

# Triple Nickel

**AMENDABLE CONTRACT!  
COMING SOON**

- ☒ FREE FOR MEMBERS
- ☒ SHAPE YOUR FUTURE
- ☒ ENDLESS POSSIBILITIES



**WE WANT YOUR IDEAS**

COST OF LIVING PAY

IMPROVED OIL RULES

INCREASED DIFFERENTIALS

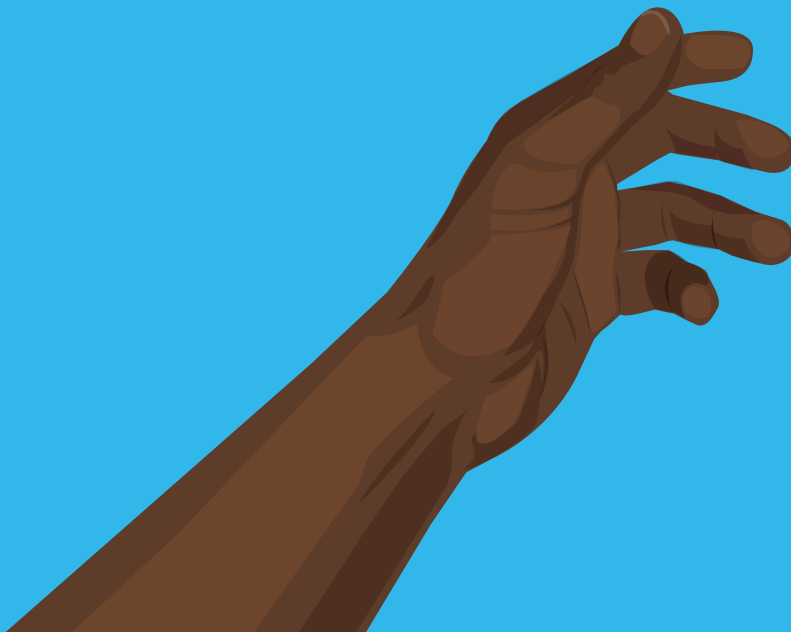
SICK TIME FOR FAMILY

LONGEVITY PAY

REDUCED MEDICAL

COVERED WORK PROTECTIONS

LEAD PAY



## Cover: Negotiations Ideas. Act Now!

It is time for everyone to begin thinking of how they would like to see the contract amended. This feedback from the membership will shape how the Local operates when negotiations begin.

LEB

Charles Cerf (HRL)

Jerry McCrummen (DAL)

Albert Barbosa (SEA)

Juan Cordova (MDW)

Jessica Hayes (MDW)

Marwyn Hughes (BWI)

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## TRANSPORT WORKERS UNION LOCAL 555

REPRESENTING THE RAMP, OPERATIONS, PROVISIONING, AND FREIGHT AGENTS OF SOUTHWEST AIRLINES  
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# PREPARING THE BARGAINING TABLE

by President *Charles Cerf*

IT'S HARD TO BELIEVE THAT OUR CONTRACT which was ratified on February 12<sup>th</sup>, 2016 is amendable February 18<sup>th</sup>, 2021. This amendable date is right around the corner and essential planning for negotiations will take place in 2020. It's important that we enter into negotiations well prepared and united. I would like to share with you some of the groundwork that will take place next year.

The first step is to assemble our team for negotiations. Notices will be sent out for members to apply to be part of the Negotiations Committee and the interview process will begin in May.

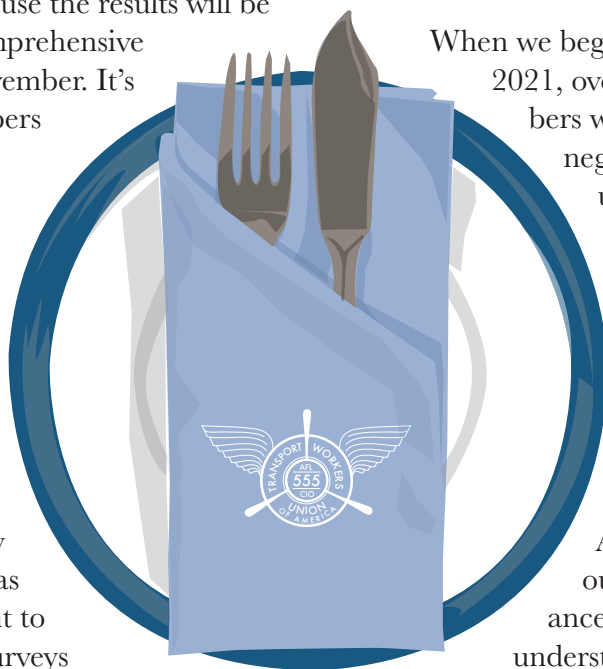
Once our team is in place, a preliminary survey will be sent to each member in October. The preliminary survey is important because the results will be used to formulate a more comprehensive survey you will receive in November. It's imperative that all 555 Members participate in the surveys and stay involved in all stages of negotiations. Proposals and priorities for negotiations are developed directly from your input. You will be asked to prioritize items so that the Negotiations Committee has a clear understanding of what's important to the membership. It's not too early to start jotting down your ideas and concerns, and if you want to offer suggestions before the surveys come out, you can do so through our website ([www.twu555.org](http://www.twu555.org)), but it will still be important to participate in the surveys.

Also, starting in the fall of next year, the Education Committee (along with the Local Executive Board as their schedules permit) will hold meetings in each station to educate our members on the negotiations

process outlined by the Railway Labor Act. The Education Committee will visit your station to discuss how the law determines when and how negotiations proceed.

Our Union will also be encouraging all members to sign up to receive negotiations updates via blast emails and/or text messaging as negotiations proceed.

This has proven to be an effective way for us to provide up-to-date reports on the progress of contract negotiations.



When we begin negotiations in February of 2021, over a third of our 15,000 members will be experiencing contract negotiations for the first time, and understandably, will have many questions about the process. I know I can count on more senior members to encourage our newer members and stress the importance of being educated, engaged members.

Our Collective Bargaining Agreement (contract) determines our pay, benefits, work rules, grievance rights, and future, so you can understand why advanced planning is critical. Each 555 Brother and Sister is important to a successful negotiations process. As your TWU Local 555 President, I ask for your assistance and support in getting the contract we all deserve.

# EMBRACING TECHNOLOGY

by 1st Vice President **Jerry McCrummen**

I HOPE THIS NEWSLETTER ARTICLE FINDS YOU in good health. As we prepare to enter the new year, I would like to encourage everyone to look back on this past year and give thanks for the many blessings that we have had bestowed on us. There have been some rough spots, but we came out on the other side stronger for the experience. Many have lost loved ones during the past year and for that loss I am truly sorry. You and your loved ones are in my thoughts and prayers. During the past year there have been many births and new beginnings within our families. I hope that everyone gets time away from

***“This Local Executive Board has taken a step to further enhance the representation of our members by taking the progressive step of hiring an “in house” legal counsel.”***

work in order to spend time with family, friends, and loved ones. You work to live and are not supposed live to work!

The Local has settled into the new building and it is a nice fit. The office move was necessary and long overdue. The current facility has enabled us to represent, protect, and advance the welfare of the membership. We have been able to hold multiple training classes for the new Representatives and many committees. We have had Arbitration Training for the new members of the Board and some Alternate District Representatives. We have hosted three MED-ARB sessions at our Local's Headquarters resulting in a substantial savings for this Union. We will also host the TWU International Veterans Committee Meeting late next year.

There have also been some growing pains in the new facility. We have put into place technology advances that will enable us to be effective well into the next century. We now have an IT provider that professionally services our network and resolves any IT issues for this Local.



The new Company is called Kalleo Technologies. This valued partner was long overdue. This has not been a seamless transition. We converted all the emails and are now using Office 365 as the office system. This is a cloud based back up and storage system. During the email migration and switch over it resulted in the temporary loss of much of the historical data and emails. With the help of Carolyn and Michelle we are recovering or restoring a lot of the lost files. I would like to thank Curtis Clevenger and Bryan Gaulle for their assistance, guidance and patience for the past decade

in keeping us functional despite the limitations (both equipment and knowledge) on the technology side. We would not have been able to function and be effective without them. In 1997, when I was a District Representative, I started a Microsoft Word based grievance tracking system that would enable me to track and research grievances within my District to better enable me to effectively represent and argue for the members within my District. It was limited, crude, and primitive. Michelle, shortly after her hiring started to “fiddle” with my concept. She developed a Grievance Tracking System that “super morphed” into the system that we utilized for the last two decades. It was Microsoft Access based and had the capabilities of archiving and retrieving scanned documents that could be used as exhibits at hearings. For the past two decades this Local had a distinct advantage at Arbitrations and System Boards due to the Grievance Tracking System that was developed within this Local. Sadly, that advantage is no longer as great because every time we introduced a “comp” or a grievance at a board or arbitration, the Company was entering it into and building their data base. The Grievance Tracking System has served its time and was starting to crash and lose cases due to the size and sheer numbers that are stored within it. We have partnered with Zorbis to

develop a new Grievance Tracking System that will enable each member to write their own grievance online and to submit it for approval of the Station Representative. Members, through a portal, will be able to view the status of their grievance and will be notified of a change in status when there is action taken involving their grievance. The station rep will be able to view all of the historical grievances within their station. The District Representatives, Grievance Specialists, and Officers will be able to view and procure the documents associated with all grievances within the Grievance Tracking System. This transparency should put more eyes on the grievances and lead to more effective representation. We are preparing to roll out the process in a couple of test stations, to be determined, prior to implementing it system wide.

The LEB has taken a step to further enhance the representation of our members by hiring “in-house” legal counsel. Ms. Ann Evans Wall will start on December 2<sup>nd</sup>. She will be down the hall and available for the guidance of our District Representatives. Her job will entail the following; assisting in the preparation and presentation of arbitration cases, the writing of post-hearing briefs, representing this Local in EEOC complaints, and help craft contractual language in future negotiations. I look forward to working with her in the defense of the best and hardest working members in the industry. Ms. Wall has been hired to complement and not replace Ed Cloutman, our attorney on retainer for twenty-five plus years. Many thanks to Ed for his devoted service of this membership. President Theodore Roosevelt stated, ***“No man can be a good citizen unless he has a wage more than sufficient to cover the bare cost of living and hours of labor short enough that after a day’s work is done he will have time and energy to bear his share in the management of the community, to help in the carrying of the general load.”*** We are part of the community, be active participants in life and enjoy the fruits of your labor. Be safe and Happy Holidays!

