

TWU Express

~ The ~
Transport Workers
Union of America

**UNITED
INVINCIBLE**

May/June 2009
Vol. 61 | No. 3

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Speaks Out
in Albany**

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Taking the Lead in the

FIGHT AGAINST GREED

*TWU Launches
“American Exec Check”*

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UNION FORWARD**
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for the Future of TWU

**Linking Politics
to the People**

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**PLUS: A Legacy -
Four Generations
of TWU**

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A MOVE *to the future*



by International
President
James C. Little

I strongly believe that organizations that want to survive and grow must be willing and able to respond to change. We as a Union must be ready to adapt to new circumstances, and to make necessary changes to strengthen our organization and be wise enough to recognize what already works. This is why I implemented the Strategic Planning committee as part of my three-year plan in 2007. This March marked our combined fourth and fifth strategic planning retreat at the National Labor College in Silver Springs, Maryland.

The term may sound vague, but strategic planning covers a wide range of issues that affect all of us, and it has provided me with a succinct description of what our organization should look like once all plans are actualized. Twenty-seven local Presidents from across

of strategic planning. This team work has helped to identify areas that have required some major shifts within the union and to recommend successful ways to make necessary changes. As a result, we have accomplished over 82 percent of the recommended changes that came out of our previous sessions. I feel confident that our plans formed during the March session will have an equal or even better success rate.

Thank you to all participants who took the time to assess our organization in our internal planning sessions.

Based on the success of the last three years my plan is to continue our internal planning sessions twice a year and to add external strategic goals to our agenda in the next few months. External planning is necessary to deal with the rapidly changing global economy and its current impact on public and private sectors.

WE AS A UNION, must be ready to adapt to new circumstances.

all divisions, international staff members and our dedicated and exceptional facilitator, attorney Mark Richard, participated in this March's retreat.

We collaborated on issues like how to monitor federal economic stimulus funding and transit authority recipients, member organizing techniques, providing information on green jobs and working towards the passage of the Employee Free Choice Act, among others.

One plan for the future is to work towards the reauthorization of the Federal Aviation Administration bill, which was just passed by the House in late May. I hope that our work on the FAA bill will help lead to its complete passage with our needs and ideas incorporated.

Over the last few years I've been pleased to see an increase in activism within our various sub-groups responsible for different areas

On the issue of change, you are currently holding one of our most tangible forms of recent change, the redesign of the Express. You may have noticed the updated look (and hopefully you like it too). This July you will find that our website, twu.org, also has a new and improved look. You will find a more usable and aesthetically pleasing site that will provide more current information, intriguing multimedia and increased interactivity.

I am excited about the changes that will come from our most recent strategic planning session and look forward to continuing to work with members and officers from all locals to ensure a bright future for TWU.

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FAMILY TRADITION:

Local 100 Retiree Robert Pustarfi Counts 4 Generations in NYC Transit

TWU cherishes its history and traditions, especially in this 75th anniversary year. But we've always taken a back seat to police officers and firefighters when it comes to multiple generations in the same occupation.

Local 100 Retiree Robert Pustarfi, however, scores a few points for TWU's side. He counts four generations of his family that have worked in New York City transit, starting with his grandfather Victor who helped build the 3rd Avenue Elevated Train. Robert's father William began as a trolley operator, moving to bus operator and then dispatcher before his retirement.

Robert said he wasn't looking to be the third generation of Pustarfis to work in transit, despite his dad's encouragement. "I had a great job with an electronics firm," Robert said. "I was very satisfied, but then I saw too many heads roll at the company and I realized my dad was right about the need for job security."

Robert became a Bus Maintainer A and Shop Steward at the East New York Depot in Brooklyn. His work as a Safety Rep for Local 100 was particularly rewarding, a role in which he made the job safer for fellow members.

"I loved the job; I hated to take the early retirement when it was offered in 1995," he said, explaining that his wife Sandra's health problems made it necessary for him to be home to help with the chores. With Sandra, Robert raised two daughters and a son in a Garden City, Long Island home built by her grandfather.

That son, Robert Jr., followed his dad into the transit life, albeit as a Track Worker. He is now a track supervisor for NYC Transit.

"There was always transit talk in our house," Bob Jr. said. "My grandfather worked over 30 years in the system and received a beautiful plaque when he retired. So, maybe it was predetermined that I'd be



in this job. "Dad always encouraged me." "When I told him Transit was looking for track workers," Bob Sr. recalls, "he said, 'What do I know about tracks?' and I explained that they would teach him what he needed to know."

Bob Jr. is happy he took his father's advice and enjoyed an especially rewarding day this February when he helped return a lost toddler on the No 7 train to his frantic mother. "That was a special day; it made me feel really good," Bob Jr. said.

Will there be a fifth generation Pustarfi working New York's subways and buses? Bob Jr.'s two boys, at 9 and 5, are a bit young to contemplate careers, but another grandchild is 18 and already getting a nudge from grandpa. "I'm encouraging him," Bob Sr. said, "It's a great job."

Top: Robert Pustarfi and his son, Robert Jr.; Right: Robert's father William in uniform; Below: Robert's grandfather Victor (left) helped build the 3rd Avenue El Train



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INTERNATIONAL AWARDS

15 Quill college scholarships

Other Scholarships
Selected at May 20
Drawing

Marking its 40th consecutive year, the International Union awarded 15 four-year college scholarships to the sons and daughters of TWU members from across the country. (Bios and photos of the 15 winners will appear next issue.)

The random drawing for this year's winners of the Michael J. Quill Scholarship program took place at the International's headquarters at 1700 Broadway in New York City on May 20.

The 15 winners and 10 alternates were drawn from hundreds of applicants by longtime Railroad Division Administrative Secretary Fran Albach. Many local officers from the New York area were in attendance.

The scholarships, named after the union's founding president, are worth \$4,800 each, paid over a four-year period, for use at any accredited four-year college.

In addition to the 15 Quill Scholarships, five other grants amounting to a one-time \$2,400 payment each were awarded by Union Benefit Planners, an employee benefits consulting firm.

Also, Air Transport Division Local 514 in Tulsa, Oklahoma funds five additional \$4,800 scholarships for children of its members. Local 252 on Long Island funds five one-year scholarships for its members. These scholarships are administered by the International Union.

The Quill Scholarship Program is supervised by International Executive Vice President Harry Lombardo with the able assistance of Administrative Secretaries Bernadette Uckele and Carlean Williams.



