hours per year since they should be paid for their sleep periods after 16-hour shifts. This win could net each Local 525 firefighter an additional \$40,000 annually in his/her pocket. This added pay would be used to offset the loss of paid sick leave, vacation and retirement contributions imposed by Chenega Infinity.

An ongoing, aggressive campaign has also been initiated by TWU International's Government Affairs department to mobilize members in support of Local 525 and will be ongoing as the case makes its way through the legal system. Tactics used in this effort include Congressional lobbying efforts, targeted outreach to influential decision makers and coordinated efforts to educate, motivate and mobilize TWU members through social media, member calls, town halls and more.

TWU International also initiated a plan for Local 525 firefighters to directly lobby their representatives in Congress, urging them to support them in our fight. Representatives Stephanie Murphy (D-FL7) and

Darren Soto (D-FL9) stepped up to the plate and sent a joint letter to Chenega Infinity on behalf of their constituent firefighters stating that "it's imperative that an agreement providing these firefighters with pay and benefits commensurate with the importance of their jobs be reached."

"The NASA firefighters are in extreme danger and confront health risks on the job. We shouldn't be forced into a battle with our employer in order to maintain fair health and welfare benefits," said Mr. Smith. "It's clear that Chenega Infinity has no respect for the heroic, often lifesaving, work of NASA's firefighters. We will see them in court."



Campaign Unit Organizes Initial *Janus* Workshop to Plan Fightback Strategy

On April 10th and 11th, TWU's International Executive Vice President Alex Garcia and Administrative Vice President Mike Mayes brought together the TWU Air Division Presidents for the second annual conference. Fifty Air Division Local Presidents from across the country gathered in San Francisco to network, discuss local and industry issues and challenges, as well as share unique tactics and best practices for solving problems within their locals and with carriers.

"Air Division Presidents are often faced with similar hurdles regardless of where they are based locally," said Alex Garcia, TWU International Executive Vice President. "By putting all of these leaders in a room and providing a format for them to get to know each other, share challenges and offer solutions based on their own experiences, they come away better equipped to tackle issues that arise day-to-day. We're also helping build camaraderie that can extend communication and encourage knowledge-sharing well beyond the conference walls."

During the conference, TWU International leadership and staff conducted workshops and spoke about their respective areas of expertise. International Staff Representative Gary Shults presented about education and training opportunities, Director of Political Action Regina Eberhart offered insights into political action and activity, Policy and Legislative Director Andrea Wholeber conducted a discussion about legislative policy, Andrew Rangolan of Government Affairs presented an overview of the division, as well as an overview of state conferences

and their activities across the country and Director of Campaigns Nick Bedell presented information on current and future campaigns, as well as the capacity for the International to assist with Local's campaign efforts.

Over the course of the two-day event, conversations amidst presidents elevated several key issues, including the need to actively strengthen the Working Women's, Veterans, Human & Civil Rights and Health & Safety committees. Presidents also pledged to develop a Young Workers Committee and a Young Workers Conference to address the lack of young members being involved in the Union, as well as

prioritize mass communications to their memberships.

"It was clear throughout the course of the conference that several issues are top of mind to a great deal of Presidents," said TWU's International Administrative Vice President Mike Mayes. "With this knowledge, we are now putting forth a concerted effort to help mobilize members in partnership with our Air Division Presidents and bring the added muscle of the TWU International to speed progress. We look forward to building on the progress made in San Francisco and making this conference an annual event."







Fight Against Driverless Buses in Columbus Heats Up

TWU's Columbus, Ohio-based Local 208 is waging a battle against driverless buses, which have been proposed as part of "Smart Columbus," a new city initiative which threatens the livelihoods of about 700 bus operators who work for the Central Ohio Transit Authority (COTA).

The initiative's new transportation technology "solutions" include a pilot project to operate six electric autonomous (driverless) vehicles to provide transportation between COTA's Transit Center and the Easton Center – a retail and commercial hub in northeast Columbus. The plan promises to reduce costs by cutting bus operators out of the equation. In its Smart City Challenge grant application, the city of Columbus wrote, "a major benefit of a fully autonomous vehicle is the reduction in cost achieved by eliminating the operator and all onboard equipment necessary for human operation..."

The move toward automation could have disastrous effects for our Local 208 members in Columbus, whose slogan is "A Bus is Nothing Without Us," but also sets the stage for a much larger national fight.

Cities across the country are gearing up to implement "smart technologies," including driverless transit vehicles.