Fraternally,  
**Jerry McCrummen • DAL**  
**1<sup>st</sup> Vice President**

## THE MORE YOU KNOW

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by 2nd Vice President **Albert Barbosa**

**W**E’RE NEARLY AT THE CLOSE OF another year. As always, I hope that this article finds you in good health, that the busy Thanksgiving week didn’t tarnish the potential the rest of the holiday season can provide, and you are all looking forward with promise to the year ahead. If not, we can gather around the Festivus Pole very soon airing out our grievances before performing our feats of strength (Seinfeld fans will get the reference). But seriously, in the end, things are what we make of them. The world can be a negative place. Be as positive as you can to effect change.

Ok. So now on to the article you’re here to read. For starters, I wanted to take a moment to touch on the Mediation-Arbitration process that is outlined in Article Twenty of the contract and what its impact meant to the Local this year. As a high level overview, each of the eight District Representatives submit the cases they are attempting to include in each session from their current grievance caseload. We hold six sessions a year and can schedule up to thirty per session. Those thirty are whittled down from an initial submission of fifty grievances (the thirty slotted in the session dates and twenty backups) as grievances are settled, awarded or withdrawn. Each session is held for three consecutive days, Tuesday through Thursday. In general however, the list is initially actually greater than the fifty that I referenced above. As the person tasked to communicate with the Company regarding the sessions, as well as compiling the lists, I ask for and have received a minimum of six grievances per district for inclusion, but regularly receive much more than that from the majority of the District Representatives that are dealing with the cases. Based on the level of discipline, caseload of a district, recurrence of issue and several other factors, I take those rough submissions and populate the list and backups down to the fifty that is sent to the Company for the session. Just to give you all a number to understand things, for the year 2019, the average



total district submissions have been anywhere from a low of sixty to a high of eighty plus. Now what that meant for this year and the sessions that were held; a minimum of one hundred and eighty cases were slotted into the official session. Of those hundred and eighty grievances, an average of five went through to be presented before an Arbitrator/Mediator. As previously stated, the others were either awarded, settled or withdrawn. In many cases, several of the cases that were on the backup list, but did not make the final list, were also resolved in some form or fashion. So, strictly speaking, the process has the opportunity to resolve as many as three hundred plus grievances just through the mediation/arbitration sessions and process. Should the grievances presented result in decisions, those decisions become precedent setting and by extension should impact the handling of further grievances.

I had thought and hoped to present the win/loss numbers for reference but I chose not to as it doesn't accurately reflect the process. Since an

***“Each time a grievance is taken to its full extent, its decision will have bearing on similar matters and could expand on or even detract from the interpreted language of the contract.”***

overwhelming number of the grievances get settled and the average of actually presented cases hovers around five per session, the math wouldn't add up and could give an impression that only fifty-ish grievances for the entire year were resolved through the process. So I alternatively chose to explain a bit more about what it is and what the sessions garner for the Local.

Over the next few weeks and months, more and more arbitration and mediation/arbitration decisions will be posted to our website for Station Representatives and the Members to review. I know that much of the above information is dry and not as interesting as perhaps some of the

other articles within this newsletter but it, none the less, needs to be shared, emphasized and understood. Each time a grievance is taken to its full extent, its decision will have bearing on similar matters and could expand on or even detract from the interpreted language of the contract. Please take a moment to familiarize yourselves with them as they do impact the enforcement of the contract in various aspects. Also, return regularly to catch up on the subsequent decisions, as we get, redact and post them throughout the year.



On another note, I'd like to once again thank the Election Committee for aiding in a station election. The election was out of District 2 and I would like to commend the membership in MCO for exercising their voices and votes for their Ramp Representative.

While not every election requires the committee to administer it, the response from the station regarding what the committee did there was refreshing and well received. Just keep in mind that if an election in your city needs to be held and a committee member goes there to administer it, they are not there to address grievance or station issues outside of the election. They are there to ensure that your voting rights are upheld and the process is done as established. Previously, the Committee was called out for local elections in BDL and PVD earlier this year and although they didn't ultimately need to hold them both, the feedback from the stations was along the same lines as MCO, so thank you to all, for your hard work. It has been an effort to put these together as the guidelines of the past and our newer by-laws are either in conflict or silent on the station elections and reflect the process as it pertains to officer positions. In the coming year, the Election Committee will meet to review the processes that they are able to review & impact and adjust guidelines accordingly to better serve the members. Like I mentioned previously, the Committee has not been needed for every election, but in every one, regardless of the method used, I would like to thank you for allowing your voices to be heard by casting a vote.

# WINTER SAFETY

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by Recording Secretary **Juan Cordova**

**B**ROTHERS AND SISTERS, WINTER IS UPON US and I want to remind you that safety is number one here at SWA. The elements, especially in cold weather cities, can overtake you very quickly. Brothers and sisters, know your body's limitations in severe and inclement weather. I recently received a call from a member in Chicago telling me that they had her working outside for three flights straight in 20° weather. I told her to get on her radio and contact her supervisor, manager on duty and union and safety rep on duty. Her safety and health was at risk and that is unacceptable. You have every right to work in a safe environment, but it is up to you to communicate with management and your reps to let them know what is going on while outside working flights back to back to back and in those types of elements. Union members, look out for one another out there while you work. Speak up and protect yourselves and each other. Remember to layer up, dress warmly, be smart and always work safely. We want all of our members going home safely at the end of their shifts. On another note; over the last 3 months we have had over 600 new hires in our new hire classes in DAL. We inform them of basic contract knowledge, but most importantly who to talk to and what to do when situations arise. Brothers and sisters, I encourage all of you to help every new hire succeed during their probationary period. Because when they do, it will make our Local even stronger. Work together and work smart. Two working together is always better than one, but 14,000 plus working together is unstoppable.



The strength of a union is in the participation of its membership. And no two typify the spectrum more, than the member who exercises their vote and those that seek that vote, to serve for the greater good. Which starts with that first step of becoming informed and then acting on it. By voting, putting in for a committee position when they become available or even just doing something as simple as opening the contract and reading a few sections or articles, you are strengthening yourself and your Local. Now what each of you do with that strength, that knowledge, is ultimately up to each of you. I'd like to believe that you all will then share that strength with your fellow union members, stand up and ensure our collective rights are upheld and become one of thousands who set aside differences to achieve collective goals and accomplishments. I'd like to believe that we'll all see the fruits of that labor, that exercising of strength, through getting consistent and reasonable treatment system-wide, adherence to the current contract and in looking ahead, a future one that meets or exceeds the mark that is called for. Sure, I'd like to believe all that, but I don't have to. You, you reading this article and the others in this newsletter, and those brothers and sisters like you throughout the system flexed that strength by simply opening the pages, because knowing may be half the battle but you have to want to know first. Thank you for wanting to know and reading a bit about what your Local is up to and hopefully sharing anything you may find of interest with another member at your station.

In closing, be safe. Take care of yourselves and each other. Inform yourselves as best you can using all the tools the Local has available to you (Website, Instagram, etc.) and have a great finish to the year and holiday season.

Fraternally,  
**Albert Barbosa • SEA**  
**2<sup>nd</sup> Vice President**

Together we can do it! ¡Juntos lo podemos hacer!  
Much Love, respect and God bless all the members  
of TWU Local 555.

# FUTURE CONTRACTS

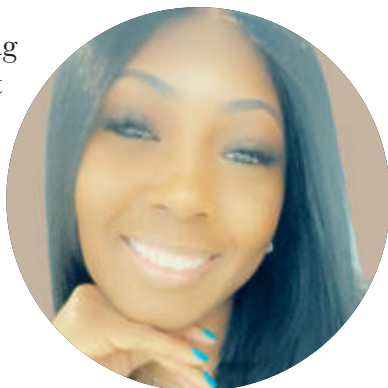
by Financial Secretary-Treasurer **Jessica Hayes**

**G**REETINGS MY FELLOW TWU BROTHERS and sisters. Just an update on the state of our Local. I'm happy to report that we are in the black. All bills are paid and all filings have been filed for the year as we close out this fiscal year, and prepare for 2020. The future of our Local is looking very bright as we strategize for our upcoming negotiations. I can't reiterate it enough, the importance of this contract and how each and every member should take part to ensure that we get the fairness that we deserve; this is our future.

***"We are welcoming all ideas to help prepare us for negotiations. Please don't hesitate to email your Local Executive Board with thoughts and comments on what you would like to see in this upcoming contract."***

We are welcoming all ideas to help prepare us for negotiations. Please don't hesitate to email your Local Executive Board with thoughts and comments on what you would like to see in this upcoming contract. I would like to give a special thanks to all the station reps, and alt reps that fight and represent our members in the station each and every day; you are the truth! I know it can be a thankless job. Just know that your hard work, and dedication doesn't go unnoticed. United we stand, divided we fall.

We are only as strong as the members that we represent.



# ACT NOW, GRIEVE LATER

by District 1 Representative **Marwyn Hughes**

**D**ISTINGUISHED members of Local 555, I want to thank everyone for their continued support during my transition into being the District 1 Representative.



Everyone is aware of what the Company does whenever someone gets in trouble! We have to be diligent in how we act and how we carry ourselves on the ramp, in the break rooms, provisioning an aircraft, while customers are deplaning, and at the ops agent podium. You have to remember that you are always on stage. You never know who is watching. Always remember to abide by the GOM and never go against management; ACT NOW, GRIEVE LATER! You never want to be insubordinate and don't forget that this once great company that always "HAD YOUR BACK", is now stabbing you in the back! Moreover, throughout District 1, I have been making my rounds and visiting stations in our district. I've heard everyone's voice and I have taken heed of what you all have said. I have been in communication with station reps. We are the voice in the workplace and I encourage everyone to make sure that they're documenting things as they take place.