THE 2009 QUILL WINNERS

Zachary Decker	514	Samantha Tirado	100
Morgan Hinton	514	Colton Kaiser	513
Nicole Rocco	100	Danniel Staves	567
Jaclyn Wilson	100	Taylor Hill	512
Harvey Doleyres	100	Audrey LeCompte	514
Amanda Gutierrez	514	Cassandra Colon	571
Brendan Heinz	101	Amanda Mataczynski	563
Blaze Hewitt	234		

Alternates (who will receive the scholarship should any of the winners be unable to accept):

Amber Knaack	514	James Mikowski	252
Michelle Wallace	100	Krista Spicuzza	225 Br.4
Emily Green	100	Elizabeth Smith	514
Kyle Lowe	100	Andrea Deonarine	561
Jean-Luc Vila	513	Kiara Dixon	250-A

Union Benefit Planners Scholarships

Gerard Castronova	225-Br.4
Patrick Dunne	225-Br.4
Brandy McCall	514
Adam VanGrinsven	513
Timothy Silva	2054

Local 514 Scholarship

Sean Cooper
Rebekah Clark
Barrett Nidey
Chelsea Young
Colleen Weber

514 Alternates:

Robert Bernhardt
Scott Donahue
Deanna Ray
Kevin Wallace
Trevor Ball

Local 252 Scholarship

Adam Mancilla
Vereisha Corbett
Stacey Shapiro
Melissa Thornton
Helene Oswald

252 Alternates:

Allison Imperiale
Robert Stark
Christina Koryluk

Shown above: Int'l Executive Vice President Harry Lombardo, who supervises the contest, with Francine Albach, who drew winners. Int'l top officers, Secretary-Treasurer Joe Gordon, Administrative VP Susan Resch, Administrative VP Hubert Sneed, Administrative Assistant to the Int'l President Michael Bakalo, Administrative Secretaries Carlean Williams and Bernadette Uckele, Union Benefit Planner Lauri Goldberg, Representatives from locals 100, 101, 225, 227, 252, 1400 and 2001.



Blueprint for the **FUTURE**

Local Presidents Map TWU's Course at Strategic Planning Session

“Have a plan and work the plan” is good advice for any individual or group. But, it’s often easier said than done — unless a lot of hard work goes into devising the plan.

That was the task confronting more than two dozen TWU local presidents, who were joined by key staffers at a three-day strategic planning session, March 31-April 2, at the National Labor College in Silver Spring, Maryland.

International President James C. Little set the tone in his opening remarks when he thanked the local officers for participating in what he views as a top priority for the union in a rapidly changing political and economic environment. He noted that while an Obama administration made life easier for unions, it will still take a lot of effort and planning to reach our goals.

A case in point, Little said, is the Employee Free Choice Act (EFCA), which — despite the support of Obama — will require a major campaign by the labor movement for passage.

The meeting focused on two main topics: Organizing/membership growth, which included passage of EFCA and capitalizing on the addition of “green jobs;” and maximizing the benefit to TWU members from FAA reauthorization, stimulus spending and

transit funding.

The strategic planning sessions were coordinated and led by attorney Mark Richard and Education & Research Director Bob Wechsler assisted with the logistics. Leading the group were two TWU Vice Presidents, Roger Toussaint, the Director of Strategic Planning, and J.W. Johnson. Dr. Jerry Brown

to act on many of the recommendations.

The local presidents participating were: EFCA — John Feltz (2001), Todd Woodward (561), Pete Hogan (510), Sean Doyle (512) and Marvin Artis (248); FAA reauthorization — Thom McDaniel (556), Steve Luis (514), Bob Owens (562), Howard Blaydes (590) and Don Tyndall (502); Green jobs

While an Obama administration made
life easier for unions, it will still
take a lot of effort and planning to
REACH OUR GOALS

led the session on green jobs.

Local presidents broke into smaller groups to tackle the individual topics, eventually making recommendations in six areas. They identified related goals (such as educating members on EFCA) and recommended strategies to accomplish the specific goals. They also identified resources and support that would be needed.

After receiving the reports from each group, President Little responded with plans

— Gordon Clark (530), Jerome Lafragola (1400), Steve Gilboy (563) and Jonathan Williams (2014); Organizing/member growth — Orton Reynolds (264), Lillian Rowe (259), William Zimmerman (565), Dave Kellner (2020) and Kevin Smith (525); Stimulus — Michael Walsh (282), Michael Lynn (2055), Todd Gibbs (521) and Fred Fink (2019); Transit funding — Bernie Burkett (1), Delisa Brown (171), Irwin Lum (250-A) and Sandra Burleson (260).

BUILDING *the team*

TWU Launches Field Service Program to Coordinate Political, Legislative Goals Around the Country

Field and team go together naturally in sports, but TWU believes the two words will also work well together in the political and legislative arena. The goal is to boost member involvement in the union's political and legislative activities by coordinating Washington lobbying with what's going on in the states and localities where members live and work.

In a pilot program approved this spring by International President James C. Little, TWU created the position of Legislative & Political Field Representative to oversee the process. Alex Garcia, formerly Political Representative in the Washington office, was named to the post. Working with him will be two Field Service Assistants: Terry Daniels, a former President of Miami Local 291, and Gwen Dunivent, a Local 556 Executive Board member, President of the Dallas Central Labor Council and former TWU legislative intern.

International Administrative Vice President Hubert Snead, TWU's COPE Director, will supervise the field service program.

While it will be innovative in many ways, TWU Political & Legislative Director Portia Reddick White notes that the field service

program will also advance many of the union's longstanding goals. "The idea came out of recommendations by the Committee on the Future, which were subsequently endorsed by the last Convention," she said. "It's a team work concept that should be a win-win situation for our locals and members."

TWU's state conferences, through which locals join together for common legislative and political goals, will be an integral part of the field service effort. California has long had a successful conference. Now, with full-time staff in the field, the union can nurture similar structures in Florida, Pennsylvania and New York and create new conferences in Texas and other states with sizable TWU memberships.

Administrative VP Snead emphasizes that the field service program will be a year-round effort – not just at election time – but will lay the groundwork for successful campaigns by labor-backed candidates. "The Field Representative and Assistants will work directly with the locals and rank-and-file members to spur greater involvement in state and local labor bodies," he said. "We want to build an army within the union movement and also forge ties with like-minded community groups. It's more than just being a presence on Capitol Hill. We're completing the circle to also be a

strong presence where our members live and work."

Alex Garcia, as the Field Service Representative, is already putting together pieces of the puzzle in his home state. He has been meeting with TWU locals in the Florida State Conference to help them set goals. "We want all locals in the state, regardless of industry, to be involved in setting legislative agendas on the state and national levels," Garcia said. "It's

important for TWU locals to support each other's issues, as well as pursue broader TWU and labor goals. When all state conferences are up and running, it will enable a real mobilization of our grassroots power."

Garcia said the Field Service Assistants would be working with TWU locals throughout the country, with

Dunivent primarily handling the Western part of the country and Daniels the East. He said they would also be working to establish ties with like-minded community groups.

Snead said the field service program should also allow TWU members to play a lead role in many local labor campaigns. On the national level, the Political & Legislative Department is teaming with Organizing director Frank McCann and his department to build support for the Employee Free Choice Act.

Citing a White House and Congress that are more worker-friendly than at any time since the Johnson Administration, Snead said TWU's new initiative will dovetail with labor's ability to play offense after years of simply warding off attacks. "We need to be 'in the know and on the go' so we can eventually change laws that affect our members."

