



TWU Women AMTs Take Over Capitol Hill



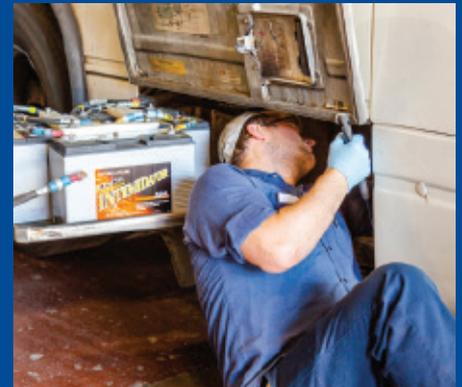
AIR / 14

Assault Won't Fly Campaign
Goes to Florida



RAIL / 17

Town Hall for
Railroad Workers



TRANSIT / 20

Local 234 Moves
Philadelphia



Detering Aircraft Maintenance Outsourcing

By International President John Samuelsen

“This bill closes the loopholes that incentivize airlines to move airline maintenance out of the country and onto less safe standards. When this becomes law, it will return tens of thousands of good, union jobs to the U.S.”

Ever since I was elected International President in 2017, the TWU has been fighting the overseas outsourcing of aircraft repair and overhaul, bringing back good-paying, blue-collar jobs to the U.S. We have steadfastly fought the offshoring of maintenance taking on the issue in our contracts, in the halls of Congress, and out on the shop floor. In fact, the TWU has been the only union fighting back - and we are winning on all fronts.

Our historic American Airlines contract, signed in 2020, includes provisions that bring back aircraft maintenance jobs that were outsourced overseas back to U.S. soil. We are the only airline mechanics’ union who has successfully rolled back outsourcing AND returned jobs to America.

But that only covers one airline.

In June of this year, we took a major step toward raising the standards for all airlines. The House committee that oversees the airline industry passed the bipartisan Global Aircraft Safety Improvement Act by an overwhelming margin. This bill closes the loopholes that incentivize airlines to move airline maintenance out of the country and onto less safe standards. When this becomes law, it will return tens of thousands of good, union jobs to the U.S.

The next step is to move this bill through the whole House and Senate.

To support that work, we flew in 14 of our Aircraft Maintenance Technicians from all across the country – who also happen to be women – for a Lobby Day on Capitol Hill (*see p. 14*). These workers had the opportunity to sit down with elected officials and share firsthand stories of working on aircraft that were flown in from maintenance facilities overseas. Often, these aircraft have serious problems, ranging from shoddy repair work to drugs and guns hidden in panels. It’s the responsibility of our members to ensure that these issues are rectified, so the aircraft can be safely returned to service and fly again, and it’s one TWU AMTs take very seriously.

Seeing this legislation signed into law would be a huge victory for the Transport Workers Union, and for all air travelers. It will make our skies safer for the flying public, cabin crews, and provide greater job security for all AMTs in the U.S. Five years into this fight, we are closer than ever to making it a reality.

I’m so proud of all the great work our union is accomplishing. Every page of this issue features members who are stepping up, speaking out, and fighting fights for economic security and better workplace conditions. It’s happening all over the country – from the Right-to-Work south to liberal coastal cities.

Together we are achieving real change. Thank you for all that you do – for the union and in your communities.

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "John Samuelsen". The signature is written in a cursive, flowing style.



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DEPARTMENTS

- 2 President's Column
- 4 Secretary-Treasurer's Column
- 11 State Conferences
- 13 Government Affairs Updates
- 23 Division Updates
- 25 Committee Updates

FEATURES

- 6 Members in Action
- 8 First Ever Joint President Council Meeting Takes Place in San Diego
- 10 The Best Maintenance & Related Contract in the Industry
- 12 Member Moment

DIVISIONS

AIR

- 14 TWU Women AMT's Lobby on Capitol Hill

RAIL

- 17 Women in Nontraditional Workplace Roles: Rajeeana Costelow, Local 2003

TRANSIT

- 20 Local 263: Successful Organizing in Anti-Union Territory



American Approval of Unions Highest in Nearly 60 Years

By International Secretary-Treasurer
Jerome Lafragola



According to data collected by Gallup this August, nearly 3/4 of Americans approve of labor unions – 71 percent – the highest percentage the polling company has recorded on this measure since 1965.

That is an incredibly encouraging statistic.

Sixteen percent of Americans live in a household where at least one is a card-carrying union member. Union membership is highest among frontline and production workers – where one in five or 20 percent are union members – followed by health care and social assistance workers (13 percent are union members).

For those who are union members, 40 percent rate their membership as “extremely important” in their lives, compared to just one in 10 saying it’s “not important at all.” When asked why joining a union was most important to them, most said better pay and benefits (65 percent), followed by worker rights and representation (57 percent), job security (42 percent), retirement benefits (34 percent), and fairness and equality on the job (23 percent).

It’s no surprise that these are the issues the TWU fights for every day: contracts that contain industry-leading wages and benefits, building blocks for a stable retirement, dignity and respect on the job, and safe working conditions. Without a union, worker’s rights would be trampled and exploited by management. There is truly strength in numbers.

We saw this during the pandemic, which pushed many workers to physical and mental breaking points, and exposed long-standing disparities between how working people and management are treated. These experiences sparked a newfound courage in working people to stand up for themselves, their safety, and their communities. Many began to see the trade union movement as the single most powerful tool to achieve economic security and workplace safety.

However, on the flip side, the lion’s share of workers who do not belong to a union (58 percent) say they are “not interested at all” in joining one. About one in 10 (11 percent) say they are “extremely interested.”

That being said, the National Labor Relations Board did report a 57 percent increase in union election petitions between

January and June 2022. This means that there was an increase in nearly 60 percent in those wanting to organize a new union – something to be proud of.

All of the blood, sweat, tears and hidden frustration that it takes to organize is finally paying off. The numbers are increasing. Union density is growing.

The TWU continues to successfully organize new workers across the country, in every transportation industry, even in Right-to-Work states. Since this leadership was elected in 2017, the TWU has added more than 15,000 members to our ranks and has organized more than 25 new workgroups.

It’s also refreshing to have real union support from our government. Secretary of Labor Marty Walsh has launched an unprecedented Worker Organizing Resource and Knowledge Center, chock full of toolkits, resources, and information on how to organize a union at your workplace, as well as the ins and outs of collective bargaining. It really breaks down everything you need to know about organizing a labor union, whether you are a student, researcher, government agency, employer or a worker seeking to organize your workplace.

