



# THE DISPATCHER

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**Remembering a labor warrior:** ILWU Vice President (Hawaii) Wesley Furtado passed away on March 15. He will be remembered for his dedication as a leader, skills as a negotiator, and hard work as an organizer.

# ILWU honors International Vice President (Hawaii) Wesley Furtado

ILWU International Vice President (Hawaii) Wesley Furtado passed away on March 15, 2020 at the age of 64. Wes rose from humble beginnings as a second-generation longshore worker in a working-class family who became a widely respected leader within the ILWU and the labor movement for his fierce commitment to unions, devotion to social justice and considerable organizing and negotiating skills.

ILWU International President Willie Adams recalled his longtime relationship with Furtado. "Wes was a labor warrior, and I had a great amount of respect for him and how he worked. He was mentored by

Bobo Lapena and Tommy Trask—two powerful ILWU leaders with very different styles but who both got results," Adams said. "Wes took the best of both their styles and created his own style. Like them, Wes was old school—he understood the importance of politics and he had a personality that put people at ease. Wes could get along in any situation and relate to every person he met. This gained him respect from the employers, ILWU members, and union brothers and sisters all over the world. Wes was a true internationalist."

### Early years

Wes was born on September 4, 1955 in Honolulu, Hawaii. He attended school in Kailua when it was still a small town just 12 miles

from Honolulu, but a world apart because of its location on the other "windward" side of Oahu. During high school, he held a part-time job, stocking shelves in a local supermarket in the morning, then returned after school to bag groceries.

### Plans to enter the trades

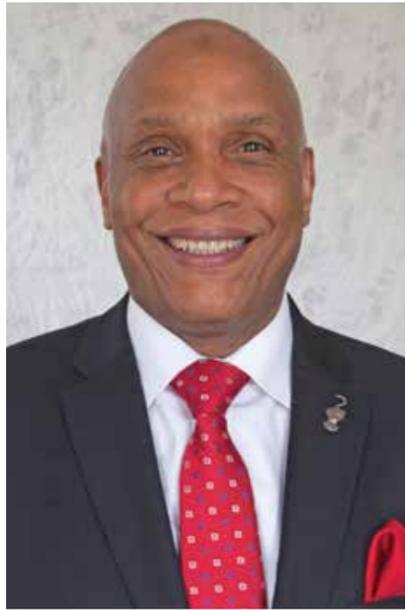
After graduating, Wes got a job at an air conditioning and refrigeration supply warehouse where he met workers in the trade and applied to an apprenticeship program run by the Plumbers and Pipefitters Union. While waiting for his application to be approved, Wes' father encouraged him to apply for work on the docks. He took his father's advice and started working on the waterfront in 1978 at the age of 22.

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## PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



The year 2020 will be remembered as the Great Lockdown. The lengthy interruption of our lives will continue and so will the economic trauma. Consumer confidence may fail to improve and an economic reset will be essential for us to move forward. We have been waiting for a surge in shipping — work that has not happened and may not happen this year. Trade restrictions have not lifted. Tourism is down. Ridership on ferries is down. Our members have been laid off and some of our members are being sent back to the hall. Work is down across the board and the unknown looms large. In the 40 years I have been a member of this great union, I have never seen a time when our members cannot have union meetings in person until now. All of this is due to a pandemic over which we have no control.

Our members are facing constant demands including new policies over the proper use of personal protective equipment (PPE)

and sanitation protocols on the job. We continue the never ending fight with employers to secure PPE, to put safety first, and to provide COVID-19-related sick leave for all. These safety measures should be a human right in order to maintain dignity on the job and in the hall. We should not have to struggle for these basic protections; we should not have to fight, for example, for two weeks of paid sick leave when a longshore worker gets sick with COVID-19 while working to keep the ports open and supplies moving during a global pandemic. Similarly, testing should be available for all. In the weeks and months ahead, the ILWU officers, local officers, and the membership will need to

ple losing their lives continues to grow. State and local government officials along the West Coast have taken this seriously from the beginning. As a result, we have been fortunate that the rate of infection is low in comparison to other areas. However, as the pandemic persists, we continue to see the devastating consequences in our families and communities.

In addition to the ongoing public health crisis, we have a jobs crisis with unemployment at an all-time high since the Great Depression. To date, we have suffered significant layoffs in Local 5, Local 6, Local 142, the IBU, and the Alaska Longshore Division. For the longshore locals, although work at

Bay Area ILWU members and community allies have been donating resources to the laid off workers from Tartine, who just voted to join Local 6. Young workers in Local 23 have been reaching out to pensioners to assist with things like grocery shopping and dropping off household items. Members from across the union are reaching out to assist others in ways large and small.

Our strength comes from our membership and local leadership and we cannot thank you enough for your dedication. Please let us know whatever actions our members and locals are taking to help out during this terrible pandemic. We all need to be engaged because our families and communities are at risk. Solidarity is important now and always, and we will continue to search for opportunities where we can play a positive role. I want to give a special thank you to International Vice President Bobby Olvera Jr., International Secretary-Treasurer Ed Ferris, Coast Committeemen Cam Williams and Frank Ponce De Leon, and all the hard working staff at the International and the Coast Longshore Division. Without them, this union would not continue to function and for that, we owe them all a debt of gratitude.

Moving forward, we must continue to maintain a first class temperament as we face the new norm. May we always remember the 4th guiding principle of the ILWU and let it guide us during this season of life: "To help any worker in distress" must be a daily guide in the life of every trade union and its individual members.

***In spite of the tragedy from the COVID-19 pandemic, there are glimmers of hope in the midst of all the turmoil. A renewed sense of community in our neighborhoods as we shelter in place together. Recognition and gratitude to the frontline workers who are doing their job to keep us safe. Acts of kindness to those that are in need. People helping people.***

have painful conversations about the kind of sacrifices required by all of us in order to protect our people, our union, and our communities. One thing that we won't need to debate is the heart of the ILWU, the resolve of our members, and the need for us to step into the void and demand more for workers.

The COVID-19 pandemic has had an overwhelming impact on millions of people across the globe. The United States has been especially hard hit as the country with the highest number of cases to date. People have fallen ill in staggering numbers and the number of peo-

ple the grain elevators is steady, shipping has slowed and many B men are not seeing work opportunities. In the smaller ports, work has all but dried up.