He said that greater political coordination is also a natural tie-in with the union's COPE program. "Members will know that their COPE dollars are going to build a better Congress," Snead said. "We'll make sure our issues are taken to heart."



International Administrative Vice President and COPE Director Hubert Snead will supervise the program



From left to right: Legislative & Political Field Representative Alex Garcia with the two Field Service Assistants: Gwen Dunivent and Terry Daniels



TWU *flight* TAKES

[TWU WAS QUICK TO FIGHT FOR WORKERS IN AN INDUSTRY THAT TOOK ADVANTAGE OF ITS NOVELTY]

The rapidly growing airline industry was a new frontier for many American workers in the 1940s, as it was for the TWU. Many aviation workers saw themselves as pioneers in a new romantic field and air companies took advantage of this, acting as if working for their companies was a privilege. People spent a lot of time and money training for “Airman” certificates and on job training, but could only secure jobs that paid meager wages and required long hours.

A number of airline industry unions formed and reformed between the 1920s and 1940s, but until TWU organized workers in 1944, none of the attempted unions had achieved much progress.

By the end of World War II, most airline employees were working long hours under poor conditions for terribly low wages, despite many attempts at unionization and airlines’ inclusion into the Railway Labor Act in 1936. Employees were working a normal week of 48 hours with time and a half paid for overtime, but at a distressing wage rate.

As the airline industry grew in the post-war years, employees began to see that their pay, benefits, and working conditions

lagged behind those in unionized occupations. As airline employees felt a strong need for unionization, TWU’s subway and bus operations organizers started spreading the union gospel among friends and relatives in the burgeoning airline industry. TWU’s Air Transport Division emerged out of these conditions which has helped shape what the Division is today.

In 1945 TWU chartered a new Local in Miami, Florida to represent ground service employees at the nation’s premier carrier of the day – Pan American World Airways. The

first TWU ATD contract brought the industry’s initial 40-hour week with no reduction in pay. This historic achievement benefited not only the Pan American workers immediately involved, but was responsible for the establishment of the basic 40-hour week in all other U.S. airlines in the succeeding months. Soon, TWU had chartered similar locals in New York, San Francisco and several other cities. The union’s historic first contract with Pan Am, signed in September 1945, signaled the emergence of TWU as a new force to be reckoned with in the industry.

In the late 1940s, TWU continued to organize other job titles and ensure the opportunity for effective bargaining for better wages, hours and working conditions, and soon became the certified bargaining agent for all Pan Am ground and most flight service personnel.

In 1946 the Union won elections by huge margins and organized employees at American Airlines. The new locals covered maintenance, fleet service and stores workers.

Before TWU, airline employees could not even spend Thanksgiving with their families, but the ATD pioneered the five day week for its early airline members, and established



Man casts ballot in Local 504 Union Shop election for Pan American employees in 1951. Top: Pan American World Air pioneered commercial overseas air travel with their famous Clippers planes.



some of the highest wage rates in the industry with its 1947 and 1948 contracts. The Division also managed to use the adjustment machinery under the Railway Labor Act to handle grievances and disputes more effectively than any other organization involved in the Act. The new contracts also established a seniority system to govern job bids, paid vacations, holidays, overtime compensation, and shift differentials.

In the 60 years since its first historic accomplishments in the airline industry, the ATD has scored many victories, including the organizing of Southwest flight attendants in 1975, which through tough bargaining and solid representation helped Local 556 to be a leader among flight attendant groups in the industry; and TWU's merger with the independent association at Southwest known as ROPA, representing the Ramp, Operations, and Provisioning Agents which formed Local 555, chartered on November 1, 1996. The ATD has seen some bitter losses as well, most notably the shutdowns of Eastern Airlines and Pan Am less than a year apart in 1991.

[BEFORE TWU, AIRLINE EMPLOYEES COULD NOT EVEN SPEND THANKSGIVING WITH THEIR FAMILIES.]

Today, TWU represents 50,000 workers in the airline industry in almost all class and crafts. We maintain contracts for our members at American, Continental, US Airways, United, Southwest, AirTran, Spirit, Frontier, Ogden Allied, Johnson Controls, Aloha, Hawaiian, Horizon, Alaska Air, at some military bases and most of the flight dispatchers craft in the industry. The ATD is working hard today to maintain fair workers rights in the midst of hard times for America's airline industry.



PAA Contract Opening, August 16, 1955. TWU's founder, Michael J. Quill is seated in the middle on the left-hand side.

TWU *crushes* BUG

[PERSISTENT WORKERS AND THE TWU FOUGHT RELENTLESSLY FOR VICTORY IN BROOKLYN]

In 1919 utility workers started a 20-year fight for fair representation and quickly demonstrated a perseverance that helped them win that fight. A valiant strike attempt against the Brooklyn Union Gas Company (BUG) was crushed by vicious opposition from the company, the use of callous scabs, police intervention and injunction action. Employees suffered worsened working conditions after the strike.

In huge, unheated gas manufacturing plants men worked 12-hour days in freezing conditions in the dead of winter and in unbearable heat during the summer. Foremen reigned supreme in a hostile working environment where pink slips were handed out on flimsy premises, workers only received two Sundays off each month, overtime was uncompensated unless it was worked during their few time off days, and overtime books were often disregarded by management.

In 1935 gas men at the Greenpoint Coke Oven Plant tried to organize into the Brother-

hood of Utility Employees and stayed strong while the company made several attempts at breaking their union. In February of the following year BUG fired a union member so the morning and afternoon shifts walked off the job in solidarity. But the night shift was not well organized and after 10 days the company strikebreakers had gained too much power which enabled them to win the strike.

Workers who returned to BUG were reinstated at lower wages and about 40 were fired in direct contradiction to the National Labor Relations Act, which management refused to recognize. Even with the law on the workers' side, it took four years of persistence to win \$30,000 of back pay and the reinstatement of 15 workers.

In 1940, the CIO Utility Workers Union became BUG employees' union but failed workers; even though it negotiated a contract, it did not enforce the provisions of the agreement.

[Continued on next page]



During a 1961 strike, workers picketed outside Brooklyn Union Gas Headquarters on Montague Street

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The hardworking utility workers needed a Brotherhood like TWU. Many had strong ethnic ties with Mike Quill and his Clann-Gael and IRA Club cohorts, and they were also impressed with the TWU's strong gains made for NYC transit workers. Hoping for similar support from the Union on their behalf, utility workers voted for TWU representation.

THE HARDWORKING UTILITY WORKERS NEEDED A BROTHERHOOD LIKE TWU.

A mass rally in the Labor Lyceum in downtown Brooklyn on December 30, 1941 resulted in a 90 percent approval vote from the Independent's Executive Board. Three months later TWU won a New York State Labor Relations Board election by a two-to-one majority. On July 28, 1942 members of Utility Division Local 101 endorsed their first TWU contract.

People gathered at a shop gate meeting in Brooklyn in the early 1940s



Along with a check-off for Union dues, the contract included wage increases of 10-18 percent each year, union security, double time pay for Sunday work, and a 5 percent night differential.