Workers are also even given an opportunity to share personal stories about why belonging to a union is so important to them and how membership has benefitted the lives of them and their families. Visit www.dol.gov/general/workcenter to see what it’s all about.

TWU members have been selflessly working on the frontlines the past few years - it’s about time we have some good news to enjoy. Thank you, as always, for your talent, expertise, and dedication. Let’s Keep America Moving.

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "Jerome Lafragola". The signature is fluid and cursive, written on a white background.

Local 571 Celebrates Their 32nd Anniversary

Members of Local 571 celebrated the locals 32nd anniversary in June at O'Hare Airport in Chicago.



Another 100% Union Graduating Class at Houston Metro

The latest graduating class at Houston Metro in Texas are all members of TWU Local 260. Hats off!



AFL-CIO Organizing Institute Teams Up with TWU Locals

This summer, the AFL-CIO Organizing Institute (OI) tapped into TWU talent.

On July 9, 24 member activists from TWU Local 260 – led by President Horace Marves – led a training in Houston, Texas, with the OI and the Gulf Coast Area Labor Federation, on how to map/chart out their workplace and do an overall assessment of their union-building campaign. Attendees also sharpened their one-on-one communications skills.

On July 25, the first in-person OI training since the pandemic began took place in Washington, DC at AFL-CIO headquarters. Twenty organizers from across the country – including TWU Local 320 member Jason Franz, who served as an OI Teaching Fellow – met for three days to strengthen organizing skills and share best practices and experiences.



Members of TWU Local 260 led an OI training on July 9 AFL-CIO Organizing Institute in person



Attendees of the in-person OI training in front of AFL-CIO headquarters

MEMBERS IN ACTION

Local 512 Picnic

Members of Local 512 held their annual picnic on July 27. For members who could not make it out to the picnic, a Day of Appreciation was held at the same time at the airport.



Local 514 Swear In: *Marla Johnson Elected First Female VP in Local's History*



On July 25, International Rep Tony McCoy swore in the newly elected Local 514 Executive Board in Tulsa, Oklahoma. Marla Johnson was elected Vice President, making it the first time in the local's history that a woman has held this position. Johnson is currently a member of the TWU Working Women's Committee and local's executive board.

Visiting with KLM Engineers

When the Air Division was in San Francisco in June, they met with a couple of our KLM Engineer members at SFO.



TWU Local 223 Member Keeps Omaha Moving for More Than Four Decades

TWU Local 223 member Larry Dixon doesn't throw anything away. He still has his ID card and service cap from when he started working for Metro Transit, Omaha Nebraska's mass transportation provider more than 44 years ago. Today, Dixon is still going strong. In fact, he is Metro Transit's longest-serving operator.

For Dixon, working in public transportation is a family tradition. His grandfather was a streetcar mechanic and his uncle, who retired from Metro Transit just two years

after Dixon was hired, was both a street car and bus operator.

Brother Dixon was recently honored for his service at Local 223's annual picnic, where members of Congress, including Rep. Don Bacon and Sen. Deb Fischer, also recognized Dixon, and took time to thank Metro Transit's frontline workforce for their hard work and sacrifices.

You can find more photos from Local 223 on our Flickr page!



Local 223 member Larry Dixon shows off the ID card he was issued when he started working for Metro Transit in Omaha, Nebraska more than 44 years ago. He has been assaulted six times in the line of duty.



Local 223 Vice President Chad Olson and member Tuah Change show off a mural outside of the union's office. Hand painted by Local 223 member Anthony Pena, the mural honors the union's many service members and veterans.



Rep. Donald Bacon greets Local 223 members at their annual picnic



Local 223 leaders and members discuss transit driver assault and other legislative issues with Sen. Deb Fischer.



First Ever Joint President Council Meeting

For the first time in TWU history, hundreds of local officers from all three divisions gathered for a Joint President Council Meeting (JPCM) in San Diego, July 11-15. The meeting was hosted by Air Division Director Gary Peterson, Railroad Division Director John Feltz and TUUS Division Director Willie Brown.

The first day kicked off with a true joint session where all three divisions received updates from the International followed by lively discussion. This debate turned into camaraderie that lasted throughout the week, with new connections and friendships forged.

“What does a comprehensive, multi-legged fightback look like? Not a whole lot of that was going on here 10 years ago,” said President John Samuelsen, explaining that the union now takes on issues legislatively, through collective bargaining, and by educating members.

“We have different classes and crafts of workers across the board,” Samuelsen continued. “It’s important to have a unified membership to fightback against the displacement of technology and other issues.”

Transportation Technology is one of the campaigns the TWU has truly spearheaded and developed. JPCM attendees saw a virtual presentation by consultant Ed Wytkind on this subject. The TWU is trying to get ahead of and understand new technology by building partnerships with locals, leading the sector on policy debates and creating national strategy around zero emission bus issues.

“We are trying to stay relevant,” said Brown.

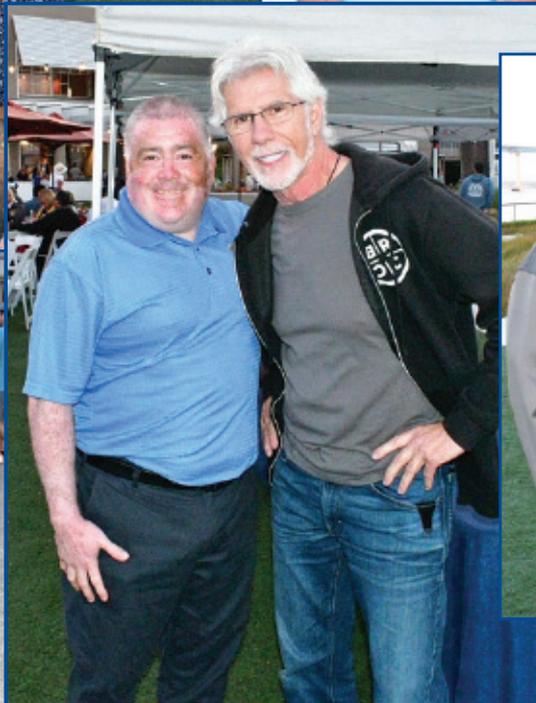
“The time to do something is now. We have to be a part of the conversation to make sure that we have a say before the development is done,” explained Senior Director of Govt. Affairs Zack Tatz.