In spite of the tragedy from the COVID-19 pandemic, there are glimmers of hope in the midst of all the turmoil. A renewed sense of community in our neighborhoods as we shelter in place together. Recognition and gratitude to the frontline workers who are doing their job to keep us safe. Acts of kindness to those that are in need. People helping people.



***An injury to one is an injury to all.***

### DISPATCHER

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# MENSAJE DEL PRESIDENTE

**E**l año 2020 será recordado como el del Gran Encierro. La interrupción prolongada de nuestras vidas continuará, al igual que el trauma económico. Es posible que la confianza de los consumidores no mejore y que sea esencial un reinicio económico para poder salir adelante. Hemos estado esperando un resurgimiento en el transporte marítimo – una actividad que no se ha dado y posiblemente no ocurra este año. Las restricciones comerciales siguen en pie. El turismo ha bajado, al igual que el número de pasajeros en los transbordadores. Nuestros miembros han sido cesados y algunos han sido devueltos a nuestras oficinas de colocación. En general, ha bajado el volumen de trabajo y la incertidumbre proyecta su sombra. En los 40 años que he sido miembro de este gran sindicato, nunca he vivido un momento en que nuestros miembros no hayan podido asistir a asambleas en persona hasta ahora. Todo esto es debido a una pandemia sobre la que no tenemos ningún control.

Nuestros miembros ahora afrontan constantemente nuevas exigencias, incluyendo nuevas directivas sobre el uso del equipo de protección personal (PPE, siglas en inglés) y protocolos de sanidad en el trabajo. Seguimos luchando constantemente con los empleadores para conseguir el PPE, para darle la máxima importancia a la seguridad, y procurar licencias por enfermedad relacionada con el COVID-19 para todos. Estas medidas de seguridad deberían ser un derecho

humano para poder mantener la dignidad en el trabajo y en las oficinas del sindicato. No es justo que tengamos que luchar por estas protecciones básicas; o luchar, por ejemplo, por tener dos semanas de licencia por enfermedad cuando un trabajador portuario se contagia con el COVID-19 mientras trabaja para mantener abierto el puerto y el traslado de provisiones durante una pandemia global. Asimismo, las pruebas para detectar el virus deberían estar disponibles para todos. En las próximas semanas y meses, los dirigentes del ILWU, dirigentes de los sindicatos locales y los miembros tendrán que tener conversaciones dolorosas sobre el tipo de sacrificio que todos debemos hacer para proteger a nuestra gente, nuestro sindicato y nuestras comunidades. Lo que no tendremos que debatir es el corazón del ILWU, el gran espíritu resolutivo de nuestros miembros y la necesidad de que nos pongamos a la vanguardia y exijamos más para los trabajadores.

La pandemia del COVID-19 ha tenido un impacto arrollador en millones de personas por todo el planeta. Estados Unidos ha sido golpeado más que otros dado que tiene el mayor número de afectados hasta la fecha. La cantidad de personas infectadas es asombrosa y la de personas que han perdido la vida sigue aumentando. Los funcionarios de gobiernos locales y estatales en la Costa del Pacífico han tomado esta situación en serio desde el principio. Como resultado, hemos tenido la fortuna de tener un índice de infección baja en comparación con otras zonas. Sin embargo, a medida que persiste la pandemia, seguimos experimentando las consecuencias devastadoras para nuestras familias y comunidades.

Además de la crisis de salud pública en curso, tenemos una crisis

laboral debido a que el nivel de desempleo es el más alto desde la Gran Depresión. Hasta la fecha, hemos sufrido cesantías significativas en el Local 5, Local 6, Local 142, el IBU y la División de Trabajadores Portuarios de Alaska. Para los sindicatos locales portuarios, aunque el trabajo en los elevadores de granos es constante, el transporte marítimo ha decaído y muchos compañeros B carecen de oportunidades de trabajo. En los puertos más pequeños, el trabajo casi ha desaparecido.

A pesar de la tragedia que es la pandemia del COVID-19, hay destellos de esperanza en medio de toda la confusión. Se ve un renovado espíritu comunitario en nuestras vecindades mientras nos refugiamos en nuestro propio lugar. El público reconoce y muestra su agradecimiento a los trabajadores de primera línea que desempeñan su trabajo para que estemos protegidos. Los actos de gentileza hacia los necesitados. La gente ayudándose mutuamente.

Los miembros de ILWU y aliados de la comunidad en la Zona de la Bahía han estado donando recursos a los trabajadores cesados de Tartine, quienes acaban de votar a favor de la afiliación al Local 6. Los trabajadores jóvenes del Local 23 han estado haciendo alcance con los jubilados para ayudarles con las compras de comestibles y entrega de artículos del hogar. Los miembros de todo el sindicato están extendiendo su mano para ayudar a otros con cosas grandes y pequeñas.

Nuestra fuerza estriba en nuestros miembros y dirigentes de nuestros locales y no hay suficientes palabras para agradecerles por su dedicación. Por favor infórmenos de todas las acciones que nuestros miembros y locales están tomando para prestar ayuda durante esta terrible pandemia. Todos debemos participar porque



nuestras familias y comunidades corren riesgo. La solidaridad es importante ahora y siempre, y seguiremos buscando oportunidades para jugar un papel positivo. Quiero dar las gracias especialmente al vice presidente del Sindicato Internacional, Bobby Olvera, Jr., el secretario tesorero del Sindicato Internacional, Ed Ferris, miembros del Comité del Litoral Cam Williams y Frank Ponce de León, y todo el personal tan trabajador del Sindicato Internacional y la División de Trabajadores Portuarios del Litoral. Sin ellos, este sindicato no podría seguir funcionando y por eso, tenemos una deuda de gratitud con ellos.

A medida que avanzamos, debemos seguir manteniendo un carácter intachable a medida que enfrentamos la nueva situación. Recordemos siempre el 4o. principio rector del ILWU y dejemos que nos guía durante esta temporada de nuestra vida: “Para ayudar a todo trabajador afligido” es la regla que debe seguir a diario todo gremio y sus miembros en lo individual.



**Harry says, “Stay safe!”** The life-size statue of ILWU co-founder Harry Bridges (1901-1990) was recently fitted with a mask, at its home outside Local 13’s new dispatch hall in Wilmington. The humorous gesture also reminded everyone to stay safe and wear personal protective equipment on the job. If Harry were alive today, he might ask why the federal government is allowing companies to profiteer and price-gouge on masks, and other supplies needed to protect workers and the public.