Local 101 soon organized Brooklyn Borough Gas and Queensborough Gas and Electric Company employees. Today, the local represents about 1,700 utility workers at what is now known as National Grid.

LOCAL 100 ACTIVISTS LOBBY *Albany*

The halls of New York's state capitol filled with TWU Local 100's red and blue colors as hundreds of members lobbied Albany for the Local's annual Lobby Day. An estimated 1,500 members and about 100 retirees participated, many eager to discuss several key issues important to themselves and their families.

By 10 a.m., 32 buses brought the majority of participants to the capital, where they happily greeted each other, gathered for breakfast and then poured into the capital's impressive Egg building for an hour of speeches from some of New York state's top politicians and legislators, and TWU officials. Speakers included Gov. David Paterson, Senate Majority Leader Malcolm Smith, Sen. Bill Perkins, Speaker Sheldon Silver, TWU International President James C. Little, Local 100 Acting President Curtis Tate and Local 100 President and Int'l Vice President Roger Toussaint, among others.

With the current turmoil in the Metropolitan Transportation Authority, many members cheered Gov. Paterson when he expressed disappointment in the MTA's distressing solution to their claimed financial woes. In small group meetings members asked legislators what they were doing to help create an acceptable solution to the

MTA fiasco, only to hear "we are trying the best we can." Issues such as pension and retiree benefits, safety for riders and MTA employees and Taylor Law reform, among others, were also among this year's top legislative goals for Local 100.

Many speakers addressed the recent negative press about unions and MTA employees in particular and declared that union workers do not deserve to be the subject of public adversity. They focused on how the hard, and oftentimes risky, work of Local 100 members helps keep New York City safe and running smoothly. As Speaker Silver said, we "don't have an economy without a safe, efficient transit system."

In his speech, President Little emphasized the importance of the Employee Free Choice Act, and also showed a satirical video that focused on the ridiculous amount of money that companies have spent opposing the bill.

"We need to help our President and our legislators to turn America around. When you talk to your legislator, ask him or her, 'where do you stand on the Employee Free Choice Act?'" said Little.

The hundreds of lobbyists split into small

*From top to bottom:
International President
James C. Little; Local 100
Acting President Curtis Tate;
Gov. David Paterson; Local
100 members, officials and
International officers in front
of NY's Capitol building*



groups of 10 to 20 in the afternoon to visit legislators personally and discuss the issues. As they sat around long conference tables or packed into offices, members spoke out about their concerns and listened to the answers.

"This is a unique situation to be in," said Alexander Lewis, a bus operator from the Michael J. Quill depot. "It's great to see how the decision making goes, decisions that affect my life and all of our lives."



standing up to CORPORATE GREED

TWU was heard almost a mile away from the American Airlines' Fort-Worth-based headquarters in mid-April when they took their fight against corporate greed to the streets where hundreds of members rallied, shouting their message.

The Air Transport Division's campaign against AMR, American Airlines' parent corporation, extended beyond regular negotiations; it started on the internet, spilled into the streets and was taken to its Chief Executive Officer himself, Gerard Arpey.

Over the past several years, as the airline industry continues to be in a volatile state, TWU has consistently worked with American Airlines, understanding that both parties are dealing with adverse circumstances. In 2003 members gave up \$620 million a year in pay, benefits and other concessions to keep AMR out of bankruptcy, only to be left behind every April when the company doles out extravagant bonuses. Over the last four years the company has given \$300 million in bonuses. In just the first quarter of 2009 AMR lost \$375 million.

"This is about equity," said TWU International President James C. Little. "TWU members from all airline classifications keep the planes flying, and keep people safe and comfortable. We've figured out how to make operations more productive and we have brought outside work into AMR facilities. We're not asking for the Earth, moon and stars."

In early April TWU launched the campaign against corporate greed by releasing an online

game to highlight the absurdity of executive bonuses. The game, found at americanexeccheck.com, shows AMR's CEO Gerard Arpey, Google's CEO Eric Schmidt, Southwest Airlines' CEO Garry Kelly and Apple's CEO Steve Jobs. Users discover that Arpey's salary of \$4.6 million is more than the other CEOs' salaries combined, surprising considering the tough times that have fallen on his industry and company. The game received widespread coverage in many Dallas, Chicago, Miami and Tulsa newspapers, as well as in the Washington Post and on CNN.

A few weeks later the ATD organized the enthusiastic rally outside of AMR headquarters in Fort Worth, the day before the company awarded its executives an estimated \$6.5 million in stock-based bonuses - a number that is significantly less than past years' bonuses, but much higher than any bonuses or salaries that any frontline employees have ever received.

"They've taken a select group and given them a reward that the rest of us don't have any access to," said John Conley, director of the Air Transport Division. American is bleeding money, has been consistently underperforming for the last several

Opposite, top left: Robert Gerzanich, Local 513 member; top right: Assistant ATD Director Bobby Gless directed the hundreds of member protesters; bottom: ATD Director John Conley amplified TWU's message for the press

[Continued on page 14.]





TWU PROTESTORS OUTSIDE OF AMR'S HEADQUARTERS CHANTED: **“Cancel those checks!”**

[Continued from page 13]

years and frontline employees' wages have been essentially frozen after the 30 percent pay cuts made in 2003.

"It's the beginning of a fight," said Local 513 member Anthony Hardy at the rally. "We're happy to be here as a union to fight together because we are American," he said. "We are what makes the company work."

Conley and Assistant ATD Director Bobby Gless led the crowd of hundreds of members at the rally in the "excessive American Exec Check." Conley announced into a bullhorn, "Cancel Those Checks!" just before members ripped, burned and stomped on large novelty checks for \$300 million made out to "American Corporate Executives."

On the morning of AMR's annual shareholders' meeting on May 20, ATD continued its message by posting signs that read "STOP Outrageous Checks to American Execs," along the roadways and bridges that led to the Flagship University Conference Center in Fort Worth where the meeting was held.

Gless and several members from the ATD Negotiating Committee attended the somber meeting where Gerard Arpey gave a gloomy assessment of

the company's precarious situation and the industry's distressing environment. Local 564 President J.R. Ruiz addressed the slow pace of negotiations and asked Arpey what he is going to do to help move both parties towards a reasonable agreement. Arpey did not have any comforting answers and would not discuss pay increases for members, but he emphasized possible improved cost savings that members could contribute to – something they've done time and again in recent years. Arpey acknowledged the sacrifice all employees have made for the company and his inability to do much at this juncture to ease TWU members' anxiety over negotiations and the unpredictable economic situation.

ATD Director Conley says that the Union will continue to persevere and work towards an equitable contract. "Our members made concessions in 2003 and they have earned the right to share, especially if American continues to allocate awards to a select few. Working class families should not bear the brunt of corporate excess or mismanagement, even in tough times, while they continue at the trough. We are fighting to make sure that does not happen."

