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Inspiring the Next Generation of Great Minds

# The Meaning of Brotherhood and Sisterhood



**George Hogan** Business Manager

hat does it really mean when we call one another Brother or Sister? This subject was brought to my attention in a discussion with an IBEW member at a recent job visit. It seems that this member was not treated as a Brother or Sister on a jobsite in the Metropolitan area. To be honest, this really upset me to think that any of my Brothers or Sisters would even consider treating one another in this manner. If this doesn't bother you as well, maybe you should take a long hard look at yourself and see if you are really fulfilling what the IBEW thinks of as a good Brother or Sister.

I have always believed that as members we should have respect for all of our Brothers and Sisters even if we don't agree with their thoughts or views on various subjects that come into our workplace every day. I have heard that some members of our Local are not too happy about members from other locals coming into our area to seek a job so they can support their families. Come on, Brothers and Sisters, we are all IBEW members. We are all in the common fight to organize our non-union workers and to gain more market share in our area. We are always looking for NEW talent in everyone we encounter every day. The Brothers and Sisters who come from other jurisdictions of the country are just as much your Brother and Sister as that person who had the

seat next to you when you started your apprenticeship or the young person who came in through our residential training unit to start their career in the IBEW. We must understand that it is our duty to the IBEW to find and to teach all future members for the good of our Union. When we do find them, we need to teach them what it means to be a good and loyal member of Local 26 and the IBEW. For without them, we would slowly disintegrate and no longer be able to man our jurisdiction.

The same goes for our traveling Brothers and Sisters in respect to showing them that here at Local 26, we are good Brothers and Sisters. When we treat them with respect they will do the same for our Local 26 traveling members. Believe me when I tell you that in my almost 50 years in this Local, I have seen when work has been good and also when it has been bad. We, too, in this Local have had to travel at times because the work was not always here. But with our Political, Business Development, and Organizing Departments we have taken a new direction in how we operate our Local by looking ahead to the future to find new ways that we can assist our contractors and keep our members employed with future projects.

This is why we must all take on the task of making our Local stand up tall, and be respectful in our treatment of

our own members and the members of our sister locals around the country. This was your promise to the IBEW when you took the oath of membership in this great organization. I know that you will be taking a look at what goes on around your job from this day forward. If you see someone not being a good member, remind them that they represent Local 26 in all that they do and say every day. Thank you again, Brothers and Sisters, for giving your best every day to make Local 26 the best in the IBEW.

Fraternally, George



## Are You Going to Live Like a King/ Queen or a Prince/Princess?

Tom Myers
President

etirement! We all want it; we all deserve it. How does a Brother or Sister of Local 26 experience it?

First of all, this is not investment advice. This is a stream of consciousness set to paper. I spend a lot of time, as do all the officers, dealing with actuaries and accountants and lawyers and investment managers for all the funds (EWTF, pension, annuity...). All of this time results in a pretty thorough education on how these funds work to our benefit as members of this amazing Local. So, recently I have spent many hours on the phone and in person with members who want to understand what they can look forward to when it's their time to enjoy the fruits of a LIFETIME of work. Generally, when I have these discussions, I use a fictional character to create an image for them. His name is John J. Wrench (original, I know). We'll get back to John later.

Our retirement at Local 26 is comprised of three defined benefit plans (DBP) and the defined contribution plan (DCP) as follows. First, defined benefit basically means that a plan is funded by contributions based upon hours worked and that what you receive is defined by the Summary Plan Description (SPD) and ERISA rules. Our three DBPs are the Local 26 Pension Fund, the NEBF fund, and the International Pension. Each of these funds will pay a certain dollar amount to a participant (you and me) for the rest of their life and may continue to support their spouse, if it's set up that way, after their demise. Our single DCP is our annuity or the IAP. This hourly contribution is allocated to certain investment vehicles that each member has some autonomy over. I say some autonomy because the trustees and the SPD have control over what's available to each participant. A DCP is different than a DBP in multiple ways, but the most important is that when YOUR DCP or annuity runs out of money, that's it; you're broke unless you have another source of income. Now there has been a lot of discussion over how much goes in on our behalf. Using John Wrench, a journeyman electrician, as an example, \$5.90 pension (DBP), \$1.47 NEBF (DBP) goes into those plans respectively per hour worked (the IO plan is based upon your quarterly dues). Additionally, John receives \$4.10 per hour worked in the IAP (DCP). So that adds up to....hold on...\$11.47 per hour paid into retirement plans, TAX FREE, on John's behalf. John just graduated from the apprenticeship in 2020 and is currently 26 years

If John works steadily, with very little overtime, what COULD his retirement look like?

Well first, a couple of assumptions: 1) John is married and his wife is 3 years younger. 2) He wants to retire at the age of 60. 3) John works 40 hours a week, 50 weeks out of the year and hates overtime (John loves his 2 weeks' vacation every year to wherever). 4) When John graduated from his apprenticeship, and started receiving the full IAP contribution, he had \$20,000 dollars in his IAP plan and it grows, on average, 7% per year.

In 2055 John will be 60. He will have 34 years of service and his "rule of 85" will give him 5 "bonus years."

If we do not change anything from where it sits today, John's Local 26 bene-

fit will be approximately \$2962.76 after the spousal reduction. According to the future value of investments formula, John's annuity should have as much as \$1.3 million in it, assuming the stock market doesn't crash the day before John retires. John then has a choice to make; HOW MUCH of the DCP does he want and when?

If John is smart, he will take a fixed amount out that is less than his annual growth. For purposes of this discussion, let's assume that John isn't a moron. John opts to take 4% of his annuity out per year divided up over twelve months, that works out to \$4637.17 per month for the first year. If the IAP account continues to grow at 5% (not an unreasonable assumption) he will never run out of money in that account...AGAIN, assuming a meteor doesn't hit the stock market. As a matter of mathematics, John's IAP account should continue to increase in value and his 4% withdrawal will actually afford him a small cost of living raise each year, and then at his death, there will be more than \$1.5 million. So, at this point John is retired at 60 and could have a monthly benefit of approximately \$7,599.93 or \$91,199.16 per year (\$35,553 from Local 26 DBP and \$55,646 from DCP). If John needs more, he can take a little more from the annuity each

NOT TOO BAD, huh? But WAIT, there's more!!!! We haven't discussed the NEBF and the IO. Let's assume that John doesn't want to take a reduced pension from those two, and waits till he is 65 (5 years later). When John starts receiving

Continued on page 5



Rich Wilkinson

those two, his monthly income will be approximately \$8,731.40 from all three DBPs (in today's dollars) or \$104,776.83 per year.

Still not enough? Jeez, you guys are thirsty. Ok at 62 John would be eligible for Social Security at around \$1,900.00 per month or \$22,800 per year...(Yeah, yeah, I know if you wait, you'll get more, but you will also receive it for fewer years. The numbers from the SSA are based upon life expectancy charts and actuarial calculations. The only way you beat those charts financially is to live longer than they expect, so go eat a salad.)

John will be eligible for: Approximately \$91,030.60 beginning at age 60-62; approximately \$114,723.96 from 63-65 (with Social Security); and approximately \$129,224.30 thereafter.

Now you might be asking yourself, "Um..., Tom what the hell is that prince/ princess or king/queen thing you started with? There is always some connection and we sooooo, look forward to that" or something similar.

