



THE DISPATCHER

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SFVS workers strike to protest illegal actions by VCA-Mars [page 2](#)



Rally for fair contract: National Veterinary Professionals Union Vice President Tana Greatorex speaks at a rally for CRVS workers in February of this year. Other organizations at the rally included ILWU Locals 4 and 5, the Inlandboatmen's Union and Jobs with Justice.

Veterinary workers at CRVS ratify first private-sector union contract in the industry

Workers at Columbia River Veterinary Specialists (CRVS) in Vancouver, Washington ratified their first union contract on August 12 by an overwhelming margin of 53-1. These workers have been bargaining a contract with CRVS management for over a year, after voting to join ILWU Local 5 in February 2019.

The contract is the first-ever private-sector union contract in the veterinary industry. Veterinary service is a rapidly growing, lucrative industry where workers are often faced with challenging working conditions and pay that is not commensurate with the education and skill required for

the profession. In recent years, there has been massive consolidation of the industry as large companies acquire locally owned hospitals, leading to a corporate-led environment where workers' rights and sustainable jobs for local communities too often come second to profit.

Organizing the unorganized

"This is a historic agreement that will set a new standard for wages and conditions in the veterinary industry," said ILWU International Vice President Bobby Olvera. "I am so proud of the workers at CRVS for their grit, determination and courage. I would also like to thank the staff of the Organizing Department for their work. Organizing workers in an industry with no history of unionization is a difficult task, but

also a necessary one. As the seventh guiding principle of the ILWU states; 'To organize the unorganized must be a cardinal principle of any union worth its salt; and to accomplish this is not merely in the interest of the unorganized; it is for the benefit of the organized as well.'"

Campaign goals

Like the vast majority of first contract campaigns, this one was long and hard fought. CRVS workers began the bargaining process in February 2019. The workers had several primary goals for their first contract:

1. Enhance worker rights beyond minimum legal (federal/state/local) requirements;
2. Raise wages and establish a fair and transparent wage structure;

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SFVS workers strike to protest illegal actions by their employer, VCA-Mars

Workers at San Francisco Veterinary Specialists (SFVS), walked-off the job on July 30 to protest federal labor law violations by their employer, VCA-Mars. The “Unfair Labor Practices” strike was triggered by a new charge that the ILWU filed against the company and by a new complaint issued by the Federal Government, alleging the hospital committed a host of federal labor law violations.

Solidarity and social distancing

Workers held a small rally outside of the hospital in San Francisco’s Mission District following proper COVID safety protocols, while community supporters and clients listened to the rally speakers over Zoom and participated in a car caravan that circled the hospital.

In 2018, workers at SFVS voted by a 3-to-1 margin to form a union and affiliate with ILWU Local 6. Since that time, they have been trying to negotiate their first contract. Meanwhile, the company has hired anti-union consultants and lawyers to avoid reaching an agreement. The company refused to meet more than one day per month for bargaining until recently, when they finally agreed to meet twice per month to settle a NLRB complaint for bargaining in bad faith in violation of federal law.