For the second and third day of the meeting, divisions split up into breakout sessions where they tackled their respective internal issues and heard presentations from the International’s State Conferences, COPE, Government Affairs and Communication Departments, as well as the Future Leaders Organizing Committee (FLOC). The meeting also featured presentations followed by discussion on the ESAP Program and American Roots.





ting Takes Place in San Diego



The Best Maintenance & Related Contract in the Airline Industry

What does it mean to have the best maintenance contract in the airline industry? It's a lot more than just a wage rate. Having the best contract means you have financial security, job security, and seniority opportunities. That's what the TWU negotiated collective bargaining agreement at American Airlines provides. While American wanted to completely eliminate the Facilities Maintenance classification, the TWU fought for and won improved scope protection that secures specific work, now and into the future.

Wages

The top-of-scale wage rate for maintenance and related classifications at American Airlines are at the top of the industry, but how long it takes you to get there is just as important to your career. At Southwest Airlines, for example, AMFA-represented AMTs don't reach top-of-scale until 15 years of service due to their longevity scale. At United, it takes technicians 12 years to top-out. At American Airlines, AMTs reach top-of-scale after 8 years.

Other classifications aren't left behind at American Airlines. Facilities Maintenance and Cleaners, for example, make wages at or near the top of the airline industry, while their AMFA-represented counterparts at Southwest Airlines have been below the wages negotiated by TWU for more than a decade, missing out on tens of thousands of dollars in wages.



The average M&R Cleaner at American Airlines has made nearly **\$5,500 MORE** per year in straight time pay than his or her counterpart at Southwest Airlines.



Retirement and Take-Home Pay

Just as important as the hourly rate on your paycheck is how much of that paycheck ends up in your pocket. Southwest Airlines mechanics' 401(k) is made up entirely of company matching contributions under the AMFA contract, while at American every TWU member receives an automatic 5% company contribution. It costs an AMFA mechanic \$1 to get \$1 from Southwest. At American Airlines, you only need to put in 4% of your salary to receive the maximum 9% 401(k) benefit, essentially you get an additional \$2.25 for every dollar you put in when you max out contributions. That means you get the added benefit of keeping more of your money in your own pocket, where it belongs.

Scope

Most importantly, the job security and scope in the American Airlines contract is by far the best in the industry. The combination of headcount protections, furlough and station protections, and outsourcing limitations assures that the current 12 to 1 ratio of technicians to aircraft at American Airlines is far and away the highest in the industry and miles above Southwest's required 2.75 to 1 ratio of M&R employees AMFA negotiated. At Southwest,



classifications like Facilities Maintenance have been almost entirely outsourced, while at AA nearly two thousand mechanics enjoy top of the industry wage and job security protections.

The Best in the Industry

Any airline would happily trade wage increases for scope concessions, which is why American's CEO offered to immediately accept the AMFA Southwest contract – and AMFA leaders know their contracts pale in comparison to the TWU contract at American, the facts are undisputed! What makes this contract truly the best in the industry is getting it all: the high wages on a short scale, substantial 401(k) benefits without requiring a wage sacrifice, scope language and job protections that secure your future and provide you with flexibility and opportunity – all while leaving no other TWU member behind.

That is why the TWU contract at American Airlines is the best in the industry.

FSC at Florida AFL-CIO Convention

The Florida State Conference showed up at the Florida AFL-CIO's COPE and Biennial convention in Orlando, Florida. As union leaders joined together to promote a better future for Florida's working families, they enjoyed solidarity and continued to strive for progress. TWU delegates from Locals 291, 555, 556, 568, and 57 were in attendance.

AFT President Randi Weingarten expressed her support for our TWU locals in Florida. She appears in the photo with our TWU bus, in the center with the light blue jacket.



[Click here for State Conference Elections Endorsements](#)



Local 555 Family Day in Oakland

Members of TWU Local 555 held their Annual Family Day in Oakland, California. Pictured in the middle is International Administrative Vice President Mike Mayes.



Rep. Don Bacon (R-NE-2)

The TWU has champions fighting for workers in every state around the country. Elected Members of the U.S. Congress and state legislatures have your back in our nation's capitols, yet most of these allies remain unknown outside of their home districts. To help you get to know these compatriots better, The TWU Express features "Member Moments" to give you a personal view of some of our union's greatest friends in positions of power around the country.

This issue features an interview with Rep. Don Bacon (R-NE-2). He was elected to the United States House of Representatives in 2016, representing the Second Congressional District of Nebraska. Rep Bacon serves on two committees within the House of Representatives: the House Armed Services Committee, and the House Agricultural Committee. Rep. Bacon served in the U.S. Air Force for nearly 30 years, ultimately retiring as a Brigadier General. Upon his retirement from the Air Force in 2014, Congressman Bacon served as the military advisor to Rep. Jeff Fortenberry (NE-0).



Rep. Don Bacon

"I have been vocal that Republicans can and should do better on a host of union issues, especially transportation safety legislation."

Q. You have been a strong and vocal advocate to protect workers – especially transit workers – from assault on the job. What steps do you see Congress taking in the near future to make sure workers can do their jobs without fear of assault?

A. Over the last two Congresses, I have cosponsored legislation to require transit systems to conduct a study on what is needed to protect transit drivers from assault. I am proud to say that this legislation was part of the Bipartisan Infrastructure Act that was signed into law last year. I was one of 13 Republicans in the House to vote for that bill. But I think what we really need is legislation modeled after a bill in the Nebraska legislature that flat out makes assaulting transit drivers and other transit workers a felony act. This became even more apparent to me after a TWU female driver was brutally assaulted on the job in my district in early July.

Q. In addition to fighting assaults, you have also led legislation to end the offshoring U.S. airline maintenance jobs, stop toxic air from entering aircraft cabins, and end sequestration for railroad unemployment pay. You are one of the TWU's best champions in Congress and you are self-described conservative Republican. What do you say to members of your own party who do not believe that working with unions is "conservative"?