OK, so in the sports industry, like the NFL or MLB or whatever, young people start earning incredible sums of money but usually for a short period of time. The unions that represent these players have classes that basically teach them some fiscal control with the pitch being this, "You just got drafted by team 'x' and are earning \$3,000,000 a year for the next three years. You have a choice to make. You can live like you will be earning that money forever and spend like a king/queen for as long as it lasts, or you can be more prudent and use that money to ensure you can live like a prince/prin-

cess for the rest of your life. What's it gonna be?"

In my example John is not an idiot. He is making sure that his IAP doesn't run out by carefully monitoring annual withdrawal vs. annual growth. John could very easily have taken all \$1,300,000 out and bought an oceanfront condo, and a boat, and a new truck. What does retirement look like then? It's \$48,685 before Social Security and \$70,285 after Social Security. Quite a difference.

Now as you all know, monies get allocated to the annuity and pension fund in all contracts (well at least the ones I'm involved in) and these numbers are based on today's dollar value and contribution rates and benefit credits as of today. What will these numbers be in 2055? I don't know but they will be higher, with your support and union solidarity. My ultimate goal is that every man or woman who comes to Local 26 is able to retire between ages 57-60, live comfortably for the rest of their lives, and STILL leave something to their kids.

So, what's it gonna be, kings/queens or princes/princesses? (Once again, not investment advice, just a conversation starter for the Brothers and Sisters who care.)

want to take some of your time to talk about brotherhood and what our Union should be about. We should stand strong for our Union and our brotherhood.

I guess we can start out with what our Union should mean to you and all of our members. To me, it means standing strong, defending it, being willing to volunteer when needed, and coming to a meeting to get involved. Take that extra step to be a proud union Brother or Sister. The main thing is to get out and vote. Show that you do care.

Second is brotherhood. You know there was a time where if someone saw a Brother or Sister with their head down or with a problem look on their face, they would stop and ask that person if they were ok and ask if they needed anything.

Somewhere along the way we as a union, as a brotherhood, have gotten away from those morals and that need to take care of our Union and our Brothers and Sisters.

My quest is to get a message out to everyone to watch out for others and get more involved with your Union to make it stronger.



# An Update on Membership Dues

Joe Dabbs
Financial Secretary

opefully everyone enjoyed the summer months spending some time outside. Continue to be safe and keep hydrated. As Maryland began to reopen from COVID restrictions, we looked to see if a picnic might be possible not knowing if the vendors that helped us in the past were still in business. After receiving the green light from Camp Letts, we reached out to the caterer and other vendors and were happy to hear that most were available. Unfortunately, as COVID-19 cases began to rise again, we had to cancel it due to venue requirements.

A quick update on our membership dues. Ordinarily the dues increase each year for either the per capita or the Pension Benefit Fund. These increases are mandated by the IBEW International Convention. The 40th IBEW International Convention has been postponed to May 2022. The current dues rates below will stay the same until after the convention. Journeyman Wireman - \$131.10 Apprentice - \$121.80 Residential Wireman - \$131.10 Residential Trainee (RTP-R8) - \$121.80 Residential Electrician (RE) - \$131.10 Instrument Technician - \$131.10 Maintenance Worker - \$131.10 Sign Worker - \$131.10 Test Technician - \$131.10 Teledata Classifications - \$131.10 Communications Worker - \$121.80

Motor Repairman - \$131.10

Quarterly membership dues payments are due in the Finance Office by the beginning of every new quarter: January 1st, April 1st, July 1st, and October 1st of every year. It is important that your dues are paid on time. Remember, they are due in advance of the quarter not by the end of the quarter. Your union dues cover a pension from the International Brotherhood of Electrical Workers that is based on continuous years of membership. If you get behind on these dues and drop from membership, the International pension for those previous years will be lost. To qualify for an International Pension at age 62, you need 20 years of continuous membership. If you have less than 20 years but at least five continuous years, you have to wait until age 65 to draw the International pension. You can see what kind of negative effect being behind on your dues can have.

Another benefit you receive from your dues payment is a death benefit, and this could be as much as \$12,500. However, if you fall behind on your dues by two months, the death benefit will be lost and it takes six months of new continuous membership for that benefit to be reinstated.

Dues payments can be made conveniently through the Unions Get It app or the Local 26 website or by credit card over the phone by calling the main office in Lanham 301-4592900. You can also mail your payment to the Lanham office and we will mail the receipt to you. If you belong to the Local 26 Credit Union you can call them and authorize them to make a payment out of your account, and they will bring it over to the Finance Office. It would be wise to call the Finance Office and confirm what your dues payment is before authorizing the Credit Union to make your payment.

Please do your part in keeping Local 26 running smoothly and efficiently by paying your dues on time each quarter or year. Your union dues make it possible for Local 26 to protect your work and provide a good income for all upon retirement.

Remember to contact the Finance Office with any changes to your address, phone numbers, or email. It is very important that we have your current information on file in case we need to contact you.

Many members have been asking about the retirement seminar. The last couple of seminars have been virtual. Local 26 is in the process of adding the retirement seminar presentations to the Local 26 website so members can review the information at their convenience. If you would like the seminar materials sent to you, please contact the Finance Office. Thank you to all of our Brothers and Sisters who make Local 26 the best local in the IBEW. Work safely!

## 



# Politics Has Become A Key Tool in Our Organizing Toolbox

Kyle McMillan

here is a saying that "all politics are local." That could be meant to imply that all politics affect the local level or that politics must start on the local level and grow from there. The Local 26 Organizing Department holds both interpretations to be true and, in fact, over the past election cycle in particular, has focused heavily on getting the right people in political office on the local—city, county, state—levels for the benefit of the entire membership...and it's working! We are seeing a more level playing field than ever before, a dramatic increase in opportunities for our good signatory contractors to bid on projects, more integrity in contractor selection, and a decline in unscrupulous contractors on major projects.

About three years ago Local 26 developed what has evolved into a robust political program. It began as a group of officers with a political wish list, and has evolved into a political force that has made it possible for labor-friendly politicians to win elections all over our jurisdiction, but especially in Northern Virginia. Local 26's political program, created under the leadership of Business Manager George Hogan, operates in conjunction with our Organizing Department.

In large part, our political program has focused on education. We have learned that political efforts need to go far beyond just financial contributions. Over the past few years we have spent a tremendous amount of time first identifying solid candidates and then educating those candidates on not just the merits of union labor, but on the dangers of using unqualified open-shop contractors. When a candidate fully understands the current environment with bidding and staffing projects and the need for the skills and regulation that come with union labor, they are committed to helping us once they are elect-

ed. We are essentially getting in with a candidate before they are even on the ballot. In fact, we have identified many labor candidates before election season even began and encouraged them to seek office. And, we are proud that we have been highly successful in getting so many of "our" candidates elected.

Of course, this new approach doesn't mean that we have abandoned our other means of political action, such as lobbying existing politicians. That is still very much a part of our political activities and has indeed been successful in helping Local 26 gain market share and create more job opportunities for our contractors.

So what have been the results of this new approach to political action? First, our political efforts helped us flip the Virginia House and Senate in the 2019 state legislative races. Now all across Northern Virginia we have labor-friendly leaders in office—from the city level to the General Assembly. In the 2020 Virginia General Assembly, a law was passed that establishes prevailing wages-Davis Bacon rates—on state projects over \$250,000 and the prevailing wage law also allows localities to adopt prevailing wage ordinances. This law was effective May 1, 2021. The General Assembly also repealed a prohibition on project labor agreements (PLAs) and instituted a responsible contractor policy that allows localities to mandate from contractors such responsible contractor requirements as certified apprenticeship programs, safety training, and compliance with wage and employment laws.