Above: Hundreds lined the streets outside of AMR's headquarters

COPE'S *strength on display*

by COPE Director
Hubert Snead



The Transport Workers Union has always had high visibility with the public. Everywhere you go you come across the letters TWU. Whether at airports, riding a subway in New York City, buses in Miami, going to a ball game in Akron, Ohio, taking an auto rental shuttlebus in Fort Lauderdale, riding a cable car in San Francisco or having your home gas meter read in Brooklyn, you're likely to see our members working hard while wearing their TWU insignia apparel.

But now when you see our TWU logo, you can also see the progress of our COPE program.

At a recent COPE drive in Florida members were bringing their COPE coolers, COPE blankets, COPE bags and, of course, COPE hats to the local picnic. At a contract negotiation session, local officers were doing their bargaining while wearing COPE polo shirts. Recently at an airport, as a colleague and I were walking to our gate, we saw the TWU logo on the back of some shirts worn by members walking to their workstations. Along with their shirts letting people know that they were members of the TWU we were surprised to see they wore hats that said TWU COPE.

You can't believe how proud I felt when I saw all of this. I had always wondered: "Do our members really wear the COPE items?" The answer seems to be a resounding YES!

I believe many people are aware of TWU

as a union and its history representing workers in the transportation and other trades. But, I guess many still don't know that the letters C.O.P.E. stand for Committee on Political Education. Of course, the more our members support COPE and wear the COPE promotional items that is likely to change.

I always asked myself, "Do our members really want to display to the public that they are members of our COPE program?" Now, I know the answer is "Yes."

Do our members really understand what our COPE program is about? Again, the answer is yes.

Can we make our COPE program more successful? Well, yes, we can if we continue to work together.

I'll do all I can to
publicize COPE and
educate fellow members
on the importance of
**POLITICAL
ACTION**

I say "we" because I'll do all I can to publicize COPE and educate fellow members on the importance of political action to our families' lives. But you, the individual TWU member, must make that commitment to join the COPE

program if you haven't already done so, or by increasing your donation if you are a member so that we can continue to work hard for you in getting our agenda addressed in city halls, in the statehouses and in Congress.

You have made the Transport Workers Union COPE program one of the most successful in the labor movement. Let's stay on top. Continue to support COPE, register to vote, be an informed voter and don't forget to vote.

LOCAL 289 Aramark Cafeteria Workers Approve New 3-Year Agreement —→

Union workers at Upper Darby School District in Pennsylvania approved a new three-year agreement in early April. Negotiations were led by President Joseph Hughes, Vice President Jacque Rodgers, Cafeteria Representatives Mickey Gibson and Michelle Walton and assisted by Transit Division Director Susan Resch. These workers proudly serve 12,000 students breakfast and lunch on a daily basis. The contract runs from July 2009 to July 2012.

In these difficult economic times the Company was seeking givebacks in health benefits and the layoff clause and seeking new hires to be paid at a substantially lower rate regardless of title. The negotiations team held steadfast to their positions and was able to get an agree-



Local 289 members from the Upper Darby School District

ment which maintained their existing benefits and focused on improving wages. They received upgrades of 9 positions, a 4 percent wage increase in each year and improvements in their uniform allowance and training rate.

WORKING WOMEN'S COMMITTEE

Local 526 in Kings Bay, Georgia hosted the Air Transport Division's WWC May meeting. The program focused on organizing. Dir. of Organizing Frank McCann and organizer Karla Kozak spoke on the importance of organizing and on the Employee Free Choice Act. AFL-CIO Organizer Trainer Amy Niehouse also discussed EFCA and engaged the group in a mock "door knock" activity.

Other guests included President of Local 260 and Director of the Civil and Human Rights Committee, Sandra Burleson and Director of Performance & Planning Analysis for American Eagle, Stacey Brown.

On the third and final day of the meeting the WWC was given a tour of the Nuclear Naval Submarine Base by Alison Christopher (Local 526 Secretary-Treasurer) and Robert Payne (Local 526 President). —→



Railroad Regional Meeting in Elkhart, Indiana

RAILROAD Regional Meeting in Indiana —↑

TWU recently held a Railroad regional meeting in Elkhart, Indiana. Railroad Division Director Gary Maslanka chaired the meeting with participation from Division staffers Fred Fink, and John Feltz. Education and Research Director Bob Wechsler taught sections on Railroad Division history, grievance handling and disciplinary hearings. Also participating was attorney Richard Gilardi. Attending the meeting were Robert E. Russell, Mark A. Pacheco, R.L. Turney, Ken Stone, Ben Lambright, and David Davenport, all from Local 2053; Charles Flaughner, David Cox, Doug Vare, Don May, Danny Groves, and Jack Ragland, from Local 2003; Harold Mackley and Jeff Layne, from Local 2011; and Jonathan Williams, Local 2014.



ATD's WWC at the Naval Submarine Base



Kansas City's MCIE Overhaul base hosted the send off celebration

LOCAL 101 Holds Delegate's Meeting in Brooklyn

Local 101 recently held a delegates' meeting to ramp up their representational skills. Local 101 President Marsha Spinowitz spoke to the class and introduced representatives from National Grid who made a presentation to the group. TWU Education and Research Director Bob Wechsler conducted a grievance seminar with participation from Vice President Mike Conigliaro, Secretary Treasurer Josephine Arroyo, Executive Board members Bruce Cox, Joe Coscia, Steven Mauro, and Constance Bradley, as well as Delegates Frank Cooper, Mark Macari, Rob Mojica, Bill Blache, John Malone, Frankie Correa, Gregory Wilson, John Simonelli, Dominick D'Onofrio, Richard Diaczuk, Curtis Rolland, Anthony Williams, John DeMattico, Sal Mirasola, Lonnie Blair, Vaughn C. Pratt, Tony Balzano, Yolanda Daniels, Robert McIntosh, James Kroboth, Tony Caban, Allyssa Hyacinth-Daniels, Jason Catapano, Anthony Chieco, Hugo Sepulveda, Michael Cavaliere, Dawn Alexander, Paul Conde, James DeMattico, and Anthony Gallipani. —>

LOCAL 530 "Helping Soldiers Help Children"

Kansas City Local 530 worked together with American Airlines to support the Operation Iraqi Children organization which supplies school supply kits and other necessities to Iraqi children and care packages to American soldiers in Iraq. American Airlines donated a 767 aircraft, which is maintained by Local 530 members, to OIC, helping the organization to transport the largest one-time shipment of supplies - 10,000 school kits. Crocs' SolesUnited program donated more than 6,000 pairs of Crocs shoes for children and soldiers and the Peter Burk's Unsung Hero Fund also donated snacks, supplies, books and video games for soldiers and soccer balls for Iraqi children.

The Kansas City MCIE Overhaul base hosted a send off celebration where the hangar space was converted into a stage decorated with balloons and banners. Several speakers addressed the mission, including TWU Local 530 President Gordon Clark.

