

# TWU

The Transport Workers  
Union of America  
*United Invincible*

# Express

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# TAKE CHARGE

*of* **POLITICAL CHANGE**

2010 COPE

LEGISLATIVE

CONFERENCE



*TWU Leads National Transit Campaign with  
ATU & Rev. Jackson, **WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH,**  
**BRIGHT FUTURE FOR RAIL,** *Fighting Executive Greed**

# investing in the FUTURE

by *International  
President*  
**James C. Little**

There's an old saying about "doing well while doing good."

That means making a profit while also doing the right thing.

America is in that position now with respect to its transportation needs. A timely investment in our transit, rail and air transportation systems will pay big dividends in job creation, energy savings and long term prosperity.

Our country has traditionally treated public transportation as a stepchild. That's why our rail and transit systems continue to lag behind Europe, Japan and other industrialized countries.

Since the 1950s, our spending on mass transit has stayed at about 20% versus 80% for highways—despite the fact that 80% of the population lives in metropolitan areas. No, we're not going to give up our automobiles. But if you've ever sat in a traffic jam, I'm sure you've thought: "There has to be a better way!"

The lingering recession, which dealt us a body blow in 2008, provides an opportunity to address our transportation needs. It's clear that further stimulus to the economy is needed, and what better way to create jobs and boost the economy than to rebuild our aging transportation systems? In addition, the growth of fuel-efficient mass transit is one of the keys to greater energy independence in the future.

Although members of Congress from both sides of the aisle acknowledge the need for steps to ease the climate crisis, both the Senate and House versions of the Surface Transportation bill still favor highways. Old habits die hard, so we have our work cut out for us.

With a sympathetic administration in Washington, there is a window of opportunity to reset funding priorities as Congress addresses a variety of bills on job creation,

economic stimulus and transit, rail and aviation appropriations.

More funding is necessary, but it is not the only ingredient. We must spend wisely. Transit is a good case in point. The introduction of new technology makes worker training a priority.

I think of this as an investment in human capital. What is the point of investing in new transit systems if workers aren't given the skills to operate them? Workers, through their unions, must also play a role in the process.

Similarly, increased federal spending will be insufficient if cash-strapped state and local governments cut back on service. Congress must create incentives for localities to increase their own investment in transit.



the "green" technology industries.

Of course, none of this will happen automatically. Too often, decisions are based less on what makes sense or what is "fair" than on the politics of influence and power. The fact that we are pushing for sound policies that make sense for our country does not exempt us from that reality.

That's why we're dedicated to making

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IF WE DO THE RIGHT THING BY  
OUR PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION SYSTEMS  
**IT WILL PAY BIG REWARDS**  
DOWN THE LINE.

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If we do the right thing by our public transportation systems it will pay big rewards down the line. There is no question about the need to create jobs when unemployment and underemployment are running at close to a combined rate of 17%. Any jobs bill must include a sizeable investment in transportation. Giving the green light to some \$15 billion in ready-to-go transportation projects would create 450,000 jobs.

Transportation spending puts people to work at jobs that need to be done and will benefit our environment. We'll be less dependent on foreign oil, which in turn will improve our economic competitiveness and national security. A bonus will be new jobs created in

TWU a powerful force in Washington, which is key to legislation, policy, regulations and funding for our transportation jobs. We plan to move our International headquarters to DC in the fall, while maintaining a strong presence in New York City through Local 100, our largest and founding local.

Congress is set to address Surface Transit Reauthorization, a jobs bill, FTA, FAA and FRA reauthorization bills, a new stimulus bill, and climate change and energy legislation. Hopefully, with our heightened presence in the nation's capital—and with a lot of hard work—we'll get Congress to do the right thing.



*Int'l President James C. Little opens the COPE Legislative Conference on April 27.*

## Take Charge of Political Change: *Stay Connected*

TWU delegates to the **2010 TWU COPE Legislative Conference** heard from key legislators on issues important to working families.

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**+** TWU Celebrates Women's History Month, TWU Says No to Corporate Greed, State Conferences: Tx. & Fl., ATDVC Wounded Warriors Project, Grassroots Training

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*Cover photo by Tom Matthews*

### LOOK FOR THE



If you see an icon next to an article be sure to check out [twu.org](http://twu.org) for supplemental coverage of that story. **STAY CONNECTED!**

## 5 | National Transit Campaign

TWU, ATU and Rev. Jackson hold rallies across the country to fight for proper transit funding.

## 7 | Getting on Track

Obama's high speed and passenger rail plans present unprecedented opportunities for TWU and the country.

## 8 | Health Care Reform Passed

Find out what you need to know.



**↑** DLPA Director Portia Reddick White, Sec. Of Transportation Ray Lahood, COPE Director Alex Garcia and TWU Counsel David Rosen at the COPE Leg. Conference

### OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF THE TRANSPORT WORKERS UNION OF AMERICA, AFL-CIO

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Page One Photography, Nancy Rokos Photography, TWU Media Representative Angela Tucker.







Shown here: **Back rows from left:** Jeffery Mitchell, Local 291; DLPA Staff member Merrick Kranz, DLPA staff Keith Benjamin; Ray Rosario, Local 100; Maximo Ortiz Jr., Local 100; Brian Delucia, Local 2055; Harry Wills, Local 100; Garry Moffitt, Local 567; John Bell, Local 514; Doug Wegryn, Local 2019; Audrey Van Hook, Local 512; Shannon Jones, Local 555; Frank Brooks, Local 234. **Front rows from left:** Jon Levin, Bryan Orozco, Local 556; Stephanie Roberts, Local 556; TWU Int'l Staff Tinisha Thompson; DLPA Dir. Portia Reddick White; Avignon Dent, Local 234; Shae Flores, Local 513; Constance Bradley, Local 101; Joe Montana, Local 2022; Addie Crisp, Local 556; Robert Villarreal, Local 260; Ricky Towers, Local 721

# Learning to Harness the Power of Politics

## DLPA Grassroots Training

A visit to your state senator or congressman at their federal offices in Washington, DC requires proper preparation and a certain amount of confidence. Once you locate the correct building, you pass through a metal detector and then enter a structure that feels more like a museum than a place for government business.

The century old architecture of block-long federal legislative buildings—16-foot high ceilings, grand rotundas, floor-to-ceiling French windows, etc.—can be intimidating; it is not the usual atmosphere where union brothers and sisters talk politics.

That's where TWU's Department of Legislative and Political Affairs (DLPA) Grassroots Training program steps in. Once you pass through your representative's door you enter a busy government office, with phones ringing, faxes beeping and staffers crafting bills. The Grassroots Training teaches TWU activists how to prepare their talking points, understand TWU legislative issues and know what to expect while lobbying so that the grandiose architecture and, more importantly, rushed staffers don't throw you off your game or prevent you from having your voice heard by your elected representatives. Legislators are public servants who

work for the people—that's you, and your union brothers and sisters.

"There is no way I would have been able to walk into any of those offices without the training I had the last couple of days," said Constance Bradley, a Local 101 member and Grassroots trainee. "Plus, I had a great time here. I made new TWU friends from different states and it was a great experience going to meet the senators and realizing they will welcome us in their offices. I was very impressed by that."

DLPA Director Portia Reddick White explained: "The goal of our program is to educate our TWU activists on how to be involved with politics in a positive way and to teach them how to involve their communities and locals in the process." White emphasized the DLPA's efforts to help TWU members speak in unison on the Hill and in state and local governments. She also reviewed important state and local elections approaching this fall and implored participants to go back to their communities and encourage friends, neighbors and members to vote for candidates who support working families.