These laws and provisions alone have gone a long way in leveling the playing field for our contractors. As we reported in a previous issue of *InCharge*, contractors who have avoided prevailing wages, to say nothing of their misclassification habits and use of labor brokers, have been able to financially under-

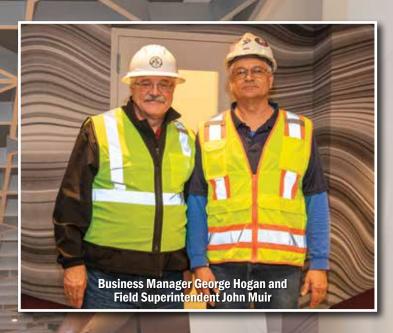
cut our good union contractors and win contracts they didn't deserve for far too long. In DC, we have been fortunate to have the help of Attorney General Karl Racine and Council Member Elissa Silverman, and now in Virginia we have a team of local and state politicians helping us, along with our longtime ally Ellen Marie Hess, commissioner of the Virginia Employment Commission. Our political connections are also working for us from Arlington, where County Board members persuaded Amazon to adopt labor standards in its H2Q project; to Alexandria, where elected officials have made it clear that they will not tolerate unscrupulous contractors on the Virginia Tech Innovation Campus project and that union labor is preferable; to Fairfax County, where the Board of Supervisors has agreed to adopt a prevailing wage ordinance and responsible contractor policy for the county's Capital Improvement Plan.

The amount of support we are receiving for union labor from elected leaders and the positive impact that support is having on our organizing efforts is truly unchartered waters for us. Yes, it has been a long time in the making, however, taking organizing from a different perspective is certainly paying off in more market share, a more level playing field, and many more tools in our toolbox. Everything we can do to help our contractors helps our members, and this is what drives us every day.

We hope all Local 26 members get involved in our efforts. If you see something on a jobsite, know of a job about to be sent out for bid, or know of questionable practices on the part of a non-union shop, please let us know about it. You are our eyes and ears in our jurisdiction. And, when our friends in government need our help, we hope we will be able to count on all of you.

# MISSION LOFTS: REDEFINING WHAT IT MEANS TO WORK FROM HOME







# Cherry Lane Electrical constructs Mission Lofts to be the newest trend in multiuse buildings.

hat image comes to mind when you think of an office space? Perhaps a big open floor with monochromatic cubicles scattered about? You know, the kind of generic offices often seen on television shows? If so, it's time to reimagine your definition of an office space. If Mission Lofts, located in Falls Church, VA, is any indication, the new trend in office space geared towards millenials, is to combine a living and working environment that is modern and inspiring into one accessible location full of amenities.



Front row, from left: Retired Business Agent Riley Gaines, Marvin Manzanares, Yawukal Belay, Foreman Aaron Benson, and Field Superintendent John Muir. Back row, from left: Subforeman Juan Luna Barahona, Jonathan Smith, Josh Cabiness, Business Agent Cordelia McKoy, and Business Manager George Hogan.





From April 2019 until April 2020, Cherry Lane Electrical was a major part of the team that converted an old government building into a state-ofthe-art living and working environment now known as Mission Lofts. About 25 electricians from Local 26 worked on the project under the leadership of Superintendent John Muir and Foreman Aaron Benson.

Cherry Lane Electrical has been a Local 26 signatory contractor for over 25 years. They specialize in designbuild residential work.

Given that the building was a much older building, demolition of the old electrical and fire alarm systems had to take place before any new installation work could even begin. The old systems were simply not safe by today's standards and therefore couldn't be repurposed. In fact, the only existing systems that were kept on during the initial phase of construction were the sprinkler system and services for the elevators and fire pumps. The building was completely gutted, leaving only the elevator shafts and the stairwells.

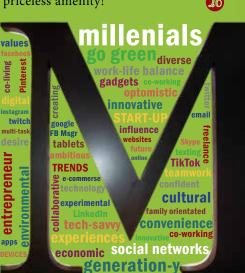
The work of Local 26 included bringing in new services from Dominion Power, installing all new electrical systems from high voltage to low voltage, LED lighting, and all life safety systems including the fire alarm system and monitoring system. Now complete, Mission Lofts features 156 one- and two-bedroom loft-style apartments with industrial finishes



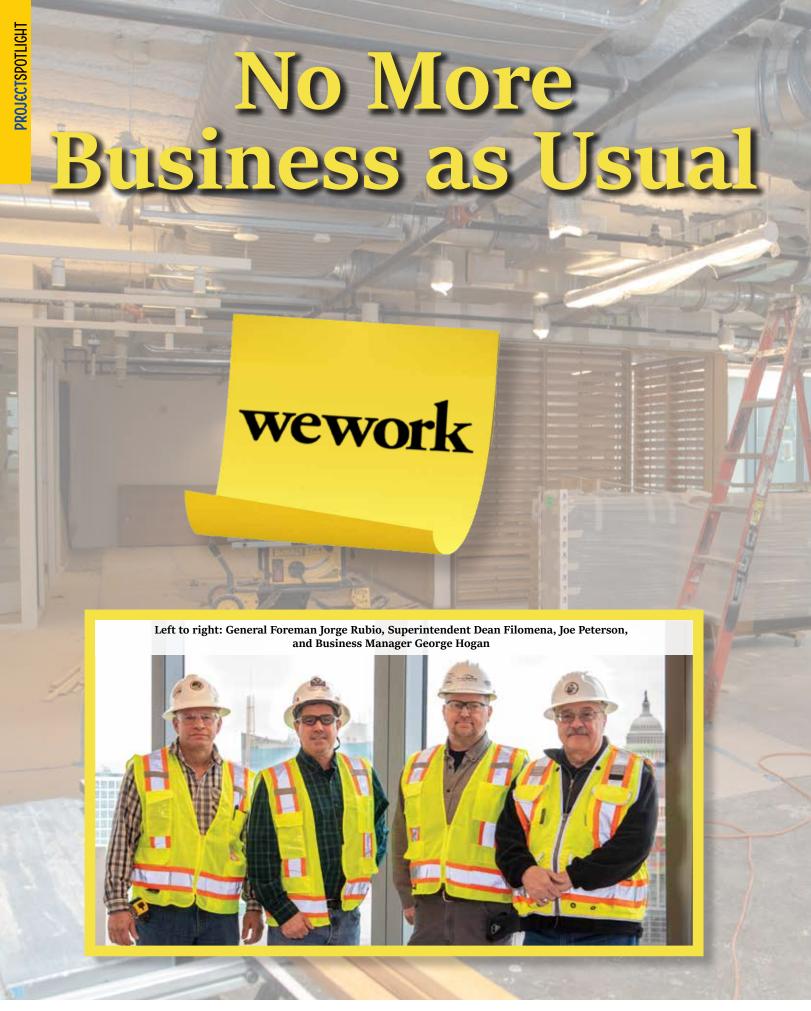
and tall ceilings and well as shared and private work spaces and conference rooms with ultra-high speed internet, WiFi, and Smart TVs. Other amenities include a fitness center, business center, sundeck, clubhouse, soundproof music room, community demonstration kitchen with coffee bar and even a dog wash area, to name a few.

Superintendent John Muir says it was gratifying taking an outdated, outof-use building and making it useful and modern once again. "We achieved everything we wanted to achieve," he noted. "And, the project was good union work."