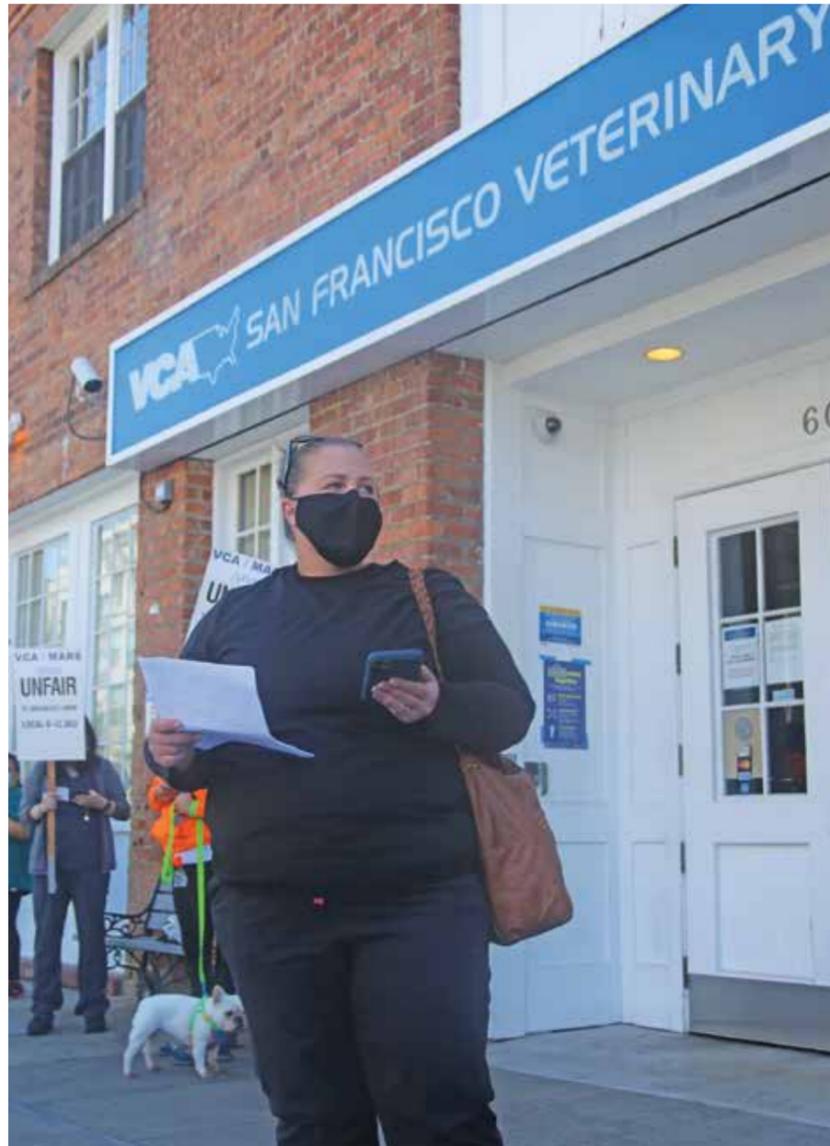
Standing with Katy

During the strike, workers, community members, and clients also rallied in support of Katy Bradley, an outspoken union supporter, bargaining committee member, and advocate for better patient care who was fired by VCA-Mars hours after the employer was notified that charges were being filed against them for violating federal law. Bradley has been an exemplary employee at SFVS for nearly eight years where she worked as a lead veterinary technician.

“VCA-Mars can lock me out but they can’t keep me from bargaining for a fair contract,” Bradley said during an emotional speech. “We’ve been trying to reach an agreement for 27 months to improve this hospital as well as the pet-care industry. We want a fair contract that mutu-

ally benefits the hospital and the employees that work here. We want to improve the staffing ratios so that we can continue to provide the best patient care possible. Despite how reasonable our asks are, VCA-Mars

mal care industry, along with ownership of IAM’s and Pedigree brand pet foods, and other animal-linked assets. Mars has come under fire in recent months by civil rights activists for the negative racial stereo-



Solidarity with Katy: San Francisco elected officials and community supporters expressed their solidarity with Katy Bradley, an outspoken union supporter, bargaining committee member, and advocate for better patient care who was fired by VCA-Mars hours after the employer was notified that charges were being filed against them. “VCA-Mars can lock me out but they can’t keep me from bargaining for a fair contract,” Bradley said.

continues to stall bargaining and deny that they can hear our calls.”

The big business of vet care

The veterinary care industry is a lucrative, multi-billion-dollar business built on the backs of a workforce that is underpaid for their high level of skill and education.

In 2017, the Mars Corporation quietly purchased SFVS, along with hundreds of other animal hospitals and clinics, for \$9.1 billion. Mars is a privately-held company famous for their M&M candies. Mars now controls a large share of America’s ani-

typing depicted in the packaging of their Uncle Ben’s brand rice products. The company has also been criticized by human rights activists for using slave labor in the production of their cocoa products.

“The ILWU is proud to stand behind Katy and all of the workers at SFVS who are fighting VCA-Mars to improve patient care and reach a fair contract. VCA-Mars is not the first billion-dollar corporation the ILWU has faced. We won those battles and will win this one too,” said ILWU International President Willie Adams.

Support from elected officials

The action drew statements of support from House Speaker Nancy Pelosi, and San Francisco Supervisors Hillary Ronen and Dean Preston.

“Recent developments represent a troubling deterioration of labor negotiations. This week, the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB) ordered VCA-SFVS to respond to charges of retaliation and termination based on employees’ protected union activity and refusal to bargain in good faith. And last week, ILWU filed an Unfair Labor Practice complaint and 10-J Injunction for the termination of Katy Bradley, a union supporter who rose through the ranks at VCA-SFVS to her role as lead veterinary technician,” Speaker Pelosi wrote in a letter to the employer.

Supervisor Ronen stated in her letter to the company: “When a company knowingly attacks workers or undermines worker support, that company attacks our community. As the community-elected representative of the city’s 9th District I request that you reinstate Katy Bradley, cease all anti-union activity and you return to good faith bargaining. A quick resolution that is mutually beneficial to all parties is what our community grows and thrives on.”

District 5 Supervisor Dean Preston wrote in a letter the employer, “I have closely followed the multi-year effort of the VCA union. I have been impressed by how committed and serious these professionals are, diligently trying to improve their place of employment for the benefit of workers and patients. Naturally, we expect their employer at VCA – Mars Corporation – not to undermine workers.

“Like most, until I became familiar with the VCA workers’ union, I was unaware of the size and nature of Mars’ investment and growth in the pet care industry. I would hope that a multi-billion dollar company would be thoughtful in disciplinary action towards an employee, particularly during a pandemic and during contract negotiation. I am concerned not only by the report of the termination of Ms. Bradley, but also reports of zero cost of living adjustments, raises or any proactive policy in support of the workers at SFVS during this health crisis, as well as a

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DISPATCHER

Roy San Filippo
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Explosion at the Port of Beirut puts spotlight on lax maritime regulations

On August 4, two devastating explosions occurred at the Port of Beirut, the capital of Lebanon. The second explosion, caused by the ignition of 2,750 tons of ammonium nitrate, leveled the port and killed at least 177 people, including seafarers, longshore and other port workers. The blast left an estimated 300,000 people homeless and caused billions of dollars in damage throughout the city. The ammonium nitrate had been confiscated by the Lebanese government from the abandoned ship, the *MV Rhosus*, and then stored at the port for six years without safety measures.



Aftermath: The warehouse blast decimated the Port of Beirut and killed scores of port and maritime workers.

ILWU statement

The day after the explosion, ILWU International President Willie Adams released the following statement:

“International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) workers on the West Coast of the United States and Canada grieve the tremendous losses that Beirut is suffering following an explosion of stored material at a port warehouse. While the chaos of the explosion has yet to reveal the full scope of human loss, we are heartbroken to learn that longshore workers lost their lives when their worksite became ground zero for the catastrophic explosion. The city of Beirut and thousands of families will never be the same.