Continued on page 19

## TRANSPORT WORKERS UNION OF AMERICA, AFL-CIO

**JAMES C. LITTLE** International President

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**JOSEPH C. GORDON** Int'l Secretary-Treasurer

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**SONNY HALL** Int'l President Emeritus

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**Frank McCann** Director of Organizing

**David Moses** Director of Information Technology

**Roger Toussaint** Director of Strategic Planning

**Ed Watt** Director of Health and Safety

**Portia Reddick White** Director of Legislative and Political Affairs

# TWU tackling the American Transit Crisis

TWU, along with ATU and Rev. Jesse Jackson, is leading the effort to “Save Our Ride,” fighting for transit systems in major cities across the country.

America’s transit systems, from New York to San Francisco, Chicago to Atlanta and Boston to Miami, are in severe financial trouble. The economic crisis has given way to a widespread transit crisis: service cuts and layoffs that will affect hundreds of thousands of union members, millions of public riders and, effectively, the environment.

TWU President James C. Little and his leadership have taken charge of the effort to curtail this crisis by forming an alliance called Save Our Ride with the ATU and Rev. Jesse Jackson’s Rainbow PUSH Coalition.

“Mass transit has been under-funded for decades,” said President Little. “This is about the millions of people who need and depend on these services.”

Save Our Ride is holding rallies around the country to call for flexibility in federal transit funds that currently do not allow large cities to use that money for operating costs. Rallies are planned to be held this summer in San Francisco, Oakland, Sacramento, Houston, Miami, and New York City; and the alli-

ance has already rallied in Washington, DC, Atlanta, Birmingham, New York, Detroit and Cleveland. With significant news coverage, the rallies have already successfully raised public awareness of the issue.

“The fight for quality public transit isn’t just about transit workers,” said TWU Executive Vice President Harry Lombardo at the Atlanta rally. “It’s about our cities and our communities—what kind of country and future we’re going to have. The public needs transit, and transit is essential to America’s environmental goals of reducing greenhouse gases and provides thousands of good green jobs.”

Current federal aid for municipal public transit comes with significant strings attached; local officials in large cities can only use these funds for capital projects and are prevented from using resources to meet local needs and priorities. The alliance is lobbying for the passage of Rep. Russ Carnahan’s transit bill, H.R. 2746, and its Senate version, Senator Brown’s S3189 bill, which would allow transit agencies to flex funding

to suit local needs.

“It makes no sense to have a brand new bus sit in the garage, if you have nobody to drive it,” said ATU President Warren George at the Atlanta rally.

On opening day of the TWU COPE Legislative Conference, delegates to the conference joined more than 3,000 TWU Local 100 and ATU members at Upper Senate Park in the shadow of the Capitol for an alliance rally. TWU Local 100 President John Samuelson told the crowd, “This national problem, 30 years in the making, is not going to be solved on the backs of workers.”

Other speakers addressed the importance of saving American jobs during a time when 10% of the population is unemployed. Reverend Jesse Jackson concluded the rally, stressing the need to use transit to stimulate the American economy:

“We can make the steel, we can lay the rail,” he told the crowd, and had them repeat after him. “We can make trains, make buses... go green...go transportation. Put America back to work!”



Shown here: President James C. Little addresses the crowd of 3,000 at the rally in Washington, DC on April 27. Bottom photos, from left: Rev. Jesse Jackson at DC Rally, TWU Executive Vice President Harry Lombardo at May 11 Atlanta rally, TWU Local 100 President John Samuelson at the April 27 DC rally, Warren George at May 11 Atlanta rally.





# International Sister SOLIDARITY

In February, President James C. Little had the opportunity to unite his strong dedication to women's rights with his dedication to global solidarity -strengthening the labor movement worldwide -by sending TWU Human Rights Director Sandra Burleson and several TWU women leaders to London for the International Transport Workers Federation (ITF) Women's Conference. More than 200 union women from 62 countries attended the Conference where participants discussed a wide variety of issues important to working women in today's world.

TWU delegates to the Conference heard from other union women leaders from around the world on issues like sexual harassment of women workers in Belgium, maternity leave issues in the Asian Pacific Region, and violence against women while traveling to work in Australia, to name a few.

The TWU has been working with the ITF for the last several years by sending repre-

sentatives to meetings overseas and hosting visiting unionists here in the United States. One of the most important aspects of TWU's involvement with the ITF has always been that the participants' common dedication to Labor allows them to relate to each other, despite the vast differences in background, culture and jobs.

"We shared stories with union women leaders from other countries and learned quickly that women from around the world face similar troubles like violence, sexual harassment and inequality," said Angela Tucker, Chair of the ATD Working Women's Committee.

Participants learned that while situations are clearly worse in some countries than in others, no matter the circumstances, sharing stories and ideas on equal rights and organizing with people from such different backgrounds introduces plenty of fresh and intelligent ideas.

Tucker attended the Conference with Civil and Human Rights Director Sandra Burleson; Managing Director of Organizational Development Tonya Gordon; TWU Organizer Linda Dill; Chair of Transit Division Working Women's Committee Delissa Brown; Local 100 Women's Committee member Oneshia "Gracie" Portlette; Local 100 E-board member Christine Williams and Local 100 Recording Secretary Benita Johnson, shown in bottom right photo.

## TWU CELEBRATES WOMEN'S HISTORY MONTH

March is Women's History Month, and March 8 is International Women's Day. This year, the TWU took advantage of the time reserved to celebrate the economic, polit-

ical and social achievements of women of the past and present. Many TWU women have dedicated themselves to the union and to fighting for fair working conditions and equality for all, regardless of race, creed, religion and gender, which the TWU has been committed to since its founding.

Sandra Burleson, Director of Human Rights and a Coalition of Union Women (CLUW) Vice President, attended a three-day CLUW working women's celebration in honor of Women's History Month. At the Conference, Burleson participated in workshops and heard from speakers and panels that focused on women's issues, among them: Health Families Act, Pay-check fairness Act and health reform. "The national recognition of women's history provides a good avenue to recognize and celebrate women's historic achievements and achievements of today's women as well," said Burleson.

"The TWU is a proud supporter of equal rights, and of course, women's rights," said TWU International President James C. Little. "We are honored to celebrate the accomplishments of women during the month of March, and are proud to celebrate our TWU women's accomplishments year-round."

According to the ILO report on 2009 Global Employment Trends for Women, women are "often in a disadvantaged position in comparison to men in labor markets around the world [and] in most regions, the gender impact of the economic crisis in terms of unemployment rates is expected to be more detrimental for females than for males."

Some of today's issues that still affect women in many countries are wages inequalities, lack of sick leave policies and workplace violence.

President Little has always been committed to women's rights and has helped to foster the growth of TWU Women's Committees during his time as ATD Division Director and today, as President of the International union. TWU Transit and Air Divisions, and some locals, have established Working Women's Committees (WWC). More than 100 women and some men are involved in WWCs today, and the numbers continue to grow.



Left: TWU Organizer Linda Dill surrounded by the women of the world who attended the ITF Conference. Bottom photo: names listed in middle column of article.





# getting ON TRACK

TWU Rail Division, an asset to federal rail plans.

**W**ith the future of American high-speed intercity rail in mind, U.S. Secretary of Transportation Ray Lahood boarded some of the fastest trains in the world—Japan and China’s bullet trains—in early May. Lahood is working to bring the super-fast rail networks of Asia and Europe to the United States. Because the American rail system has been essentially neglected since the development of interstate roadways, Lahood estimates that the implementation of high-speed rail networks will take “a decade or so” to accomplish in our country, but emphasizes that the work must start now.

As the future of high speed rail develops, the U.S. government has also committed to improving passenger rail systems. This brings unprecedented opportunity and exciting possibilities to the country and to the TWU.

Consistent with Obama’s “Vision for High-Speed Rail in America,” the federal government has allocated \$8 billion in stimulus funds for high-speed rail projects throughout the country, with an additional \$1 billion to be budgeted annually over the next five years. The government has also identified 10 corridors, each from 100 to 600 miles long, with the greatest promise for high-speed rail development, many of which are TWU areas.