Mission Lofts has certainly revitalized a once-bland government building but it also redefines the phrase "office space." The new concept that is Mission Lofts is helping create a better work/life balance and that's a truly priceless amenity!









Power Services builds a WeWork space to bring another modern office space to the District.

he workplace as we once knew it has evolved to be more convenient, more accessible, and more global. And, this evolution began way before COVID-19 came ashore. On the front line of this evolution was WeWork, a commercial real estate company that offers flexible—temporary or permanent work spaces typically for business ventures with a small staff such as start-ups or freelancers or smaller regional staffing needs. Since its inception in 2010, WeWork has planted roots, or rather, office space, in over 800 locations around the globe. WeWork currently has nine locations in Washington, DC, and three locations in Northern Virginia. Local 26 members working for Power Services were proud to be a part of the beautiful construction of the most recent WeWork location in the District at 200 Massachusetts Ave. in Northwest, DC.





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Mark Surrena

prises three floors—floors 7 through

system, fire alarm system, and

lighting control system in the

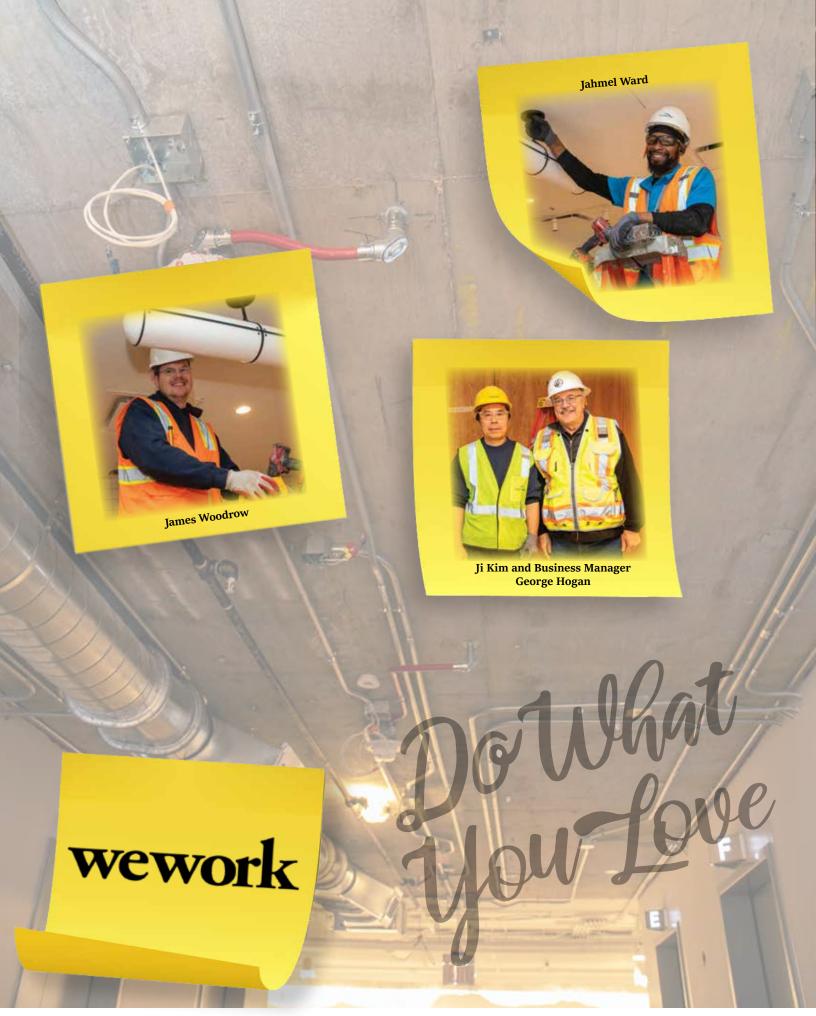
WeWork offices. WeWork com-

ly for work.

In addition to a central location in the

center of DC, this particular WeWork

offers such amenities as bike storage, an





9—that totals over 100,000 square feet in the building on Massachusetts Avenue. Because of its sheer size, the project included the installation of over 7,500 light fixtures, 1,200 Lutron controlled receptacles, and over 500 fire alarm devices.

Certainly most of the work at WeWork was typical electrical and fire alarm installation, but the crew faced a unique challenge that required a tremendous amount of pre-planning. No drilling could take place after 8 a.m. each day in order to keep the building quiet and professional for the current tenants on other floors whom the Local 26 crew was working around. This required six 10-hour shifts every week from June

2019 to August 2019, and six eight-hour days from November 2019 to December 2019. Everything had to be carefully plotted out because of the noise restrictions Power Services was required to work under. If something wasn't accounted for and a task that required drilling wasn't performed before the building's business hours, an entire day of work could have been lost. Superintendent Dean Filomena noted that Power Services has completed other WeWork spaces so they were aware of the challenges of the job. This experience helped the project move along smoothly for the Power Services crew and also helped meet and exceed the expectations of the client—WeWork.

Power Services has since completed

other WeWork office spaces in the area and is proud that such an innovative company has the confidence in them to be repeat customers. Brother Filomena is also proud of the work his crew completed, noting, "All the work put in was installed in a very professional workmanlike manner with attention paid to the customer's needs."

The success of the WeWork concept is proof that work doesn't have to be the old "business as usual." It can be flexible, out-of-the box and inspiring and Local 26 electricians working for Power Services proved that they can be valuable partners in creating a whole new way to work.



Kneeling from left: Jacob Manoogian, Wayne Hill, Ji Kim, James Woodrow, Jalen Dickens, Ronell Shorter, Jahmel Ward, and Ross Hackett. Standing from left: Dan Audet, Mark Surrena, Retired Business Agent Riley Gaines, Business Manager George Hogan, Joseph Cho, Pat Dunn, Superintendent Dean Filomena, Jorge Rubio, Jorge Perez, Joe Peterson, and Business Agent Cordelia McKoy.

# Inspiring the Next Generation of Great Minds





Local 26 and Rosendin Electric complete a state-of-the-art global school for the 21st century and beyond.

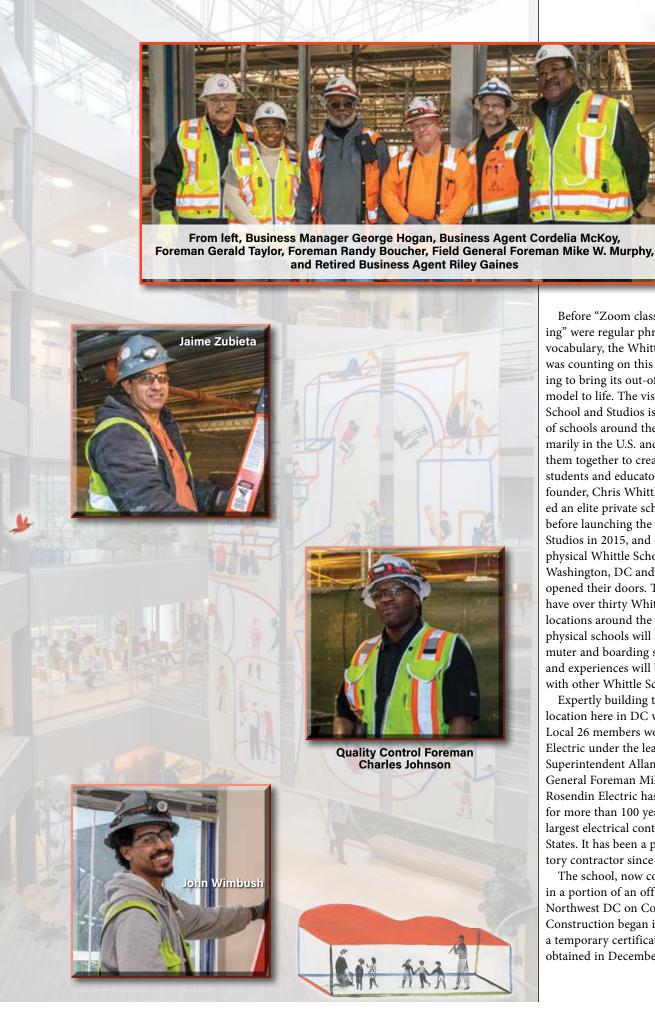


Kneeling, Business Agent Cordelia McKoy and Marvin Diaz. Standing, from left, Foreman Rahmel Meade, Alphonso McDowell, Steve Kubanda, Business Manager George Hogan, and William Villalta.