“Reports that the Lebanese government has put port authorities under house arrest while investigating the dubious storage of these explosive materials on the docks since 2014, and the likelihood that these deaths were preventable, are deeply disturbing but not surprising developments to those of us who work on the waterfront. Employers, port authorities and government agencies should always hold safety paramount on the waterfront – but, left unchecked, complacency and profit motive too often put workers’ lives at risk. The shocking images we are seeing in the news illustrate why dockworker unions fight for safety on the docks and the safe movement of cargo: to protect our lives and communities.

The ILWU is closely monitoring the developments at the Port of Beirut, and we will determine the best way to assist when the facts become clearer.

On behalf of my fellow Titled Officers, the Coast Committeemen and the rank and file membership, I extend our profound condolences to the families, friends and colleagues of the dockworkers and the people of Beirut. “

The International Transport Workers’ Federation (ITF) also issued a statement:

“On behalf of the ITF and our 700 affiliates from around the world, we send our sincerest condolences and sympathies to all of those impacted by these terrible explosions. The ITF and our affiliates stand in solidarity with all of you, your members, colleagues, families and the people of Lebanon at this incredibly sad time,” they wrote. “We mourn this terrible tragedy alongside you and express our deep condolences to families who have lost their loved ones and wish the injured a quick recovery.”

ITF affiliated unions in Lebanon include the General Confederation of

Drivers and Transport Workers in Lebanon (GCDTW), the Union of Beirut Port Employees (UBPE), the Syndicate of Middle East Airlines and Affiliate Companies (MEA), the Lebanese Cabin Crew Association (LCCA) and the Lebanese Seaman’s Syndicate (LSS).

Profits over people

Protests erupted in the aftermath of the explosion that resulted in the resignation of Lebanese government officials including the Prime Minister. But the gross negligence of the government is only part of the story.

In an opinion piece published in *The Guardian*, Laleh Khalili, Professor of International Politics at Queen Mary University of London, argues that the roots of the catastrophic explosion run “to a network of maritime capital and legal chicanery that is designed to protect businesses at any cost.”

At the heart of this “network of legal chicanery” is the “flag of convenience” (FoC) practice that prioritizes the profits of shipping companies over the health and safety of seafarers and port workers, Khalili argues.

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ILWU President Willie Adams’ letter to Governor Tony Evers on the shooting of Jacob Blake

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August 26, 2020

Governor Tony Evers
Office of the Governor
PO Box 7863
Madison, WI 53707

Governor Evers,

On behalf of the membership of the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU), I am writing to demand that the Kenosha police officer who senselessly shot Jacob Blake in the back seven times be charged for attempted murder.

Once again, we watched in horror as a familiar scene unfolded involving an unarmed black man, Jacob Blake, who wished to keep the peace in his neighborhood. He wanted nothing more than to help de-escalate a domestic incident. Instead, the situation that developed was all too familiar: an unarmed black man was shot in the back in front of his children. The Kenosha police officer responsible for the shooting must be arrested and held accountable for his actions.

We the ILWU are a union that has a rich history of fighting for racial and social justice. We are tired. We are tired of watching the same scenario unfold time and again. We are tired of seeing that black and brown lives don’t matter. This nonsense needs to stop and things need to change.

You, Governor Evers, can be the change. You can take this opportunity to heal a community that continues to suffer at the hands of police brutality and police violence. We cannot continue to make excuses for bad behavior. We can only achieve justice when people are held accountable for their actions.

Now is the time for you to act.

Sincerely,
William Adams
William E. Adams
International President

WEA/skj cww 39521

cc: Josh Kaul, Attorney General, State of Wisconsin
John Antaramian, Mayor of Kenosha, Wisconsin
Daniel G. Miskinis, Chief of Kenosha Police Department



THE
DOCKER
PODCAST

The Docker Podcast with special guest
ILWU President Willie Adams

The latest episode of The Docker Podcast featuring special guest ILWU International President Willie Adams is now live. You can subscribe to the Docker Podcast through iTunes or your Android podcast app or listen the episode at www.ILWU.org/dockerpodcast

REMEMBERING OUR ROOTS: Local 5 marks 20-year anniversary

Forming ILWU Local 5: EXCERPTS from *No Decisions About Us Without Us*

By Kristin Russ

[ILWU Local 5 was chartered on August 10, 2000, after a two-year organizing and contract campaign by 400 workers at Powell's Books in Portland, OR. The organizing effort began in 1998 when the company restructured jobs and significantly reduced raises for workers. Powell's workers filed for a union election on March 12, 1999. On April 22, they made history by voting to join the union and becoming the nation's largest union bookstore. In honor of Local 5's 20-year anniversary, we are running excerpts from the article "No Decisions About Us Without Us.]

Workers Take Action: September 1998

[Powell's] employee, the late Marty Kruse, knew his coworkers were upset about the changes, and he decided to take action. The day the email was issued, he wandered around the Burnside store carrying a cardboard sign under his shirt. On it was scrawled: "If you're pissed off, meet at Ringlers Annex at 11pm." He flashed his message to fellow booksellers whom he thought might be sympathetic. In answer, about a dozen workers met covertly to discuss their options. The atmosphere that night was heavy with paranoia—even a random bar patron in a cowboy hat was seen as an informant for management. Not knowing how to take the next step, the group decided to seek guidance from representatives with the Industrial Workers of the World (IWW) and the United Food and Commercial Workers (UFCW). One week later, these representatives met with an expanded group of employees, more representative of the broader Powell's workforce. Once employees began talking, they realized that the wage changes were not their most important concern. Many employees found that lack of management accountability and lack of respect, as well as a loss of specialization in their jobs, were common issues of contention.