Sec. Lahood dedicated much of his keynote speech at the 2010 TWU COPE Legislative Conference this April to the prospect of high-speed rail.

“We are right at the place where the country was at when we started interstate system,” said Lahood. “A decade or two from now America will be connected by good passenger rail service—and the infrastructure for that, and the train sets for that, will be built by American workers in America.” Lahood noted that the DOT has never before had funds allocated for high-speed, intercity rail projects.

As reported in past issues of the *TWU Express*, jobs have already been created at the Amtrak Beech Grove, Indiana facility, where stimulus funds have provided more than 100 new jobs and helped to revive the facility.

High-speed rail and modernized passenger trains will bring the United States a rail network that is competitive on an international level, and will create jobs nationwide. These developing networks will also provide a cleaner alternative to the expensive, fuel-based and environmentally harmful transportation options that are currently available.

“The opportunities provided by the Obama administration’s commitment to rail in this country are invigorating,” said TWU International President James C. Little. Little com-

mends Sec. Lahood for his clear dedication to keeping all high-speed rail work in America and to employing American workers.

Railroad Director Gary Maslanka explained the positive effects he anticipates. “New service, new systems and rail car manufacturing and maintenance are going to present a lot of opportunities for the TWU and our rail locals,” said Maslanka. “The Rail Division staff are preparing to make the most of the opportunity to be an integral part of improving America’s rail systems.”

Members in the TWU Rail Division know how to get this work done. Many are second and third generation rail workers who are going to be a great asset to the administration’s implementation of exciting plans for American rail systems.

Sec. Lahood recognizes the TWU’s value in helping to achieve the Transportation Department’s goals. “Our growing rail industry is going to need skilled domestic workers and your union to get the job done. And I’m very confident this will be done,” said Sec. Lahood.



**Top left:** Left to Right: Several new TWU members hired as a result of stimulus funding with Rail Division Director Gary Maslanka, Amtrak President Joe Boardman, Secretary Lahood, TWU Int’l Rail Division Rep Fred Fink, Congressman Andre Carson D-IN. **Right, top:** Rep. Andre Carson (D-IN) gives the thumbs up from Amtrak Locomotive 832, recently overhauled at the Beech Grove Shops. Rep. Carson has been a firm supporter of the TWU and has helped to guide the positive changes that stimulus funds have brought to Amtrak and to the union. **Right, bottom:** TWU was well represented at the Beaver-Lawrence Central Labor Council’s Spring Human Rights Banquet held on April 10, 2010 at the FEZ (Hopewell TWP. PA.) Show here left to right: Dave Carlino, Vice President of Carmen Local 2035; Tom Holsinger, Secretary Treasurer, Local 2035; Richard Bloomingdale, Secretary Treasurer of the P.A. A.F.L.-C.I.O.; William George, President of the P.A. A.F.L.-C.I.O.; Gary Maslanka, TWU Railroad Division Director; James Guido, President Local 2035; Harry Lombardo TWU Executive Vice President; Tony Vilk, Recording Secretary Local 2035





# health care REFORM

**T**housands of TWU members worked hard to win historic health care reform that would favor working Americans. TWU lobbied, rallied, wrote emails, made phone calls and signed petitions; and we succeeded. The health care reform passed in March expands coverage to 32 million of the 47 million Americans who were previously uninsured.

Based on surveys and discussions with members, TWU leadership made the decisions to fight for a public option and to oppose the excise tax on insurance benefits. Along with most of the Labor Movement, TWU was disappointed when the public option was dropped.

However, as many know, unlike the AFL-CIO and many affiliates, the TWU continued to oppose the excise tax—a tax to be placed on the shoulders of American workers—even when others accepted its inclusion in the bill. Although it was not eliminated completely, the threshold for the excise tax was raised days before the bill passed and 85 percent of the proposed tax is gone thanks to our work. TWU is still optimistic that there is opportunity for change to the tax before it is enacted

in 2018.

The TWU will not allow dissatisfaction over one provision of the bill to overshadow the gains that were won; and the gains are more meaningful than just statistics and details of coverage.

As the first piece of major social legislation in decades, the passage of health care reform means a large step towards closing the wealth inequality gap in this country. For the last three decades, the gap between rich and poor Americans has continuously grown as the pre-tax incomes of the wealthy have increased and their tax rates have fallen more than those for the middle class and poor.

In a New York Times Editorial, economist David Leonhardt writes, “[The bill] aims to smooth out one of the roughest edges in American society—the inability of many people to afford medical care after they lose a job or get sick. And it would do so in large measure by taxing the rich.”

Leonhardt explains that this means that those who need health care the most, households making less than four times the poverty level—\$88,200 for a family of four—will benefit the greatest from the law.

## What Health Care Reform Means for You:

**You will continue to have the employer-sponsored health coverage you win at the bargaining table.**

**Holds Insurance Companies Accountable:** Health care reform limits wasteful spending on executive salaries, eliminates annual and lifetime limits on benefits and ends denials for pre-existing conditions and discriminatory premiums for women. It also requires government review of excessive rate increases.

**Lowens Costs:** It reduces union plan costs with reimbursements for early retirees. New health insurance exchanges—where members of Congress must get their health coverage—will lower costs by increasing competition. The exchanges and new tax credits and cost-sharing assistance to low- and middle-income Americans—the largest tax cut for health care in history—will make insurance affordable for people who don't get health care through their employers. The bill also gives seniors additional help paying for prescription drugs, closes the Medicare “donut hole” and requires free preventive care through Medicare.

**Helps Ensure Your Children Have Health Care:** Starting this year, children can't be denied coverage because of pre-existing conditions and they can stay on your policy until they are 26 years old.

**Holds Employers Accountable:** It requires large employers to pay a penalty for workers who need subsidies in the exchanges to buy their own insurance.

**Lowens the Deficit:** The independent Congressional Budget Office estimates that health care reform will reduce the budget deficit by \$138 million over 10 years and another \$1.2 trillion over the next decade.

**For more on health care reform visit [www.afcio.org/healthcare](http://www.afcio.org/healthcare)**

## TWU Making Connections

In March, Chief of Staff Jeff Brooks gave a presentation at the Transportation Learning Center's Making Connections forum, where transportation leaders discussed the industry's challenges and exchanged ideas to help formulate joint solutions that best serve the needs of transportation administrators, employees and most importantly, riders. Brooks presentation, given on behalf of Int'l President James C. Little, provided a

strategy to help unions and the transportation industry cope with the current climate and transit crisis and take advantage of opportunities presented by the Surface Transportation Reauthorization and related legislative initiatives.

“We have the opportunity now to adopt sound public transportation and training partnership policies that will help our economy recover, create hundreds of thousands

of good jobs, and ease the climate crisis,” Brooks explained in his presentation.

The detailed strategy covered methods to build on and strengthen programs for training partnerships, work towards sufficient federal funding, promote the AFL-CIO's aggressive jobs agenda, and take advantage of legislation scheduled for Congress to address this year, including: Surface Transit Reauthorization bill, jobs bill, stimulus bill, climate change and energy legislation and FTA, FAA and FRA reauthorization bills.



# TWU TAKES CHARGE

## *of political change*

Nearly 200 TWU Local activists from around the country attended the 2010 COPE Legislative Conference in Washington, DC in late April. 📷 📺 ✍️



*Delegates to the 2010 COPE Legislative Conference*

**T**hey addressed pressing legislative and political issues important to the Transport Workers Union and to working families across the nation.

Key legislators, TWU activists and the AFL-CIO team that helps to shape Labor's agenda in the nation's Capitol discussed the challenges and opportunities faced by transportation and by Labor today. The Conference theme, "Take Charge of Political Change: Stay Connected," reflects the importance of staying involved with politics in order to take advantage of the opportunities and to overcome challenges as a unified front.