f there is one thing that the COVID-19 pandemic taught everyone, especially school-aged children and their parents, it's that "school" doesn't need to always take place in a traditional school building as we have long been used to. When the pandemic hit, bedrooms, kitchen tables, and backyard patios became classrooms for school children as they shifted to a virtual, online model of school. As challenging as virtual learning was for most families to adjust to, coincidentally, non-traditional instruction that includes distance learning is exactly the vision for a new school that planted roots here in Washington, DC, pre-pandemic. Timing can be ironic sometimes.







Before "Zoom class" and "virtual learning" were regular phrases in most people's vocabulary, the Whittle School and Studios was counting on this exact style of teaching to bring its out-of-the-box education model to life. The vision of the Whittle School and Studios is to create a network of schools around the world—at first primarily in the U.S. and China—and link them together to create a global campus of students and educators. The school's founder, Chris Whittle, successfully created an elite private school in New York City before launching the Whittle School and Studios in 2015, and in 2019, the first two physical Whittle School locations— Washington, DC and Shenzhen, Chinaopened their doors. The ultimate goal is to have over thirty Whittle School and Studio locations around the world by 2026. The physical schools will serve as both commuter and boarding schools, but classes and experiences will be a collaboration with other Whittle School locations.

Expertly building the Whittle School location here in DC was a talented team of Local 26 members working for Rosendin Electric under the leadership of Project Superintendent Allan Potts and Field General Foreman Mike W. Murphy. Rosendin Electric has been in operation for more than 100 years and is one of the largest electrical contractors in the United States. It has been a proud Local 26 signatory contractor since 2010.

The school, now completed, is housed in a portion of an office building in Northwest DC on Connecticut Avenue. Construction began in the fall of 2018 and a temporary certificate of occupancy was obtained in December of 2020. About 180



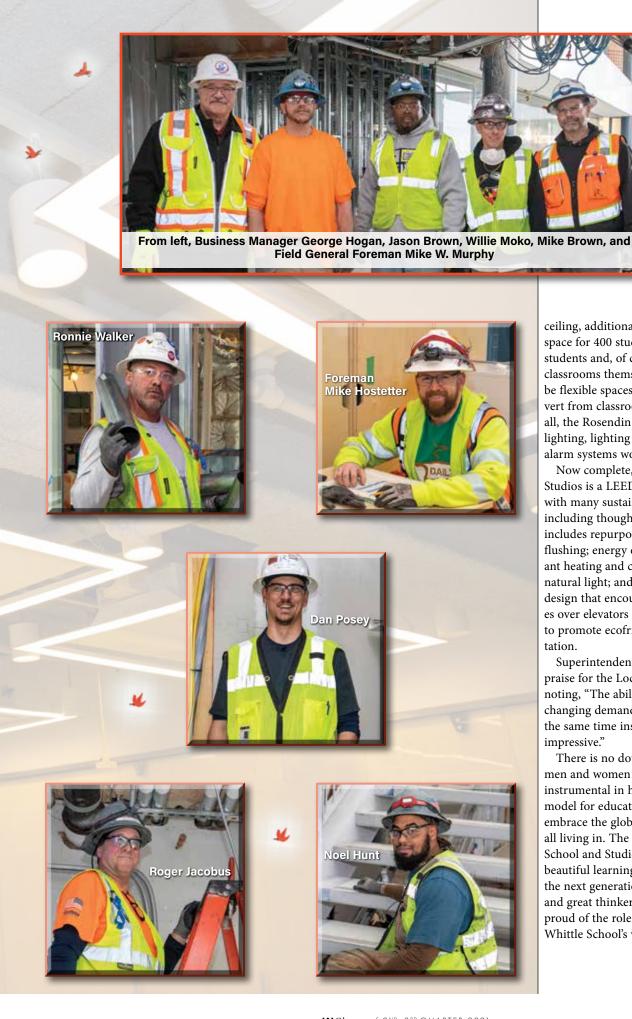


electricians were on site at peak to transform office space into learning and living environments for Whittle School's students. The total cost of the project was about \$185 million with the electrical package totaling about \$36 million. Additional leadership on the job included Field Foremen Brian Benjamin, Celestin Barasebwa, Craig McCoy, Delmetrius Cloyd, Derrick Coleman, Gerald Taylor, Greg Brooks, Jeremy Ramsey, Melvin Cherry, Mike Hostetter, Rahmel Meade, Ronnie Walker, Sean Moita, Stan Hubbard, Stephon Lake, and Tyrone Sutson; Fire Alarm Foreman Matt Wesley; QA/QC Foreman Charles Johnson; and REI Safety Lead Erika Fry.

The construction crew transformed most of a twentieth century office building into a 650,000-square-foot modern, bright and airy learning environment. The goal was to create a "school in a park" and, with the building situated on over 13 acres of wooded land and a beautiful sun-filled center atrium that serves as a community gathering space, a "school in a park" is, indeed, what has been created for the Whittle School and Studios.

The Rosendin crew staged shutdowns to repair, renovate, and revise the electrical systems that were in place for the previous tenant, the government communications company Intelsat, all while ensuring that the building's other tenants remained uninterrupted and fully powered and operational. The renovations were so extensive that four floors of the central eight-story tower of the building were removed and re-supported to create a main performance theater. There is a state-of-the-art gymnasium with a glass vaulted







ceiling, additional theaters, a choral room, space for 400 students to live as boarding students and, of course, classrooms. The classrooms themselves were all designed to be flexible spaces that can seamlessly convert from classroom to lab to other use. In all, the Rosendin crew installed all the lighting, lighting control, power and fire alarm systems working multiple shifts.

Now complete, the Whittle School and Studios is a LEED-certified Silver facility with many sustainability efforts in place, including thoughtful water use that includes repurposing rainwater for toilet flushing; energy efficiency that uses radiant heating and cooling, LED lighting and natural light; and even an architectural design that encourages the use of staircases over elevators and space for bike storage to promote ecofriendly means of transportation.

Superintendent Allan Potts had high praise for the Local 26 electricians on site noting, "The ability to adapt to the everchanging demands of this project and at the same time install a quality product was impressive."

There is no doubt that the work of the men and women of Local 26 has been instrumental in helping to create a new model for education, a new way to embrace the global community that we are all living in. The creation of the Whittle School and Studios into a state-of-the-art, beautiful learning environment will inspire the next generation of leaders, innovators, and great thinkers, and Local 26 can be proud of the role it has had in making the Whittle School's vision a reality.