A. I don't view supporting unions and their policies as a "conservative" issue at all. I find that most of the bills and issues that transportation unions have asked me to support are about jobs, better pay and benefits for workers and common sense safer working conditions for workers and transportation passengers/consumers. Since I arrived in Congress in 2017 and began learning about various unions positions, I have been vocal that Republicans can and should do better on a host of union issues, especially transportation safety legislation. Republican President Theodore Roosevelt wanted American workers to get a "square

deal." I believe in his tradition when it comes to ensuring working women and men are treated fairly.

Q. What does the Labor Movement mean to you?

A. Over the last several decades, the middle class has been falling behind. Workers' wages have not kept up with inflation. Pensions are disappearing and underfunded. 401K type plans are causing workers to work longer and retire later, if at all. Health care is much more expensive and complicated as time passes. The negative effects of all these escalating problems are causing workers to want a stronger voice in their workplace. I believe that unions provide workers with a united voice in communicating and negotiation a reasonable contract with employers. A fair collective bargaining process usually leads to a win-win for workers and the employers for whom they work.

No Brakes for Autonomous Vehicles

Autonomous vehicles (AVs) are going to be on our streets one day – they are already deployed in some places.

In San Francisco, driverless cars are taxiing paying riders across the city between 10pm and 6am every night. The federal government recently approved Einride's application to operate a fleet of trucks remotely at low speeds, as long as they don't go onto highways. Highly automated, full-size buses are now in testing around the world.

We are in the midst of a transition to cars, buses, and trucks equipped with autonomous technology, and at the end of that transition TWU members are still going to be sitting behind the wheel of these vehicles earning the middle class wages our contracts have always secured.

Navigating Changes

In the policy world, both in Washington, DC and in state capitols around the country, winning the fight over new technology is not about rejecting change. TWU members have navigated the change from steam-powered subways, from propeller planes, from coal-fired trains all into the modern era. And through every shift in the type of equipment we operate or maintain, we've increased the quality of life for workers and expanded jobs. Our message to policymakers: AVs can be a part of our transportation system, but only if they are at least as safe and at least as effective as our current system while creating and sustaining good union jobs. That requires workers to be at the forefront of these innovations.

Automation, when implemented safely, actually increases the reliance on human operators in transportation. TWU members use automation daily to facilitate their work; drivers have automatic braking, lane assist, collision avoidance and passenger alerts for "next stop" built into their equipment. All of these are technologies which require training to use and maintain in order to make our jobs easier, but they also make human oversight of the system even more critical. A passenger in distress needs an operator onboard; a robotic bus lacks any ability to respond.

This reality can be observed in other modes of transportation. The first aircraft "autopilot" was patented in 1912 and two pilots still sit in the cockpit onboard commercial aircraft. These workers require different training and qualifications – they monitor autonomous systems as well as operate the equipment when the automation fails – but their physical presence is still necessary to safely navigate complex airspace.

Carnegie-Mellon University, the leading academic institution on automation issues, recently released a report discussing the potential for autonomous buses. The report highlights the many automations theorized for use on public transportation and concludes that "due to both technical and operational challenges, transit vehicles including buses and vans will be highly likely to continue to require skilled human operators, even as automated vehicle capabilities are incorporated". In short, if we expect our public transportation systems to function safely and efficiently, they need workers in the drivers' seats.

"At both the state and federal levels, elected leaders need to hear from union members who make it clear: no AV available today and none expected in the future will operate as safely without a well-trained, qualified human operator at the controls."

Fight with Facts

These facts will never stop the marketing machines at AV companies. Despite having its entire fleet recalled by the federal government seven times for safety concerns and the state of California pursuing legal action over misleading advertising to consumers, Tesla continues to sell cars with "Full Self Driving". It does not matter that these cars cannot drive themselves or that they cause a lot of accidents when they try not to, the only thing Tesla cares about is how cool the name sounds. The company, and many of its competitors, are spending a significant amount to convince consumers and regulators not to look any further than their publicity claims.

The TWU's job is to pull back that curtain and make sure decision makers understand the facts about AVs. That requires engagement from every TWU member. At both the state and federal levels, elected leaders need to hear from union members who make it clear: no AV available today and none expected in the future will operate as safely without a well-trained, qualified human operator at the controls. This is a fight that we will win together.

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TWU Women AMTs Lobby on Capitol Hill

Only 2.6% of AMTs Are Women: ‘We Want to Break These Stereotypes’

Fourteen female Aircraft Maintenance Technicians (AMT) who are TWU members touched down on Capitol Hill July 28, to lobby for support of legislation that would improve safety standards for the aircraft they work with: The Global Aircraft Safety Improvement Act, as well as more visibility and support for women in their trade.

Only 2.6% of AMTs are women, a huge disparity compared to other crafts employed by airlines, such as pilots and flight attendants.

The following women traveled from all corners of the country to TWU International headquarters in Washington, DC for a day of in-depth training followed by a day of lobbying:

Denise Andrade, Local 591, based at LGA
Kim Blair, Local 567, based at DWH
Tammie Brown, Local 576, based at AUS
Wendy Burkinshaw, Local 591, based at ORD
Daisy Chauca, Local 591, based at LGA
Karen Davidson, Local 591, based at MIA
Bertha Gallardo, Local 591, based at LAX
Kristy Howe, Local 574, based at MQT
Marla Johnson, Local 514, based at TUL
Tamee Kelly, Local 591, based at STL
Caroline Neild, Local 591, based at ORD
Lisa Prince, Local 514, based at TUL
Sharon Riffle, Local 591, based at DFW
Jasmine Vargas, Local 591, based at LGA

‘Shop Class Was Where It’s At’

Each worker’s introduction into the trade is a bit different. For example, Andrade, Chauca and Vargas, all graduated from Aviation High School, a vocational school in Long Island City, Queens, and went directly to work as an AMT for American Airlines (AA).

“Shop class was where it’s at,” Vargas said.

Howe explained, “High school offered me classes, or I wouldn’t be here. I like working with my hands, knowing how things work, tearing them apart and putting them back together. If I didn’t have that awareness I don’t know where I would be.”

Others, like Johnson, Prince and Blair started out with other positions at AA, put themselves through school, graduated with an A&P license and became mechanics.

Many shared stories of families trying to talk them out of becoming an AMT, being told it’s not “work for a woman,” and were encouraged instead go into another field such as cosmetology or nursing.