Vet Pet Care Pioneers: Pictured here are members of the Northwest Veterinary Specialists bargaining committee. NWVS workers were among the first veterinary workers who voted to unionize on the West Coast. Local 5 represents about one hundred veterinary workers at the Northwest Veterinary Services VCA, ranging from receptionists, kennel caretakers, to certified technicians.

Searching and Striving for a Union

[The] new Organizing Committee worked toward a quick declaration of which union they wanted to represent them. It wasn't long before the Committee determined that the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) was the best choice for their needs. Under the ILWU banner they were able to charter their own Local, which would be a self-governing, independent division of the larger union. This Local would function in the same democratic, inclusive and militant tradition of the ILWU. They would no longer be isolated employees of Powell's Books. They became ILWU Local 5.

Management began to take action to quell the support for the union among employees. By holding informational meetings and sending out letters explaining the ills a union would bring, management vied for employees' attention. On November 12th, 1998 a letter was sent out to employees on Powell's letterhead, attempting to dispel rumors of upcoming corporate changes and to show what the company had done for its employees. In efforts to convince employees that a union was not necessary, the corporate managers advised: "We also want to alert people to the fact that if you don't want to be represented by a union, if you don't think it's the right thing for Powell's, your rights to oppose unionization are protected by law just as much as your coworkers' rights to support unionization are." The corporate managers played on the anxieties and affection of its employees, stressing that the uniqueness of Powell's would be under threat and possible ruin with a union.

Despite Management's efforts to sway employee interests in its favor, on March 12, 1999 Local 5 had collected enough signed Union Authorization Cards to file for a union certification election with the National Labor Relations Board (NLRB). On that rainy Friday afternoon, a rally was held outside Powell's Burnside store in celebration of the filing. Employees held signs urging a "Fast and Fair Election." Local 5 had one month to generate the support it needed to win the election. In another testimonial John McMahon asked fellow Powellsians: "Should Michael Powell be left to speak for all of us, or should we have a strong voice in shaping the future of both this company and the community it serves?"

On April 22nd, that question was answered. The ILWU was accepted as the union for Powell's bookstore. Local 5 was official! The vote was close at 161-155. With 90% of the 350 eligible employees casting ballots, only 6 votes had determined the future of Powell's Books and its employees. It wasn't a strong win, but it was a win that would take everyone into a promising, albeit tentative, future. The next nine months were spent organizing toward bargaining efforts, electing a bargaining team, and surveying employee wants and needs. On September 14th, 1999, exactly one year after Corporate's compensation email and that first meeting of exasperated workers, the Powell's Bargaining Team and the Local 5 Bargaining Team met across the table for the first time.



Fighting for a first contract: Workers at Powell's Books demonstrate in support of their efforts to win their first contract. ILWU Local 5 was chartered on August 10, 2000, after a two-year organizing and contract campaign by over 400 workers at Powell's.



Rank and file leaders: ILWU Local 5 stewards pose for a photo. The Local 5 stewards training program is important part of developing rank and file leaders.



Growing Seeds Bargaining Committee: Workers at the childcare chain Growing seeds in Portland voted to unionize and join Local 5 March 2020.

The End and The Beginning

The end of bargaining came after almost 11 months and 53 bargaining sessions, with hard feelings on both sides of the table and much conflict within the Portland community. Powell's Burnside bookstore had become a mecca for the liberal-minded city of Portland, and the ongoing internal rift had been a source of community distress for too long. The hard-won agreement became a commitment to get back to the selling of books. Everyone was ready to move on, although some were uncertain what a unionized Powell's would mean.

The proposed contract included more than 18% in wage increases over three years; a protection of current health care benefits; and a closed shop. The union lost in the fight for a successor rights clause; however, it was not a big loss as there was no imminent fear that Michael Powell would sell. But if, for example, a future employer should decide to contest the union, then by law a new vote for unionization would take place. Any strongly organized union should have no problem winning such a vote—yet another reason why it is in the best interest of the Local 5 and its members to maintain a good and healthy union.

After a long struggle, Powell's bookstore had defied the doubts of the retail business and completed what it set out to do—build a strong union. The vote to

ratify the contract was a resounding victory at 293-37. A statement at the time from Mary Winzig, who was about to be Local 5's first President, spoke to the fatigue of Local 5 bargainers and their satisfaction with the results: "I think we got everything we were looking for. It's a great first contract." Corporate Manager Ann Smith stated, "Yes, there's relationship mending to do. But I look forward to moving on to the next chapter. It's a good contract; it gives us a good foundation to build on."

It took two years of fighting and rallying, multiple appeals for support from the Portland community, many ULP protests, and one powerful and united workforce to gain a precious first contract, ensuring protection of the livelihood of Powell's employees. 'No Decisions About Us Without Us' had been the proclamation that reverberated throughout the aisles of Powell's Books and had given a voice to its workers. And this new voice needed to be guarded. Setting the tone for the future of Local 5 and Powell's, Union member Meredith Schafer stated, "The only way we get what's in that contract is if we stay together and keep on working. The contract is not a gift—we worked for it and we'll work to keep it."