**Correction and apology:** Last month’s report about the Maritime Union of Australia’s National Conference failed to recognize the participation of ILWU Canada President Rob Ashton (far left). Also attending from ILWU Canada were Local 502 members Jeremy Noullett and Dorian Eccles (not pictured). We regret the omission and appreciate the chance to correct the record.

# ILWU honors International Vice President (Hawaii) Wesley Furtado

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## Beginning on waterfront

As his seniority and experience on the waterfront grew, Wes' abilities were increasingly recognized by his peers. Co-workers elected him to serve as their Shop Steward, then Longshore Unit officer, and eventually a member of the Longshore Negotiating Committee.

## Becoming an organizer

It was through helping non-union workers to organize that Wes began to distinguish himself. He started as a rank-and-file organizer in 1986. His first major assignment involved helping workers at a Kauai hotel to organize for better pay and working conditions. That experience helped Wes find his calling in life, as he explained during an interview with ILWU Historian Harvey Schwartz in 2014.

"I found a passion to help people to stand up as equals to the employers," Wes said, "To ask for what they deserve for the work they perform. That's what drives me. When we organize a new house and negotiate over the table and look at the employer, we can tell them what we think we deserve. We deal as equals."

## International Representative

Local 142 President Donna Domingo knew Wes well because they both grew up together in Kailua. "I worked for Wesley's mom when I was in high school and our family lived just up the street from them," she recalls. They lost



**Rallying for mine workers:** Vice President Furtado at a rally for ILWU Local 30 members in Boron, CA during their 107-day lockout by the mining giant Rio Tinto in 2010.

touch after graduating, then met fifteen years later in a surprising way.

In August 1989 Wes was appointed to serve as an International Representative by ILWU International President Jimmy Herman. In that new position, Wes kept on organizing, negotiated numerous difficult first contracts and oversaw challenging renewals. It's also how Domingo met him again.

"I saw this guy who looked familiar at one of the big hotels on Maui where the ILWU was organizing," said Domingo, "and it turned out to be Wesley, so we both ended up in the union movement together."

"Even back then, I could see that Wesley had courage and the patience to understand organizing was a long-term commitment. He knew how to bring people together and he understood politics, so he used those skills to negotiate and finesse contracts that improved conditions for workers," said Domingo.

## Challenging & winning the VP race

In the year 2000, Wes decided to run against International Vice President (Hawaii) Leonard Hoshijo. Wes narrowly lost by 291 votes out of 11,000 cast. A controversy ensued with Wes challenging the results. His protest was rejected by the union's International Election Procedures Committee, but upheld by the International Executive Board, which ordered a new election. Wes won the re-run by 850 votes – making him the new International Vice President for Hawaii.

ILWU President Emeritus Robert "Big Bob" McEllrath recalled his many years of friendship, comradery, and hard work with Wesley during his time as International Vice President (Hawaii). "The first time I remember meeting Wesley, he was an International Rep at one of the longshore caucuses in the 1990s. In 2000, Wesley and I both ran and were elected to the position of Vice President. At the time, (ILWU President Emeritus Jim Spinosa) Spinner would send me out to travel and I told him, 'I'm taking Wesley with me.' That's when we became not just co-workers but really good friends. We got to trust and understand the way each other worked." McEllrath continued, "When I first became International President, I remember having a meeting with the Titled Officers to go over roles and responsibilities. Wes

was by far the best organizer I have ever seen. For me to tell him how to do his job would be crazy. He knew everything better than anyone out there." Big Bob concluded, "With Wes' passing, the ILWU lost a great labor leader. And for me, I lost a great friend."

## Legacy of a leader

Throughout the more than thirty years that he held office, first as an International Representative and then as International Vice President, Wes' biggest contribution was furthering the ILWU's organizing program in Hawaii, as the state's economy continued shifting from agricultural to service work.

Longtime ILWU Organizer Tracy Takano recalls working with Wesley for over 24 years, spending their first five together as organizers for Local 142.

"When he was elected International Vice President, Wesley's duties greatly expanded," explained Takano. "He played a key role in building solidarity with unions around the world and representing ILWU members to top government officials and employers. But when we got together, either in Hawaii or over the phone, the conversation usually turned to organizing. Sometimes it was about specific drives, sometimes on strategic organizing. He liked to remind me by saying: 'I'm an organizer.'"

"Wesley was very proud to be an International Vice President, and he was always clear on what it meant to hold union office. For him, respect didn't come from the title. Respect had to be earned – and throughout his long union career, Wesley earned widespread respect for himself and the ILWU."

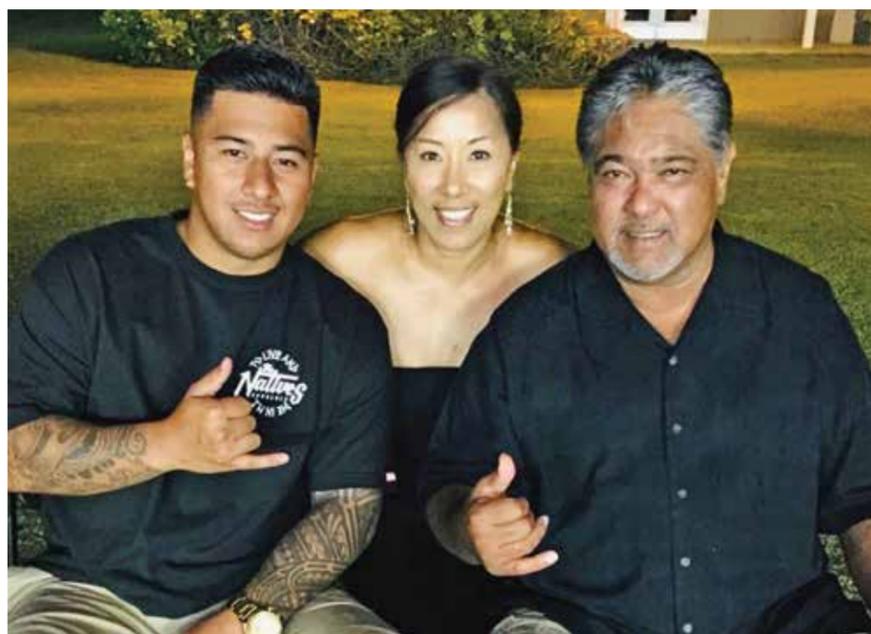
## It's about the union

Wesley met his wife Marla 32 years ago through the ILWU: "It was funny because I used to see him (Wesley) on the Big Island working. Wesley knew my brother because they would rope (do rodeo) together so he was a familiar face. I was working at an ILWU

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**Oath of office:** Wesley Furtado being sworn-in as International Vice President by James Spinosa in 2000.