While driverless vehicle technologies are advancing, they've not yet been proven safe. Accidents have occurred resulting in property damage, injuries and death. One driverless public transit shuttle in Las Vegas crashed on its first day on the job. In March, an Arizona pedestrian was killed by an autonomous car that failed to detect her in the roadway. That same month, a driver in California died when his car, operating on autopilot, struck a highway median.

Technology failures and intentional hacking represent real threats to public safety. There are other concerns about allowing transit vehicles on the roads without operators as well. "A driverless bus can't help an elderly person get on or off the bus. A driverless bus can't report a crime in progress or report a child that appears lost and alone on a street corner, or alert authorities to a suspicious package or person," said Local 208 President Andrew Jordan.

In addition to proposing a plan calling for operators to be on board all driverless vehicles – even if they are not performing their traditional roles – TWU International has committed staff and resources to wage a proactive fight against autonomous buses in Columbus, as well as elevate the autonomous vehicle debate to the national level.

The International has been working in partnership with Local 208 to power an aggressive educational campaign, alerting members, the community, press, local businesses and elected officials to the importance of keeping an operator on board all transit buses.

A majority of Local 208's members have signed-up to volunteer and they have started by leafleting COTA's customers. The TWU's most recent leafleting event was held on April 5th at the Easton Center – the location proposed for the autonomous shuttles test line.

The TWU has also been conducting a proactive media outreach campaign that has resulted in multiple news stories and the publication of an op-ed by Local 208 President Andrew Jordan, in the Columbus Dispatch. The Local has also generated local television coverage.

The TWU also is using its muscle to educate elected officials and candidates. Leaders of Local 208 have met with Columbus Mayor Andrew Ginther and are gearing up for a round of meetings with City Council members. The union has also drafted a resolution opposing driverless buses, which it plans to push the City Council to pass.



On the state level, Local President Andrew Jordan testified at a hearing on autonomous vehicles held by the Ohio House's Transportation and Public Safety Committee. The TWU has also had conversations with Congressional Representatives, educating them on the issue of driverless buses.

Earlier this spring, Ohio gubernatorial candidates participated in Local 208's endorsement process and several have sided with Local 208 on the importance of maintaining operators on transit buses. Two candidates even participated in leafleting passengers alongside union members.

"The TWU International will continue to stand side-by-side with Local 208 to educate key constituents and influencers and fight for our jobs and for public safety," said International President John Samuelson. "It's true that you can't stop progress, but you also can't just eliminate jobs and put the public at risk for the sake of being 'innovative'. That doesn't make a city 'smart'. Quite the opposite. As well as taking on the autonomous vehicle debate at the national level (see story on page 11), all part of the union's commitment to waging strong fightback campaigns when members' livelihoods are threatened.



Air Division Presidents Gather to Share Best Practices, Mobilize Behind Key Issues



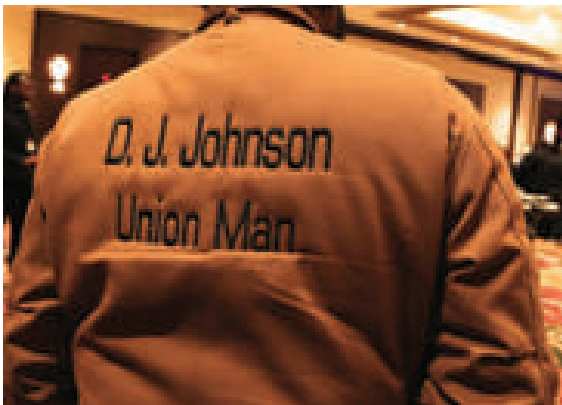
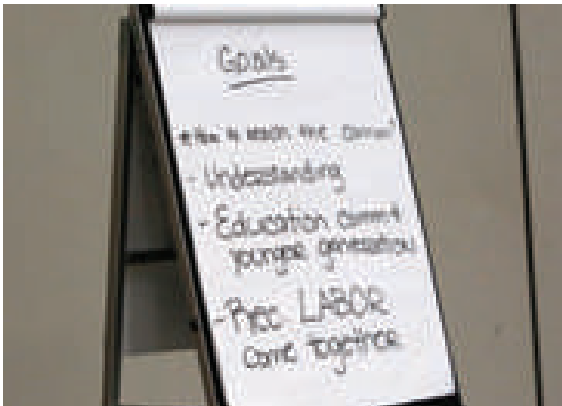
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TWU MLK 2018

January 2018: TWU members and leaders from across the country are in Houston, TX this weekend participating in the AFL-CIO MLK Conference.