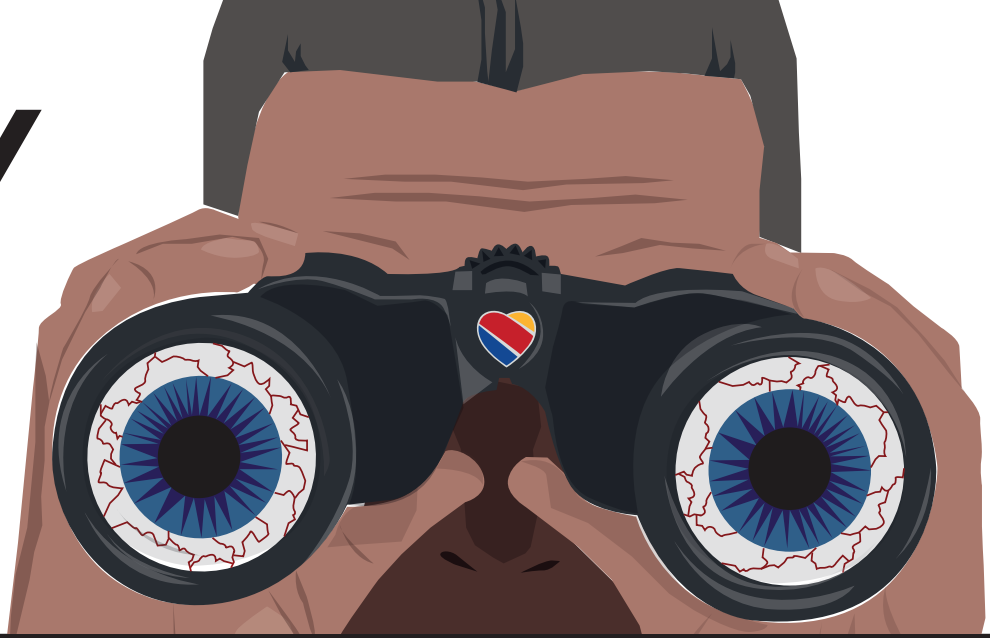
Lastly, safety is everyone's job and if you see another union member committing an unsafe act, do your part and have a conversation with them about the importance of safety. Our aim should be to unite all of our brothers and sisters in our local. As always, you can always reach out to me with any problems that you come across.

***"Great things never come from comfort zones."***  
-unknown

Happy Holidays and Happy New Year. Peace and blessings to all.



# I SPY



by District 2 Representative **Karl Mager**

**B**ROTHERS AND SISTERS, LET ME BEGIN BY wishing everyone Happy Holidays and blessings for the new year. Every Christmas, I take the time to reflect on the past year I have had. This year is no different. I reflect on the good, the bad, as well as think about things I can improve upon. One of the things that stood out to me while reflecting is the way all of us are watched at so many points during our day. From red light cameras on your way to work, to your local gas station camera, to cameras at the mall, to airport security cameras, to gate area cameras, to warehouse cameras in provisioning and cargo, which brings me to the title of my article. While most, if not all, of these cameras in today's society are needed at times in certain situations, I feel like the person or people on the other end of the camera are waiting for us to trip up, so they can say GOTCHA! This, to me, is like spying. It has been brought to my attention that in one of my stations there is a member of management that spends much of his day and night, yes night while at home, viewing the cameras in the work area. In my opinion this goes beyond security and is indeed spying or intimidation. If you ask how I know this, the same manager I write of has called the facility in which he works to let one of our members know what he saw. The calls have come during the day, at night, very late at night, and on a holiday. The most disheartening thing is that our Brothers and Sisters in this facility feel as though they must walk on egg shells just going about their everyday work. An-

other example of this; on a slow day one of the Supervisors received a call from the same Manager asking why are the agents playing dominoes and cards in the break room.

Southwest Management has said that the aviation industry heavily relies on trust and once the trust is broken it can never be fixed. It surely doesn't seem our members are trusted in this particular warehouse that I am writing about, nor do they trust their leader. To further expand on the ever-growing eye in the sky, these cameras are



***“The most disheartening thing is that our Brothers and Sisters in this facility feel as though they must walk on egg shells just going about their everyday work.”***

used extremely quickly to point out any mistakes our members make, but if one of these cameras captures something that may exonerate one of us, getting that footage is extremely slow if not impossible. An extremely wise man was quoted as saying the following:

**“A company is stronger if it is bound by love rather than fear.” -Herb Kelleher**

Perhaps this message should be passed on at leadership training classes for those that haven't heard it. My message to everyone is that the good old days are gone, and we must adapt to the new Southwest Airlines. This kind of stuff is too good to be made up, this happens day in and day out. Be mindful of your surroundings and remember that the ever-present eye in the sky is watching, no matter where you are.

#### **District II News**

A quick reminder to anyone that files a grievance: When you go to your representative wanting to file a grievance, bring along any documentation involving the incident or issue you are grieving. Write a statement that details the incident or issue while it's fresh in your memory and give a copy to your Representative. All of this documentation assists us in the handling of your grievance.

Regarding discipline, it seems as though the following topics have been the most popular in District II:

- *Dispatch Advised events for Operations*

Ops members; take your time to ensure that your numbers are correct. Hurrying to get a flight out on time is not worth the discipline that is handed out, even though you followed all the procedures once you noticed the mistake.

- *Missing bags for Ramp*

Ramp members; double check your gate and if you are missing any bags make that radio call advising your zone Supervisor of the missing bags. Allow them to make the call, taking you out of the equation.

- *Bump, scratch or come close to damaging a piece of equipment*  
Ramp, Ops, Provo, and Cargo; make sure to stop, don't move, and report whatever happened. The flight, bags, or freight can wait. Do not expose yourself to unjust or excessive discipline for failing to report a bump or scratch.

As we close out 2019 and look forward to 2020, let's remember why we are here. Yes, we are here to do

a job but more importantly we are here to provide for ourselves and our families. Each one of us has an obligation to ourselves and our family to come home the same way we left. Don't take that shortcut that could

lead to injury. If you need help in a bin, stop the belt and ask for it. Look out for each other as WE ARE OUR BROTHER'S KEEPER.

Lastly, I wish you all the very best this Holiday Season and leave you with this:

**“Most of the shadows of this life are caused by standing in one's own sunshine.”**

-Ralph Waldo Emerson

Fraternally,

**Karl Mager**

**District II Representative**

***“When you go to your representative wanting to file a grievance, bring along any documentation involving the incident or issue you are grieving. Write a statement that details the incident or issue while it's fresh in your memory... ”***

# IT'S THAT TIME OF YEAR

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by District 3 Representative **Daniel DC Chriss**

**I**T HAS BEEN A TRYING YEAR AND THE LAST FEW months will be even harder dealing with cold frigid temperatures. Along with cold weather comes de-icing fluid, slip hazards, and dangerous driving conditions. We are currently well over 4,000 grievances for the year and I expect more to finish out the year. With that being said, while working in these conditions, dress in layers including a hat as well as gloves. Weatherproof shoes and socks to protect your extremities. While driving to and from work pay close attention to your surroundings and be cautious when there are weather conditions affecting the roads. Driving on the airfield for members on the ramp and provo; be very cautious. For my operations peeps; be mindful of tugs and carts impeding your vision while maneuvering your jet bridges. We all have one common goal and that's to get to and from work the same way we left home, IN ONE PIECE.

I have been making every effort to get to every station within my district to speak with our members about their concerns and issues, and with the help of the station reps, I was able to make this happen. These visits are very important as it's the only way I can see what's going on day to day. It also gives me the opportunity to fix an issue right then and there when possible. Outside of always fighting for our rights, this gives you a chance to see a more personable side of me that's not always formal and business and gives me an opportunity to meet each and every one of you. I would like to give a special thanks to Albert Barbosa (2<sup>nd</sup> VP), Juan Cordova (Recording Secretary), Dan Hilton (TWU 555 Safety) and Troy Lamont (Alternate District 3 Rep) for attending some of these visits with me. Everything that we do is a group effort to make a stronger local for our Brothers and Sisters.

I encourage everyone to pay close attention to the Union Website in December. I have been named the liaison for the Future Leaders Organizing Committee, formerly known as The Young Workers Committee. This



***“I have been named the liaison for the Future Leaders Organizing Committee, formerly known as The Young Workers Committee.”***

committee has been somewhat displaced since receivership and I have been given the opportunity to help jump start it for our future. With the help of current chairman Chris Lampe (MCI RAMP) we hope to open this committee up looking for new members with great ideas. In the past, the committee was solely focused on young workers and now it is open to all members interested in it. We will be looking for one representative from each district. This will be a great opportunity for any one that wants to get involved to get involved.

In closing, I would like to wish everyone a Happy Holidays, and I look forward to seeing and working with everyone next year.

# GRIEVANCES FROM AROUND THE DISTRICT

by District 5 Representative **Robert “Wolfie” Bettinger**

## NEW AND IMPROVED GRIEVANCE SYSTEM

**W**E ARE CHANGING OUR GRIEVANCE system and depending on when this article is sent out to the station, it may be already in the process.

The reason for this change is long overdue; our old system was a great program when we were dealing with six thousand members, but now that we have grown to approximately thirteen thousand members, it has become outdated. With this new system, it will allow you to file your grievances electronically from your phone, tablet, or laptop. The new system will also allow you and your station representative to track the progress of your grievances. This new system has been in the works for the past year and thankfully we are near to the implementation date.

## GRIEVANCES FROM AROUND THE DISTRICT

### *Arbitrations*

Recently, we received an awarded arbitration decision for an agent who was wrongfully terminated. During the process of working this case, the Company made numerous offers of a financial settlement if the agent was willing to withdraw his own case and resign from the Company. With every offer, the Company increased the amount of the financial compensation. I in turned called the agent and told him of each new offer. The agent told me he was not interested in any discussion of a monetary settlement with resignation. It was more important to him to clear his name rather than to get a financial settlement. I am very glad he made that decision; the arbitrator awarded the agent his job back with full pack pay and made him whole in every way. What I respected was his desire to clear his name of the accusation that SWA claimed he did. With that being said and while he was waiting on his decision, he was not even sure he wanted to return to work for SWA but he did not

want to walk away being accused of something that he simply did not do.

### *Ramp Scanner Grievances*

#### • DAMAGED SCANNER

In some cases, some of these scanners were damaged prior to the agent receiving the scanner for the day.

If you are given a scanner, please check them out prior to leaving the ramp office. If you see any damage, even just a scratch, notate it. When you check the scanner back in make sure you have the supervisor check the scanner and notate that you are turning it back in with no damage to it.



#### • FAILURE TO RETURN YOUR SCANNER

Remember to turn your scanner in at the end of your shift. Currently we have numerous agents who stick the scanner in their locker at the end of their shift rather than return them. We also have numerous agents who just take them home with them. Please remember the scanners are the Company's property and need to be returned after every shift. Trust me, I know mistakes happen. While I was back at the job, I forgot to turn in my radio numerous times. Usually, I would discover it when I got home at night. I know it sucks, but if that happens to you, I suggest you get back in your vehicle and drive back to the airport and turn it in or at least call your supervisor and notify them.