Wesley enjoyed spending time with some of his ohana: son Kyan and wife Marla.

hotel on the Kohala Coast while going to school part time and Wes was organizing on the Big Island.” Marla said. “I was drawn to his charisma, his intelligence, and his passion for the things he loves, including the union. We had the same kind of humanitarian heart.”

Marla recalled his commitment to the ILWU. “The union was more than a position or a title for him. It was his life. He loved the union and what it stood for and saw his fellow ILWU members as part of his family. His job was everything to him and he sacrificed a lot for other people. He knew how important it was to never forget where we came from because we are here to help the people not to help ourselves. Wesley always said it’s not about the individual leader, it’s about the union and how you can make it better and stronger.”

#### Recent accomplishment

One of Wes’ last major accomplishments was the creation of Local 100 which represents newly-organized longshore supervisors. In addition to working with Hawaii’s powerhouse, Local 142, he also assisted the Inland-boatmen’s Union of the Pacific, Hawaii Region, with their organizing efforts.

#### Condolences from afar

After Wes’ passing in March, letters of condolence arrived to the ILWU from dockworker unions all over the globe. One heartfelt message came from the International Transport Workers’ Federation (ITF) President Paddy Crumlin.

“Wesley’s union journey from the docks of Honolulu was as long as it was meaningful. It was founded on the hard rock of his belief in social and economic justice for all workers, and blessed with a gentle but pervasive charisma. His achievements and actions bettered the lives of all he touched and were as steady as the Kona winds of his home,” Crumlin wrote. “The words and



*International President Emeritus “Big Bob” McEllrath and Wes Furtado share a laugh during the 2006 ILWU Convention in Vancouver, BC.*

workings of Wes’ life were not solely dedicated to his fellow longshore and dock workers. He was a formidable and relentless activist for peace, an advocate for sovereign rights and true political independence and accountability, and of course, a warrior for justice, equality and universal access to all material benefits regardless of race, gender, age or religious denomination.”

ILWU Canada’s Local 502 lowered their flags to half-mast at the Vancouver union hall to honor Brother Wes’ memory.

#### A legacy remembered

ILWU International Vice President (Mainland) Bobby Olvera Jr., remembered Wes as a mentor and a selfless union leader. “Brother Wes was instrumental in mentoring me over the past 10 years,” he said. “Wes was an example of rank-and-file leadership, he demonstrated selfless commitment to the membership of the ILWU. He was a progressive advocate for work-

ers’ rights around the world and his is a legacy that will live on forever.”

“The ILWU and the entire International trade union movement has lost an icon with the passing of Brother Wesley Furtado,” said ILWU International Secretary-Treasurer Ed Ferris.

“I will always fondly remember Brother Wes’ kind and gentle nature, his wonderful sense of humor, and his strong dedication and commitment to his family and his union.

“My sincerest condolences and prayers go out to his entire family during this difficult time. May our good Brother Wes always rest in peace.”

Coast Committeeman Cameron Williams said, “Wesley Furtado is a true labor icon who dedicated his life’s work for the betterment of the ILWU family. I will greatly miss the subtle conversations and charisma Brother Furtado expressed as he entered a room. May his legacy live on through the Furtado family, and never forget the precious time we all enjoyed in the presence of our dear friend.”

Coast Committeeman Frank Ponce De Leon said, “I would like to express my heartfelt sympathies and condolences on the passing of Wesley to his family, Marla, Levana and Kyan, and to his brothers, sisters and friends in the State of Hawaii. My thoughts and prayers are with you all during these difficult days. Wesley’s passing will not only leave a void in our hearts but also as a leader in the ILWU as well. Wesley may be gone from our sights but never from our individual memories. May Wesley’s journey on the sands of the shore find him much peace and comfort. Aloha Brother Wes!”

Danny Miranda, President of Local 94, recalled the friendship he and Wes cultivated through the years and his admiration for Wes’ negotiating style. “What made Wes so special as a leader was his passion for his work, his love for the Hawaiian culture and his love for the Hawaiian people. He treated the union like family. Wes wanted a better way of life for people, and he wanted them to feel good about their work, so he always stressed working conditions when negotiating. Wes always told me that in negotiations, you have to be a listener first and speak last. He always

stayed calm and people trusted him. That’s what made him so effective.”

ILWU Hawaii Longshore member Dustin Dawson recounted his many years working with and learning from Furtado. “Wes always gave everyone a chance to learn and teach what he knew. There are a lot of things that Wes doesn’t get credit for. He had the ear of a lot of powerful and influential people. Whether they agreed with him or not, believed in the union or not, were Democrat or Republican, employer or worker—he had their ear. This was not because of his position but because of the person he was. He was always willing to sit down, listen, and talk story. Wes was always there for the members, not himself. We will never forget all the hard work Wes put into the ILWU. Because Wes trained and passed on his knowledge, his legacy will never die.”

James Spinosa, who served as ILWU International President from 2000-2006, remembered Wes’ work ethic and reliability. “He was a delightful guy to be around. Anytime I asked him for something, he was always there for me,” Spinosa said. “This is a great loss for the ILWU. He was someone who was always working to move the union forward.”

Eusebio “Bobo” Lapenia Jr., who was elected President of Local 142 in 1991 until 2003, first met Wes when while Wes was serving as a rank-and-file organizer in the 1980’s.

“Wesley was a very good organizer who was instrumental in organizing several major hotels on the Big Island,” Lapenia said. “He was a terrific leader and a testament to his generation. Hopefully he inspired a new generation of longshoremen to become leaders.”

ILWU President Willie Adams concluded with his favorite words of wisdom from Wesley: “Wes always told me, ‘Discussions are always better than arguments. An argument is to find out who is right. A discussion is to find out what is right.’ Wesley ‘The Hurricane’ Furtado will always be remembered as the spirit of Hawaii and a labor leader for all seasons.” Wes is survived by his wife Marla, his daughter Levana Solidum, his son Kyan Alaka’i Furtado, and three grandchildren.