The conference includes workshops, boot camps and community service projects in the spirit of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s mission of service to others and justice for all.



Amtrak Updates

On February 20, 2018, TWU Amtrak JCC Carmen/Coach Cleaners and ASWC On-Board Service members ratified a tentative agreement consisting of a 2.5% net wage increase over the seven-year term of the agreement. When compounded, that comes to 18.8% net over the term of the agreement.

Effective January 1, 2018, the monthly Health Care Insurance contribution of \$228.00 had been frozen until renegotiated. Our members also received retro active pay dating back to July 1, 2015 with no offsets for health care.

The TWU JCC Carmen/Coach Cleaners ratified the agreement by 97% and the ASWC On-Board Service members ratified the agreement by 94%.



American Airlines Walks Away from Contract Negotiations as Fight Against Offshoring Aircraft Maintenance Heats Up

Recent TWU efforts to negotiate a contract with American Airlines broke down with top officials from the company storming away from the bargaining table and out of the room. While TWU is attempting to continue conversations, key issues stalemating the talks continue to be healthcare, retirement and job security. Following years of negotiations, American Airlines currently owes TWU a counter-proposal.

TWU has stated that as part of the company's contract demands, the airline wants to move hundreds of mechanic jobs (jobs currently based in the U.S.) overseas. John Samuelsen, TWU International President calls it "...a potentially catastrophic loss of work as well as a major threat to national security."

Over the last few decades, airlines have dramatically increased the rate at which they outsource maintenance of aircraft, with an average of 47 percent of these jobs being sent to external repair facilities overseas in locations including El Salvador, China, Singapore, Hong Kong and Mexico.

While U.S. mechanics are held to the highest standards, FAA and TSA do not mandate those same standards apply at foreign repair facilities. For example, foreign repair stations servicing U.S. aircraft are not required to have even a single FAA-certified mechanic working at the shop.

Front and center in this debate is April's Southwest Airlines engine explosion during a flight from New York to Dallas which killed a passenger. Maintenance on the plane had been outsourced overseas. Only weeks before the accident, the Southwest Airlines mechanics union cautioned the airline that there was too much outsourcing of maintenance work.

"Our mechanics and other ground workers take great pride in making the transportation system in the U.S. the safest and most reliable in the world," said Samuelsen. "Returning aircraft maintenance jobs to the U.S. will improve the likelihood that the U.S. aircraft are repaired properly while bringing thousands of middle-class jobs back."



Companies like American Airlines must start putting passengers above profits."

The number of mechanic jobs at U.S. airlines dropped 30 percent between 2000 and 2016. American Airlines has generated billions of profits since its merger with US Airways but continues to outsource roughly 38 percent of these jobs.

TWU recently announced its hiring of former U.S. Homeland Security Secretary Tom Ridge to conduct a security assessment on U.S. commercial planes that are serviced in hangars overseas. According to his consulting firm,

Ridge Global, the job will be to evaluate and assess critical repair and maintenance work performed on U.S. passenger aircraft.

Further TWU International issued a whitepaper in April to members of Congress explaining the impact of offshoring U.S. Aircraft Maintenance to foreign repair stations on jobs, safety and security.

TWU International continues the fight with American Airlines to preserve and protect aircraft maintenance jobs in the U.S. – jobs that our members do and do exceptionally well. Further,

American Airlines

the TWU is urging policymakers to adopt measures that close the regulatory gaps and encourage airlines to place aircraft maintenance back in the hands of certificated U.S. airline mechanics, where the work is strictly regulated and closely monitored by the FAA.

To learn more about TWU's fight against American Airlines and against outsourcing aircraft maintenance, visit www.twu.org/readytofight.



Feature Story

Ready For Takeoff

**JetBlue Inflight Crew
Members Vote To Join TWU**





April 17, 2018 represented a historic day, not only for the Transport Workers Union of America, but for trade unions everywhere, as JetBlue Inflight Crewmembers ("IFCs") voted overwhelmingly to unionize and join TWU. The newest members of TWU represent a continued effort by the union to regain and reinforce the power of working people in this country.

The more than 5,000 flight attendants employed by JetBlue voted 2,661 to 1,387 – or by a 2 to 1 margin – to join the TWU. The victory came after a multi-pronged organizing campaign by rank-and-file attendants and TWU's in-house organizers.