#### • FAILURE TO SCAN

This is a big one. As I travel around our District, I have seen numerous agents scan four or five bags and then put the scanner on the belt loader. Please do not do this. You are on camera and if you mis-scan, your



manager will pull up the video and give you discipline for not scanning correctly. This is a tough case to fight, because your actions are on video. Fyi, I know you are saying “F\*\*\* that, the way I do it is quicker”, but please remember we are not in the business of speed but rather the business of 100% accuracy.

### ***Operations***

We are still getting numerous grievances for inaccurate paper work. Please slow down and take your time to do your job. Do not rush. You are more likely to screw up if you are rushing.

### ***Provisioning***

Lately, we have been receiving grievances that I have never seen before. Letters for agents not stocking their truck correctly at the end of their shift. If you are running late and it is time to go, notify your supervisor and tell them you are jammed up.

### ***Freight***

Grievances have slowed down but we still have a couple of grievances for either not screening the freight properly or failure to screen the freight at all. When you are screening freight, please take your time and do not get distracted. Distractions and rushing have caused way too many issues.

### ***MED-ARB***

Just in case you are not aware of the current program for handling grievances that are not terminations nor contractual violations; if your grievance is not a termination and not a contractual violation, your case will be subject to the MED-ARB process. This is a very problematic process because currently we are only allowed to do MED-ARB cases every other month and the most grievances that I can do in one session are six cases. This creates a huge back log of lower level discipline cases. We are trying to increase the session to every month although due to the CBA language, this has to be agreed to by the Company.

### ***FYI***

If you receive discipline please write everything down as soon as you receive the discipline, it may be six or eight months (or even longer) before I get your case scheduled, especially if it is an LOI.

Typically, what happens is, I will call you when it

is filed and ask for details about your case. If I cannot get it resolved then it will remain active until I can get it scheduled for a MED-ARB session or it will run the full retention period per Article Twenty of

the CBA. FYI, with our new grievance software, you will be able to log on and check on the status of your case as it is happening. Writing every detail down at the time of your discipline is vital, even though we will talk when your grievance gets to my desk there may be items that you forget to disclose to me.

In closing, I would like say THANK YOU for taking the time to read this news article and also thank you for allowing me the privilege of representing the best work force in the industry. Second, I would ask that if you agree with this article, please ask your fellow members to read it. Also, if any member wants to discuss this article and our contract; call me on my cell number at 346-772-9672 or email me at [Robert.bettinger@twu555.org](mailto:Robert.bettinger@twu555.org).

Thank You,

**Robert Bettinger**

**District V Representative**

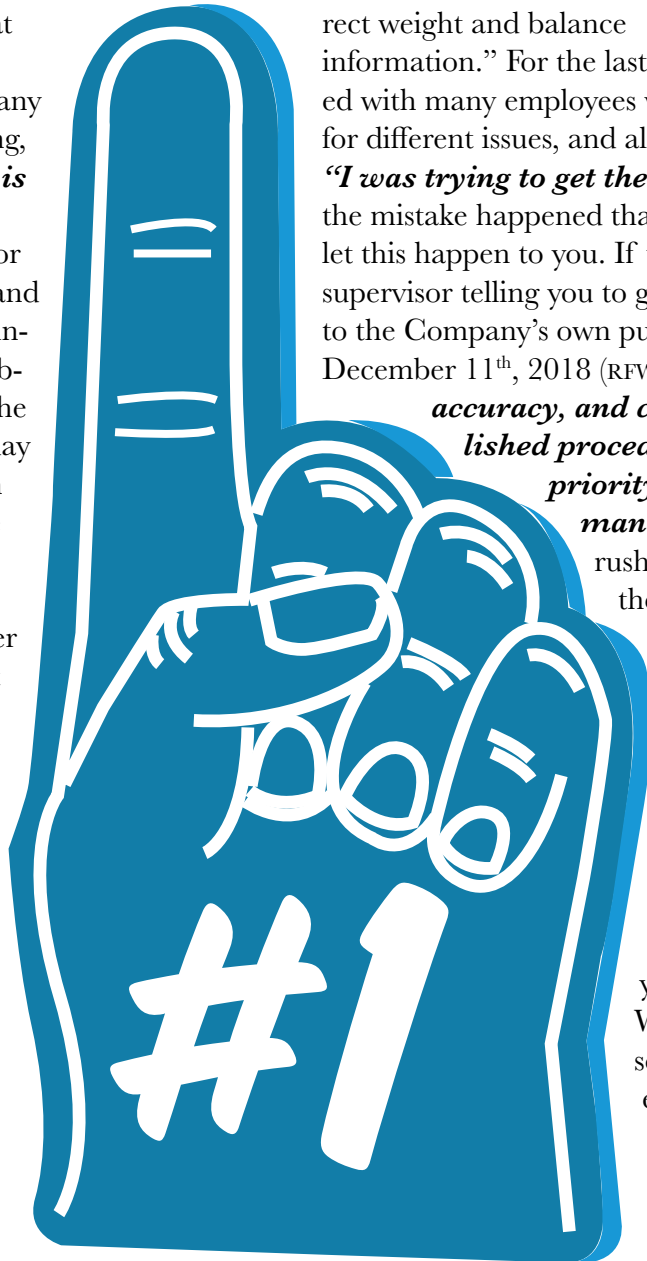
# WHO IS NUMBER 1?

by District 6 Representative *Tyler Cluff*

**A**S I SIT AND WRITE THIS ARTICLE, WE ARE in the midst of the college football season and with each passing week a new, updated poll is published for all to see that ranks the college football teams. With each poll that is released, the endless debates begin as to who really is number one. Is it really this team? What about that team? There seems to be the same endless debate in our own work on a day to day basis. It is not about who is number one, but more about what is number one. Anytime you hear anyone from the Company talk in a formal, official setting, they will always say, ***"Safety is number one at Southwest Airlines."*** That is all good for sound bites on news stories, and for quotes to be used on the internet and in media print publications, but what about in the practical application of the day to day work we all do? When an originator is about to take a delay, do your supervisors emphasize the safety aspect? If you are missing a passenger on your boarding screen, but every seat on your aircraft is full, does your supervisor say, "check everyone's ID on the aircraft," or does your supervisor say, "they are on the plane, board them and push the flight"? It seems that when push comes to shove, safety will take a back seat to just about anything on the front lines, if it means the flight will be

delayed. Unfortunately, if that flight paperwork was wrong, because the passenger was not really on the flight, the Company will write you up and quickly say, "Safety is number one, and you allowed a flight to leave with the incorrect weight and balance information." For the last several months, I have talked with many employees who have received discipline for different issues, and almost all of them have stated, ***"I was trying to get the flight out on time"*** when the mistake happened that led to the discipline. Don't let this happen to you. If you feel the pressure of a supervisor telling you to get the flight out, please refer to the Company's own published Read For Work from December 11<sup>th</sup>, 2018 (RFW 18-226). It states: ***"Safety, accuracy, and compliance with established procedures must always take priority over on time performance."*** Don't let a supervisor

rush you. Don't let the idea that the originator has to leave on time at all costs get you into trouble. When we rush, we make mistakes. If you have ANY question on the accuracy of your flight paperwork, make sure you resolve it BEFORE you push the flight. That is what the Company has made clear to you in published material. Why is the published material so important? Because several arbitrators have stated, ***"written procedures will***



***always trump oral declarations.***” What does that mean? That means if you follow the clear directions of the Ground Operations Manual, or the Read For Work directions, that is your “GET OUT OF JAIL FREE” card. With very few exceptions, (for example, in cases that might involve the general public safety), don’t follow the direction of your supervisor if what they are asking you to do is ignore the procedures of the Ground Operations Manual. If the GOM states to check the ID of a passenger, then check it. Don’t just verbally confirm their ID. If a supervisor says to do something that is not in the GOM, then ask them to put it on paper with their signature that states, “I am directing you to ignore the procedures of the GOM on this flight.” If a supervisor gives you that, on paper, then follow their directions. Many of us who have been doing our job for a very long time can sometimes forget what the GOM actually states. Make sure you take the time to review your job duties and the procedures of your job so that you are ALWAYS in compliance with the “written procedures.”

Another little tidbit of information, in case you missed it; the Company published a Read For Work on August 13<sup>th</sup>, 2019, (RFW 19-069), that states:

***“Above Wing Leaders: Observe the shoulder-to-shoulder process to confirm the correct completion of the CBLs and the CBLs to OTIS comparison”.***

Next time you close out a flight without a supervisor present, you might want to call for one before you verify your CBLs. I have a feeling the Company will not be 100% compliant on their own rule for leaders. Rest assured, you will receive discipline if you are not 100% compliant with the procedures.

One final thing. Not sure if this will be discussed by someone else in this newsletter, but I will mention it and go into more detail with the next article that I write and as we get into negotiations. The US Courts issued a remarkable ruling for American Airlines. As American Airlines sued TWU, the Union representing their Fleet Service employees, for illegal work actions. American claimed the Union was engaging in work slow downs and other illegal job actions. The ruling that came down put a cease and desist order on all employees from engaging in such activities. The ruling even listed things that would qualify as a work action or that were otherwise banned by the order. One thing

on the list was simply telling your co-worker to “work safe.” According to the court, and American, that was a code word or phrase to engage in a work action or work slow down.

I mention it now, because I think it is only a matter of time before SWA tries to get a similar order when we get into negotiations. My time may be limited in being able to say something we all need to hear and be reminded of. Southwest Airlines, and every airline for that matter, will always tell the public

***“Next time you close out a flight without a supervisor present, you might want to call for one before you verify your CBLs.”***

that safety is number one, but a friendly reminder in reference to that all important priority is now banned from being said at one airline. It may be coming to an airline near you soon. Until that officially happens; follow the procedures of the GOM, and please, work safe.

Fraternally,  
**Tyler Cluff**  
**District VI Representative**

**2019 District VI Statistics (as of 11/15/2019):**

Total Grievances that have come to the District Level: 365 (termination grievances not included)  
Of those 365:

183 have been settled

128 have been withdrawn

7 were awarded due to a time frame violation

47 are still active

7 arbitration hearings (4 rulings were in the Union’s favor, 2 were in the Company’s favor, and 1 was settled prior to an arbitration ruling.)