"We are at the beginning of a cycle of new economic activity that will occur around the greening of the economy and the requisite re-engineering of the economy, under a generally labor-friendly and science-friendly administration," said TWU President James C. Little in his opening presentation. Little explained that despite some disappointments with the current administration, the Obama White House and Democratic control

of Congress present an opening to advance members' issues and interests that we haven't had in years.

Little stressed the need for Labor to have a strong presence in Washington, DC in order to best take advantage of these opportunities and to overcome our challenges: the economic crisis, unemployment rate and severe cuts to state and municipal budgets across the country that are plaguing transit systems.

"Because transportation is central to the economy, to economic recovery to job creation and to cleaning up the environment, we will have a role influencing politics, and by being in DC we have even more of a chance," Little said, elaborating on the International headquarters' forthcoming move from New York City to Washington, DC.

"This is an exciting time to be in Washington," said TWU's Department of Legislative and Political Affairs Director Portia Reddick White during the opening session. "Major

legislation is passing, brand new transportation policies are being developed, and politics are heating up as election season is right around the bend." White covered the major state elections

approaching this fall and prepared delegates with thorough information on TWU legislative issues to lobby with on the Hill. Many speakers urged delegates to have conversations with friends and families about supporting politicians who are on the side of the middle class and of Labor, and to take an active role in the upcoming elections.

Chairman Barney Frank (D-MA) opened the Conference at the breakfast session on April 27 explaining the importance of services like transit. The country cannot afford to wait until those services disappear to find out how much people want and need them, he said. Representative Mary Jo Kilroy (D-OH) emphasized his point well during the afternoon session explaining that she wants to make sure that "cities continue to be strong in the center and I know we need a strong transportation system to get that done."

Department of Transportation Secretary Ray LaHood delivered the keynote speech at the Conference. He thanked the TWU and delegates for their role in helping to make our share of the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act a success. "Fourteen-thousand transportation projects have been approved—from fuel efficient buses to paving airport runways to modernizing passenger rail service," he announced. He added that we need to continue to support efforts by Congress to pass good legislation that creates jobs for our workers and we need to strengthen transportation as an economic engine in the United States.

*President Little with Chmn. Barney Frank*



*Continued on page 13*

# COPE SPEAKERS



## 1 RAY LAHOOD, SECRETARY OF THE DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION

As the country's 16th Secretary of Transportation, Ray LaHood has implemented several policies that stand to be extremely beneficial to TWU members. He has turned Obama's "Vision for High Speed Rail" into a reality, with billions of dollars invested in rail across the country. LaHood told delegates that the DOT's goal is to give American workers the chance to make American products from start to finish.

LaHood reported that the DOT has already put more than \$37 billion into the U.S. economy and has approved more than 14,000 transportation projects across the country. He laid down the Transportation department's priorities: to implement a system for rail transit oversight and to invest in transportation projects that make our communities more accessible, clean and livable, "increasing the transportation choices for everyone."

When it comes to reauthorization and budget planning, the bottom line, according to



## 2 WARREN GEORGE, PRESIDENT OF THE AMALGAMATED TRANSIT UNION

President George has spent his life working in the labor movement and fighting for the same workers' rights as the TWU. As President of the ATU, George has been acting on the national stage to promote policies that will benefit transit agencies, transit workers and labor unions.

George joined TWU President Little and the Reverend Jesse Jackson at a massive rally on Capitol Hill during the first day of the Conference. George asked for stimulus funding flexibility so that money may be used to cover operating costs. "We are not asking for anything that isn't deserving," George told the crowd. "There is no sense to service cuts when it means there are kids



## 3 REP. JAMES OBERSTAR (D-MN) CHAIRMAN, COMMITTEE ON TRANSPORTATION AND INFRASTRUCTURE

Oberstar is the longest serving member of Congress in Minnesota history and has always been a tireless advocate for workers. Oberstar touts fair, forward thinking, and pragmatic transportation policies. His role as the Chairman of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure along with his long tenure in Congress has led many to consider him to be Congress's foremost expert on transportation policy.

Chmn. Oberstar was instrumental in the passage of the FAA Reauthorization last summer. He has also penned a transformational surface transportation authorization that, if passed, would cut through the red tape to allow transit agencies to spend efficiently







and with workers in mind. The authorization would increase focus on mass transit as America seeks to control carbon emissions and reduce dependence on foreign oil.

*Read Chmn. Oberstar's remarks to the Conference on page 13.*

#### 4 REP. JOHN D. DINGELL (D-MI)

Dingell, the longest serving Congress member in the history of the U.S. House of Representatives, has dedicated his life to standing up for middle class Americans. He tirelessly works to improve health care access and to ensure that no American is denied the right to health care. Dingell introduced the bill that became the Affordable Health Care for America Act, which was the first comprehensive health care reform bill to pass the House of Representatives.

"We have had much to contend with: the president came into office with two wars, a depression and a \$3 trillion deficit...we have dealt with the depression and I believe things are turning up for American workers. We've saved hundreds of thousands of jobs and reformed our health care system, which will improve the lives of all Americans. You in labor can take pride in what has been accomplished."

#### 5 REP. LAURA RICHARDSON (D-CA)

Through her service on the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, Richardson helps in crafting aviation and transit legislation that improves safety, increases services, or provides vital funding on which TWU members depend.

Richardson encouraged delegates to hold their elected legislators accountable. "We need to get back to the basics, which is working people."

#### 6 ED WYTKIND, PRESIDENT OF TRANSPORTATION TRADES DEPARTMENT

Wytkind has spent his entire career working on behalf of labor, especially transportation labor. He has been the leading voice on behalf of positive labor policies and an advocate for millions of transportation workers across America.

The Transportation Trades Department is the transportation policy and legislative arm of the National AFL-CIO, representing over 10 million workers in the United States. Wytkind oversees daily legislative, public policy and regulatory programs and initiatives, serving as transportation labor's chief spokesman.

*Read some of Wytkind's remarks on page 13.*

#### 7 REP. BOB FILNER (D-CA)

Filner is a member of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure and has helped TWU Air Division members by working with other Congressional representatives to craft the FAA reauthorization that passed the House last year. The FAA bill represents countless changes that the TWU fought for while the Bush administration was in power.

Filner commended TWU delegates for traveling to Washington to lobby and encouraged grassroots organization to fight for political change. He explained that it is important to stick to the Conference's theme, "Take Charge of Political Change: Stay Connected," because "the forces in Washington are very strong, if we step back and don't stay connected, they take over."

#### 8 TONY HARRISON, OUTREACH COORDINATOR FOR MAJORITY WHIP REP. JAMES CLYBURN

Harrison explained the value of registration drives and the urgent need for members to get their brothers and sisters registered to vote. "We need full court engagement; this is contact sport. This is wrestling out in the yard. This is raising money so that you can buy a ticket to get inside the fence where the fight takes place. It's about trying to get the membership to truly appreciate the value of this engagement."



## COPE PANELISTS

Workshops: "Session One: The Importance of Staying Connected Local, State and Federal" "Session Two: Understanding Our Legislative Issues." Panelists: Discussed issues and provided helpful lobbying tips.