“We want more women in our field, and we have to spread awareness to bring more in,” Andrade said. “People look at us and they don’t see an aircraft mechanic. I am commonly confused as either a Flight Attendant or a Gate Agent and I have to explain to people who I am just to do my job. They are directing me to the cabin, but I need to go to the flight deck.”

“We want to break these stereotypes. Even the males in your field don’t take you seriously because they don’t see as many women here and it’s something they don’t understand,” Vargas explained.

“If we [women] make a mistake they [men] don’t have the same repercussions as we do,” Burkinshaw said.

“You have to work 10 times harder than any man to have to prove yourself. I’ve been touched inappropriately multiple times,” added Johnson.

‘Prove Them Wrong’

Because women are so underrepresented in the field, many bases don’t provide proper bathrooms, locker rooms, or safe spaces to pump. Uniforms that fit properly are on backorder for months.

Kelly said that after she gave birth, she was back on the job in six weeks and had to pump. “They were very strict with breaks. Some

AIR UPDATES



guys were jerks and felt it wasn't a female's place to do this type of work, but I was able to prove them wrong."

Vargas also called for designated spaces, "We are working with dirty things and cancerous chemicals, and they can't be touching breast milk."

During their Lobby Day visits, each asked for better support in these areas, as well as improved childcare.

"We're here talking about women in aviation, but we shouldn't be just biased towards women- there may be single dads who need that support, too," Howe noted. "We don't deserve it any more than they do based on gender but due to circumstance."

Spreading Visibility

One of the ways to make change is to simply spread visibility and awareness to girls – beginning in high school – that becoming an AMT is an option and a satisfying career. Many are not even aware it's out there. This can be achieved by expanding high school apprenticeship programs and providing more student grants to study.

"We have to reach students in junior year, get them interested," said Kelly, who encouraged four of her daughter's friends to get their A&P license.

"There needs to be more access to grants, especially for women – need more education on women in the fields dominated by men, like plumbers, electricians," Johnson noted.

You can graduate with an A&P license in two years and are guaranteed a job after graduation.

"It's not a risk, it's known you will be employed, and you can pick in the country where you want to live and work," Howe explained.

"We used to have over a thousand and only have about 700 or 800 mechanics. We need more people coming out of school."

Legislative Support

The women also lobbied for the passage of the Global Aircraft Safety Improvement Act, as well as an FAA reauthorization bill.

"Foreign repair stations are not held to the same standards," Kelly said. "I found 20 rows of seats with pins missing – passengers were complaining of seats moving. It took a long time to fix but they were able to find it in Dallas."

"We don't want work to be outsourced but if it is, then it should be regulated. We just want a level playing field," Blair said, adding that she and her co-workers have found drugs and guns hidden in panels in aircraft arriving from overseas.

'Go for It'

No matter what the challenges, everyone loves their job.

"I highly recommend it. If you have any mechanical ability, it is a great profession where you can be an independent female. It's fulfilling. I enjoy it and I like what I do. You get to work on an airplane every day of your life and know that you helped make that go into the air," Johnson said.

"Go for it and don't be afraid! We may not have the same upper body strength as a man does, but sometimes they need someone with small hands," Howe said. "We all work together as a team."

"Don't discredit or underestimate yourself," Kelly said. "We need to get the awareness out there that anyone can do this job."

Visit our Flickr page for more Lobby Day photos.

TWU Local 548 Ground School Instructors at Envoy Unanimously Ratify TA

On August 9, Local 548 Ground School Instructors at Envoy Air unanimously ratified a four-year tentative agreement with the company. Ground School Instructors provide classroom training to Envoy Air pilots.

Highlights include substantial pay increases, reduced step pay scale, and improved hours of service language.

"A solid union contract is the only true pathway to economic security – something every worker should enjoy," said TWU International President John Samuelsen.

"I'm proud of the negotiating team for securing such a solid agreement and I am ecstatic local members ratified it unanimously."

"Our negotiation team evaluated this agreement and realized the benefits our members will experience by the changes to such a strong contract," said TWU Air Division Director and International Vice President Gary Peterson. "Congratulations to the membership will now enjoy the contract's vast improvements."

HUGE VICTORY FOR TRANSPORTATION WORKERS: **Court Ruling Allowing Meal & Rest Breaks for Flight Crews Still Stands**

In a huge victory for transportation workers, a motion to overturn a 9th Circuit Court ruling extending meal and break protections to California-based flight crews, was denied by the Supreme Court on June 30. The Court also rejected a similar case from airlines seeking an exemption from Washington state's sick leave law. Airline workers will receive the same state-level protections as their colleagues in other industries as a result of these decisions.

Under California law, employers are required to provide employees with ten-minute rest breaks for every four hours worked, as well as thirty-minute meal periods for every five hours worked. These meal and rest requirements have been in place for over a decade and help to ensure the health and safety of workers while preventing harms associated through overwork.

However, airline executives and their lobbyists have been attempting to deny flight attendants and

other crew members these laws by falsely claiming that federal law pre-empted states from applying labor protections to this group. Airlines have lost this argument in nearly every lower-level court and today's final decision by the Supreme Court makes it clear state legislatures can improve airline workers lives through state-level powers.

"The TWU has been leading the charge to prevent these cuts from happening, not only in California, but in Illinois, New York, and elsewhere," said TWU International President John Samuelsen. "It should go without saying that every worker deserves rest and meal breaks, every worker deserves sick leave and time to care for their families, every worker deserves access to quality healthcare and a minimum wage. The airlines have been wrong on this from the start and the TWU is going to ensure that workers assert these rights in every state."



Assault Won't Fly Campaign Goes to Florida

On August 24 and 25, TWU flight attendant members from Locals 556, 577 and 579 (JetBlue) held leafletting events in Orlando and Sanford, Florida to promote our Assault Won't Fly campaign.

One of the components of the campaign is to pass the Protection from Abusive Passenger Act which would make stricter penalties for anyone who

assaults a flight attendant or airline employee. Over the past two years, assaults against airline workers have skyrocketed by over 200%, according to the FAA. As a special guest, Congressman Darren Soto, a co-sponsor of the bill showed up to support this effort in Orlando.

For campaign updates, visit assaultwontfly.com.