Afterword, The Years Since

In the years following that initial contract, Local 5 has continued to fight and continued to grow. Now with the 7th contract at Powell's, the agreement has progressed and developed through negotiations, grievances and precedents set. The workers have continued to make gains with the most recent contract providing for over \$3 in wage increases over a four-year agreement as well as maintenance of other benefits such as healthcare and PTO. The workers at Powell's have continued to play a pivotal role in making sure Local 5 is a well-run union and continue the democratic traditions on which it was founded.

One thing has changed significantly over the years, Local 5 is no longer the "Powell's Union" as it was initially referred to. Local 5 now represents workers from across a diverse set of industries: in foodservice is Aramark workers at the Evergreen State College in Olympia; in museums is Oregon Historical Society; in veterinary medicine is Columbia River Veterinary Specialists and Northwest Veterinary Specialists and in early learning education is Growing Seeds Learning Center. Local 5 is on the move and continues to embrace those workers who are taking a stand in their workplace and demanding better wages, benefits and working conditions. It's a tradition 20 years in the making and one the Local looks forward to maintaining for another 20 years and beyond. Forward Ever - Backward Never!

ILWU Legislative Director Lindsay McLaughlin retires

ILWU Legislative Director Lindsay McLaughlin retired on August 14 after serving the union for over 30 years. Lindsay's many contributions to the ILWU and his work with the Legislative Action Committee have left a lasting imprint on the union and membership.

During his tenure as Legislative Director, Lindsay successfully navigated many rounds of contract negotiations, worked diligently to protect our health care and retirement benefits, advocated for investments on the waterfront, defended the Jones Act, and ensured the wellbeing of future ILWU members for years to come.

At the July 17 International Executive Board meeting held over Zoom, IEB members thanked Lindsay for his decades of work.

"I've known Lindsay for almost 30 years. This organization owes you a debt of gratitude," said ILWU International President Willie Adams. "Thank you for all the years of service. You've been a true warrior."

"One thing you've demonstrated was never to be intimidated by these politicians—they work for us," said Executive Board member Dan McKisson. "You've always done a great job for us and I really appreciate it."

Lindsay recalled how he actively pursued a job with the ILWU.

"When the job came open, the first thing I did was read a biography of Harry Bridges and that got me very excited about the ILWU. I wanted the job very badly because I knew this was union with principles," he said. "I got so hyped-up, I even grew a long mustache so I could look older. I was 27 years old at the time and I thought the union might want someone with more experience."

Lindsay thanked the Titled Officers and Executive Board members for the opportunity to serve the ILWU membership for 30 years.

"I may be retiring but I will never leave the ILWU. If the union needs anything from me, I will be there," he said.

Lobbyist Kyle Mulhall, who has



worked with the ILWU Legislative Office since 2015, will be handling the transition of duties for the ILWU Legislative Office.

We wish Lindsay all the best in his retirement and thank him for his many years of service to the union.

Local 13 Benefits Officer Vivian Malauulu to receive 2020 Domenick Miretti Award

The Center for International Trade and Transportation (CITT) announced that Vivian Malauulu has been selected to receive the 2020 Domenick Miretti Award. The award will be officially presented to her at the Center's upcoming virtual State of the Trade and Transportation Industry Town Hall on October 6.

Malauulu's resume includes over 20 years as a full-time registered longshore worker at ILWU Local 13 with many years of serving in various leadership roles there. She currently serves as the Benefits Officer for ILWU Local 13 and is the President of the Long

Beach City College District (LBCCD) Board of Trustees.

"It is a tremendous honor to be the recipient of a prestigious award that bears my union brother's name," Malauulu said. "I knew Domenick Miretti and had the privilege of working with him on occasion. He was both an activist and a visionary, which is the epitome of what a gentle, educated man who works on the docks and builds bridges between other stakeholders in the community should be. My journey to this point has not been easy both personally and professionally, but nevertheless, through the guidance, mentorship, and support of others like Domenick, I persisted. Thank you, CITT, for recognizing my work

with the union and in the community. I sincerely hope that this encourages others--especially women."

Malauulu was nominated by Port of Los Angeles Harbor Commissioner Diane Middleton.

The award honors someone who demonstrates one or more of Domenick's qualities, which include helping to foster partnerships along the supply chain, facilitating dialogue among industry participants, showing a long-term dedication to the trade and transportation industry, and earning the respect of a wide variety of stakeholders. The award selection committee, comprised of representatives from industry, labor, and education, unanimously chose Vivian Malauulu from



a strong group of candidates whose qualifications were submitted to CITT as part of an open nomination process. The committee, in making its selection, acknowledged that Malauulu met and in many cases exceeded the qualities outlined in the review criteria.



Local 94 assists COVID testing effort: In their effort to support community testing efforts in Southern California to help combat the spread of COVID-19, ILWU Local 94 members recently donated lunches to 100 firefighters and volunteers testing Angelenos for the virus at Dodger Stadium. Lunches were provided from the San Pedro Fish Market.

"Testing is essential to getting the COVID-19 pandemic under control. We are thankful for all of the L.A. City firefighters and volunteers who continue to staff the testing site at Dodger Stadium. The least we could do was bring lunch and show our support for their selfless work," said Danny Miranda, President of ILWU Local 94.

The union has been feeding healthcare workers and first responders throughout the COVID-19 pandemic and has made donations to church food banks in the Harbor area.