Top row, from left to right: Rep. Mary Jo Kilroy (D-OH); Rep. Neil Abercrombie (D-HI); Stanley White, Rep. Robert Brady's Chief of Staff; Rep. Russ Carnahan (D-MO); Bottom row, from left to right: Secretary Treasurer of the Transportation Trades Department Larry Willis; Naomi Walker, AFL-CIO's Deputy Legislative Director; Bryan Charlton, AFL-CIO Legislative Representative; AFL-CIO Legislative Representative Cecelie Counts





U.S. Sec. of Transportation Ray Lahood (center) with, from left: TWU Sec.-Tr. Joe Gordon, Exec. Vice President Harry Lombardo, President Jim Little, Lahood, DLPA Director Portia Reddick White, Admin. Asst. to the Int'l President Jeff Brooks, Rail Division Director Gary Maslanka, International Representative J.W. Johnson



From left: DLPA Dir. White, 556's Stephanie Roberts, Rep. Shelley Berkley (D-NV), 556's Bryan Orozco, 556's Addie Crisp



TWU Exec. Vice President Harry Lombardo, Rep. Kucinich (D-OH), Local 547 President Bill Gray



TWU Sec.-Tr. Joe Gordon, Admin. Asst. Jeff Brooks, Sen. Chaka Fattah (D-Pa.)




to the Int'l President  
A), President Little

Local 530 members met with Sen. McCaskill, from left:  
Jim Soptic, Jim Koch, Pat Serrone, Sen. McCaskill,  
Bill Caldwell, Local 530 President Gordon Clark

Local 525 President Kevin Smith, Local 556's  
Susan Kern, Local 556's Donna Keith and Local  
561's Tony Bernal meet with Sen. Bill Nelson to  
discuss his proposal for the U.S. space program.

to the Int'l President  
A), President Little

TWU members at a breakfast with Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid and Sen. John Ensign (D-NV)  
From left: 555's Mike Cernosek, 556's Addie Crisp, 556's Bryan Orozco, 556's Susan Kearn, Sen. Ensign, Local  
502 President Don Tyndall, Sen. Reid, 556 President Thom McDaniel, 514's Rick Allen, 555's Charles Cerf

Continued from page 9.

Protecting and strengthening the aviation industry, through legislation like the Federal Aviation Administration and other reauthorization bills, was another heavily discussed topic. Rep. James L. Oberstar (D-MN), Chairman of the Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure, spoke about the safety of airline workers and the need for the FAA reauthorization bill to hold foreign workers to the same standards as those here at home. He also addressed the need for Occupational Health and Safety Administration standards to be applied to flight attendants.

Addressing the survival of the airline industry, President of the Transportation Trades Department Ed Wytkind said, "We need resilience. That is what it is going to take to win our crucial battles that lie ahead."

Wytkind also addressed the opportunities that Obama's "Vision for High Speed Rail in America" presents for the TWU and for the country's development and economic recovery, "if done the right way." He, and others, emphasized the necessity to buy American and employ American labor to do the job.

In addition to hearing from speakers, delegates to the Conference participated in workshops, discussions and question and answer sessions, and used much of their time in DC meeting with their legislators and staff members on Capitol Hill. They were well prepared with information provided by DLPD Director Portia Reddick White.

TWU members who were new to the Conference, as well as seasoned attendees, felt the event was a success. "What keeps me coming back is the education, the members, the support of the International itself," said Michael Williams, a Local 291 member.





# TWU Fights Against Executive Greed, Reaches Contract Agreements with AMR

Shortly after the International and Local 513 launched a campaign and rallied against executive greed at American Airlines and American Eagle's parent company AMR, the TWU wins agreements with the company.

Outraged over the millions of dollars in bonuses that American Airlines and American Eagle executives received this year, TWU launched an aggressive advertisement and text campaign this April. On tax day, April 15, readers of Dallas area newspapers found a message from the TWU in their daily papers. "EXCESS BAGGAGE," it read, "passengers pay steep fees to check bags and ground workers get nothing—again."

American employees rescued the company from bankruptcy in 2003 when they gave up \$620 million a year in pay and benefits, and made other concessions. At that time, management promoted the message, "Share the pain, share the gain." But for years there has been no gain for TWU members, only for the top executives who have received millions in bonuses every year since workers made those concessions. The public is sharing the pain too; American has raised \$346 million from checked bag fees alone.

AMR and TWU representatives first opened contract talks to modify labor agreements covering 11 separate bargaining units in 2006. At the time when executive bonuses

were doled out this April, all contract talks had been stalled because the company had stonewalled at the bargaining table, despite the years of effort by TWU members to boost workplace productivity and bring new revenue to the company. But the TWU has continued to speak out against corporate greed and to fight for a contract, and even asked for release from the National Mediation Board (NMB) on March 11.

The hard work and united voices of the TWU members have started to pay off. In early May, TWU won tentative agreements for three work groups: the Maintenance and Related, Material Logistics and Technical Specialists. Earlier this year two American Eagle groups ratified contracts. Progress is being made with other work groups as well. The tentative agreements call for signing bonuses and structural salary increases, preserve TWU defined-benefit pension plans for all current members, and continue retiree health care benefits. There are also increases in holidays, sick time pay and accrual, profit sharing and vacation days.

"Our goal, as always, is a fair settlement,

because that's the best result for our members, the flying public, and for the company," said TWU Air Transport Division Director John Conley. "The tentative agreements mark a pivotal shift in the process from what was a virtual standstill only a few weeks ago and we were waiting for the NMB to release the TWU from mediation. We are hoping to have other announcements in the near future."

In conjunction with the TWU International's campaign against AMR executive greed, TWU Local 513 organized a rally at the Dallas Fort-Worth International Airport. Several hundred TWU members, along with members from the Association of Professional Flight Attendants and the Allied Pilots Association, marched in front of Terminal D on April 15, demanding "Our Turn," and an end to corporate greed.

"Management should have a clear message today, they have a lot of angry, upset employees," said Local 513 President Darrin Pierce. "The energy and enthusiasm shown here today against corporate greed shows it has to stop!"







# LABOR'S *crucial at-bat*

by Former  
COPE Director  
Hubert Snead

A baseball player who can get three hits out of ten is considered to have a great batting average. That would be a .300 batting average even if he hits three singles out of ten and no home runs.

Well, if labor was playing baseball we would have a great batting average: President Obama's appointment of Sonia Sotomayor has given us another labor-friendly Supreme Court Justice. We've also received a commitment to bring our troops home on a responsible timetable from Iraq and Afghanistan. After much battling, we've finally passed health care reform.

But with respect to our "home run"—the Employee Free Choice Act—we haven't hit it out of the park yet. And I'm afraid that if we fail to pass EFCA, our most important piece of legislation, our batting average on all types of legislation will go down, not up, in future years.

EFCA is needed to restore workers' right to join and form unions. Without it, labor's strength will continue to decline.

Have you seen the commercial that says, "It's my money and I want it now"? That's what we should be saying about the Employee Free Choice Act; it's our legislation and we want it now.

This may be our best chance to pass labor law reform. Right now, we may very well have the votes in Congress to pass our EFCA bill. The mid-term elections are coming up in the fall. Historically, the President's party (the Democrats) loses seats. If we were to lose even one seat of a labor-friendly Democrat or Republican this fall, we would be hard-pressed to get EFCA passed.

Unfortunately, in a typical election year, landmark legislation does not get passed,

because the congressmen and women are more concerned about holding seats than they are about putting their reputations on the line over controversial legislation. And EFCA is going to be controversial.

We need to make sure we can count on our friends to help us. So now is the time for us to help them. And that is what our COPE dollars can do—help our friends that are concerned about holding their seats. We can volunteer to work on a campaign in our districts, make sure all of our friends and families are registered to vote, and we can give just a little more to the TWU COPE fund.

If everyone would increase their contribution by a dollar or more we could put more political activists in the field to help our friends on their re-election campaigns so they can vote their conscience and pass our legislation.

We need EFCA and we need it now! But we need your help. This battle can be won, but it is going to take all of us to get it done. So, volunteer to work on a campaign, canvass to register your co-workers, family and friends to vote. And most important: Join COPE, and if you already belong, give that extra donation.