# Retired Members' Club Looking Forward to a Full Roster of Activities Soon

The COVID-19 pandemic is still with us, but conditions in Maryland are improving enough that the Local has reopened their offices. In conjunction with this, we hope the Retired Members' Club can begin to meet in-person at the Union Hall in September. Watch your email for official notice.

Due to the pandemic, email has become more important than ever to Club members in order to stay informed and connected. We are trying to send emails regularly with information about our members and our Club. If you have an email address that is not on file with the Club or if you have not been receiving our emails, please contact Retired Sister Susan Flashman at flashmanbissell@aol.com so that we can include you in our communications.

Throughout the pandemic, the Club has been having Zoom meetings for those members who are willing to expand their computer knowledge and who enjoy seeing familiar faces. While the Club normally takes a break from regular meetings during June, July, and August, we did continue to hold informal Zoom meetings during the summer just to stay connected. We will return to our official meetings in September, assuming all things are good. Zoom has allowed members who are not in the vicinity to participate and we may try to continue this method until everyone feels safe coming to the Hall. If you would like to have a one-on-one Zoom training session, please contact Recording Secretary Susan Flashman via email at flashmanbissell@aol.com or call 301-277-5823. It is not difficult but it does take some practice and patience. You do not need to have a computer; a smartphone will work as well.

There has been an ongoing meeting of the Retired Members' Club South which is basically our Fishing Club. At least twice each year (spring and fall) Rusty Griffis sets up a fishing trip for the first six respondents out of Chesapeake Beach with Captain Frank Abner, who is also a Local 26 retiree. RMC South generally meets once or twice monthly for lunch at restaurants anywhere from just before the Bay Bridge to Port Tobacco (pictured below in June), and from Hyattsville to Kent Island.

There are plans for an upcoming train trip to the Canadian Rockies. Please contact Rick Warner at 240-472-0438, for the details and to find out if there are any spaces available, or if you have any questions regarding the Club's trips. Also, we are still uncertain about the October crab feast, but should have more information this month.

We hope everyone continues to stay healthy and vigilant about COVID-19 safety. We cannot wait to get back, in full swing, to all of the activities that our members have long enjoyed. As things continue to evolve and open up, we will continue to update our membership, via email, about the Club's events.



RMC South members met at Port Tabacco Marina and Restaurant in June.



Pictured above, from left, are Retired Members' Club Recording Secretary Susan Flashman, Brenda and Retired Brother Tom Heil, 40 years.



# Retired Brother Ralph Lilley's Retirement is About Service to His Community

ome people think of retirement as an opportunity to just relax. Six Saturdays and a Sunday. But others see retirement as a second chapter, a chance to continue to pursue a passion or even share their professional talents in a different capacity. That's Retired Brother Ralph Lilley.

Like many working members, before Ralph hung up his tools, he dreamed of a retirement that took him on the golf course every day, that allowed him to perfect his swing and enjoy some time on the links. Golf was a big part of Brother Lilley's retirement for two years and then he just didn't find it satisfying or fun anymore. So when two electricians living in his community in North Carolina told Brother Lilley that a local church was looking for volunteers for a Habitat for Humanity project, Ralph was eager to volunteer. After all, with 40 years of electrical experience, wiring residential homes was not just something that Brother Lilley could do easily; it was a perfect way to give back to his community and participate in meaningful work in retirement. That first volunteer job was 18 years ago and since then Ralph has wired 54 of the 67 homes the Brunswick County Habitat for Humanity has constructed since 2003. The Brunswick County Habitat for Humanity believes that Brother Lilley may be their longest serving volunteer.

Brother Lilley joined Local 26 in 1958 after spending three years in the Marines. He retired in 1998 and he and his wife Nancy moved from Reisterstown, MD to North Carolina. The Lilleys have three children—JATC instructor Ralph "Rusty" and C&L Contractors Foreman Mike, who both

followed in their father's footsteps and are proud members of Local 26; and daughter Janet who lives in Charlotte.

Ralph is very clear on his least favorite electrical job—hanging fans. He says he doesn't enjoy working over his head but what he *does* enjoy is roughing in an electrical job before the drywall goes in. There is



Brother Lilley received his 50-year pin in May this year. Pictured above, from left: Mike, Ralph, and Rusty Lilley. Pictured below: Brother Lilley and Business Manager George Hogan



no doubt that with 54 homes under his belt, Ralph has been able to do quite a bit of roughing-in. Habitat for Humanity is now able to hire paid electricians for their projects but that doesn't mean that Brother Lilley is heading back out to the golf course.



No, he is still volunteering with the organization but in other capacities.

And, he still has his other pastimes to pursue. He has taken up gardening and landscaping and recently added a bird bath, lighthouse and 25-foot flag pole, which he wired for lighting, to his property. He also built a walkway and stairs to the stream that runs behind his house using salvaged bricks. Even at 85 years old, Brother Lilley knows that he "can't sit around and do nothing."

Habitat for Humanity and Brother Lilley have certainly been a perfect match all these years. Habitat for Humanity Director Tamara Morales stands in awe of Brother Lilley's service to the organization noting, "He does it expecting nothing in return. This quiet service to others is uncommon today." Brother Lilley, however, does believe he gets something in return—a good feeling knowing he has helped others. "The families really appreciate it and it makes me feel good about it," he says.

## Scholarship Award Winners

ongratulations to our 2021 IBEW Local 26 Scholarship winners. These young adults are role model students and dedicated members of their communities. They represent the very best of their generation and are a source of pride for our entire Local 26 membership. We wish these students the best of luck in their academic and professional pursuits and we can't wait to see what the future holds for them.



Jonathan C. Armel, the son of Brother John Armel

onathan Cole Armel, is a 2021 graduate of Sherando High School in Stephens City, VA. He is the son of Brother John Armel, a 25-year member. Jonathan will be attending James Madison University in the fall of 2021 and plans to study biology in his pursuit of becoming a pediatrician.

Jonathan graduated high school as an honor roll student (all four years) and a member of National Honor Society and he completed four advanced placement courses. He was captain of the Sherando High School varsity basketball team and the Sherando High School varsity baseball team. He was an assistant coach and mentor for the Sherando JV basketball league and a volunteer coach at the Sherando youth basketball camp. Outside of school, Jonathan volunteered at the Blue Ridge Hospice Thrift Store and for the Timbrook food and toy drive organized by the Winchester, VA, police department.

Jonathan's high school counselor has high praise for him, noting, "On a daily basis, he sets an example to underclassmen on honesty, integrity, and dependability."

Jonathan is extremely thankful for the Local 26 scholarship and said, "Thank you for giving me this opportunity to further my education. As I continue my education at James Madison University, I will be very grateful and appreciative of this scholarship. This scholarship has instilled confidence and trust in me as I progress though life."



Jada C. Herring, the daughter of Brother Jimmy Herring

ada Catherine Herring is the daughter of 15-year member Jimmy Herring and a 2021 graduate of North Point High School in Waldorf, MD. She will be attending Mercer University in the fall and plans to major in psychology and minor in Spanish. She will be on a pre-med track to become a trauma surgeon.

Jada was a Principals Honor Roll student, vice president of the National Technical Honors Society, a member of the marching band and drumline, and a participant in North Point's theater program. She served on her school's student government association (SGA); as vice president, secretary and treasurer of Student to Student; and was a state contender for medical math in the Skills USA competition. She was also a Skills USA historian and student liaison.