"As the group embarks on this long journey that will undoubtedly put smiles on the

faces of thousands of children you must know the Transport Workers and American Airlines have worked very hard together to make your flight the safest in the world," said Clark. "For those of you flying with us today



TWU Local 530 President Gordon Clark speaks at the celebration.

the Boeing 767 aircraft you will be flying on is completely 100 percent maintained by the members of the Transport Workers Union."

The charter continued on from Kansas City through New York and Ramstein Air Force Base in Germany and finally to Kuwait where the cargo, volunteers and entertainers were airlifted to Iraq.



Local 101 Members at a delegates' meeting in Brooklyn



LOCAL 568 SALUTES LONGTIME MIAMI OFFICER JOE ROSENDE

Former Local 568 First Vice President Joe Rosende (holding plaque) was saluted for his long service as an officer of the Miami local. Shown at the local's annual picnic on April 18 are (from left) Manny Lorenzana, Executive Board, Tom Lee, President, Robert Gless, Assistant ATD Director, Rosende and Mike Garcia, Vice President.

"He's a great guy, very knowledgeable," Lee said of Rosende who also served as Local 568 Secretary-Treasurer, in addition to other posts. "No matter how deep Joe had to dig, he would always come up with an answer. He was tenacious. He never backed down from a fight."

Rosende, who has 18 years on the job at American Airlines as a Fleet Service Clerk and Crew Chief, recently became an Aircraft Mechanic and is now a member of TWU Local 561. He plans to become active in his new local, but said, "I think I'll take a little sabbatical from union work for awhile."

Rosende shown below with wife Esmeralda



INT'L Hosts Stewards' Workshop

Locals 225, 226 and 241 joined together for a stewards' class held at the International's offices recently. Education and Research Director Bob Wechsler taught the group with participation from International Rep-

resentative Jerome Lafragola, Local 225 President Carlos Padilla and Secretary Treasurer Anthony Celeste. Local stewards included German DeJesus, James Graham, Angel Peguero, Erick Roman, Randy S. Lavin, Gregory Cooper and Shameika Harrell (225), Larry Williams (226) and Alan Dixon (241).



LOCAL 555 Signs New Contract

Union and company representatives gathered to sign the new agreement for Southwest Airlines Ramp, Operations, Provisioning & Freight Agents. Front row – SWA CEO Gary Kelly, Labor Relations VP Mike Ryan, TWU Local 555 President Charles Cerf, International VP Garry Drummond and Air Transport Division Director John Conley.

Second row – Senior Human Resources Director Steve Goldberg, HR Dir. Jeff Cox, HR Mgr. Trudy Christensen, HR Dir. (provisioning) Michelle Jordon, company attorney Eric Carr, HR Mgr. Bill Venckus, TWU negotiators Albert Barbosa, John Kaczmarek, Kevin Carney and Patti Adams. The contract, ratified by a four-to-one margin, features a 9% raise over three years, slightly less for workers at the top of the pay scale.

LOCAL 234 MEMBERS “Race for the Cure”

This May, nearly 100 Local 234 members joined thousands of others for the annual Susan G. Komen Race for the Cure 5k breast cancer walk through the streets of Philadelphia.



Clockwise from top right: Sharee Bullock (middle), her husband, Cris Bullock (second row, middle)—a recently retired Local 234 member, and their family participated to support the cause; Local 234 Vice President Allison Cooper and Executive Vice President Brian Pollitt helped organize the Locals' participation in the walk; Philadelphia City Hall made an inspirational backdrop for the walk.

LOCAL 1400 Settles Contract with NY Port Authority

Local 1400 has settled an 18-month contract battle with the Port Authority of New York and New Jersey that has resulted in an excellent contract settlement. Over 95 percent of the voting members ratified the contract which provides for, in part, 15% wage increases; no employee contributions for medical, dental, prescriptions, eyeglasses; and increases in

longevity pay, shift differential, and uniform allowance. With electronic tolling a reality in the foreseeable future, a key battle that the Local won was maintaining a no-layoff clause for all Senior Toll Collectors and Toll Collectors. President Jerome Lafragola attributes the contract victory to “preparation, research, member support and the unwavering determination of the bargaining committee.”

Left to right seated: Director of Transit Susan Resch, President of Local 1400 Jerome Lafragola. Standing, Officers: Rhonda Keitt, Kim Whitfield, Brian Campbell, Bob Higgins, Peter Basile, Pat Reynolds, Joe Natole and representatives from Port Authority Labor Relations



SOUTHWEST FLIGHT ATTENDANTS

APPROVE LOCAL 556 CONTRACT

With a “yes” vote of 89%, TWU Local 556 Flight Attendants approved a new four-year contract with Southwest Airlines. A tentative agreement was reached in March. Voting was by electronic ballot.

Although the negotiations weren’t as contentious as the last time around, Local 556 President Thom McDaniel said they presented their own challenge because of the severe economic downturn. Nevertheless, union negotiators were able to obtain 3% raises in each of the first three years, while a raise in the fourth year will depend on company performance. The contract, which covers close to 10,000 Flight Attendants, is retroactive to June 2008 and runs through May 2012.

Southwest also agreed to increase contributions to workers’ pension funds. In a message to members, McDaniel said, “At the end of the process and considering our industry-leading status and the daunting economic challenges, we had to prioritize what was most important and, of course, our negotiating committee stood strong and prevailed against any economic concessions or minimum flying requirement. That being said, you can be sure that our union will continue to work with Southwest Airlines to improve our quality of life even outside negotiations.”

McDaniel credited the contract education team with creating the best atmosphere for negotiations. “We would have never made it to this point so quickly without an informed and involved membership.”



TWU Warns MTA: “HANDS OFF OUR JOBS”

On April 23 two thousand Local 100 members, other supportive unions and TWU International members and officers stood outside of the Metropolitan Transportation Authority's headquarters and yelled “Hands Off Our Jobs!” Within two weeks the MTA loosened its grip on our union jobs and announced that current jobs were no longer in jeopardy.

TWU International President James C. Little told the crowd, “We are drawing the line against service cuts impacting our members and the service to those who need it the most.”

At the rally, Local 100 President Roger Toussaint made it clear that Albany needed to work with the desperately cash-strapped MTA to save members. “However they’re going to find the money, they’ve got to go find the money,” he said. “We need Albany to come through, and if the MTA needs to do some cuts, they should start lining up the managers and fire them.”

Local 100 fought in the state capital, in New York's local media and on the streets for the safety of the public and the job security MTA employees deserve. On May 7 the Senate and Assembly passed a package of taxes and fees that is expected to generate \$1.8 billion, all of which will go to the MTA. This will avert layoffs, prevent most service cuts and limit fare hikes – a great victory for TWU.

The day before the bill was signed, Local 100 leaders, Acting President Curtis Tate, Administrative VP Barry Roberts and Station VP Andreeva Pinder met with Speaker Sheldon Silver, Sen. Majority Leader Malcolm Smith and Gov. David Paterson, while other VPs led teams that met with other key legislators. TWU extracted a promise from Albany that the bill would not be signed without the assurance that jobs would not be cut. The promise of no layoffs was formally acknowledged on May 11 by MTA

Chief Financial Officer Gary Dellaverson at a meeting of the MTA Board of Directors.