Women in Nontraditional Workplace Roles: Reajeana Costelow, Local 2003

In our latest TWU Express series, “Women in Nontraditional Workplace Roles,” we interview TWU members who are women performing jobs traditionally done by men. Each issue will feature a Q&A with a member. This time it’s Local 2003 member Reajeana Costelow, a Car Cleaner and Carmen Apprentice at Amtrak. She is based in the Beech Grove, Indiana Shop where she currently cleans trains but is learning how to repair and restore the trains that run on our national rail system.



Q: Can you give us an overall view of the job you perform?

A: I am currently in the Carmen Apprenticeship Program learning how to repair train cars.

Q: What made you decide to go into this craft?

A: To better myself. I like to learn new stuff and I was anxious to learn something new. I was a Cleaner for 13 years with Amtrak and learned all I could about it.

Q: Are there any huge obstacles you’ve overcome that you’d like to share?

A: Being a woman is an obstacle, but I was raised with three stepbrothers and am comfortable in a man’s environment. All the guys I am training with accept me, but when we get out on the floor it will be a lot harder. Before I entered the training program, I was bullied by some of the other Carmen. They would say, “You think you can be a Carmen?” Those guys will still be out there on the shop floor, and I will have to deal with it.

But I should have the same opportunity as the guys: I am getting ready to retire and want to learn as much new stuff as I can and earn some more money. It makes me a happier person when I learn new stuff.

Q: Do you have any advice for young women wanting to go into your craft?

A: Follow your dreams, don’t sell yourself short or underestimate yourself. If you have the knowledge you need to do the job, you can do the job. Always follow your dreams.

Q: What do you do for fun outside of work?

A: I like to hang out with my family and grandkids, go to church and spend time with my dog, a Doberman Pinscher who just turned a year old. He is really lively and happy. He certainly relieves my stress at the end of the day. I like to fish – I fished in bass tournaments in the past few years – and I like motorcycles. I like to laugh a lot and be happy – bring in positives to the environment I work in. Working with a bunch of guys...they are not always happy. I hope to bring some happy vibes to some of the grouchy carmen.

Q: Is there anything else you’d like to add?

A: I’ve had great enjoyment being a TWU member, working on the political side, on the E-board making decisions for my local.

The TWU is the strongest union out here at the Amtrak facility in Beech Grove. I like to be a part of union that sticks together – if we didn’t have this union management would run all over us. It’s great to see progress with the airlines. It’s first time I have ever been in a union, so that’s great too. It’s all about being involved.

This apprenticeship program has helped me. I was a logistics planner in my last career and learning industrial trades skills has helped me feel more comfortable in my Carmen career.

TWU Rail Workers Shed Light on Abysmal Working Conditions

Two members of TWU's rail division recently joined 12 of their sisters and brothers from across the freight rail industry to shed light on the horrific working conditions currently plaguing the industry.

Brandon Redman and Dennis Sabina participated in a virtual town hall on August 4, where they spoke to AFL-CIO Secretary-Treasurer Fred Redmond about serious safety issues, lack of personnel, and the toll railroading can take on the body, especially in the wake of a new business model adopted by rail carriers called Precision Scheduled Railroading, or PSR.

"Under the PSR model, freight rail carriers are focused on one thing and one thing only: lining the pockets of Wall Street investors and Robber Baron Railroad CEOs. To do so, they have made drastic cuts to both safety-sensitive procedures and people, and are operating railroads with overworked skeleton crews," said TWU Rail Division Director John Feltz.

For Redman, who conducts federally mandated inspections of rail cars and is president of Local 2053, in Elkhart, Indiana, the town hall was a chance to put real meaning behind the phrase "doing more with less." Redman spoke about facing an increased amount of work and being forced to work 16-hour days, which is the direct result of massive layoffs that have occurred in the industry in recent years. He also explained how working so much, and under stressful conditions, takes a toll on safety.

"There are safe train issues and worker safety issues. When I hired on in 2009, we had around 80 carmen. Presently, we have around 50, so you have less people doing the same amount of work," Redman said. "The continued grind [...] results in incomplete and improper Class 1 brake tests, as well as cars being released from the repair tracks without proper repairs. At the end of the day, if we were properly staffed, there would be safe and rested employees, proper inspections completed, safer trains and freight cars traveling around the country, and greater employee retention."

The townhall was hosted by the Transportation Trades

Department, AFL-CIO, and moderated by Redmond. It comes as rail workers and their unions face stiff opposition from freight carriers in contract negotiations that have gone on for nearly three years.

"Across the board, rail workers have not had a pay increase since 2019. Yet, like so many other essential workers, they put their lives on the line to work through the pandemic," Feltz said. "All these workers want is a strong contract that secures fair pay, health benefits, and safe working conditions, but for the railroads, that seems like too much to ask."

Since 2015, seven major railroad companies have made record profits off the backs of their workers. But during this same time period, those companies eliminated 45,000 jobs from the industry. Now, instead of recognizing the value of their employees, the rail carriers are offering workers a net pay cut and sub-par health care benefits.

According to Sabina, who is also president of Local 2035 in Conway, Pennsylvania, things weren't always this way. Sabina started working for the railroads 17 years ago and said at one time the industry offered competitive pay, excellent benefits, and that morale was high. Since the implementation of PSR, though, rail workers across the country are facing similar challenges – and those problems are only getting worse.

"The workforce has gotten older. Our median age is about 50. There's a lot of wear and tear on our bodies. No matter what profession you're in, you're not as productive now as when you were younger," he said. "In addition, the carriers are trying to force overtime as part of an emergency situation. But because you lay off so many people, that doesn't constitute an emergency. It's a compounding issue that continues to get worse."

Both Redman and Sabina hope the town hall, which drew thousands of viewers, demonstrates to the carriers that solidarity is strong among freight rail workers. "We have to stick together," Sabina said.

Town Hall for Freight Rail Workers

Local 2011 President and Ohio State Conference Chair John Hofbauer and Local 2051 President Derek Deman attended a town hall for freight rail workers in Toledo, Ohio, on August 20. Senator Tim Ryan (D-OH-13) spoke to the workers about the issues that mean most.



Locals 2001 and 2055 Reach New Side Letter Agreement with Metro North

Local 2001 President Pat Howard and Local 2055 President Robert Cifarelli, representing members employed by Metro North Railroad, reached a superior agreement with the railroad in August.

In this agreement, Coach Cleaners are allowed to relinquish their rights to attend Car Inspector training classes. In return, they will receive a stipend of \$6,000 after taxes. They can still request to become a Car Inspector, but they would have to go through the hiring process by submitting an application for an open position.