**Political Action:** (L to R) ILWU Legislative Director Lindsay McLaughlin, Vice President Furtado, then US Labor Secretary Tom Perez, Congressman John Garamendi and ILWU President Willie Adams (then serving as Secretary-Treasurer) during a legislative visit to Washington DC in 2014.

# Solidarity helps seafarers on cruise ships

The cruise ship industry gained notoriety early this year after several Princess vessels became high-profile hotspots for COVID-19 outbreaks, spreading the virus to hundreds of passengers. The cruise industry operates 272 vessels worldwide that host 300 million customers a year. While companies initially responded to the outbreaks with an eye toward protecting their public image and profits, treatment of crewmembers before and after the virus struck seemed to be a lower priority.

The cruise industry depends on massive numbers of low-wage workers to care for guests and operate the giant vessels. Typical crew sizes range from 25% to 50% of the total guests, with ratios of one crewmember for every three customers being common.

## Longstanding abuses

Crewmembers on cruise and cargo vessels have long struggled against low pay, abusive management and dangerous working conditions. Vessel owners perpetuate this abuse by exploiting a loophole in maritime law, allowing ships to register in countries that provide little or no enforcement of labor, environmental and tax laws. Most large vessels, whether carrying passengers or cargo, now fly a “flag of convenience” which allows them to carry passengers from wealthy nations while bypassing stronger labor, environmental and tax laws.

## COVID-19 flourishes under FOCs

Flying a flag of convenience (FOC) has made responding to the COVID-19 outbreaks more difficult for passengers and crewmembers. When the virus outbreaks occurred, vessels were far from the countries where they were registered, and those countries had neither the funding or infrastructure to offer any meaningful medical, public health and scientific assistance. That left responsibility to states, nations and non-

governmental organizations (NGO’s) to respond as best they could while epidemics raged aboard the giant vessels. The national governments of passengers and crewmembers were called to help, with some offering sympathy and support, while others turned their backs on both citizens and workers.

## Tale of two vessels

The experience of two different Princess vessels illustrates how the FOC system allows seafarers from around the world to be exploited. In February, the Diamond Princess attempted to quarantine at the Port of Yokohama in Japan, following a COVID-19 outbreak. Japanese officials were limited in their ability to intervene because the ship was registered in Bermuda and subject to that nation’s laws, not Japan’s.

## COVID-19 strikes second Princess

A few weeks later, a different vessel, the Grand Princess, was sailing in circles off Northern California. They needed to dock at a nearby port because COVID-19 was spreading among passengers and crewmembers. After high-level consultations with California Governor Gavin Newsom and Oakland Mayor Libby Schaaf, the Grand Princess was allowed to dock in Oakland on March 9th. Two passengers and 19 crew had tested positive for the virus, confirmed by test kits that were delivered and recovered from the vessel via helicopter while the ship circled off the coast. Once again, efforts to enforce federal and state health and safety standards were limited because the ship was registered in Bermuda. That complication didn’t stop local community groups and longshore leaders from voicing concerns at rallies and sharing those concerns with reporters.

## Protecting workers & community

Local 10 President Trent Willis joined with Local 34 President Keith Shanklin, Local 75 Secretary Ryan Murphy and Local 91 President Billy Keypoo to express concern for the safety of seafarers – and ensure that refuse offloaded from the Grand Princess was properly handled to protect longshore workers and the community



Photo by Brooke Anderson

**Safety first:** This protest held in front of the Grand Princess cruise ship at the Port of Oakland on April 7 was one of several organized in the Bay Area to advocate for better safety measures needed to protect longshore workers and seafarers. The speaker is Adrian Boonifacio, Chairperson of Anakbayan USA. The youth and student group promotes democratic change in the Philippines, home port for many seafarers who serve as crewmembers on cargo and cruise ships. Other groups supporting the effort included the Alliance of South Asians Taking Action, the People’s Association of Workers and Immigrants, Migrante NorCal, Filipino Community Center in San Francisco and National Alliance for Filipino Concerns.

from COVID-19-contamination. The team of union leaders began coordinating their efforts before the cruise ship arrived, using their Joint Port Labor Relations Committee as a forum to raise concerns with employers. Local officers sought and received support from the ILWU Coast Committee and International Officers, including President Willie Adams.

“It wasn’t easy, we had to make them do everything,” said Trent Willis, “and that includes making them follow the grievance procedures,” he added.

## ITF Inspectors involved

As events were unfolding in Northern California, longtime ILWU member Sam Levens was completing a training in London, England, as the Bay Area’s new International Transport Workers Federation (ITF) Inspector. West Coast ITF Coordinator Jeff Engels from Seattle temporarily filled-in during the brief absence, coordinating events on the ground in Oakland until Levens returned. Engels kept in touch with local activists, the union in Italy (FIT-CISL) that represented workers on the Grand Princess, U.S. Coast Guard officials and Princess Cruise Lines representatives. He also consulted with ITF leaders in London and with the ILWU International Officers. Levens returned and quickly hit the ground running as the area’s newly-trained ITF Inspector.

## Advocating for work

Levens worked hard to advocate for crewmembers under trying circumstances – made more difficult because the vessel is registered in Bermuda under a flag of convenience. No representative from Bermuda helped with the lengthy and sometimes difficult negotiations needed to protect the health and safety of crewmembers, longshore and transportation workers, passengers and residents of Oakland. Another complication involved crewmembers’ desire to return to their homes in China, the Philippines and other nations – but some countries were reluctant to repatriate their own citizens because they had been exposed to COVID-19 while working on cruise ships.

President Willie Adams used his experience and connections as a long-

time San Francisco Port Commissioner to assist Levens and Engels in their efforts to protect workers and the community.

## Cruise ship flotilla

On April 8, the Grand Princess left the Bay Area and sailed for Southern California where she anchored with roughly a dozen other cruise ships, seeking to enter the Port of Los Angeles on April 23. Meanwhile, her sister vessel, the Royal Princess, sailed from Southern California on April 18, filled with seafarers bound for the Philippines, then Indonesia and India – bringing workers home who were unable to secure passage on a charter flight. Princess officials have told Bay Area longshore leaders that they have now sanitized the Princess Grand and intend to shuttle her between LA and Oakland every 7-10 days, using a skeleton crew to keep the engines and systems operational.