\*numbers may not be exact, and may be off by a small margin due to files and systems not being fully updated at the time the information was gathered.

# DISTRICT 7 UPDATE

by District 7 Representative **Mike Roach**

I AM WRITING THIS ARTICLE ON NOVEMBER 15<sup>th</sup> and that was the deadline for articles to be submitted. As of today, there have been 335 grievances filed for members being terminated this year from Local 555. This is the largest amount of termination grievances that we have ever had in a calendar year and we still have a month and a half to go in 2019. The total number of grievances filed so far this year is just shy of 3,000.

There have been changes to how Protected Absence Hours will be implemented at California stations. These changes will be effective tomorrow, November 16<sup>th</sup>. There are five stations in District 7 that will be included in these new procedures and

***“Management at LAS seems to enjoy giving discipline letters for the most minor matters...”***

many of you will be familiar with the changes by the time you read this article. Members at these stations will be allowed to choose whether or not to use Protected Absence Hours when they are absent from work. The Company will continue to automatically apply Protected Absence Hours when a member is absent, but you can then notify your administrator of attendance that you choose not to use it. If you choose not to use your Protected Absence Hours, you must submit a new form to your administrator stating that you want to decline the use of Protected Hours and normal attendance rules will apply. This form must be turned in on the first day you return to work from the absence. Please make sure to make a copy of the form for your records in case a problem arises in the future. Everyone knows a situation where a shift trade or a shift bid, or some other document was lost after being turned in and I am pretty sure this will be no different so always

keep a copy in case you need proof later. At this time, we have forty-one grievances that are going through the process and have not been resolved. Five of them are terminations and the other thirty-six are a combination of discipline letters of instruction, warning, final warnings, mandatory overtime, and bypass grievances. Of the forty-one grievances active in District 7, it saddens me to report that thirty-two of them are out of LAS. There was a time when representatives of the union and management could resolve issues for the most part at the local level. That is no longer the way things work at this station. Management at LAS seems to enjoy giving discipline letters for the most minor matters and upper management gets the grievance and writes respectfully denied. Most of the grievances that get to the District level, should never leave the station. LAS is a station that has many senior employees that love working for SWA but have really become frustrated with the way this station has changed. It is my hope and that of the excellent Union Station Reps that we can somehow get back what has been lost. LAS has one of the best groups of Union Reps in the system that work hard each and every day to help LAS members have an environment that they once again enjoy coming to work in.

Hopefully, this newsletter reaches the membership before Christmas. I hope that each and every one of you have a happy holiday season with your loved ones and I wish you all a Happy and Healthy New Year.





# KOOL AID OF AN UNUSUAL FLAVOR

by District 4 Representative *Tony Slavings*

ONE OF THE DUTIES OF OUR RECORDING secretary is to go over to Company Headquarters every time we have a new hire training class. It's usually once a week that they will go over, give everyone a copy of the contract, collect the approval sheet for dues payment, and take an hour to talk to them about unions in general and about ours specifically. That's all the time the Local gets. One hour. I had a chance to go over there a while back. This was well over a year ago. It was interesting, to say the least. It wasn't what happened in the meeting that was so interesting. For those of you that I've had a chance to meet, you've probably realized that I'm a direct person. I'm not going to sugar coat things just to make someone feel better. That didn't change in this new hire class and it hasn't changed since then.

I basically went down the list of the grievance process and how it works. Showed them what our grievance list looks like and how long it was at the time. It's longer now. I then told them that while they are down in DAL, the Company gives them a big glass of **"Kool Aid"** and just keeps filling it up. I'm sure you all remember how awesome it was. All the "LUV" they gave you. How important you are to the new "family". Then I told them the reality that most of us have come to realize; **"it's all bullshit"**. **"You are replaceable."** That, **"this isn't the same company that you've heard how it is fun to go to work"**. Those are just a few of the phrases I used. I told them how the Company gets thousands and thousands of applications and they will replace you if you don't fall into line. Most of us that have been here more than a year know this and accept it as normal life. So, after we got done, apparently, all the new hires came back to class and were all up in arms about the way the big mean union guy talked. So much so that they wanted to email our office to let us know how bad he was. The

funny thing is, I even blatantly said how SWA is a good job. It's not all doom and gloom. It's a good place to work to provide for your family. I guess they didn't like the comment that was made about how 30% of them won't make it off probation. At the end of the day, everything we said was true and I'm still here to write this article. I stand behind every last word I said and I take none of it back. I genuinely hope that every single one of the agents in that new hire class made it off probation. But, the reality is, it didn't happen. The reality is, several of those new hires have now been written up and had some sort of discipline. Some of them found out the hard way that what I was saying was true, and they are currently looking for a job somewhere else.



The reason I'm telling this story is that I know it gets rough at work with a bunch of new hires around. I know it disrupts your work rhythm and how you operate. Fact of the matter is, every single last one of us was in that position at one point in



time. We were all new hires and had people looking at us and wondering why SWA hired that person. I'm not saying everyone who gets hired is going to be the best employee at SWA. Hell, I'm not. The whole thing made me realize how out of touch we as a Local are. These guys believed every word that SWA was telling them. How great and amazing the Company still is. And, on a recent station visit, I had one of those members that was in that class thank me. Apparently, they remembered that talk well and took it to heart. It was good to see that someone was paying attention.

What I want to encourage you all to do is, give the new hires a chance. You might be surprised. Help them out as best you can. Let them feel like they are a part of our Local even before they are off probation. Help teach them the "real way to do the job". Let them know how the real world at SWA works. Help them with the ins and outs of the contract. If you see management trying to take advantage of the new hires, step up and say something. The fact of the matter is, a lot of these agents are going to make it off probation and be working with you for years to come. We need to do a better job of getting people on board with our Local and ways to help each other out. The next round of contract negotiations is not that far off. If we don't get more members on board with our Local, we will just continue to give up benefits and jobs, and at that point, we will all be new hires again.

In Solidarity,  
**Tony Slavings**  
**District IV Representative**

# WHAT'S IN IT FOR US?

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*by District 8 Representative Abilio Villaverde*

**M**Y FELLOW BROTHERS AND SISTERS, we will be accepting résumés for the Negotiations Committee next year and we need to move forward in building a stronger future for our local. With all of the great members we have, I know that we will be strong and obtain what we deserve. It will take every member getting involved to make it happen. Even if you are not interested in serving on the committee, your input is greatly needed. There is a suggestion box on the [TWU555.ORG](http://TWU555.ORG) website. Please use that to submit anything you think we need to address concerning negotiations. "What's in it for me" needs to start being replaced with "what's in it for us". Each of us can make a large contribution and you don't have to be a Union representative to do that. Whether you were for or against the current contract, I think we can all agree that there are areas of concern that need to be addressed. The Company is adding future union members every day. Let's embrace each and every one of them. Let's educate them on the contract, as it should mean as much to them when they start as it does to all of us now. Power is in numbers and we need all of them to understand what it means to be a part of a union and an effective one at that. When we have union events, let's encourage them to join in and participate. If you aren't having J-lines or breakroom meetings in your station, please encourage everyone to start talking about having them. We need your input on the next contract. Let's start by getting on the same page now and starting the conversation.

The discipline that has been given to our members is increasing at an alarming rate and so have the terminations. We are again on a record pace. Some might say that it is due to having more members and that is true but the type of stuff that we have

been seeing people disciplined for is outrageous. First and foremost, let's not put our jobs in the Company's hands. Take the time to make sure your work is accurate. Rushing to get that plane out on time is the most common cause for us to make mistakes. I haven't seen any one of us get a bonus for that plane going out on time, but I've seen lots of discipline being handed down when we make mistakes doing so.

As far as District 8 goes, we are still seeing a lot of operations discipline. Failure to scan also seems to be a growing concern. I'm sure we all want the plane to leave on time but let's make sure

***“The point of this is that no matter how much you go above and beyond, that you never miss any work or have any active discipline in your file, once you make a mistake no matter how minor, they will throw excessive discipline your way...”***

everything is accurate and that we have properly scanned all passengers. I know we can point to some of those glitches between ALTEA and OTIS and faulty scanners. If you're seeing something out of the norm, please report it immediately. That could make a huge difference in whether you get disciplined and how that discipline gets resolved. The Company will always deny any glitches happen as they testify to that fact in every MED-ARB and arbitration. Keep notes on when those things happen, and any screenshots or information that you can pass to your union rep or district rep will be much appreciated.

On the ramp, we are starting to see discipline for damaged scanners. Just like any other piece of equipment, the Company is going straight to a Letter of Warning when we damage something regardless of what you have in your file. A continuing trend that is somewhat laughable is when local management gives out discipline and

blames

Labor Relations(the Company's disciplinary department) for what they are handing out. Yet LR states the complete opposite and says that it was local management's decision and that it's best

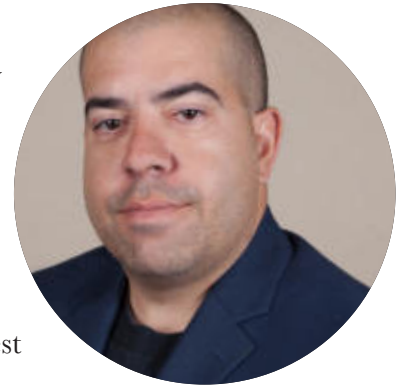
that the local managers decide what's appropriate since they know what kind of employee and person you are. Let's be honest here; the stations are not the

ones making the decisions anymore. Those LR people are not going to see or care how much you go above and beyond your normal job duties for our passengers. The point of this is that no matter how much you go above and beyond, that you never miss any work or have any active discipline in your file, once you make a mistake no matter how minor, they will throw excessive discipline your way in a heartbeat and not think twice. So, take your time and make sure your work is accurate before signing that bin slip. Safety is also very important so don't be in a rush and make sure you and everyone around you goes home in one piece. WE ARE 555!