Outside of school, she has spent a considerable amount of time volunteering for her church as a vacation Bible school counselor, working in the soup kitchen, and assembling holiday food baskets. Jada is so focused on her goal to pursue a medical profession that she has already earned her EMT certification, as well as a number of other certifications from the Red Cross and the American Heart Association.

"Thank you to IBEW Local 26. My work ethic and determination are things my dad instilled in me that he learned through Local 26," noted Jada. "Having Local 26 help me achieve my dreams is something I'm grateful for."



Chloe E. McMurray, the daughter of Brother Scott McMurray

Thloe Elizabeth McMurray is the daughter of 20-year member Scott McMurray and a 2021 graduate of Huntingtown High School in Huntingtown, MD. She will be attending Charleston Southern University to pursue a career in nursing.

In high school, Chloe was a member of National Honor Society and a high honors student. She was active on the Huntingtown Student Council, serving as senior class president, and an active member of the Fellowship of Christian Athletes, serving as vice president in 11th grade and president in 12th grade. She was also recognized for an award for excellence in AP world history.

Outside of school, Chloe has been very active in her church as a children's ministry small group leader. She has also dedicated a considerable amount of time to ending hunger and food insecurity through her work with Chesapeake Cares Food Panty, the Calvert County Warehouse, the Solomons Dragon Boat Festival, and Project Echo. She also participated in unified soccer and the Special Olympics basketball championship.

"I am so grateful to have been awarded the Local 26 scholarship," notes Chloe. "College is no easy expense, so to be able to have help in paying for my education is a blessing. This scholarship eliminates some of the financial burden and gets me one step closer to attaining my bachelor's of science in nursing!"



Kori M. Sheckells, the daughter of Brother Brian Sheckells

graduate of Maurice J.
McDonough High School in Pomfret,
MD. She is the daughter of 25-year member Brian Sheckells. Kori will be attending Shenandoah University in the fall to study nursing.

Kori was a member of National Honor Society where she served as parliamentarian, Student Government Association secretary and treasurer, captain of the varsity soccer team and a member of her high school's lacrosse team. She also played travel soccer.

In addition to excelling in school, Kori has also been an active volunteer for a number of organizations, including the Alzheimer's Association on their Alzheimer's Walk, the American Legion, the Tim Tebow Foundation on its Night to Shine event, La Plata Youth Soccer Association serving as a youth coach, and the McDonough Athletic Department working in the concessions stand and selling mulch. She has also held a parttime job at a local restaurant.

Kori thanks her parents for always being there for her and thanks the members of Local 26 for awarding her this scholarship. "This scholarship will help me pursue my dream of becoming a nurse and helping those in need," she says.

# Congratulations to the following members who have retired:

#### January 2021

Dominic A. Paluti Bernard G. Durkin Eric W. Daum Anthony F. Donahue Michael J. Stone John R. Kurty

## Henry M. Emory **February 2021**

Pero Gunjevic
Garland F. Perkins
Bernard F. Gregory
Robert L. Terrett, Jr.
Edward V. Turner
Bruce E. Uhthoff
Richard L. Willey, Jr.
Ernesto P. Bugayong
Juanita Jones

#### March 2021

Wilfred H. Bellerose, Jr. Dale H. Knott Benfacio F. Ciampo Darryl E. Greene William P. Autrey

#### **April 2021**

Kenneth P. Garber
Lathan E. Kornegay
Howard C. Green
James C. Lundeen
Robert M. Noonan
Thomas W. Taylor
Bill D. Collette
Michael E. Hryckiewicz
John P. Payne
Coskun Yildirim

#### May 2021 Mark A. Dean

Robert F. Middleton
Michael P. Breece
Alan G. Cannon
Michael T. Santini
Robert E. Venis
Steven A. Orchowski
Rodney Plesko
Jeffrey E. Lehmann
Richard A. White, Jr.
Christopher A. Johnson
David E. Ridley

#### June 2021

Edgar L. Ovando Russell P. Swann Thomas E. Jeans Lyle R. Washburn Charles E. Hall Charles D. O'Donnell David E. Curtin Peyton E. Duncan, Jr. Thomas V. Grisez James A. Lusby, Sr. James Lynch, Jr. James W. Schwalenberg Paul D. Lumsden Gary L. Cooke Ronald P. Kesecker Charles S. Flagg, III **July 2021** 

Daniel J. Noel James M. Blum Thomas C. Ruble Walter L. Hughes Robert W. Agnew, Jr.

<sup>\*</sup>Robert R. Craig (late notice, June 2020)

# Congratulations to the Class of 2020 and the Class of 2021

The COVID-19 pandemic forced countless things to be put on hold or cancelled altogether. However, just because celebrations couldn't be held, doesn't mean that milestones didn't happen over the past 18 months. Among those milestones was the completion of the apprenticeship program for Local 26 apprentices of the class of 2020 and class of 2021.

With COVID-19 still very much a concern, the JATC opted to forego the traditional graduation event once again this year in order to protect everyone's safety.

The class of 2020 was 178 graduates strong. Valedictorians were Azamat Assatov of the inside wireman graduates, Christopher Hubbard, Jr. of the telecommunications graduates, and Lhoussaine Amar Mancour led the R-A upgrade graduates. Closely following were the salutatorians: Michael Haugan from the inside wireman program, Sean Mellon from the telecommunications program, and John

Watterson from the R-A upgrade program.

Five students of the class of 2020 achieved a grade point average of 95% or above in their programs. They were Azamat Assatov, Christopher Hubbard, Jr., Michael Scullin, Michael Haugan, and Aleh Korsakau. Forty-seven 2020 graduates achieved a grade point average of 90% or above. Despite the challenging circumstances brought on by COVID-19 which forced our Local 26 apprentices to transition to online learning, many students had perfect attendance throughout their entire apprenticeship and still others completed their apprenticeship with only one absence.

The class of 2021 was equally impressive in their own right, with over 200 graduates. The three valedictorians were Evgheni Lazarev (inside wireman), Elnaz Harrafamoughin (telecommunications) and Dennis Safrit, Jr. (R-A upgrade). Ryan Pearman (inside wireman), Daniel Novak

(telecommunications), and Michael Dwyer, Jr. (R-A upgrade) were all salutatorians. Five sudents-Evgheni Lazarev, Ryan Pearman, Katelyn McKinley, Dennis Safrit, Jr., and Michael Dwyer, Jr.achieved a grade point average of 95% or higher and another 16 graduates achieved a grade point average of 90% or higher. Once again, COVID-19 forced our apprentices to participate in online learning the entire year which required a significant amount of focus and drive on the part of our students. Dozens of students rose to this challenge and completed their apprenticeship with perfect attendance or just one absence.

On behalf of the entire Local 26 membership; the officers and staff of Local 26; and the officers, staff, and instructors of the JATC, a big congratulations goes out to all of the graduates of the class of 2020 and the class of 2021. May all of you enjoy many, many rewarding years in the electrical trade as proud members of the IBEW!

# Congratulations to the Local 26 Clubs Recognized by the International



The Local 26 Women's Committee

This committee is hereby recognized and established to encourage members to take on activist and leadership roles within the IBEW and their communities; and foster a greater understanding of the social, economic, and health issues that affect working women. The Women's Committee strives to provide education, networking opportunities, and a support system that empowers IBEW sisters to be committed and strong union members and to run for elected public office and to support candidates who uplift women.