"Our first order of business will be negotiating an initial contract for our new brothers and sisters," said International President John Sameulsen. "For the first time in decades, the number of working women and men in unions increased last year. The JetBlue vote is a strong sign that the upward trend is continuing. The inflight crewmembers want and deserve job security, representation and due process in disciplinary cases, improved wages and benefits and a seat at the table in the case of possible mergers or acquisitions."

The outcome represents the culmination of years of attempted organizing by JetBlue IFCs. Last fall, JetBlue began distributing flyers and emailing staffers in an effort to distort the truth. The company was using the same tired unionbusting language used against working people in the past. In one instance, JetBlue management and their team of union busters created an anti-union graphic that grossly distorted TWU's history of political involvement and attempted

to tarnish the support TWU had received from politicians throughout the New York area.

JetBlue IFCs, however, refused to be intimidated by these tactics of lies and misrepresentations. They recognized the advantages that their colleagues at other airlines had through unionizing – such as advances in pay and grievance procedures – and decided they had had enough of being taken advantage of by management.





Throughout the fall and winter, workers organized and, with assistance from TWU's Organizing Department and International Campaign Unit (ICU), led the charge to file with the National Mediation Board (NMB) for a representation election. Starting in December, the ICU used a variety of tactics to ensure JetBlue flight attendants, and the public in general, were aware of what was at stake in the upcoming election and of how JetBlue had acted in bad faith over the years. By utilizing modern, 21st century organizing tactics to supplement traditional on the ground organizing, the ICU left nothing to chance.

The campaign was executed in phases based on the NMB election calendar. Due to the government shutdown, however, the NMB was unable to hold the election as immediately as originally anticipated and, subsequently, the pre-election phase was extended. When the election phase officially started in mid-March, the TWU and JetBlue IFC lead organizers were ready to run a sophisticated GOTV campaign. This process highlighted both the dedication of JetBlue IFCs and the ability of the TWU to run a highly organized, highly targeted and, most importantly, highly effective campaign.

Along the way, JetBlue IFCs received the support of numerous politicians, showing the impact TWU and unions can have when they are organized and activated. Among those who showed their support were Vermont Senator and former presidential candidate Bernie Sanders, New York Governor Andrew Cuomo, U.S. Senate Minority Leader Chuck Schumer, and New York State Assembly Speaker Carl Heastie.

This is particularly meaningful given that JetBlue has a headquarters in Long Island, New York.

As the vote drew closer, management stepped up their unionbusting attempts. They attacked those politicians who dared support the flight attendants and TWU. In the end, however, two-thirds of JetBlue flight attendants said "no more."

"JetBlue is an extremely profitable corporation, and now the time has arrived for these frontline workers to be appropriately compensated for their undeniable contribution in bringing JetBlue this high level of success," said Samuelsen. "This historic victory is yet another example of the tide turning in America as workers collectively fight back to defend their livelihoods. The United States trade union movement is the greatest vehicle for the economic security of working families that this country has ever seen, and more Americans are recognizing this every day."





Members In

Action





WARRIOR UNION WOMAN

the fire & sunshine of my friend Gwen

BY MARY MATTHEWS

TWU International Photographer,
Videographer and Media Producer

Gwen and I started working at TWU International around the same time, almost ten years ago. She in the COPE department, me in the Communications department. Both jobs required a great deal of travel and I often had the privilege of documenting Gwen's work through the years. From running COPE drives and State Conferences at TWU locals all over the country, to her lobbying work on Capitol Hill and mentoring of TWU female labor leaders on the Working Women's Committee.

Gwen's work, much like my own, allowed her the unique opportunity to connect to and engage with TWU members and leaders from all divisions, in all industries and in all regions of the country. Gwen knew TWU, inside and out.

It is her years of leadership and participation in the TWU Working Women's Committee that has most impressed me, inspired me and honestly, kept me going since her passing. In the years of covering these meetings, I have seen the direct effect Gwen has had on so many union women, who are sometimes just struggling to exist in a male dominated work place, craft or trade, even at their local union hall.

Gwen taught by example, calling her TWU sisters "warrior women", not ladies, not girls. Warrior Union Women; helping them navigate challenging environments and complicated issues, encouraging them always to step into their power, their fire and their sunshine.



The committee is now the largest it has ever been, with TWU warrior women in leadership roles of all kinds nation-wide. Some being the first top female leaders in the history of their locals EVER. At the most recent Working Women's Committee meeting, held in Washington, DC this past April, (the first since Gwen's passing,) woman after woman stood up, to share what they have learned from Gwen, heard from Gwen and will always take with them from Gwen:

"Be the person you are. Do everything that you can."