Taking action at San Quentin: Inlandboatmen's Union (IBU) President Marina Secchitano started off a large rally and protest in Larkspur, CA on August 2 calling on Governor Gavin Newsom to release people incarcerated at San Quentin to mitigate the outbreak of the COVID-19 virus at the prison. At the time of the rally, 21 people at San Quentin had died from the virus. The outbreak at San Quentin began after a transfer of 121 people from the California Institution for Men in Chino at the end of May. Within four weeks, San Quentin went from zero COVID infections to almost 1,200 cases. Officials at the California Department of Corrections and Rehabilitation (CDCR) said that two-thirds of the San Quentin prison population — 2,184 incarcerated people plus 258 staff members — have contracted COVID-19. San Quentin is responsible for 40 percent of all COVID-19-related deaths in the state's prison system.

Secchitano spoke at the start of the rally at the Golden Gate Ferry Terminal, calling on Newsom to begin releasing prisoners at San Quentin while also drawing attention to the 300,000 seafarers aboard vessels who are unable to be sent home due to increased Covid-19 restrictions. "It's time for them to be sent home!"

She said that all laid off workers living on unemployment insurance should continue to receive the \$600 supplemental to make ends meet during the pandemic. "Please call your Senator and urge their support of the Hero's Act." After she spoke, there was a march and car caravan from the Larkspur Ferry Terminal to San Quentin for another rally.

Also in attendance were Sam Levens, ITF Inspector for Northern California and IBU member Otis Lerer who assisted with motorcycle security and traffic control.

Explosion at the Port of Beirut puts spotlight on lax maritime regulations

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Flag of convenience

The FoC practice allows shipping companies to register a ship in a country other than that of the ship's owners to avoid oversight, regulations, and accountability. Such ships are registered to (and fly the flags of) countries with the weakest labor, environmental, and health and safety regulations.

The beginning of the tragedy

In her article, Khalili begins the story of the Beirut Port explosion in 2013, when the Russian-owned MV *Rhosus*, registered to a company in Bulgaria and flagged in Moldova, set sail from Georgia to Mozambique with a cargo of ammonium nitrate. The 30-year old vessel had a hole in its hull

requiring water to be pumped out to stop it from sinking. It was operated by a crew of eight Ukrainians and two Russians who were unaware that the previous crew had left the ship in protest of the non-payment of their wages by the ship's owner.

The *Rhosus* stopped in Beirut to earn extra cash by picking up additional cargo of heavy machinery. Inspectors were alerted when the ship's decks buckled under the weight. It was declared "unseaworthy" and Lebanese officials impounded the vessel for failure to pay charges including port fees. The owner filed for bankruptcy, abandoning the ship, its cargo, and its crew in the Port of Beirut.

Port authorities refused to allow four of the seafarers off the ship with-

out a replacement crew. The captain and remaining crew were trapped aboard the ship—with its 2,750 tons of explosive cargo—for almost a year with no wages, no access to electronic communications, and with dwindling food and fuel provisions, until a Lebanese court intervened and ordered them to be released.

The cargo of ammonium nitrate was confiscated and stored in a warehouse at the port—where it remained until it exploded on August 4.

"Flags of convenience are essentially an offshoring tool intended to protect capital, allowing unsafe ships to sail with crews who are vulnerable to the depredations of unscrupulous employers. Even the wealthiest shipping companies in the world, with

headquarters in Europe and east Asia, flag their ships to open registries to save on wages, taxes and insurance," Khalili concluded.

"The removal of these offshoring provisions, eliminating flags of convenience, and an overhaul of the arbitration mechanisms that so often disadvantage seafarers and less powerful states are only the first steps towards addressing the malfeasance that created [the August 4] tragedy. As the dust settles in Beirut, there is a great deal of work to be done."

The ITF says that until there is a "genuine link between the flag a ship flies and the nationality or residence of its owners," abuses will continue."

Veterinary workers at CRVS ratify first private-sector union contract in the industry

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- 3. Improve benefits;
- 4. Secure an environment where the union would remain established and be able to improve upon the provisions won in this contract in the future.

By March 2020, like all bargaining tables, the CRVS/ILWU sessions were disrupted by the COVID-19 pandemic. Nonetheless, five months later, workers secured their contract.

A base to build on

The agreement was achieved through many collective actions, shows of solidarity, and productive and collaborative negotiations at the table. This is a first contract, and while not all goals were met, many were. The agreement is a marked improvement from the status quo and allows workers the opportunity to continue building the movement as they prepare for second contract negotiations in 2023.

The results of those combined efforts were:

More Workplace Rights:

- “Just Cause” and progressive discipline standards of treatment;
- Seniority based layoff and recall procedures;
- Improved hospital communications such as: required all-staff meetings and establishing office hours for 1 on 1 meetings with administration to address workplace concerns;
- Grievance Procedure to ensure contractual obligations are adhered to;

Increased Wages:

- Increased base rate of pay for all positions;
- Transparency on wages and wage rates;
- Defined Differentials for additional skills/duties;
- Yearly increases to the rates of pay for all positions;

Better Benefits:

- Increased Paid Time Off (PTO) accrual and ability to cash out PTO upon resignation;

- Paid Jury Duty;
 - Bereavement for loss of a pet;
 - Improved Employee Assistance Program benefits;
 - Expanded rollover options for Continuing Education Credits;
- ...and a union shop where all new applicants are informed there is a union contract in place before they apply, and a structure whereby the union is able to effectively administer the contract and support workers on the job.