*This is Hubert Snead's final column, written before he retired in April. Snead has been devoted to the TWU for almost four decades and has served in various positions at the International. President Little commends Snead's dedicated years of service and his accomplishments in his most recent positions as an Int'l Administrative Vice President and COPE Director. The TWU wishes him all the best in his retirement. Alex Garcia, former Legislative and Political Representative, is now serving as Director of COPE and Political Field. Read more about Snead and Garcia in the next issue of the TWU Express.*

**IF WE FAIL TO  
PASS EFCA,  
OUR BATTING  
AVERAGE ON  
ALL TYPES OF  
LEGISLATION  
WILL GO  
DOWN**

# WORKERS

## *memorial day –*

### *April 28, 2010*

Mourn for the Dead, and Fight for the Living

**D**uring the 2010 COPE Legislative Conference, the TWU honored April 28 as Workers Memorial Day with a moment of silence and a prayer. Participants also heard from Senators and Representatives who have pushed for legislation to keep workers safe and healthy. Around the nation, laborers from all walks of life joined with victimized families and friends to honor workers hurt or killed on the job, and to rededicate to improving the future safety of workplaces everywhere.

On April 28, 1971, the Occupational Safety and Health Administration Act was signed into law. Eighteen years later, the AFL-CIO adopted April 28 as Workers Memorial Day to commemorate the passage of the Act. President Barack Obama proclaimed the date official this year and called on all Americans to remember those killed due to unsafe working conditions.

The International Labour Organization reports that, each year, over two million men and women die as a result of work-related accidents and diseases. The AFL-CIO's annual report, *Death on the Job: The Toll of Neglect*, released each year in conjunction with Workers Memorial Day, reported that: "In 2008, 5,214 workers were killed on the job—an average of 14 workers every day—and an estimated 50,000 died from occupational diseases. More than 4.6 million work-related

injuries were reported, but this number understates the problem. The true toll of job injuries is two to three times greater—about 9 to 14 million job injuries each year."

The Transport Workers Union has lost many members over its 75-year history to workplace fatalities. Thousands have been injured, while others have suffered from disease caused by prolonged exposure to

sands of workers and their businesses suffer and the ecosystem is suffocating.

Another example of neglected safety violations that resulted in worker fatalities is the coalmining disaster at the Upper Big Branch mine in West Virginia that killed 29 miners. This non-union mine, owned by the Massey Corporation, continued to operate despite more than 500 safety violations cited in a two-year period. After eight years of Bush administration energy policies, mine operators had virtually no accountability. A monetary fine imposed after lives are lost is a minor impediment for corporations, and of no consolation to victimized families. President Obama ordered the Massey mine to be shut down and a full investigation to be conducted.

In general, the Obama administration presents a positive shift in the way worker safety and health issues are going to be monitored and handled. The Occupational Safety

and Health Administration (OSHA) announced it would be rolling out a new program, the Severe Violator Enforcement Program, which will increase the fines for OSHA's worst violators.

Assistant Secretary of Labor for OSHA David Michaels said in a statement, "Higher penalties and more aggressive, targeted enforcement will provide a greater deterrent and further encourage these employers to furnish safe and healthy workplaces for their employees."

The administration's

efforts are commendable, but workplace safety also depends on workers to speak up about unacceptable and unsafe working conditions.

Workers Memorial Day helps workers and their families, as well as the federal government, to remember and rededicate their efforts to take a step in the safe direction.

*You can read more about the federal government's efforts to protect workers' safety and health on page 21.*



unhealthy workplace conditions.

Many U.S. fatalities and injuries could be prevented if existing safety regulations were seriously enforced. The recent Gulf oil rig explosion killed 11 workers and another 60 workers suffered from burns and other medical traumas. Crude oil continues to flow unabated in the Gulf. The three major corporations responsible for the disaster—British Petroleum, Halliburton, and Transocean—continue to blame each other, while thou-





## LOCAL 234 SUPPORTS SUSAN G. KOMEN "RACE FOR THE CURE" 5K BREAST CANCER WALK

In May, nearly 100 Local 234 members walked through the streets of Philadelphia for the Race for the Cure walk. The local also raised \$1,390 to go towards the cause.

## **RAILROAD DIVISION** Wins Premier Contracts with Amtrak

Rail Division members won a remarkable five-year agreement with Amtrak on April 20, which was ratified by Railroad Division Joint Council of Carmen, Coach Cleaners, and Helpers (JCC) members on May 26. The contract covers wages, health care benefits and rules: members will receive their first wage increase, 1.5%, on July 1, and will receive 15% in wage increases over the 5-year term. The contract also puts caps on future health care contributions and freezes co-pays and deductibles.

Railroad Division Director Gary Maslanka commented on the successful negotiations, noting the stark contrast to the last JCC contract, which took eight years to negotiate. "Unlike in past agreements, our members are not going to have to wait for years for their wage increases—They will receive solid wage increases now," stated Maslanka.

On May 13, the Division also reached a tentative agreement with Amtrak for

it's Amtrak Service Workers Council (ASWC) members. The agreement provides for significant health insurance cost controls, including a 5-year freeze on health insurance co-pays and deductibles, dollar caps on employee insurance contributions, and holds the line on the 15% insurance contribution formula.

"This agreement provides a window of opportunity to secure solid wage increases and extremely important benefit protections now," said Maslanka. "Given the many factors that relate to Amtrak there is no guarantee that this agreement will be available in the future."

ASWC members should have received their ballots in the mail in early June and must return them by June 18.

Look for more on the contracts in the next issue of the TWU Express and on [twu.org](http://twu.org).



## LOCAL 525 FIGHTING FOR NASA JOBS

Local 525 President Kevin Smith attended a White House press conference where President Obama announced his plans for NASA and the U.S. space industry on April 15. The TWU International continues to support Smith and his Local's efforts to fight for space coast jobs and for a plan that protects the communities dependent on space exploration.

*Read more about space coast issues on page 22 and on [twu.org](http://twu.org).*

*Shown above, Smith with astronaut Buzz Aldrin, pilot of the Apollo 11 mission and the second person to set foot on the moon.*





## OFFICERS AND STEWARDS CLASS, LOCAL 1 AND LOCAL 208

April 2010 – Columbus, Ohio

Attending the class for Local 1 were: John Anderson, Rick Speelman and Kevin Hobson. Participating for Local 208 were Andrew Jordan, Lisa Combs, Tracy Cole, Davon Washington, Marcia Woods, Lyntel C. Cannon, David Ausbenny, Tim Wadlington, Orlando Epps II, Duane L. Marbury, Jamie Shaner, Alice Rawls, Trina Tucker, Karl Harris, Tim DeMoss and Kenny Rawls. International representative Carl Martin and former Education and Research Dir. Bob Wechsler



## LOCAL 513 TRAINING

### SHOP STEWARD CLASS, DALLAS/FORTH WORTH AIRPORT

1st VP Anthony Noviello, 2nd VP John Coker, Executive Board Officers Don Dougherty and Frank Pecararo; Shop Stewards; David Cruz, Dave Peterson, Gerald Brown, Jose Perez, Trent Hawkins, Gerald Kotinek, Thomas Behm, Anthony Hardy, Chino Polak, Miguel Mercado, Unalato Paongo, Jesse Mosby, Shelby Mahoney, Stan Grigs, Carlos Ramos, Henry Hagar, Section Chairman Steve Krsyco, Jeff Scott, Gary Hardin, Danny Cobb, Chris Henry, Garland Crafton, Carl Samsair, Zack Zanago, former TWU Education and Research Director Bob Wechsler



# LOCAL 225

Organizing Training – April  
TWU New York Headquarters



## ➔ ATTENTION TWU RETIREES:

For inclusion on [twu.org](http://twu.org) and in the *Express* please send photos and information on your events and meetings that you would like covered to TWU Communications, 1700 Broadway, 2nd Floor, New York, NY 10019 or to [Igiegerich@twu.org](mailto:Igiegerich@twu.org)

**SHOP TWU** Find exclusive Union products at our TWU store at [shopTWU.com](http://shopTWU.com). All merchandise is Union made in the U.S.A.