The bill saves over 1,000 Local 100 members - Bus Operators, Maintainers and Station Agents - who were in jeopardy of losing their jobs, and will help ensure continued safety in New York's subway stations and along its bus routes, which will benefit the public as well as MTA employees.

In addition to the rally and work in Albany, Local 100 also organized leafleting at key transportation hubs, demonstrations outside the offices of selected politicians and advertisements on the radio, in the press and on cable TV.

Now that the issues of layoffs and transportation service reductions have been settled, Local 100 is focusing on preventing the MTA from using attrition to cut service and endanger passenger safety in the name of economy.

Above, clockwise from left: Crowd at rally; Anita Clinton, Chairperson of Local 100's Women's Committee; Int'l President James C. Little; Int'l Vice President and Local 100 President Roger Toussaint

NEW *TWU* Interns

Get Up Close & Personal in Washington

Forget the high school textbooks or even yesterday's news report. If you want to learn how Washington really works you can't beat TWU's internship program. That's the judgement of the two members who recently completed a three-week stay in the nation's capital.

Now in its third year, the internship program brings local activists to work with the Washington staff on lobbying, research, coalition-building and other facets of the legislative process. Political & Legislative Director Portia Reddick White, who supervises the program, says, "We're tapping into the talents each intern comes with, so they can do whatever they do even better."

"I wanted to get a clearer understanding of the political process to better represent my members," says intern Greg Cosey, Recording Secretary/Treasurer of Local 590. The 21-year Fleet Service veteran said he has been active in many political campaigns over the years, but the Washington internship was an opportunity to "learn from people who are doing it really well on an everyday basis."

Cosey says he enjoyed getting a first-hand view of how Washington works. "I got to see the mechanics of government and, more importantly, the politics. What you see on TV or in the newspapers is not quite an accurate portrayal of the process."

The second intern, Doug Wegryn, the Cleveland Section Chair for Local 2019, agrees: "I got to meet many Representatives and Senators and going to legislative hearings was particularly informative. It's a real hands-on experience versus seeing it on TV or reading about it in the newspaper."

Now in his 34th year as a railroad Carmen, Wegryn has been active for two decades in three Presidential elections and countless local races. He views the internship as a way to carry on the tradition of unionism, "to help elect officials who are labor-friendly."

Both Wegryn and Cosey recommend the internship to other TWU activists. "It's a unique opportunity," Cosey says. "It's a chance to see where our COPE dollars go. The Washington office is a microcosm of what our union should look like in terms of political effectiveness."

Wegryn adds: "It's an opportunity to learn how to get the right people elected, the politicians who will be good for working people. And you'll be able to bring the knowledge back to your local and give people an informed idea of what's going on in Washington."

Cosey said he learned what an important role congressional staffers play in structuring a bill, since few congress people know the details of every bill. "I love to learn. Anytime I'm in a learning mode," he says, "I'm enjoying myself."



THE UNION WAY

AT LOCAL 234 IN PHILADELPHIA, DAVID O'CONNOR IS FOLLOWING DAD BOB'S EXAMPLE OF UNION ACTIVISM

Children learn best by example, and that's as true of union values as family values. It also explains why David O'Connor, at age 22, is already an activist in Philadelphia Local 234.

Setting the example for almost 40 years as a member and officer is his father, Bob O'Connor, currently Recording Secretary of the local.

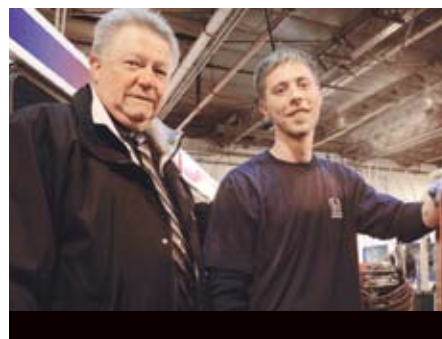
Compared to David, Bob was a relatively slow bloomer as a union activist, first holding office in 1983. A variety of union posts followed, including Executive Board Member and a staff position as Business Agent in 1988. He even mounted an unsuccessful run for Secretary-Treasurer of the local in 1993. Later he was on the winning slate in 2002 as Vice President and most recently as Recording Secretary.

"I got involved because guys would come to me for answers," Bob says. "I was somebody who went out and got the answers."

Not surprisingly, David cites a similar motivation. "People would ask me for help, probably because my father was a local officer," he says. "I figured I might as well be involved so I could give the right answers. I enjoy helping people, but I also enjoy getting others to be involved. It builds a stronger union."

David says his union work can be stressful because an officer is a natural target for members' complaints. "But for the most part I like it," David says. "My father set a good example."

Bob O'Connor with his son David



Interns Greg Cosey (left) and Doug Wegryn in Washington D.C.



SHOP TWU

Find exclusive Union products at our TWU store at shopTWU.com. All merchandise is Union made in the U.S.A.



TO ALL
MEMBERS OF
THE TRANSPORT
WORKERS UNION
AND THEIR
FAMILIES,

President James C. Little would like to honor any TWU members and immediate family of members who have served or are serving in our military. We are organizing a tribute to veterans and soldiers to be shown at our 23rd Annual Convention in September. Please send the following requested information to the International office at 1700 Broadway, Communications — 2nd Floor, New York, NY, 10019, or email the information to lgiegerich@twu.org. Email is preferred.

Please send:
Name, Number of Local, Rank, Relation to Member, and a photograph.

We can only accept this information up until July 15, 2009. We will not be able to include anything in the Convention tribute that is received after that date.

THANK YOU.



Jim Gannon

Retires After 24 Years as Express Editor

Jim Gannon, TWU Communications Director for 24 years, recently wrote “- 30 -” to a long career in labor journalism that began in 1972 with the Seafarers International Union.

The symbol “- 30 -” is a time-honored way newspaper reporters indicate the end of a story. Gannon began his career at a time when such journalistic traditions were still in use, along with hot metal type and justified headlines. But, he also guided TWU publications through a period of rapid technical changes, including computerized make-up of pages, internet research, electronic photos and the union’s own web site.

“Jim embraced technology as a way of doing things faster, but it didn’t really change his mission as a writer and editor,” said Dwight Burton, who worked with Gannon for 12 years and is now a consultant with the Communications Department. “The aim was to always to give members the information they needed to make a better life for themselves and their families.”

International President James C. Little added, “We wish Jim well in retirement, but we’re sorry to see him go. He represented the best of our staff in that he always kept the members’ interests front and center. Even as our International officers changed, they knew they could count on Jim to produce top-quality publications.”

Gannon started as a staff writer for the Seafarers after graduating from Manhattan College in 1972. By 1975, he was Editor and Director of Publications — one of the youngest to hold that position in an inter-

national union.