Many workers whose wages have languished under corporatized veterinary medicine are now receiving their first increase in years under the agreement. Tracie Vestal, Licensed Veterinary Technician (LVT) stated:

“Since I had not received any meaningful wage increase from CRVS over my five years of employment, I had the lowest hourly wage of any technician with my experience, education, and skillset. This did not reflect the unique role I served in the hospital as the sole LVT expert in laboratory diagnostics. I had considered sub-standard pay par for the course as a veterinary technician and had been debating applying my skills to human medicine/public health sectors, in order to be more financially sound. This was an agonizing consideration given my deep and abiding love and dedication

“The new wage structure put in place by the contract will provide workers with clear work classifications, inflationary increases in pay, and appropriate pay for the type of work performed. We believe this contract is a much-needed first step in bringing higher workplace standards in the veterinary industry.”

to the veterinary profession. This first contract with PetVet lays the groundwork for me and the countless others like me to truly make a financially stable career in the field we love. What’s more, the system of pay established in this contract will provide transparency and objectivity to wages at the hospital.



Setting a new standard: ILWU International President Willie Adams posted a solidarity photo on social media in support of workers at CRVS. After the vote ratification, the ILWU Titled Officers wrote a letter to the employer, congratulating them on reaching a fair agreement. “The new wage structure put in place by the contract will provide workers with clear work classifications, inflationary increases in pay, and appropriate pay for the type of work performed. We believe this contract is a much-needed first step in bringing higher workplace standards in the veterinary industry,” the letter stated.

This equity in pay will set CRVS apart as being a leading employer in the local veterinary community.

“I am extremely hopeful that this inaugural contract with veterinary professionals will serve as a model for

to ensure that workers are prepared to defend their gains and organize for future negotiations.

Katt Bennett, LVT, Veterinary Technician Specialist (Small Animal Internal Medicine) who was a member of the Member Action Team and instrumental in organizing every solidarity action, including picket lines and rallies, reflects on the struggle and looks to the future:

“It took CRVS over two years to accomplish this feat and this contract is only the first step toward making veterinary medicine a viable career during this time of corporate greed. It will provide veterinary workers with protections, wage equality, and establish a foothold for continued improvements in working conditions. Hopefully hospitals throughout the nation will follow suit, including veterinarians. This is a long journey, but we owe it to ourselves, our clients, and especially our patients to keep pushing for justice and fairness in our hospitals.”

everyone in this country and prove that negotiating across the employer/employee divide benefits everyone (most importantly the patients).”

But as all union members know, the struggle is never over. ILWU Local 5 administrators are already building for the next phase of these efforts

Local 13 Family Scholarship recipients

The ILWU Local 13 Family Scholarship was recently awarded to 28 students of Local 13 members for academic excellence and school leadership.

Each Scholarship recipient wrote an essay on Harry Bridges, specifically “How the life and personal qualities of Harry Bridges can inspire us to achieve our goals today.” In addition, students had to submit an application, transcripts and letters of recommendation for consideration.

Congratulations go out to all the recipients.

Melanie Estrella
UC San Diego

Sierra Salas
University of Oklahoma

Sophie DiLeva
University of Oregon

Thessa Malauulu
UCLA

Julissa Ramirez
Long Beach City College

Dalia Hernandez
Stanford University

Miguel Mendoza
Cal State Long Beach

Alexia Siong
UC Riverside

Marina Erosa
University of Hawaii, Manoa

Sabrina Alvarez
Rensselaer Polytechnic Institute

Natalie DiMeglio
UC Davis

Andres Srsen
Butler University

Joemar Pigao
UC San Diego

Katelyn Viducic
Arizona State University

Daniel Carrillo
Cal State Long Beach

Makenzie Hutchinson
Middle Tennessee University

Kayla Solomon
University of Oregon

Francisco Villanueva
Cal State Long Beach

Jaelene Kapu
Grand Canyon University

Priscilla Andrade
Santiago Canyon College

Forrest C. Reid
Orange Coast College

Devanae Zuniga
El Camino College

Alexis Guerrero
California Baptist University

Matthew Gandasetiawan
Cypress College

Andrea Carrera
Azusa Pacific University

Megan Spradling
Chaffey College

Sebastian Huizar
CSU Dominguez Hills

A'zario Cush
Los Angeles Southwest College

Local 502 raises nearly \$26,000 for BC Children's Hospital



In this photo from the 2019 Telethon are Local 502 personnel and President Rick Hurtubise (back row, second from left.). No live TV presentations were made this year because of the COVID-19 crisis.

Despite the obstacles caused by the pandemic, ILWU Local 502 moved ahead with their annual BC Children's Hospital fundraiser. This year, Local 502 members raised \$25,773 for the hospital, bringing the ten-year total to \$359,291.

"On behalf of BC Children's Hospital Foundation, patients, families and staff I want to express my sincere gratitude to ILWU 502 for their incredible fundraising efforts. The donation will support the most urgent needs of the hospital, like purchasing equipment, funding research and supporting the

needs of families. Thank you, ILWU 502, for making a difference in the lives of BC's kids!" said Cherie Spence, BC Children's Hospital Foundation Philanthropy Officer.

"Some people think that because the hospital is in Vancouver they don't need to get involved if they reside elsewhere but this hospital serves the needs of children from all over the province. Many services provided are only available at this one hospital in British Columbia. We are very honored, proud and humbled to be involved with such an amazing organization and that is why our local has become partners with this great community cause," said Local 502 member Bal S. Sanghera.