## LEADERSHIP CLASS AT NY HEADQUARTERS

Locals 241, 225 and 226

Shown here: International President James C. Little, Executive Vice President Harry Lombardo, Administrative Vice President and Transit Director Susan Resch, International Representative Jerome Lafragola and former Education and Research Director Bob Wechsler along with stewards and officers from Local 241: Rolando Myers, John McGrath, Lloyd Jackson, Abraham Jean, Charles Jones, Reynaldo Alava, Herman Rodriguez, Catina Small, Lonnie B. Graham, Clarence Pennix, Maurice Joseph, Henry Clemente, Mario Guzman, Alex Molina, Mike Loughran, Guy Graziano, Rebecca Lopez, Louis Simeon and Enso Rodriguez; Local 225: Peter Hewel, Alfonso Mollica Sr., Karen Fleming, Mensan Kinvi, Max Amouzouvi, and Gilbert Ramirez; Local 226: Antonieta Marin, Dora Aquile and Alvaro Vizcaino.





## RAILROAD DIVISION Kicks Off 2010 Regional Meetings

March 25, 2010 Cranberry, Pennsylvania

## LOCAL 100 SWEARS IN NEW OFFICERS

**MARCH 11, 2010:** TWU Int'l President James C. Little (right) swore in new Local 100 officers President John Samuelson (middle right) and Secretary-Treasurer Israel Rivera (middle left). On left: Admin. Vice President Susan Resch, Int'l Sec.-Tr. Joe Gordon



## LOCAL 225-BRANCH 4 RATIFIES CONTRACT

On May 4, 2010 the Brick School District Members overwhelmingly ratified a new two-year Agreement. The negotiation process was long and difficult, but the Section Reps stood together in solidarity for their members and forged one of the best agreements possible given the negative economic climate surrounding New Jersey's public employees. The local won a raise in both years and kept their benefits intact. "The Brick School Section Reps and International Reps worked very hard to hammer out this agreement and I commend all those who helped to get it ratified," said Local 225-Branch 4 President Chris Mikkelsen.

*Shown here: Bottom row from left: Patty Hatch; Margaret Reddan; Ann Morgan; Joyce Kramer, Local 225 Branch 4 Treasurer. Top row from left: Jerome Lafragola, International Rep. Ray Schlauch; Scott Wily; Chris Mikkelsen, Local 225 Branch 4 President.*



*Continued from page 4*

## DLPA Grassroots Training

"It was about coming together, sharing ideas and listening and learning from each other," said Audrey Van Hook, a Local 512 member and Grassroots trainee, speaking about her positive experience with the program.

The Grassroots Training program was held from March 15-19 at the National Labor College in Silver Springs, Maryland. The twenty participants heard from and were trained by DLPA Director Reddick-White, AFL-CIO legislative and political department representatives; Gwen Dunivent, COPE Field Assistant; Walter Pearson, Dean of New College at St. Edward's University and a Labor Educator; and House and Senate staff.



*Local 101's Constance Bradley and Local 512's Audrey Van Hook in front of the Capitol.*

## LOCAL 527 Ratifies First Contract



**April 9**

Local 527 ratified its first collective bargaining agreement with Multi Services Group International Corporation. Local 527 represents Bio Medical Technicians/Instructors working at Ft. Gordon Georgia and Ft. McCoy Wisconsin.

The two-year agreement secures first year pay increase effective May 1, 2010. This CBA includes important work rule language covering: just cause language, seniority, reduction in force (RIF), lay-off procedures, recall rights and promotion procedures.

The economic improvements include an hourly pay increase of 3% the first year and 8% the following year.

"The considerable energy, and knowledge of brothers Harry Merck and Richard Heinz during negotiations was instrumental in Local 527's ability to secure this collective bargaining agreement," said Local 527 President Benyoel Morgan

Shown here from left: 3 of the 4 members of the negotiations committee: Harry Merck, Richard Thompson and Ben Morgan (Richard Heinz not shown)

# TWU Takes Active Role in OSHA Affairs

New leadership at the federal Department of Labor and at Occupational Safety and Health Administration (OSHA) brings the promise of improved standards, stricter rule enforcement and better communication between workers and employers. These improvements should extend to state health and safety policies, which are required to match OSHA regulations.

OSHA has been holding public meetings to give their policy stakeholders a chance to provide input on key health and safety issues. Mike Massoni, Local 556 1st Vice President and Health and Safety Task Force member, and the TWU Department of Legislative and Political Affairs, provided testimony to a recent OSHA hearing that focused on the lack of OSHA coverage for flight attendants.

OSHA hopes to improve injury and illness reporting by placing the musculoskeletal disorder (MSD) column back on the OSHA 300 Log, which is a log of workplace

injuries and illness that employers are required by law to maintain. Work injuries are most commonly considered sudden instances, such as a trip, slip or fall. But workers also get hurt slowly, over time, as the body wears out due to repetitive motion and strain at work. Often, slowly developed injuries and illnesses that result from such circumstances do not get reported.

The TWU Health and Safety Department provided comments to the legislative docket that support the addition of MSD to the 300 Log. Revised legislation will help unions and employers reduce some of the many workplace hazards that cause muscle, nerve and joint damage.

In April, a delegation from the Health and Safety Department attended OSHA's National Action Summit for Latino Worker Health and Safety in Houston. Rates of workplace injuries and fatalities for Latino workers are disproportionately high. More than 1,000 people attended the event,

which focused on increasing Latino workers' knowledge of and ability to exercise workplace rights. The summit emphasized the need for workers to report unacceptable conditions in order to help the DOL identify, penalize and stop employers who are breaking the law. OSHA and the DOL are expanding campaigns to educate workers about their rights.

The TWU is focused on helping our locals increase education on safety and health. The union is also developing in-house expertise to provide accredited training to locals' safety representatives.

Health and Safety Director Ed Watt and Health and Safety Task Force member Mark Johnson attended a week-long "Train-the-Trainer" course at the National Labor College in April, and they are planning training sessions for interested locals on a variety of health and safety issues, including: identifying hazards in the workplace, creating a health and safety committee and record keeping.

For more information contact Health and Safety Director Ed Watt at [ewatt@twu.org](mailto:ewatt@twu.org).

*Contributed by Health and Safety Director Ed Watt*

## DLPA Director Portia Reddick-White Honored by Boy Scouts

The Boy Scouts of America honored the TWU Director of the Legislative and Political Affairs (DLPA), Portia Reddick-White, at their annual "Women of Achievement" Award Breakfast in April. TWU Secretary-Treasurer Joe Gordon and TWU Chief of Staff Jeff Brooks were present to honor White.

"Portia has always been an asset to the TWU," said Brooks, who presented White with her award. "As a tireless worker, dedicated to pushing Labor's legislative agenda forward in Washington, she is well-deserv-

ing of the award presented to her today."

White joined TWU Local 556 in 1989 when she started working as a flight attendant at Southwest airlines. Since graduating from Law School in 2002, White joined the TWU DLPA to lobby on behalf of TWU members. She then became an International Representative and, in January 2009 Int'l President James C. Little appointed her as Director of the DLPA. White was also awarded with the Labor Leader of the year award by the National Black Caucus of State Legislators in late 2009.





# TWU wounded warriors project A SUCCESS

**I**n late March, the TWU Air Transport Division Veterans Committee (ATDVC) coordinated an event that truly lived up to their motto, "Veterans helping veterans."

Fifteen members of the ATDVC traveled to Washington, DC to complete "The Wounded Warriors Project" at Walter Reed Army Medical Center, where they joined four American Airlines Veteran Military Employee Resource Group (AAVMERG) members and the United Service Organizations (USO) to distribute TWU donated items to patients.

Many of the patients were young men who were amputees, or had been seriously injured in the line of duty. The volunteers, all veterans themselves, struggled with the emotional situation.