Fraternally,

**Abilio Villaverde**

**District VIII Representative**



## EDUCATION COMMITTEE

# DIRECT EDUCATION

**H**ELLO BROTHERS AND SISTERS, first and foremost we would like to introduce you to the new Education Committee. We have Juan Cordova - Recording Secretary from MDW, Khyle Leong - Membership Specialist from BWI, Mark Waddle - Alternate Rep. from PHX, Jay Fenimore - Alternate Rep. from LAS, Emory Marshall - Alternate Rep. from PHL and Andrew Soto - Alternate Rep. from MDW. Our goal as your Education Committee is to directly educate the members and to find different and effective ways for the members to get more involved with the Local. Increasing membership involvement will strengthen and fortify our Union. The more educated our members are, the more unified we become. As a committee, we want to be accountable for developing more resources and tools for members to access, so that they can be more informed. One way for our members to be able to get more involved is through Social Media. We have opened and developed an official TWU

555 Instagram page at “TWU555” and an official YouTube channel as well. Please subscribe and watch for informational videos on various topics and contractual information that can potentially help you during your time with our Union. Local 555 is also working with various technology teams to create a portal for our members to access and have a direct involvement with the Union. The portal will allow TWU 555 members to create a log-in and access pertinent information regarding their stations and local station representatives, along with grievances and questions regarding the contract.

Another one of our goals is to reach out to our members directly through station visits and training involving the new portal. We look forward to being actively involved with our members throughout the entire system, educating members on our contract, and being a great resource for the members to reach out to.

**In solidarity,  
Your Education Committee**



*L to R: Juan Cordova, Mark Waddle, Andrew Soto, Emory Marshall, Jay Fenimore, and Khyle Leong*



# FIGHTING SIDE BY SIDE

## WORKING WOMEN'S COMMITTEE

**T**HE WORKING WOMEN'S COMMITTEE HAS been an important part of our Union by encouraging our women to help each other through life. There are many instances we've been overlooked because we didn't stand up for ourselves or one another. The wwc brings in women speakers that have fought to win and keep our rights, as well as sharing their stories on the way to the top. Encouragement is something that we need to always focus on regardless of things put in our way. If we continue to stand united together we can achieve anything we put our minds to. We should all be standing up for the greater good of each other collectively no matter our backgrounds. We should be encouraging our women to run for office, by helping out with phone calls, emails, face to face discussions on why they should elect us. We may not like or agree with each other, however, our Union Women are fighters and we bring many things to the table of elected office. Ann Richards was the 1<sup>st</sup> Women Governor in Texas. There are more women co-sponsoring more legislation, more women are running for office...and winning. We should be promoting solidarity within our Union and with our community through involvement. Our Committee helps empower women by equipping

them with confidence, resources, and the skills to achieve their goals. The wwc helps meet and network with the same interests through the transportation industry. Our Committee encourages and performs many community service projects like Habitat for Humanity all Women building where we helped build a house. Working at a Food Bank just before Thanksgiving. We've collected books to donate to the USO at DFW for our soldiers, we've also collected women's toiletries for our female soldiers.



It only takes a few short hours to help out. We need to keep pushing for paid family leave nation wide, not just in a few states. We need to keep bringing awareness of the need for physical and mental awareness. We as Union members have won many rights through collec-

tive bargaining such as equal higher wages, better insurance, vacation time, the eight hour workday and others. These are rights that many outside of a Union still today do not have. Let's keep pushing together; the possibilities are endless. Don't limit us. Women are more likely to vote. Let's do it!

In Solidarity,  
**Margaret Sadler • FLL**  
**Working Women's Committee Chair**

# VETERANS COMMITTEE

**W**E CAN'T BE MORE GRATEFUL OF THE sacrifices you've made for our country, our freedom, our families, our friends and our Union. November 11<sup>th</sup> is just one day that is a reminder to celebrate you but in reality, you deserve a lifetime of thanks and gratitude. We are proud to have our veterans in our Union and will strive to protect the rights afforded to you. We have recently been made aware of a situation in which eligible veterans in certain states are allowed the day off for Veterans Day or are given preference over other

***“You may be pleasantly surprised at how the laws have changed and how this may help you or your family’s situation.”***

employees. The four states in particular are Iowa, Oregon, Massachusetts, and New Hampshire. We are currently looking into many of these laws and the interpretations of them but encourage you to research laws in your state as you may be eligible for benefits beyond a day off of work. Massachusetts, has in its laws, a clause for Memorial Day. To assist in your research, we've stumbled upon the following website that is easy to navigate and assists with a breakdown of the benefits by state:

[HTTPS://WWW.CNAS.ORG/PUBLICATIONS/REPORTS/STATE-VETERAN-BENEFIT-FINDER](https://www.cnas.org/publications/reports/state-veteran-benefit-finder)

The Federal government has added new practices to the VA Medical system and these are changing on a daily basis. Eligible veterans are now authorized to go to non-VA urgent care facilities and/or

# OUR VETERANS, OUR HEROES

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non-VA Emergency Care facilities paid for by the VA insurance. Every veteran's situation is different, so if you are unsure of your rights, please don't hesitate to ask. You may be pleasantly surprised how the laws have changed and how this may help you or your family's situation.

The Veterans Committee would like to continue helping our veterans moving forward and encourage any suggestions for future contract negotiations or ideas on how we can serve you better to be sent to the, soon to be formed, Negotiations Committee or our Committee. Currently, we have a few ideas ranging from bidding/declaration procedures for those deployed, language for travel days corresponding to federal/state law for reserve or active military, Veterans Day off, an automatic interview for veterans, a military help line, send off/welcome back event for those being deployed overseas, and buy back time for retirement. These are just ideas, and some may already be in place for certain states, but to have clarification or to have it across the board is always preferred. We continue to encourage the Company, Union, and even our active military members to keep up with USERRA laws as they apply.

In the words of Rodney Frelinghuysen:

***“Veterans are a symbol of what makes our nation great, and we must never forget all they have done to ensure our freedom.”***

Thank you for your service and support,

**Charlana Bilodeau**

**Veterans Committee Chair**

**TWU International Veterans Committee**

**Recording Secretary**

# A COMMITTEE REBORN

## FUTURE LEADERS ORGANIZING COMMITTEE

**I**F YOU HAVE BEEN WITH THE LOCAL FOR SOME TIME, you may be wondering why you've never heard of the Future Leaders Organizing Committee or FLOC. The answer is that this new Committee is replacing what once was the Young Workers Committee. With the objective of reviving the Committee I have been named as Committee Chair. District III Representative, Dan Chriss, is the LEB liaison that will be assisting with getting everything up and running. Greg Gamboni, who has helped run the previous Committee for several years, has decided to step away and focus on his duties as the elected Ramp Representative in TPA. Thank you Greg for everything you have done to help get us to this point.

About two years ago is when the idea of getting this all started again came to be. I was only twenty-four which is naturally why I gravitated towards trying to get people my age involved. The question was clear then and it is clear now. How do we get

young people involved? Hopefully this Committee will be one step in the fight to recruiting as many active union members as we possibly can. Since this idea sparked a couple years ago, I have been to countless meetings and had numerous conversations with members of our Local Executive Board and within TWU International.

Today, FLOC is finally a committee recognized by TWU International, we have quarterly meetings with other local's members throughout the TWU and we are beginning to map out meetings exclusive to our Local. I personally got the chance to write a large part of the by-laws for this Committee to help give us structure,

so that on the International level, this fire doesn't fizzle out again. We have had Yolanda Long - DAL, and Ray Pitstick - SAN, coming out to these meetings as well to contribute some of their input with the International meetings and how they would like to see this come to life with 555.

Future Leaders is a fresh take on what we have had in place for several years now with the Young Workers Committee and our goal is very simple. We have to invest in our future. We have to invest in each other. We have to ensure that this Local remains strong and healthy for years to come. We have to work every day to make it better and, in

turn, make each other better. That is what this Committee is all about. It is about helping the next one up by giving them the tools to succeed. We will bring the youth of this local together, to educate, engage and empower everyone

who wants to step up and be the difference in their station, in their district, or throughout the system.

A lot of information will be coming out about FLOC soon. Keep an eye on [TWU555.ORG](http://TWU555.ORG) and relevant social media avenues to keep up to date on when we will begin accepting letters of interest from the membership to become a delegate for FLOC.

Fraternaly,  
**Chris Lampe • MCI**  
**Future Leaders Organizing**  
**Committee Chair**





# SAFETY

## COMMITTEE

**A**RTICLE 17 OF OUR CONTRACT HAS SOME of the strongest safety language in the industry, but did you know there is another article in our contract that has language equally as strong when it comes to our safety while loading 800s?

The Article in question is Article Twenty-Four and its opening lines are strong. How often do you see the Company and the Union agree on staffing? With Article Twenty-Four that is exactly what happened regarding the rear bin of an 800. Article Twenty-Four reads, in part, ***“The Union and the Company agree that management is responsible for securing the necessary assistance for the process of loading and unloading aircraft bins. In the 737-800 rear bin, a minimum of two Employees will be required for loading and unloading the aircraft.”*** This is a guaranteed right under our contract, and it is important that we hold the Company to this mutually agreed upon, negotiated language. One of the great things about this Article is that once we advise a supervisor of the need for assistance ***“management is responsible for securing the necessary assistance”***, meaning we can focus our attention solely on the loading and unloading of the aircraft. It should be noted that ***“A Supervisor may provide assistance as one of the two Employees in the bin in accordance with Article 2.B.”***

The language in Article Twenty-Four is strong safety language that protects employees and it is important that it stay in our contract. If we don't hold the Company accountable for the language in Article Twenty-Four, it will make it very hard for us to keep or even improve upon this language when we negotiate our next contract. Shoulder and back injuries are among some of the most common injuries our workgroup faces and without a second

# ARTICLE

## TWENTY-FOUR

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person in the rear bin, our risk of sustaining these injuries increases. In addition to the safety aspect, this article helps protect us from discipline. Chapter 5.12.1 of the Ground Operations Manual (GOM) states ***“Do not throw, toss, or roughly handle baggage under any circumstances.”*** The Company is always looking for new and creative ways to get us to do more with less and while Article Twenty-Four does not cover the forward bin, we still have the right to work safely regardless of staffing. While the contract does not require a second person in the front bin, nothing stops us from asking for assistance. Every time the topic of help has come up in our discussions with the Company, they have always asserted that if an agent asks for help, they will receive it. Chapter 2 of the Company's GOM covers safety and Chapter 5 of that same manual covers the ramp. These chapters clearly define how we should perform our jobs and it is important that we familiarize ourselves with both chapters as well as our CBA. Remember, if we strictly adhere to the Company's policies, it makes it much harder for them to discipline us. Article Twenty-Four does allow for some exceptions when it comes to the two-person requirement and they are listed below.