Reach out and Engage Next-gen Electrical Workers (RENEW)

This committee is hereby recognized and established for the purpose of inspiring the next generation of IBEW members to become active in their local unions by attending to issues that are important to younger workers. The Reach out and Engage Next-gen Electrical Workers (RENEW) committee can provide the means for educational and social activities, strengthen the connections between young IBEW members, encourage them to be more fully informed about economic and political issues that affect them, and foster their relationships with established union members and local union leadership.

# IBEW 26 Federal Credit Union

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4371 Parliament Place Lanham, MD 20701



7016 Infantry Ridge Road Manassas, VA 20109



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IBEW Local Union 26, contractors, and employees of contractors who have signed agreements are eligible to join. Family members are also eligible to join including spouses, children, parents, brothers, sisters, grandchildren, and grandparents.

Contact us at 301-306-0610 or visit our website at www.ibew26fcu.com.





For Local 26's clubs the one thing they missed the most during this past year and a half of the COVID-19 pandemic was their ability to serve their community. Volunteerism and community service are pillars on which the Electrical Workers Minority Caucus (EWMC), the Local 26 Women's Committee, RENEW, the Retirees' Club, and the Local 26 Motorcycle Club stand and the pandemic took those opportunities away as the virus simply made it too dangerous for all.

Over the past year and a half, we have learned so much about the virus, including how to safely get back to some form of normal. If this new "normal," with PPE and social distancing, is what it would take to get our Local 26 volunteers back out in the community, this amazing group of members was ready to roll up their sleeves, don their masks, and load up on hand sanitizer. And, this is exactly what they did on March 21st at the Capital Area Food Bank.

From 9 a.m.-12 p.m. about 25 members representing the clubs of Local 26 arrived at the Capital Area Food Bank in Northeast DC ready to work on behalf of the EWMC. Together they filled 1260 boxes of food to be distributed to area families in need. Those boxes filled 27 pallets!

The group also collected 100 masks and hand sanitizer for adults and children at the Foster and Adoptive Parent Advocacy Center (FAPAC). Local 26 matched that





mask donation, donated 12 gallons of hand sanitizer, and delivered both to FAPAC.

In June, the EWMC, the Retirees' Club, and the Local 26 Women's Committee joined forces with the DC Housing Authority to repair outside lighting at the Greenleaf Garden public housing community in Southwest DC. The lighting was in such disrepair that it actually posed a public safety concern. If an emergency were to happen in the community, first responders would not be able to find an accurate location since the community had little to no outside lighting that worked. The members of these Local 26 clubs did trou-

ble shooting on the existing lights and repaired and replaced lighting as needed throughout the entire community.

Also in the beginning of June, a number of EWMC members canvassed throughout Virginia in support of our political allies running in Virginia's primaries. This was a great show of solidarity with labor-friendly candidates.

Looking ahead, the EWMC will once again be returning to the Capital Food Bank this fall and will be holding an open house at Potomac Gardens public housing community in Southeast DC to put a face to Local 26 and let the community know what our Union is all about. The EWMC

is also in the planning stages of a Night of Solidarity to be held at the Laurel Racetrack, and intends to build on its longstanding relationship with United Communities Against Poverty (UCAP) to participate in the EWMC's national day of service at the end of the year.

For these Local 26 members and clubs, the opportunity to volunteer has been the best sign they could have hoped for that better days are indeed ahead. Service is the lifeblood of our Local 26 clubs and they look forward to many, many more opportunities ahead to give back to the communities in which they live and work.



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## We Mourn the Loss of a Labor Legend

t is with great sadness that we recognize the passing of AFL-CIO President Richard Trumka, a fierce advocate for all trade unionists and a dear friend to all working men and women. Brother Trumka passed on August 5, 2021 at the age of 72.

Brother Trumka followed in his father's footsteps and worked in the coal mines of Pennsylvania before earning his bachelor's of science degree from Penn State University and then his law degree from Villanova University School of Law. He worked as a staff attorney for the United Mine Workers of America (UMWA) from 1974-1979, was elected to the UMWA's Board of Directors in 1981, and became UMWA president in 1982. At age 33, he was the youngest person to be elected president. He served as UMWA president for 13 years. He led the UMWA in several successful strikes and established a strong relationship with miners in South Africa who were fighting apartheid, even organizing a boycott against Shell in

response to their continued business in South Africa. For this he won a human rights award in 1990.

In 1995, Trumka was elected AFL-CIO secretary treasurer and held the position until 2009 when he was elected AFL-CIO president. As secretary-treasurer he created investment programs for the pension and benefit funds of labor movements and was a tireless fighter for increased corporate accountability. As AFL-CIO president, Brother Trumka continued his activism on an even greater stage, standing against former President Donald Trump and quitting the president's manufacturing council on which Trumka sat when Trump refused to denounce the racism, bigotry, and domestic terrorism that occurred at the Unite the Right rally in Charlottesville, VA.

In 2018, Trumka became the first-ever recipient of the World Peace Prize for Labor Leadership for his lifelong dedication to labor and labor rights, equality and the



rights of all working people.

It was a true honor for the officers and staff of Local 26 to work under and work alongside Brother Trumka. His leadership and dedication will be missed by all who were fortunate to know him and all who benefitted from his tireless efforts.

We send our deepest condolences to Brother Trumka's family and friends.

### **LOCAL 26 MEMORIAM**

#### Members

Retired Brother William T. Powell Retired Brother John J. Jacob Sister Renee A. White Retired Brother Paul D. Wilson Retired Brother Philip E. Brannan **Brother Jefrrey S. Pawlak** Brother Florian J. Bonkowski Retired Brother Granville X. Walker **Retired Brother James R. McGee** Brother William P. Linton, II **Retired Brother James F. Rainey Retired Brother Gordon W. Miles Brother Robert M. Romero Retired Brother Steven S. Lay** Retired Brother David M. White **Brother Jose "Joe" Fuentes Retired Brother Charles F. Stroop Retired Brother Clarence L. Lewis** 

#### Members

Retired Brother Donald "Bub" E. Martin, Jr.

Retired Brother James E. Haiber

Brother Jerome J. Ray

Brother Michael J. Ryan

Retired Brother James C. Welch

Retired Brother Stephen J. DiCarlo

Brother Darryl T. Dubiel

Brother Christopher P. Hott

Brother John R. Smith

Retired Brother Raymond L. Ellison

Retired Brother Lawrence D. Scott

Brother Ronald B. Cook

Retired Brother Neal J. Gregory

### **Family Members**

Brother James A. Markley's mother, Nancy Markley

Brother Kevin D. Sharp's mother, Floydine Sharp

#### **Family Members**

Sister Kim Bibb's (OPEIU #2) father, Howard Harley Bibeau (also grandfather of Brother Jake Wiseman)

Brother Juan C. Sotelo's mother, Elodia Gutierrez Alvarez

Brother William M. Stallings, Sr's son, William M. Stallings, Jr. (also brother of Brother Jacob S. Stallings)

Brothers Tommy and Johnny G. Garrett's mother, Mary Garrett

Sister Cynthia Baker's father, Frederick N. Baker, Jr.

Brother Gregory A. Little's wife, Patricia A. Little

Brother Richard J. Stenberg's brother, Joey D. Stenberg

Retired Brother Donald W. Judd's mother, Hazel M. Judd

> Brother James B. Russell's wife, Angela M. Russell

#### **IBEW Local Union 26**

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