## Passengers gone, problems persist

Cruise ships around the world are in the final stages of unloading all their remaining passengers, a process that should be finished by the end of April. Then comes the work to assure seafarers will not languish before being repatriated to their homes. Time is running out for some seafarers with personal contracts that expire soon. Non-essential crewmembers are only entitled to room and board – without pay – until they can get home. Cruise Lines are also imposing industry-wide pay cuts for crewmembers who remain on duty, beginning in May. Companies are screaming poverty after decades of healthy profits, made easier by exploiting crewmembers and avoiding taxes – thanks to their flags of convenience.

## Seeking taxpayer subsidies

Registering with foreign flags to dodge labor laws and avoid paying taxes hasn’t stopped the world’s largest cruise line from seeking a massive bailout from U.S. taxpayers. Carnival, the massive parent company for Princess Lines, Holland America, Cunard, Seaborn, Costa and other lines, is seeking a public bailout for their foreign-flagged fleet. Jeff Engels predicts

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Photo by Indybay

**Speaking out:** Local 10 President Trent Willis (center) and Local 34 President Keith Shanklin (left) rallied with members and community leaders on March 20 at the Port of Oakland. The group called on employer SSA to sanitize equipment and facilities, including the terminal where the Grand Princess had docked before heading to Hunters Point in San Francisco. Other speakers included Bishop Bob Jackson of the Acts Full Gospel Church in West Oakland and Local 10 Business Agent John Hughes. Locals 75 and 91 also supported the call for protecting workers and the community from COVID-19. “It is imperative for us as workers, as well as the public, that the equipment we work with everyday, be sanitized to prevent the spread of Corona virus,” said Shanklin, who noted that other employers at the Port had complied with Safety Code requirements – except SSA.

# Solidarity on May Day

Solidarity was in the air on May Day, with ILWU members finding creative ways to celebrate the traditional workers holiday that began in 1889 to honor a strike by 40,000 Chicago workers for an eight-hour workday.

This year, COVID-19 restrictions meant traditional rallies and marches were unsafe, so other creative tactics were required.

ILWU members in the Columbia River region organized a car caravan that visited shops where workers are fighting for fair treatment, including Georgia Pacific warehouses. The company operates a production facility and two warehouses on the river. Because Georgia Pacific is owned by the anti-union Koch brothers, the company is demanding contract cuts from members of the Inlandboatmen's Union (IBU) – the ILWU's Marine Division – who work inside to provide paper towels and bath tissue to Costco and other retailers. After visiting GP's Kelley Point facility, they headed to the River Gate warehouse. The caravan pulled-in and delivered a petition signed by most workers, asking the company to address a longstanding safety condition.

In the Bay Area, ILWU allies and community supporters organized a large car caravan on May Day. The

effort was organized by longtime ILWU-ally Fred Glass, and included Susan Solomon, President of San Francisco's United Educators teacher union and widow of longtime ILWU Local 6 leader, Fred Pecker. Three dozen cars went to San Francisco's Pier 50 where they joined a coalition of housing justice organizations to create an International Workers Day car caravan with more than 150 vehicles. Cars were decorated with posters demanding protection for frontline workers, release of ICE detainees, a Green New Deal to create jobs, and cancellation of rent and mortgage payments during the crisis. The caravan honked and circled its way to the Bill Graham Auditorium – chosen because it provided hundreds of original New Deal jobs between 1935 and 1939. A Green New Deal banner underscored the connection between federal rescue efforts in the 1930s and what's needed now to help working families.

In Southern California, the leaders of Locals 13, 63 and 94 produced an open letter to the community, thanking the multitude of “essential workers” who remain at work during the COVID-19 pandemic despite the risk: those working in hospitals, elder care and rehab, grocery stores, security, truck drivers, and many others, including dockworkers.

Local 94 took those concerns to heart with a program that delivered



Photo by Hunter Lee, Press Telegram/SCNG

**The ILWU delivers:** Local 94 member Gil Garcia (wearing the bright orange shirt) delivered meals to Station #48 on May Day. It was the culmination of a weeklong effort by his union to thank frontline workers in their community. Donations from the local union were combined with help from local restaurants, including Sirinat Thai in San Pedro, to make the effort a success.

“thank you” meals to essential workers in their port community during the last week of April, concluding on May Day. A contribution from Local 94 members was combined with donations from local businesses (Sandwich Saloon, Big Nicks, Sirinat Thai, Busy Bee Market). Meals were brought to a local fire station and hospitals including the Harbor-UCLA Medical Center, Little Company of Mary Providence Hospital in San Pedro and St. Mary Medical Center in Long Beach.

“The doctors, nurses, staff and first-responders who show up day after day to care for our families deserve every bit of support we can give them,” said Local 94 President Danny Miranda.

“The harbor communities have always supported ILWU members and



San Francisco activists organized a solidarity car caravan on May Day with 150 vehicles.

we're happy to support them back” The union effort generated a nice story in the Daily Breeze newspaper by reporter Donna Littlejohn with a photo by Hunter Lee of the Press-Telegram/Southern California News Group.

## LETTERS TO THE DISPATCHER

Dear Editor,

### Remembering Johnnie Robinson

Johnnie Pearl Robinson, wife and partner to the legendary ILWU Local 10 rank and file leader Bro. Leo Robinson, passed away in her sleep in the presence of family members on Monday, April 13th at her home in Raymond, CA.

Married for more than 34 years to Brother Leo, Sister Johnnie was a highly active supporter of ILWU and Local 10, in particular. She accompanied Leo for many years to Longshore Caucuses, International Conventions and Coalition of Black Trade Unionists' gatherings across the nation. She was present at the Million Worker March October 17, 2004 at the Lincoln Memorial. She was also at the Million Worker March Commemoration of the Million More Movement in 2005 in Washington D.C.

Brother Leo paid tribute to Sister Johnnie while at the fifth anniversary of MWM gathering at Teamsters Local 808, in Long Island City, New York in 2009. He was overcome with emotion as he vividly expressed an admiration for Johnnie in his life keeping him steadfast through many challenges and struggles.

Johnnie and Leo provided many of us in the labor movement and the community with examples of doing revolutionary work.