***“• When mechanical means are available and utilized for the on and offload of the 737-800 aircraft***

- When only bins E and F are utilized***
- Late bags arriving at aircraft that can be loaded into bin E or F***
- Transfer bags arriving at the aircraft that can be loaded into bin E or F***
- Jetway checked bags”***

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact your District Representative or any member of the TWU LOCAL 555 Safety and Health Committee.



# COPING MECHANISM

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## LEGISLATIVE AWARENESS COMMITTEE

**W**HILE WE'VE HEARD IT SAID ON NUMEROUS occasions that Elections are important, many of us make the decision not to participate in them. Though there are many divisive issues that get much of the press coverage, there are many other effects of elections that go unnoticed. High profile races like the Presidency, U.S. House of Representatives and U.S. Senate all the way down to your Local City Council effect our daily lives. The President makes lifetime appointments to the U.S. Supreme Court and other Federal Benches. The Courts then make decisions that can change the way that Labor Unions in the country operate and defend their members. Don't forget about that Traffic signal needed in front of your local Elementary School. Voting for the right local candidate can help accomplish that too.

If it has been some time since you participated in the voting process, you might be wondering if you're even registered to vote. Perhaps the voting laws have changed in your State or County. Make sure you are prepared before heading to the polls! Transport Workers Union International has a webpage dedicated to helping our members check their registration status, register if a member has not done so, and even find out if a member's state has any special leaves for time off to vote. Visit [WWW.TWU.ORG/LEGISLATIVE-AND-POLITICAL/](http://WWW.TWU.ORG/LEGISLATIVE-AND-POLITICAL/) for answers to Voter Registration questions, and to find your local TWU State Conference.

On this page you will also notice a link for TWU: COPE. COPE is TWU's political action committee. What is COPE and what do they do? The TWU's COMMITTEE ON POLITICAL EDUCATION is funded by voluntary donations from TWU members who recognize the value in electing pro-union representatives in all levels of government. Their goal is to ensure that pro-union representatives receive support and that we are supported

in return. How does TWU know which candidates are pro-union? One way in which candidates are vetted are through face to face meetings with one of the many TWU state conferences throughout the country. In many cases, Candidates are first sent a preliminary round of questions to respond to which creates a written record of their stance on matters important to the livelihoods of TWU members. Then, during the face to face meetings, representatives of various TWU unions have the opportunity to further establish whether they are a candidate worthy of support, and the union representatives then vote on the type and amount of support that they believe is warranted. TWU then endorses these pro-union candidates. I have taken part in many of these meetings and they have been very beneficial in not only vetting candidates but in creating a relationship that continues when these candidates are elected and passing pro-union legislation. Corporations spend large amounts of money, that they earn off of the backs of their workers, supporting anti-union candidates in hopes of destroying our ability to fight for our rights and a fair wage. Everyone has the right to choose their candidate at the voting box, and should, but please consider the effect an anti-union candidate can have on our jobs and the lives of ourselves and our families.

**“Elections belong to the people. It's their decision. If they decide to turn their back on the fire and burn their behinds, then they will just have to sit on their blisters.”**

- Abraham Lincoln

In Solidarity,

**Chris Avila •ONT**

**Legislative Awareness Committee**

**TWU CA State Conference**

**Co-Chair**

# YOU'RE NEVER GOING TO GET THAT

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by *Triple Nickel* Editor **Jason Sonnabaum**

**B**EFORE I GET TO THE MAIN PORTION OF MY article, there is something that I want to address that could be an important piece of evidence if you or a fellow brother or sister ends up on the wrong side of discipline which, as the years pass, is more and more likely. The potential evidence that I'm referring to is a simple statement. There was a case that I was involved with recently where a Company witness provided damning testimony against the grievant, who had been terminated. The Union had a statement demonstrating the Company's witness was biased against the grievant stemming from an incident approximately one year earlier. The problem was that the statement wasn't written a year earlier. It was written after the agent was terminated, and prior to the arbitration. The Arbitrator did not take kindly to the timing of the statement and referred to it as *"tardy and contrived"*. Ouch. From everyone I spoke to in the initial portion of the investigation, the statement was true, but that didn't matter. It wasn't written when it happened. Arbitrators don't like when statements are written only for the benefit of a hearing and a lot of times agents don't want to make something a bigger deal than it needs to be, especially when it seems everyone can move on amicably. However, if a situation escalates with a specific individual, writing a statement about something long ago won't be helpful. If you have an issue with a member of management, or the way things are done at your station, putting it on paper at the time of incident and ensuring the Union has a copy might be the piece of evidence that saves you or a fellow member in the long run when the opposing side wants to create a work of fiction painting you as the antagonist.

## PART TWO

On to the next subject. Negotiations. As break-room and internet discussions of negotiations begin to increase with slightly more than a year left until the collective bargaining agreement becomes

amendable, remember that it doesn't expire under the Railway Labor Act, you will hear many familiar voices. Increased pay will certainly be brought up. Medical costs will be a hot topic as rates continue to increase. Employee parking is always a popular target. For those that were around prior to the current agreement, our previous OJI language and perhaps the February roll-off will be brought up. In response to some or all of these issues, someone will be there to say that we will never be able to accomplish these goals in negotiations. That the Company is all powerful and there isn't anything we can do. Or conversely, there will be someone there to say that all we need are lawyers doing the negotiating and that, apparently, they can walk in and perform lawyer magic at which point the Company will bestow a plethora of riches upon us without us having to do anything. Someone will say we have no leverage since we are but lowly ground employees. While we may or may not have an equal amount of leverage to other locals on the surface, our power as a union will depend almost completely on our ability to stand together. Our local can not expect a fair agreement if each and every one of us aren't willing to do our part and it will take action of various types. Hopefully, we have taken notice of how the other workgroups on property have handled themselves in negotiations and how their agreements were affected. We beat the dead horse constantly by stating that *"this isn't the same Company"* and in turn, *"these aren't the same negotiations"*. The days of the two year negotiation period are long gone as group after group reaches five plus years to reach an agreement, many of them with a tentative agreement forcefully voted down in the process. It has been mentioned elsewhere in this issue and I'll echo the sentiment that when the Negotiations Surveys are sent to the stations, it is important that we all participate. Negotiations priorities are based on the membership surveys and if you have ideas or proposals, they need to hear them prior to actually negotiating. This opportunity doesn't come around often and this is your chance to make a real difference in the lives of every member. Some may feel like they don't know what to ask for outside of the obvious pay

and vacation, but luckily there is plenty of time to do some research prior to receiving the surveys. A great place to look is within the agreements of other locals which are available online. Reading through the CBA of a union at another airline or even a completely different workgroup in a different industry can be a great source for negotiations ideas. Forget about what you think we *might* get in the end and ask for what is most important to you. There are many areas in need of improvement and while we won't get everything, we will get something, and what we get is what shapes a large portion of our workdays. Members tend to forget about the work rules hiding in the shadows of the dollar signs in Article Twenty-Eight, but the work rules are just as important. Don't make that mistake. As a representative, it is very common to be approached by an angry agent looking for ammunition in the CBA to combat how they have been wronged by the Company only to find that the contract doesn't include what they're looking for. That the contract is silent or that the included language just isn't strong enough for a successful grievance. This is where that can change. Many members want employee parking covered. That makes a lot of sense in a station that pays \$100+ per month, and less sense in a station that pays \$10 per month, where fighting for an extra dime on the wage would be more beneficial. Perhaps the compromise is that we propose the Company pays employee parking in all stations where the cost exceeds \$20 per month or some other variation. Maybe increases for shift differentials or restrictions are in order in a time where we are sure to have start times by the minute any day now. I personally can't wait for my 1408 start time. What about paid lunches and straight eight hour shifts? We need to be creative in finding value beyond and in addition to pay, which is challenging because value is inherently subjective. Each item means something different to different people. Some members lived by the February rolloff, where members with point totals between zero and three reset to zero at the end of each February. Others never used it. Regardless of the value that each of us places on pieces of CBA language, we can't give anything away just because we all don't benefit. We will all benefit in different ways at different times in many cases, but we should always seek the maximum value for the membership. For those who may not be aware, there was once an agreement for our workgroup where members agreed to an A and B

pay scale where newer employees were relegated to a separate and lower pay scale. Remember that those that have come before you have sacrificed for what we have and that that should be our goal to not only benefit ourselves but to benefit those that come afterward. In the end we are an extremely diverse membership spread throughout the country with different needs. We need to support each other throughout this process and we will need to support

***“Be careful about demanding to have something to vote on because voting on a subpar agreement can end poorly.”***

our Negotiations Committee and Local Executive Board. There always comes a time during negotiations when the Company attempts to pit the membership against the Committee and the LEB. The Company will say that the Negotiations Committee and the LEB don't represent our wishes and that the members want the horrible Company proposals where they take all of our sick time and destroy our attendance policy. The Company will pressure them to give us a tentative agreement to vote on and they will probably sprinkle some change on top of it believing that we won't pay enough attention to vote down a lopsided agreement. Be careful about demanding to have something to vote on because voting on a subpar agreement can end poorly.

We can argue amongst ourselves in private but we must stand together when it is the Company on the other side. Stand together when we read what are always heinous Company proposals to begin. Stand together when we don't see the immediate progress we had hoped for. Stand together when the updates aren't exactly what we want to hear. Stand together when the Company says they just don't have any money for us. Stand together on the picket lines. Who knows, maybe some of us will even stand together at some union meetings.

In Solidarity,  
**Jason Sonnabaum • SAN**  
**Triple Nickel Editor**

# TWU LOCAL 555 SUPPORTS LCLAA

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*by MCO Operations Agent Jesus Gomez Garcia*

SISTERS AND BROTHERS, I HOPE THIS HOLIDAY season finds all of you well! As I write this article, Thanksgiving is weeks away and I can't help but to feel thankful! Thankful to have a job that allows me to provide a stable home for my family and thankful for the great wages and benefits we enjoy that were negotiated on our behalf by our great Union! Unfortunately, not everyone has the same luxury that we have which brings me to the subject of this article.