Other provisions of this side agreement include:

- Current Car Inspectors will receive a lump sum payment of \$2,000 (after taxes)
- Meal allowance is increased from \$7 to \$12
- Increased Welding differentials from 17 cents per hour to 50 cents per hour
- Waiver of the 100-day vacation qualifying requirement for those retiring. In the year of retirement, you will now be required to work only one day in the year to be credited with vacation weeks
- Established a mentor program to assist in the training of new car inspectors. All mentors will receive one hour at the overtime rate of pay, per day.



The *TWU Express* is issued quarterly every year. Are you receiving the magazine in your mailbox every Spring, Summer, Winter and Fall? Do you have a co-worker who would like to read it?

Let's make sure we have your correct mailing address! Send an email to communications@twu.org with your name, local and mailing address and we will make sure you get on the list.

You can also read issues of the magazine anytime by visiting www.twu.org/express.



Local 263: Successful Organizing in Anti-Union Territory

Thanks to a joint effort by the TWU International Organizing Department and TUUS Division, in just over six months, membership at Local 263 in Ysleta, Texas has quadrupled in size. Local 263 represents bus operators and mechanics in the Ysleta Independent School District.

Organizing Director Angelo Cucuzza explained that this past spring, International Rep Jose Cruz and Local 100 Member Organizer Jemary Pabon, set up meetings with folks who were interested in revitalizing the local after President Arvol Brumley passed after contracting Covid in December, “We held productive meetings on the property – and Cruz got someone to step up and run for local president.”

That someone is Ruth Villalobos.

She initially did not want the position, but so many new members said, “The only way I’m going to sign a card is if you lead it.”

After nominations and an election, she was sworn in with her new executive board in June. With strength in numbers, the local is already seeing improvements.

“We got a really good raise for our employees... stipends were more than expected,” Villalobos said. “Our accommodations are not the best, but they are renewing our bathrooms. A big, big plus is we are getting new buses. The ones we drive every day are run down.



Ruth Villalobos

“We need to get more members and we are trying to make it work,” she continued. “Older members are appreciative. Most don’t understand what the union is about. It’s not just us representing you, we can go before the school board, ask for what we need and work it out.”

Local 263’s goal is to be 100 percent organized, which isn’t an easy feat in a Right to Work (RTW) state like Texas where labor laws are weak. The Weingarten Act is not supported in the state, however during a disciplinary meeting, a union rep is allowed to stop a member from speaking and take them outside to advise them.

“We’re looking to have a new organizing drive and are determined to get everyone we can,” Cruz said.

“Right now, it’s very exciting to see people motivated and wanting to work at this,” Villalobos said. “It’s a blessing to see that people want more. I am praying that I am a good leader, that I can get them what they need, have answers when they need them, and I can guide them to a good place where they have faith in the union. I have a good team under me.”

“The efforts of Jemary and Cruz is mainly how we made this happen,” Cucuzza said. “The Organizing Department and TUUS Division are working together on several other organizing efforts across other RTW areas in the country.”

Are you signed up to receive our monthly Transportation Technology Newsletter? Get started and read more about the campaign by visiting www.twu.org/transportation-technology-campaign/.

TWU Local 234 Moves Philadelphia

Check out the photos of our dedicated Bus Operators and Mechanics who keep the City of Brotherly Love moving. TWU Local 234 members are employed by SEPTA.

The TWU Communications Department is rebuilding our photo library. You can view more photos from Philadelphia, as well as photos from other locals, on our Flickr page.



A Busy Summer in Suffolk County: Local 252 Organizes New Workgroup, Ratifies Three Contracts

Local 252 President Debra Hagan had a very busy summer fighting on behalf of workers in Suffolk County. She organized a new workgroup, as well as ratified three amazing contracts.

The newest members of Local 252 are actually former management at Suffolk Bus Corporation— who realized that they were better off not being in management but belonging to the union.

Hagan explained that the workers handle customer client reservations for para transit rides, but “kept getting jostled around” with their schedules, work hours and holidays.

“They were being told, ‘Take it or leave it.’ So, they came to the union,” she said. “A union shop steward quietly worked with them, and we got the signed cards right away, within a week.”

Suffolk Bus Corporation voluntarily recognized the cards as filed with the National Mediation Board and the workgroup was born. Hagan is currently in the process of negotiating the first contract.

“New member organizing is always a difficult exercise, but it’s made so much easier when you negotiate solid

contracts. Significant wage increases and additional sick leave and holidays speak for themselves,” said TWU Director of Organizing Angelo Cucuzza. “Debra and her team utilized basic textbook organizing and the way it was handled, from start to finish, was impeccable. This is the way to truly build worker power.”

On June 21, the other workgroup at Suffolk Bus – Operators, Washers and Mechanics - ratified a five-year contract, which includes wage increases of a minimum 17.5% over 5 years, and additional sick days, holidays and shop allowance.

On August 3, Local 252 members who work for First Student unanimously ratified a five-year contract, which includes a total wage increase of 34.6% over the five years, huge increases to longevity bonus, health insurance, 401k and sick days.

On August 26, Local 252 members who work for Guardian School Bus and Maintenance ratified a three-year contract, which includes wage increases of 13% - 14.5% over 3 years, a 10 percent increase to 401k company contributions, increased sick days and holidays.

The TWU keeps Suffolk County Moving!

Sweet! Transportation Technology Swag Praised by Union Label

The jellybean swag the TWU distributed at the AFL-CIO Convention in June to promote our Transportation Technology Campaign has caught the eye of Union Label.



The “Don’t Let the Bean Counters Win, Human Operators Save Lives” message printed on the packets of Jelly Belly jellybeans, were called a “novel idea” in the July-August 2022 issue of *The Label Letter*.

“The packets, with a large BCTGM logo on the back, are being used to combat zealous automation in their industries and protect member jobs,” reads the article, which also includes information about our Transportation Technology campaign.

CORRECTION

The Summer 2022 issue of the *TWU Express* wrongly misidentified the transit agency serving San Francisco. SFMTA is the San Francisco Municipal Transportation Authority. We apologize for the error.