"Speak up for what you want. No matter what."

"If you have the right backing, you can make it through anything, together."

"Everyone here is a leader. Be the leader you are."

In too short a life, my friend Gwen moved women, TWU and the United States labor movement forward, by lifting others up over and over and over again. Arms stretched high and strong, with courage and caring and fire and sunshine. I miss you, Gwen and I take you with me, Gwen. Forward.

ALEX GARCIA

Gwen was a flight attendant with Southwest for more than 30 years. She was incredibly loyal to the TWU, the cause of labor and, mostly, women's issues across the board. Gwen was a relentless fighter for what she believed in. She was a loving, devoted and overall great mother to her only daughter, Alyson Reed.

Gwen's service to the TWU and the labor movement was vast. She served as the COPE Director and an International Rep. She helped start the State Conferences with Terry Daniels and myself.

Gwen was at her heart a pure political activist who wasn't afraid to roll up her sleeves and do the work that needed to be done to achieve positive outcomes to benefit working men and women. She was a good friend and loyal to all her friends and family and will be truly missed by all that were lucky enough to have known her.

SUSAN KERN:

Gwen had the ability to put aside her personal feelings and work with people she deeply disagreed with. Gwen did NOT have a poker face, and if you said or did something she didn't think much of, you could tell by the look on her face!

Gwen didn't consider her work a job, it was her calling. She was a tireless champion for labor.

Even in the face of defeat, Gwen always kept faith that with persistence she could make a difference and she did so with grace.

Gwen always stated proudly that she was a "Fourth generation Texas Democrat" and always spoke with intense love for her family. She brought that love to her work.

Once Gwen was your friend, there was no going back.

ANDREW RANGOLAN:

My friend Gwen...she and I were friends since 2009. She has always been there when I needed her and I will miss her dearly.

Gwen was hard working, intelligent, caring and a very thoughtful person. I learned a lot from her.

Gwen always called me when she was on any American Eagle flight (small scary aircraft) and we spoke just hours before her tragic accident.

I'm a better person today to have known her.

THOM MCDANIEL:

Gwen York was a fierce advocate for fairness and justice in the workplace and the world. While she was a strong believer in expanding her horizons through education and new experiences, she took everything she learned to mentor and encourage everyone in her orbit.

Most importantly, Gwen was the best daughter, mother, sister, aunt, and friend I've ever known. If Gwen was on your side, you were in very good company. We all miss her every day, but her spirit lives in every one of us who was lucky enough to know her.

HEATHER ROSE:

Gwen's impact on the TWU, and women especially, is immeasurable, and we have felt her loss so deeply. She took on so many tasks with a great curiosity and a love for this union, its people, and what we do. Her smile and laugh were infectious. She never had any judgement and was the first person I called to talk to. We built a trust and relationship that will never be forgotten and I truly miss her each and every day. She has left us much too soon.

MICHAEL MASSONI:

She was one of those people that was bigger than life itself. Causing one to actually believe she would live forever...or at least as long or longer than ones self. Gwen had a way of making anyone that she came in contact with feel as though they had just met their biggest advocate, fan and cheerleader all rolled in one.

Gwen once paid me a compliment by saying that I exhibited grace in how I handled myself in difficult situations. In her passing, I have come to the conclusion that she was the poster child for exhibiting grace in difficult situations. It may not have shown on the surface but it was definitely there...Be it single parenthood, going back to school in mid-life, deciding to be an industrial labor Unionist or standing up (with that big Texas voice) for all people's rights, that was my Gwenny's life's work summed up in two little words: Grace Personified.

TERRY DANIELS:

Gwen was a smart, loyal and hardworking labor activist. She worked hard for the causes she believed in and was relentless in her advocacy. I was fortunate to know her and call her a friend and I will miss her dearly.

In Memoriam: Melvin "Mel" Brackett

The former President of TWU Local 504, Melvin "Mel" Brackett, passed away on Sunday, April 22 at the age of 94. Mel was the President of Local 504's 14,000 members from 1979-1987.

Mel worked at Fairchild Republic before coming to Pan American World Airways. Once he became the President of Local 504, there were over 14,000 members. Mel led the Local in the 1985 strike against Pan Am. The strike, which lasted for one month, resulted in a 20% wage increase over three years, transfers or cash settlements for displaced commissary workers, a tow-tier wage structure, increased use of part-time workers and changes in job classification for the 5,700 Pan Am mechanics, baggage handlers and food service workers. Mel was a veteran of WWII, who saw active combat in the Pacific as a Naval Airmen.