During the weeks prior to the Walter Reed visit, TWU members and locals sent the wounded soldiers more than \$9,000 along with dozens of much-needed items, including: storage containers, break-away pants, beef jerky, toothbrushes, cds, common personal items and a \$25 gift-card for each patient to purchase what they pleased. The donations and volunteered time helped more than 100 wounded warriors and their families.

"They were grateful not only for our presence, but for the generosity of our TWU

locals and members," said TWU International Representative Don Videtich.

"There were a lot of 'thank yous' back and forth," added Vice-chair of the ATDVC Paul Mazzara. "They were thanking us profusely and we were thanking them for their sacrifice and service. What they gave for our country was worth much more than our humble donations."

The Walter Reed Center is the United States Army's flagship medical center. It serves more than 150,000 active and retired personnel from all branches of the military and provides many of the military members' families with living quarters and accommodations.

In an exclusive interview with the TWU, Colonel Gordon Roberts, the only active Congressional Medal of Honor recipient, explained, "This is a place where organizations like TWU can come and fulfill the Commander-in-Chief's biggest promise, which is taking care of those who have sacrificed."

The TWU ATDVC has always played an active role in maintaining and growing a network of veterans that helps to ensure other vets have access to pertinent information about benefits available to them and about relevant legislation.

"The ATDVC is a great group and I am really happy that they were able to coordi-



TWU volunteers sort items to be distributed to the wounded warriors at Walter Reed. ↑

nate an event like the Wounded Warriors Project," said ATD Director John Conley. "It allowed ATDVC members to reach out in a new way to make a difference in the lives of veterans who have given so much for this country."

TWU volunteers who visited Walter Reed Medical Center included: Shirley Kolling, Thom Lee, Antonio Quezada, Kevin Starling, Hank Trujillo, John Giovenco, Gary C. Hanna, Peter Meyer, Ernest Toigo, Bobby Velasquez, Don Videtich, Paul Mazzara, Arizo Gajewski, Pete Hogan and Craig Gillett.



# spotlight: TEXAS & FLORIDA

The COPE Political Field Program was started in May 2009 and was tasked with, among other things, the creation of TWU State Conferences throughout the country. These State Conferences bring TWU members within a state or geographical area together, regardless of division, to find common goals and educate one another on local, state, and federal politics. Each State Conference is directed by a member of the COPE Political Field team, which includes COPE Director Alex Garcia, and Field Assistants Gwen Dunivent and Terry Daniels.

## HOUSTON, TEXAS, APRIL 20

22 TWU Texas-based locals, 26 members

Guest – Democratic Candidate for Governor of Texas, Bill White



**ISSUES:** • Airport security badges • Commercial drivers license requirements

• Workers compensation review:  
- Thousands of Texas workers often get forced back to work before they have healed properly, and many are under the threat of losing their jobs completely if they don't return to work when the company demands.



Bill White addressing Tx. State Conference.

*"I've always had an open door to labor." – Bill White*

*"We have a great state, we need a middle class...world competition is tough on our workers." – Bill White*

*"By attending the conferences I have opportunities to interview potential candidates, like White, and ask him about our issues like security badges, educational issues and a Workers Compensation law that needs to be fixed." – Local 555 President Charles Cerf, an active State Conference participant*

## TALLAHASSEE, FLORIDA, MARCH 25

in conjunction with the 2010 Florida AFL-CIO Legislative Conference • TWU Local leaders from Florida met with 16 state representatives and senators • Matching yellow for SOLIDARITY



**ISSUES:** • Space coast jobs and jeopardized state economy: an estimated 65,000 Florida jobs and \$4 billion in wages could be cut with the Obama administration's plans for the space industry • Opposition to Rep. Tom Grady (R-FL) House Bill 1319 that proposes to force state workers to work longer in order to receive less in his/her retirement

*"We all came together to make sure that our legislators know where we stand on these issues." – COPE Director Alex Garcia*

*Shown here: Front row from left: William Harris, Local 291; Alex Giarrocco, Local 540; Kevin Smith, Local 525; Todd Woodward, Local 561; Mike Williams, Local 291; J.W. Johnson, Int'l VP and Assistant Transit Director; Susan Kern, Local 556; Back row from left: Brian Davis, Local 291; Tony Bernal, Local 561; Jim Volpe, Local 556; Mike Cernosek, Local 555; Andrew Rangolan, Local 570; Alex Garcia, Interim COPE Director; Terry Daniels, COPE Political Field Assistant*



## CALIFORNIA March

Eric Williams, Rafael Cabrera, Terrence Hall, State Senator Leland Yee, Walter Scott III, Irwin Lum, Gwen Dunivent, Bobby Brown



## NEVADA/ ARIZONA March

Nv./Az. State Conference meeting with Robert Randazzo, Candidate for NV Lt. Governor



## NEW ILLINOIS/INDIANA STATE CONFERENCE OFFICERS April

Hubert Sneed, former COPE Director; Local 512's Diana Tiggs, newly elected Assistant State Conference Director, Gwen Dunivent, the State Conference Director; and Local 556's Donna Keith, newly elected State Conference Secretary-Treasurer





# taking on WALL STREET

by International  
Secretary-Treasurer  
**Joseph C. Gordon**

Wall Street just can't get out of the news. Although they'd much prefer

to earn their billions in private, the Wall Street bankers constantly find themselves on the front page of the newspaper and leading off the nightly newscast.

First, it was the meltdown in the global financial crisis. Then, with recovery (for them) it was the return of obscene bonuses while the rest of the country remained mired in recession. Lately, it's been efforts in Congress to prevent future financial abuses.

In late April, the AFL-CIO led the charge against Wall Street with a massive rally in lower Manhattan. Joined by other organizations, the labor movement voiced support for the Obama administration's efforts to rein in dangerous financial practices, but also called for forcing Wall Street to help pay for Main Street to recover.

"People in New York and across the country, who did nothing wrong and want to work, have paid for the misdeeds of the big banks with their jobs, homes and retirement savings," AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka told the crowd. "Now it's time for our government to hold Wall Street accountable and make them pay to create the good jobs they destroyed."

Trumka said that the financial crisis and subsequent recession had cost working people some 11 million jobs.

Jack Ahern, President of the New York City Central Labor Council, said, "Big time economic help came to Wall Street, now big time economic recovery must come to Main Street. Working people are losing their jobs, homes, life savings, retirement and dignity. Americans are counting

pennies, while bankers are counting their billions."

I agree with the AFL-CIO position, but can't help feeling that Wall Street excess is a symptom of a larger economic problem: We celebrate financial success, while ignoring workers and their needs.

For decades, big corporations have been rewarded with rising stock values for shipping jobs overseas to low-wage factories. We don't blink an eye at million dollar bonuses for executives, but demonize workers if they ask for a few extra dollars in their pay checks.

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I think it all starts with the growing inequality between the very rich and the rest of us, a gap that has been widening for three decades. Not only is it bad for our economic health, but a new study by British scientists indicates that it's bad for our actual health as measured by various yardsticks of illness, stress, social problems and emotional well-being.

(Economist David Leonhardt writing in The New York Times recently suggested



that President Obama fought so hard for a less-than-perfect health care bill because it is one of the few pieces of legislation that will actually start reducing income inequality. *See page 8.*)

I mention all this because the issue of wealth inequality will be at the heart of the next big debate on reducing the budget deficit—painful cuts in spending versus tax increases for the wealthiest Americans and mega-corporations.

How we decide that question is likely to shape the health of our economy for years to come.

Brothers and Sisters, now is the time for all of us to become more politically active and to contact our Senators and Congress and let them know loud and clear that we have had enough. The time has come for them to stop giving huge tax breaks to those that can afford it the most. It is time for our political leaders to rebuild the middle class to what it used to be when every American had an equal opportunity to share in the American Dream. We can no longer just sit on the sidelines and watch the constant attacks on workers and the middle class in America. We must get in the game if we want real change. The time for us to act is now.... for tomorrow might just be too late!

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