Envoy Air Presidents Meet

Envoy Air presidents from across the country met for a week in early June at the International's office in Washington, D.C. They included:

Local 570 President Dan Rivera, Local 571 President Moisley Pawa, Local 572 President Council Creech, Local 574 President David Dodge, Local 575 President Saadat Ghani and Local 576 President Timothy Jackson. Dodge does not appear in the photo.

TWU Honorary Member Calls for Release of Wrongfully Detained Americans

On July 27, TWU honorary member Trevor Reed, appeared on the Hallie Jackson Show on MSNBC. Reed is a Marine who was wrongfully detained in Russia in 2019 and was released this April.

Wearing a TWU Veteran's Committee polo shirt, Reed called for more public pressure on the US government to bring other detainees home, such as Paul Whelan.

The TWU will always fight to ensure that all workers are treated with dignity and respect.



Local Charter Milestones

Local 264, October 7, 75 years

Local 265, August 1, 20 years

Local 1400, September 12, 55 years

Local 320, September 22, 2 years

Local 575 Shop Steward Training

In late August, Local 575 trained and swore in 15 new shop stewards. Congratulations!



Air Division Locals Join APA Picket

Presidents and officers from TWU Locals 512, 513, 514, 567 and 591 joined APA's picket at DFW on Sept. 1.

Local 504 Notices

There will be a meeting of the entire TWU Local 504 membership on:

Date: Tuesday, December 6, 2022

Time: 1:00 Eastern Time

Location: Zoom

Meeting ID Number: 882-5068-4593

Password: 219563

Telephone Call In: (929) 205-6099

The sole purpose of this meeting is for the approval of the Local By-Laws. Please view the current by-laws vs: the newly proposed by-laws at: local504.twu.org

Local 504 General Elections

Air Transport Division Local 504 will be conducting General Elections during the months of February and March 2023. Nominations will be held January 3, 2023, through the close of business January 27, 2023. All eligible members can send their nominations by either:

Email: BOSWELLS@ADR.ORG or ULERIOS@ADR.ORG
(Subject: Local 504 nominations)

Fax: 212-233-0629

Mail: American Arbitration Association
120 Broadway (21st) floor
New York, New York 10271
Attention: Election Department

NO NOMINATIONS WILL BE ACCEPTED
AT THE LOCAL UNION HALL

LOCAL POSITIONS

President

Executive Vice President Vice President

Final Secretary-Treasurer/Recording Secretary

EXECUTIVE BOARD

4 Board Members from Worldwide Flight Services

1 Board Member from Avport, KLM, Allied, Genesis, Triangle, Swissport, Airways

1 Board Member at Large from any division.

BASE REPRESENTATIVES

1 from Swissport

1 from Triangle Interline

1 from Triangle Ramp

1 from Genesis Baltimore

1 from Genesis Franconia

1 from Allied LGA Tank Farm

1 from Avport

1 from KLM SFO

1 from Airways cleaners

Worldwide Flight Services Base Representative: 1 from every station within the WFS system.

Any position without a nomination may be appointed by the Local Executive Board.

Local 512 Golf Outing

Members of Local 512 held a Golf Outing on August 2.





Future Leaders Learn Arbitration Skills

A union member posted on social media and was fired by the company, who claimed she violated the company's social media policy. Could she get her job back?

That was the hypothetical situation Future Leaders faced at the Future Leaders Organizing Committee (FLOC) meeting, where young workers participated in a mock arbitration case during their Summer meeting, June 27-30.

The event was hosted by Local 568 in Miami and members from Locals 502, 510, 513, 514, 527, 550, 555, 556, 568, 571, 575, 577, and 591 participated. International Executive Vice President Alex Garcia (pictured speaking below) gave opening remarks. The next FLOC will take place September 25-29 in Chicago and will include FLOC members from all three divisions.



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Veteran's Committee Meets in Texas

The Summer Veteran's Committee meeting was hosted by Local 513 in Dallas/Fort Worth in June.

The meeting featured a guest speaker, Joey Reed, father of Trevor Reed, who was wrongfully detained in Russia for nearly three years and was finally released in April of this year.

Trevor Reed is a Marine Veteran, and the Veteran's Committee assisted the family in getting the word out to everyday citizens, asking them to petition the U. S.

Government to get him released.

The Veterans Committee made Trevor an Honorary TWU member and presented him with a shirt, as well as challenge coins from various TWU Local Veteran committees (*see page 23 for more*).

The Committee also presented a plaque to the outgoing Veteran's Committee Co-Chairman Andre Hanekamp for his years of service and dedication to the Committee.





Working Women's Committee Gives Back

The Working Women's Committee (WWC) Summer meeting was hosted by Local 260 in Houston, July 26-28.

The WWC is being revamped, putting an emphasis on education, enrichment and empowerment, as well as providing members with useful resources and information to bring back to their locals.

One of the Committee's goals is to give back to local communities. The meeting's 62 attendees volunteered at the Bread of Life food pantry for a few hours one morning, packing meals to aid local families.

"Working in a warehouse you get air when you can. Even if it's a flash and dash," said Ruth Salas a member of Local 513. "The work we did was gratifying knowing that families in need will be taken care of during these trying times. Thank God for Bread of Life and the donations they receive."

The meeting also featured a presentation by Jeanette Fouts, Pioneer Woman of Local 260, who was one the first black women to become a Bus Operator at Houston METRO. She has served for 30 years without any accidents.

Local 555 members Kenya Rawlings and Sandra Turner thought the WWC meeting was "awesome." They enjoyed learning about human trafficking and all the signs to look out for.

"I really enjoyed the community service and local reports," said Raquel Rangel, of Local 250A. "It was interesting to learn what other locals were doing and I felt it offers different ways we can be active in our local, as well."

"The meeting was terrific. Every meeting we seem to grow, if not in size but in the knowledge we take back to our locals," said Linda Dill of Local 513. "It's all about our union passion and passing it onto those just beginning their union footprints. Thanks for the opportunity to be in Houston!"

"We're crazy, we're awesome, we're powerful. I love my sisters!" said Vetrina Davis of Local 250A.

The Winter WWC meeting is scheduled for November 30 to December 2 in New York.

If you would like to share anything with WWC Chairs, send an email to WWC@twu.org.

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“COPE participation is essential for unionized workers. COPE is the lifeblood of the TWU Political & Legislative Department. The collective voices of the working men and women of the TWU are magnified through our contributions to COPE.” – TWU Local 513