Mel was a strong Union leader and had very strong family morals. He will be missed.

Allegiant Air Flight Attendants Work Group Grows to 1200 Members

Membership of the Allegiant Air Flight Attendants Work Group has ballooned to approximately 1,200 members as better wages, sick leave and grievance procedures drive a vast majority of Allegiant Flight Attendants to sign up. Allegiant is an ultra-low-cost air carrier and the Allegiant Flight Attendants have been in negotiations with the company since 2011.

The growing membership is based on the culmination of six hard-fought years of negotiations during which the group faced strong reluctance from the company to bargain in good faith to reach an agreement. The December ratification of the first-ever contract with Allegiant represented a historic victory for the Transport Workers Union and President John Samuelson had pledged to bring negotiations to

an end at the TWU's International Convention in September 2017.

Immediately following President Samuelson's pledge at the Convention, the Bargaining Committee and the International's Campaign Unit launched a strategic, aggressive campaign against Allegiant. The campaign was designed to support and provide leverage to the Allegiant FA team at the bargaining table. The result was a Tentative Agreement ("TA"), which was subsequently approved by a margin of more than 70 percent, with 96 percent of the work group participating in the vote.

The Bargaining Committee was comprised of Allegiant Air Flight Attendants Marilou Resendes, Todd Semingson, Christa Gifford, David Rodriguez and Raychel Armstrong,

as well as TWU Staff Representative Thom McDaniel.

"The significant number of Allegiant's flight attendants signing onto the Work Group shows the growing trust they are placing in the TWU. We have proven our ability to listen to their concerns and stand up for them when they need it," said President Samuelson.

The Group chartered Local 577 on March 31, 2018 and while an election date has not been set yet, an election committee was selected in late April and an election timeline is being developed. New 577 members have hit the ground running and are participating in ITF Young Workers Committee and TWU COPE Conference, and Working Women's Committee.





2018: A Stronger, United TWU

2018 is proving already to be one of the strongest years yet for the TWU. While management across the country continues to move their own agendas at the expense of working people, the labor movement continues to fight as one to maintain, enhance, and acquire the rights we deserve. This fight will only get more difficult, but looking at our successes over the past year, I have no doubt we will meet these challenges head on, brothers and sisters, fighting as one union.

Given the complex challenges facing trade unionism in this country, I was incredibly honored and humbled to receive the support of my brothers and sisters in the TWU to become Secretary-Treasurer of the TWU International. I recognize the quality and character of those who served in this role before me, as well as the magnitude of the job ahead. My main goal is to serve honorably and to maintain the TWU's financial integrity that has been built over the last few years.

I believe my personal story is reflective of the values and determination that make up our union. I have been an active member of the TWU since 1985. I have moved up in the union ranks over the course of my career and have been fortunate to serve in many capacities in both Local 1400 and for the International.

As Secretary-Treasurer, I am excited to have a key role in identifying and engaging in fights to preserve workers' dignity and rights. The ability to produce incredible positive outcomes for our members and making sure the union has the funds with which to engage in these battles is critically important.

Now more than ever, we need to make sure that we are thoughtful stewards of our funds, using them to engage in activities that directly impact the livelihoods of the men and women of the TWU. With seeming all-out war being waged against trade unionism, our resources need to be used to fight those battles on behalf of the workers of this country.

I take very seriously this job that has been entrusted to me. As International Secretary-Treasurer, I, along with the leadership of the TWU, will ensure that our union leads the way in not only keeping trade unions strong and forces to be reckoned with, but growing our membership to increase the collective power of unions in this country. We are already making our voices heard to let the powers that be know that when they challenge TWU, we will not ever back down from a fight.

As I look to the future, I see a union that is not only taking on these challenges, but one that is winning them. We will continue to ensure that people across the country know the name of the TWU and that when they hear it, they think of fighters. That they think of hard working, determined men and women who every day serve thousands of Americans while at the same time fighting for the rights of working people.

I look forward to continuing this fight with my brothers and sisters as International Secretary-Treasurer and thank you again for this honor.

"We are already making our voices heard to let the powers that be know that when they challenge TWU, we will not ever back down from a fight."

Jerome Lafragola
International Secretary-Treasurer



@transportworker

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THE TRANSPORT WORKERS
UNION OF AMERICA, AFL-CIO
501 3rd Street NW, 9th Floor
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