During a critical period of South African anti-apartheid resistance, Johnnie and Leo opened their home to South African freedom fighters that were living underground in the U.S. They also provided financial support while some attended universities in the States.

In March of 2013, at the memorial of her husband at Local 10, Sister Robinson received a Posthumous Nelson Mandela Freedom Award for Brother Robinson, presented by Ebrahim Rassol, South African Ambassador to the United States. A South African flag was also presented for the extraordinary solidarity of the ILWU and the leadership Leo Robinson during the anti-apartheid struggle.

Sister Johnnie Robinson and Brother Leo Robinson's contributions to the ILWU shall long be remembered.

Condolences can be sent to granddaughters  
Ms. Moneshay Platt and Tamara Bell Alexander  
C/O 25110 Patricia Lane  
Raymond, CA 93653

Clarence Thomas  
Past secretary-treasurer, ILWU Local 10 retired  
Co-Founder of the Million Worker March Movement

Send your letters to the editor to: *The Dispatcher*, 1188 Franklin St.,  
San Francisco, CA 94109-6800 or email to editor@ilwu.org

## ILWU support for communities hit by COVID-19

Local 500 longshore workers in the Vancouver area are mobilizing to help their community fight COVID-19.

As of mid-April, they've raised over \$15,000 in donations to assist health care workers in the region – plus another \$40,000 for the area's food bank.

Local 500 Business Agent Rickey Baryer is part of the team behind the effort and hopes other unions will do something similar. Meanwhile, the effort by Local 500 will continue.

“We're fortunate enough to still be working and able to put food on the table for our families,” Baryer added.

If you have a story to share about how your local union or ILWU co-workers are mobilizing to help fight COVID-19, please email craig@ilwu.org and roy@ilwu.org with your report and photos.



Photo by The Province

### Helping their community fight COVID-19:

Local 500 members have mounted an impressive fundraising campaign to help their community in greater Vancouver, B.C., cope with COVID-19.

# Solidarity helps seafarers on cruise ships

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that we should “expect to hear lobbyists and their friends in Congress crying about the need to ‘protect jobs’ for a company that spent decades refusing to pay living wages, sign decent contracts or pay their fair share of taxes.”

“The industry’s effort has failed so far,” says Engels, “but we’ll need to be vigilant to see that they don’t cut a deal with the current administration.”

## More than cruise ships

Problems for seafarers aren’t confined to cruise ships. The COVID-19 pandemic and resulting economic depression have hammered the cargo industry – causing some crew to be stranded and abandoned on vessels around the world. Many companies have instituted temporary freezes on crew changes or limited them to emergencies. The ITF and its maritime affiliates – including the ILWU – are pressing the International Maritime Organization and other bodies to see that seafarers and transport workers are treated fairly

during the COVID-19 crisis – and in the future when it eases.

## Fund to help workers

Seafarers were in a precarious situation long before the COVID-19 crisis struck early this year. Many workers are now stranded on ships at sea, and others are afraid to return home for fear of losing their jobs in the future. To help, the ITF has set-up a \$3 million emergency fund to assist seafarers abandoned, stranded or otherwise affected by this pandemic. Funds can be accessed through the ITF Inspectors or ITF affiliated unions.

## Repatriating crewmembers

As *The Dispatcher* was going to press, industry reports noted that some cruise ships, including a Princess vessel from the Port of Los Angeles, were being used to repatriate crewmembers to the Philippines and other ports in the Pacific.

Thanks to Jeff Engels, West Coast USA ITF Coordinator, and Bay Area Inspector Sam Levens for their contributions to this report.

## TRANSITIONS

### NEW PENSIONERS:

**Local 4:** Scott A. Orrell;  
**Local 8:** Joel Hernandez; Ronald M. Leistiko; Sean L. Smith;  
**Local 10:** Robert Shipp; L V. Ali;  
**Local 13:** Anthony T. Rukavina; Craig E. Magnusen; Manuel H. Garcia; Anita B. Gutierrez; Carl E. Knott Sr.; **Local 19:** Darren J. Ofsthun; Daryl L. Smith;  
**Local 21:** Steven R. Boldt;  
**Local 23:** Douglas A. Schmidt; Rodney Rhymes; **Local 29:** Kirt S. Roiz; Stephen A. Campana;  
**Local 34:** A Annamarie;  
**Local 63:** Victor G. Ramirez; Robert A. Shoats; Thomas C. Harrison, Jr; Roxanne V. Lawrence;  
**Local 94:** Matthew D. Clear;  
**Local 98:** Gerald R. Collen; Rosemarie J. Wiegman;

### DECEASED PENSIONERS:

**Local 8:** Joseph J. Brozene;  
**Local 10:** Howard Davis; Manuel G. Fernandez (Lana); Juan Gudino; Roy L. Dove; Raoul Robinson; William E. Henry; **Local 13:** Lawrence J. Timmer; Sigurd Dailey; Joe M. Villalobos; George D. Arbuckle; George J. Pallitto;

Melvin Brown Jr; Guss Roberts;  
**Local 19:** Thurman A. Kendrick; Carl J. Burke (Sandra); Harry Getz (Carol); **Local 21:** Keith V. Raappana; **Local 23:** James J. Tortorici; **Local 29:** William R. Silva  
**Local 34:** Fortino G. Cabrales; Frank W. Best; Darryl L. Kasper; Roy C. Stansall; **Local 52:** Roger A. Olson (Patricia); **Local 54:** Robert V. O’Keefe; **Local 63:** Joe D. Radisich; Larry L. Kelley; **Local 91:** Bennie L. Simmons; Paul R. Cagle;  
**Local 94:** Sixto R. Rodriguez;  
**Local 98:** William Spell;

### DECEASED SURVIVOR:

**Local 10:** Elizabeth De Luca; Janis Duvauchelle; **Local 12:** A. Lorraine Hunt; Elizabeth J. Kegel; Dora M. Huber; **Local 13:** Linda A. Hooper; Isabel M. Lopez; Deena Ostoich;  
**Local 21:** Beverley J. Palmer;  
**Local 24:** Florence R. Proctor;  
**Local 40:** Lois N. Miller;  
**Local 53:** Frances E. Fogarty;  
**Local 63:** Regina Thomas;  
**Local 92:** Marilyn Fuller; **Local 94:** Nova Jean Weber-Cristea; Hester Williams; **Local 98:** Marjorie A. Root;

## A Helping Hand...

...when you need it most. That’s what we’re all about. We are the representatives of the ILWU- sponsored recovery programs. We provide professional and confidential assistance to you and your family for alcoholism, drug abuse and other problems—and we’re just a phone call away.