SFVS workers strike to protest illegal actions by their employer, VCA-Mars

continued from page 2

reduction of hours for support staff and increased patient load on reduced staff."

The strike, which lasted less than an hour, is an "unfair labor practice" strike, because it responds directly to illegal conduct by the employer, rather than concerns about working standards, such as high-turnover, short-staffing and patient care, problems that have also plagued SFVS.

Liz Hughston from the National Veterinary Professionals Union, called into the rally via Zoom and spoke about the central role Katy has played in the effort to unionize the veteri-

nary industry. "Katy is the reason that unionization in the veterinary industry is as far along as it is," said Hughston. "Katy started this mission at SFVS. She is the one who connected the veterinary industry with the ILWU and without her we would not be fighting for the rights of veterinary workers to the extent we are today."

SFVS worker David Lesseps closed the rally out, saying that workers will outlast the company's efforts to undermine the union. "We have been targeted. We have been threatened. They have tried to wear us down but we are not tired, we are not stopping," he said.

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

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ILWU CANADA

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DARE—Northern California
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300 Pendleton Way
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EAP—British Columbia
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(604) 254-7911

ILWU to Host Webinar on Ten Guiding Principles

The ILWU will be hosting a webinar on **September 22nd** as part of the union's leadership education programming. The online event, *The ILWU's Values: Members reflect on the Ten Guiding Principles*, will feature leaders from across the union discussing the role of the ILWU's *Ten Guiding Principles* in their work and union life.

The Ten Guiding Principles were developed in 1953 to codify the cardinal values upon which the ILWU was built. Since they were first written, the principles have served as a guidepost to ILWU leaders in their work within the union and the broader community. This webinar will highlight some of the work that union members have done that reflects the ILWU's values through the lens of the Principles. Panelists will share personal stories that illustrate how they have applied the ILWU's Principles to their work.

The webinar will run from
6-7:30 PM via Zoom
and is open to members and affiliates
in good standing.

Priority will be given to active members.
Those interested in attending may register
online at <http://www.ilwu.org/education>.

Please register online no later than close
of business on **September 18, 2020.**

Questions may be addressed to Educational Services Director
Robin Walker at robin.walker@ilwu.org.

TRANSITIONS

NEW PENSIONERS:

Local 8: Craig Bjornstrom;
Local 10: Emilio M. Sanbartolome;
Maurice L. Daggs; Joe E. Hughes;
Marcus E. Holder; Lorenzo Moreno;
Local 13: Joseph D. Horta; David
Herrera; Anthony Grieco; Ricky
Ponce; Paul A. Monteiro; James E.
Wheeler; Ruben E. Brown; Genaro
Huizar; Victor R. Newsom; Larry R.
Bruff; Mateo Luna; Victor Garcia;
Angel Pereira; Rene R. Trevino;
William D. Vasconcelos; Richard A.
Page; Scott A. Jones; Juan Ordonez;
Johnnie Allen; Robert E. Berman;
Local 19: Dale F. Hanke; Shawn F.
Brennan; William V. Smith;
Local 21: Tanya M. Tow; Earl T.

Scott; **Local 23:** Michael T.
Kennedy; Timothy E. Faker;
Scott P. Mason; Bradley K. Filbert;
Local 34: Deborah A. McLeod;
Local 63: Joseph A. Burich;
Nancy P. Islas; Michael Bowman;
Patricia A. Kelley; Diana B. Gielish;
Local 91: James D. Fowler;
Alvaro E. Manfut; Floyd J. Pellom;
Local 92: David N. Bononcini;
Local 94: Charles F. Keith Jr; Edward
Ceja; David L. Mattis; **Local 98:**
Robert E. West; Nancy L. Glaser;

DECEASED ACTIVE MEMBERS:

Local 10: Kelvin T. Edwards; Maurice
Austin; **Local 13:** Mike Godfrey;
Michael Young, Sr; Richard
Buonocore; **Local 19:** Matthew B.

Endicott; **Local 23:** Scott T. Grunden;
Local 24: Stanley Silva;
Local 63: Juan C. Gutierrez;

DECEASED PENSIONERS:

Local 10: Daniel Castorina;
Local 12: Donald P. Wyatt (Arlene);
Local 13: Jose Contreras;
Albert A. Lulay; Doug J. Bowen;
Joseph L. Sandoval (Geraldine);
Local 19: Dorsey L. Williams (Millie);
Ottavio C. Tarlao (Maria); Richard
Carlson; **Local 21:** Todd A. Froemke;
Local 23: Darrell J. Bainton;
Local 24: Russell W. Irwin;
Local 26: Jose R. Mendoza;
Local 40: David W. Scott;
Local 47: Delone E. Bausch (Miriam);

Michael R. Sharp; **Local 63:** Luis A.
Suarez; **Local 75:** Gary M. Brown;
Local 91: Joseph F. Gottardi;
Local 94: Peter A. Gutierrez;
Local 98: John G. Vlasic (Diane);

DECEASED SURVIVOR:

Local 8: Alice M. Barchus;
Local 10: Jean L. Dubetz; Pearl T.
Jones; Conception Garcia; Beatrice
Caldwell; **Local 13:** Marguerite S.
Hunter; Carol A. Pendergrass; Joan C.
Saputo; **Local 19:** Margaret E.
Hairrell; **Local 34:** Velma L. Davis;
Local 46: Lilly M. Lopez;
Local 63: Cecelia A. Axton; Doris M.
Yuen; **Local 94:** Bonnie Rowell;