In August 2018, for the first time, I attended and represented TWU LOCAL 555 at the LCLAA convention in SJU. This opportunity was made possible by our local and the District II Alternate Rep Darryl Wallington and his wife Gisela Alvarez (Local 556 Union Steward). As a proud Latino, US citizen and native Puerto Rican, it was heartbreaking to see my beautiful island so devastated and the people of Puerto Rico suffering. Making matters worse, the government was taking advantage of the situation. Many workers were not being paid, their benefits denied, workers being laid off and local unions were in a constant battle in the fight for their members rights! I along with Darryl Wallington, Shirley Duff, Earl Williams (MCO Operations Agent) and Oscar Camara (HOU) attended the convention in SJU, and I am very proud of the community work we did. We painted a school that was converted into living apartments for abused children, we helped clear a bridge that was blocking access to a village in the interior of Puerto Rico and we marched in solidarity against the abuse and mistreatment of the workers of Puerto Rico by the Puerto Rican government!

What is LCLAA? LCLAA is a coalition of workers representing several unions within our great country that is the leading grassroots organization driven and directed by Latino labor leaders for Latino(a) workers and their families. LCLAA was established in 1972 out of the need to educate, organize and mobilize Latinos in the labor movement. LCLAA represents the interests of more than two million

Latino workers in the AFL-CIO. Unions represented include IAM, TWU LOCAL 100, TWU LOCAL 556, TWU LOCAL 555, ATU, AARP, AFT, Labors Union Local 57, Union for Painters and Allied Trades, UFCW 540, UAW, Teamsters and several others.

Our goal is to impact workers' rights and their influence on the political process as it pertains to the Latino labor movement, immigration abuse and exploitations, pay equality for women and several other important issues that affect Latino families in the country.

How is maintaining our presence in LCLAA beneficial to TWU 555? First, each year we can send more of our union members to attend, and more members can use the lessons and tactics they learn to assist our fellow Latinos in our respective communities! As I have said before, we have the luxury of belonging to a union that fights for our rights but not everyone is so fortunate. By attending these worthy gatherings, we gain awareness of the challenges plaguing the Latino community and therefore can assist where we can or advise Latinos that find themselves in these situations. After all, many of our members are Latino or of Latino decent and by maintaining our presence, Local 555 demonstrates its support for the Latino labor movement.

As a result of my experience in SJU, I have been an active dues paying member of LCLAA for two years now and active in our local Central Florida LCLAA Chapter where we are actively engaged in our local community with many campaigns such as voter registration, community outreach programs, feeding the needy, toy drives, and Latina equal pay to name a few.

This past August, with the support of our local, I along with Andrew Soto (MDW Ramp Alternate/Education Committee Member) and Ricardo Perez (LAX Ramp Alternate) attended this year's LCLAA conference in Philadelphia which marked the 2<sup>nd</sup> year that I was privileged to represent Local 555. This year we had 282 attendees representing thirty-one unions, thirteen attendees of which were from TWU LOCAL 555, 556



and 100. During these conferences many topics are discussed that affect the labor movement as it pertains to, not only the Latino community, but minorities and women in general. We heard from several keynote speakers. Most notably Richard L. Trumka (AFL-CIO President) who gave a powerful speech as he spoke about how ***“We are a nation of immigrants”*** and how ***“We are the labor movement”*** and spoke on how our nation is being divided by ***“Racist Rhetoric”*** and how we should fight bigotry with solidarity! He elaborated on how NAFTA and CAFTA have gutted American manufacturing and iterated that we support trade if it supports labor and the importance of ensuring future trade agreements that protect fair wages and safe jobs and how our nation is being poisoned and people are being dehumanized!

He also spoke on why we should question trade rules and iterated that human suffering does not stop at the southern border and how, for years, Mexico has kept wages so low that poverty has increased. There is a reason why Mexicans and other immigrants come across the borders! Not all are criminals as some political figures would have you believe. Did you know that the United States has spent 28 billion on immigration and only 2 billion on the labor movement? How about the ICE raid in Mississippi? And the El Paso Shooter? This man traveled 600 miles to shoot and kill Mexicans. I ask you, before you believe what is being said on the national stage, to educate yourselves! Research for yourself and you will find that there is more than meets the eye than just a political agenda. There are many good people here that contribute to our community. That are here seeking an opportunity to provide for their families. Yes, some are here illegally, but maybe they just need help to be here the right way. What were the circumstances that led them here? Maybe they are afraid. Each case can be different. We cannot subscribe to the mentality that these people are all guilty by association. You may either know someone or

are related to someone who is in this very situation. Ask yourself, what you can do to help.

We heard from other notable speakers at this year’s conference such as Shannon Lederer (Director of Immigration Policy at AFL-CIO), Natalie Sowinski (Community Engagement Coordinator Philadelphia AFL-CIO) and Hareth Andrade (DACA Recipient) that spoke about DACA (Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals), Families being separated and TPS (Temporary Protected Status) recipients as well as the policies the labor movement is pushing forward and why they are important. Elissa McBride (American Federation of State, County and Municipal Employees AFL-CIO) Secretary Treasurer that spoke on the fight against University of California outsourcing jobs, Attacks on people of color and families, the Janis decision and standing up for social and racial injustice.



*L to R: Richard Trumka - AFL-CIO President and Jesus Gomez Garcia*

We heard from the Economic Justice for Latinas and heard from a panel of speakers such as Evelyn DeJesus AFT Executive Vice President (American Federation of Teachers AFL-CIO), Sabrina Hernandez IBEW Local 6, Liz Jimenez (Sports Journalist) SAG-AFTRA, Dora Cervantes IAM, Marissa Senteno NY-Co Director (National Domestic Workers Alliance), Andrea Delgado (Government Affairs Director United Farm Workers Foundation) spoke on wage disparities where Latinas make fifty-three cents to every dollar a white non-Hispanic man does, the importance of promoting well-funded apprenticeships that pay between \$25 to \$65 an hour for women in the trades. How women in unions make forty-eight percent more than their non-union counterparts. How most employers want more work with less benefits and workers are being over utilized and threatened with ICE if they complain.

The Final panel we heard consisted of Thomas

Saenz (President & General Counsel MALDEF), Terry Melvin (President CBTU & LCCA), Vivian Chang (Civic Engagement Manager APALA) and Dr. Gabriela Lemus (Mi Familia Vota, Chair). They spoke on how there are 29 million Latinos eligible to vote and how we must do everything within our power to motivate and keep them civically engaged and participating in elections. One out of two agricultural workers are undocumented. Employers are breaking the law by hiring them, yet the workers are the only ones being accosted and deported. Many times, it's the employers themselves that call ICE when workers complain about working conditions. Where is the accountability and justice?

In addition to these speakers we also attended great workshops that were very educational and informative such as the following;

- The importance of Unions and Organizing for Latino and Immigrant Health and Worker Safety where they spoke about National COSH (National Council for Occupational Safety and Health) and how OSHA is underfunded and undermanned to keep up with all safety violations and concerns and how we can help.
  - Union Representation, Issues for Immigrant Workers where they discussed the importance of union representation to combat the racial and labor injustices befalling immigrant workers.
  - How your medicine could be cutting into your retirement and how medical costs are affecting your retirement.
  - Gearing up for the 2020 Census where they discussed the importance of Latino communities being fully counted and ensuring they are fully funded.
  - LCLAA Chapters as Labor/Community Coalitions where they discussed community outreach and involving unions and non-profit organizations.
- In closing, I am extremely proud to be a part of LCLAA and am extremely proud of the work we did in SJU in 2018. This year's conference was very engaging and informative, and we learned a great

deal. I would like to again thank Andrew Soto and Ricky Perez for attending the conference with me this year and the Local Executive Board for their support and confidence. It is my hope that their experience shall serve as a testament as to why it is vital for our local to continue to support LCLAA by maintaining our presence in each year's conference. As a member of both TWU 555 and the Central Florida LCLAA Chapter, I am a voting delegate representing both at each conference and it is my sincerest wish that as you read this article it has raised your awareness on these important issues plaguing the Latino community and the labor movement. You don't have to be Latino to be involved. We have many great leaders in LCLAA that are not Latino that care a great deal about the Latino movement. It has been a great honor and privilege to represent Local 555. Again, my deepest gratitude to all who

supported our involvement.



*L to R: Earl Williams - MCO, Shirley Duff, Oscar Camara - HOU, Jesus Gomez - MCO, Darryl Wallington - MCO, Gisela Alvarez - TWU 556 MCO, Egda Avila - TWU 556 MCO)*

Did you find this information helpful? Do you want to be more involved? Have a family member or a friend that

could benefit from more information? Want to join or start a local LCLAA chapter? Visit [LCLAA.ORG](http://LCLAA.ORG)

On a personal note, as the holidays are upon us, I ask all of you to take time and reflect on how fortunate we are. Right now, somewhere in our very own communities, there is a hungry child, there is a family struggling, there is someone unemployed, there are families separated because of their immigration status. The list goes on. The very benefits, privileges and wages you enjoy today were negotiated on your behalf by your Union and many don't have that luxury. Remember how fortunate we are to be part of a union. Stay Strong! Stay United! Together we can overcome anything. I wish each one of you a Happy Holiday season and may the good lord bless each of you with Health, Love, Family and Prosperity!

In Solidarity,  
**Jesus Gomez Garcia**  
**MCO Operations Agent**

# ARBITRATION SCHOOL

**T**WU LOCAL 555 HELD AN ARBITRATION Training seminar from August 12<sup>th</sup> to 16<sup>th</sup> at the Conference Center at the new offices.

The training class materials and training were compiled and provided by Gary Shults, former TWU Local 555 President, current TWU International Training Director, and a proud member of this Local.

The attendees were enabled and equipped to prepare, present, and be effective in the arbitration process. Mr. Ed Cloutman, long term Labor Attorney and counsel for this Local, did some pro bono work and donated his time and efforts to serve as the pseudo arbitrator on the last day of the class. The attendees were divided up into “Company” and Union advocates where they prepared and presented a case to the arbitrator involving a discipline letter and a suspension. Mr. Cloutman, as the arbitrator rendered a split decision, maintaining the level of discipline but awarding the days of the suspension or loss of pay back to the grievant. Thanks, Gary and Ed for your valuable service to this Local, by enabling the attendees to be more capable and effective advocates in the fight and service of the best members in the airline industry. Congratulations and thanks to all participants. Now go forth and fight the good fight!



*L to R back: Oscar Camara, Sam Conte, Darryl Wallington, Ed Cloutman, Adan Robles, Chris Lampe  
front: Heard Bryant, Marcus Harris, and Marwyn Hughes*

**Jerry McCrummen • DAL**  
**1<sup>st</sup> Vice President**