### ILWU LONGSHORE DIVISION

**ADRP—Southern California**  
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 29000 South Western Ave., Ste 205  
 Rancho Palos Verdes, CA 90275  
 (310) 547-9966

**ADRP—Northern California**  
**Hunny Powell**  
 HPowell@benefitplans.org  
 400 North Point  
 San Francisco, CA 94133  
 (415) 776-8363

### ILWU WAREHOUSE DIVISION

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**Teamsters Assistance Program**  
 300 Pendleton Way  
 Oakland, CA 94621  
 (510) 562-3600

**ADRP—Oregon**  
**Brian Harvey**  
 5201 SW Westgate Dr. #207  
 Portland, OR 97221  
 (503) 231-4882

**ADRP—Washington**  
**Donnie Schwendeman**  
 3600 Port of Tacoma Rd. #503  
 Tacoma, WA 98424  
 (253) 922-8913

### ILWU CANADA

**EAP—British Columbia**  
**John Felicella**  
 3665 Kingsway, Ste 300  
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## SMOLIN-MELIN SCHOLARSHIP FUND

BETH A. ROSS, EUGENE VRANA, DAVID ERKKILA, NICOLE BRIDGES | Trustees

1188 Franklin Street, Suite 201  
 San Francisco, CA 94109  
 Telephone: (415) 771-6400  
 Fax: (415) 771-7010

March 19, 2020

### ATTENTION: LOCAL 10 MEMBERS

Trustees of the Smolin-Melin Scholarship Fund are prepared to accept applications for scholarships for the academic year 2020-2021. Now is the time to indicate your interest. **June 1, 2020 is the application deadline.**

Victor Smolin and Carlton Melin were longtime members of Local 10. They left a sum of money to establish the scholarship fund. They specified that scholarships were to be available to children of Class A Local 10 members to further their “collegiate” education. Trustees of the Fund interpret “members” to mean **active members in good standing at the time of disbursement of scholarship funds**, deceased members and retired members. The Trustees interpret “collegiate” to apply only to **full-time** study (at least 12 units per semester or quarter) at either a four-year college or an academic junior college.

The Trustees have agreed that (1) no applicant will be awarded more than four scholarships, (2) a fifth scholarship would be considered after careful review of the applicant’s record and if circumstances warrant and (3) in no event would an applicant be considered for a sixth scholarship.

Based always on available assets, the Fund historically has awarded scholarships in a range from \$1,000 to \$2,500 for full-time students at four-year colleges or universities, and from \$350 to \$1,750 for full-time students at two-year colleges.

Trustees are Beth Ross, retired counsel for ILWU Local 10, David Erkkila, a retired member of Local 10 and a friend of Victor Smolin, Eugene Vrana, retired Director of Educational Services and Librarian for ILWU, and Nicole Bridges, Fund Administrator and the granddaughter of Harry Bridges.

If you have a son or daughter who is applying to enter college next fall, or is already a college student who is planning to continue, and the above requirements are met, you might want to apply for one of these scholarships.

To request an application, simply email Nicole Bridges at [nbridges@leonardcarter.com](mailto:nbridges@leonardcarter.com). She will then send you the application form with the necessary explanatory materials.

## MAY IS MEDICAL, DENTAL PLAN CHOICE MONTH

Active and retired longshore families in the ports where members have a choice can change medical and/or dental plans during the Open Enrollment period May 1 to May 31, 2020. The change will be effective July 1, 2020. In addition to the May Open Enrollment period, members may change their medical plan and/or dental plan once at any time during the Plan Year (July 1-June 30).

The July 1, 2008 Memorandum of Understanding between the ILWU and PMA provides that new registrants in the ports where members have a choice of medical plans shall be assigned Kaiser HMO Plan Plan for the first 24 months of registration. After 24 months, those registrants who have qualified for continued eligibility under the Mid-Year/Annual Review hour’s requirement will have a choice of medical plans. New registrants in San Francisco, Sacramento, Stockton, Los Angeles, Portland/Vancouver and Washington will have a choice of dental plans on the first of the month following registration, and may change dental plans during the Open Enrollment period and one additional time during the Plan Year.

**MEDICAL CHOICE:** The medical plan choices are Kaiser Health Plan or the ILWU-PMA Coastwise Indemnity Plan for Southern California Locals 13, 26, 29, 46, 63 and 94. Northern California Locals 10, 18, 34 (San Francisco), 34 (Stockton), 54, 75 and 91; and Oregon-Columbia River Locals 4, 8, 40, and 92. In the Washington State area, the medical plan choices for Locals 19, 23, 32, 47, 52 and 98 are Kaiser Health Plan or the ILWU-PMA Coastwise Indemnity Plan.

**DENTAL CHOICE:** For Los Angeles Locals 13, 26, 63 and 94 the dental plan choices are Delta Dental of California, Harbor Dental Associates or Dental Health Services. For Southern California Locals 29 and 46 the dental plan choices are Delta Dental of California or Dental Health Services. For San Francisco Locals 10, 34, 75 and 91 the dental plan choices are Delta Dental of California, Dental Health Services, or Gentle Dental San Francisco. For Sacramento and Stockton Locals 18, 34 and 54 the dental plan choices are Delta Dental of California or Dental Health Services. For Portland/Vancouver Locals 4, 8, 40 and 92 the dental plan choices are LifeMap-Willamette Dental, Oregon Kaiser Dental Plan or Oregon/Washington Dental Service. For Washington Locals 7, 19, 21, 23, 24, 25, 27, 32, 47, 51, 52 and 98 the dental plan choices are Washington Dental Service or Dental Health Services.

Information on the medical and dental plans, and forms to change plans, can be obtained at the Locals and the ILWU-PMA Benefit Plans office.

All Medical and Dental Program Choice Forms and enrollment forms, as applicable, must be completed and received by the Benefit Plans office by May 31 for the enrollment change to be effective July 1.

mc/opeiu29afclcio/Open Enrollment Dispatcher Notice-032620