When the Seafarers moved from New York to Washington, D.C. in 1982, Gannon joined the TWU staff as assistant to long-time Publications Director Joe Kutch, taking over the job three years later when Kutch retired. In a sense, Gannon was always a part of the TWU family; he is the son of a Local 100 member and Bus Operator.

Education and Research Director Bob Wechsler, who worked with Gannon before moving into his current post, said Gannon’s commitment to TWU was an inspiration to other staffers.

“Coming from a teacher,” Wechsler said, “it’s high praise when I say Jim taught me a lot about what it means for an individual to be a TWU member, and about the importance of TWU’s legacy for the men and women who work in transportation.”

Liz Giegerich named Communications Dir.

Elizabeth Giegerich, who holds an M.A. in Journalism from NYU, has been named to succeed Gannon as Director of Communications and Editor of TWU Express. She heads a staff that has been revamped to maximize the union’s use of new electronic media.

Giegerich thanked Gannon for guiding her through a brief transition. “In just a short time, Jim has helped me understand the positive role union communications can play in members’ lives.”



EQUAL *opportunities*

by *International
Secretary-Treasurer*
Joseph C. Gordon

When we use the phrase “equal opportunity” we’re usually talking about civil rights, women’s rights, access for the handicapped, or other necessary goals. But in a country like America, it’s really broader than that. Equal opportunity is at our very core as a nation.

In the debate over important issues, such as health care, education or worker rights, it’s easy to get lost in the details and the rhetoric from both sides. But if we step back a bit we realize that the most complex issues come down to a simple sense of fair play.

That revelation dawned on me when I read an article in *The New York Times* last month about an Ohio high school student playing with her school orchestra in a competition in New York City. The editors must have thought it was a pretty good story too because this seemingly lightweight piece ended up on page one.

The young lady is Tiffany Clay, 18.

She’s the first violinist in the Newark, Ohio High School Sinfonia and, according to her teachers, a gifted musician. She plays a \$175 instrument her music teacher purchased on eBay. (That same teacher recalls seeing a student from a wealthier school district smash his \$10,000 back-up violin to celebrate graduation.)

By all accounts Tiffany is a good kid,

maintaining high grades while playing in the orchestra and working 35 hours a week in a drive-in – on roller skates, no less. She once thought about going away to a top college to become a music teacher, but those dreams were put away when she realized that music and other art courses were the first to be jettisoned by cash-strapped school districts. Now, she plans to study nursing for two years at a small technical college in town. “Everybody gets sick,” she says, explaining why a medical career makes more sense.

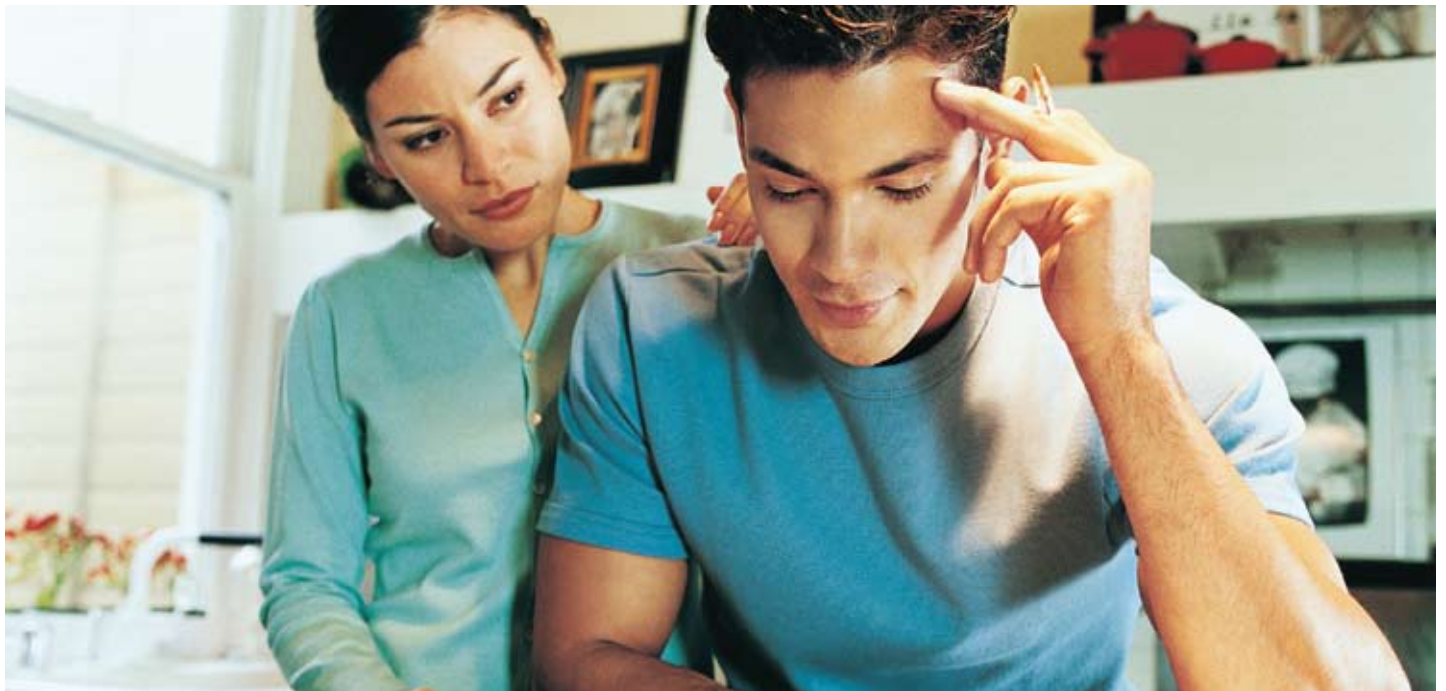
Even with her lowered expectations, Tiffany is far ahead of many of her classmates. A full one-third of students in her school district don’t graduate. School officials believe it’s a hangover from the days when high school dropouts could get a decent job at the local manufacturing plants. “Now those jobs have gone away,” said the school superintendent. “But the mindset has not.”

I don’t know if it’s a tragedy that Tiffany is giving up music for nursing. Nursing is an important and much-needed profession. Still, it’s sad that someone so young has to short-circuit their dreams. But, it is a tragedy that so many of her classmates have no dreams – or even the decent-paying factory jobs their parents and grandparents once relied on.

Contrast those lives with the children of the wealthiest Americans, who go to the best private schools and universities, spend semesters studying overseas and are able to pursue even their wildest dreams.

No, the opportunities are not equal in America, but they should be. Think about that when the debate begins on President Obama’s education reforms.

NO,
the opportunities
are not equal in
America, but they
should be.



Falling behind financially?

Union SAFE may be able to help.

If you're having trouble making ends meet in this economy, Union SAFE may be able to help. We offer valuable benefits for members who participate in Union Plus programs including Union Plus Credit Card, Mortgage and Union Secure Insurance and who are facing economic hardship.

To find out how Union SAFE may be able to help, visit:

UnionPlus.org/UnionSAFE



TWU 06/09

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