

NOTICE OF SECTION MEETINGS FOR 2013-2014

ALL MEMBERS ARE WELCOME TO ATTEND

THURSDAY - SEPTEMBER 19	THURSDAY - MARCH 20
THURSDAY - OCTOBER 17	THURSDAY - APRIL 24
THURSDAY - NOVEMBER 21	THURSDAY - MAY 15
THURSDAY - DECEMBER 19	JUNE - MEETING RECESSED
THURSDAY - JANUARY 16	JULY - MEETING RECESSED
THURSDAY - FEBRUARY 20	AUGUST - MEETING RECESSED

LOCATION: KNIGHTS OF COLUMBUS
1305 86TH STREET
BROOKLYN, NY 11228

TIME: 6 PM SHARP

ALL DELEGATES AND SHOP STEWARDS MUST ATTEND



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Transport Workers Union
Utility Division

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President's Message Promises Kept

When I took office on September 1st of 2012, it was no secret that Local 101 needed to see major changes — and fast. We needed to unlock and use the tools at our disposal. With the members behind us, your leadership had the courage to take the Union in a new direction.

We had a vision. Local 101 would join the national political conversation on labor rights — and we would do it with strength. It was about time that we moved to regain our reputation and standing among our sister industrial unions, now fighting tooth and nail to defend the dignity and livelihood of America's working class.

My aim was to move us along that path — and quickly. My strategy was to reconnect with the membership, gain back the trust that had been lost, and march down a new road as Union brothers and sisters, with hands held in unity. Mike Quill said, "Most of my life I've been called a lunatic because I believe that I am my brother's keeper." That's where we had to start.

What Have We Accomplished Since September 2012 as a Union?

100+ members at every single general membership meeting held this year — even in the dead of winter. Nine expert

guest speakers brought in to educate the membership, including a mayoral candidate. 1,021 members signed-up and receiving blast email updates; 45 blast emails sent out to the membership, carrying vital news updates. 1,100+ tickets purchased to our first annual Family Day Picnic in August. \$700,000 brought home in lawsuit settlement money from National Grid to be paid directly to the membership. Two new member-spearheaded special committees to address the specific concerns of women and younger members. Two newsletters — the first in years. And the distribution of our first ever official Union membership cards and pins.

It is my hope that at this point, each member of Local 101 has witnessed something that has caused you to stop and think about the new direction the Union is taking and where you can join us in building an organization that supports and inspires pride in brothers and sisters in unions across the country. That moment could have come during a visit to our Union's website, where you can find up-to-the-minute information on Union services and internal job postings. You may have seen video footage of guest speakers at our monthly section

meetings giving talks on workers comp, arbitrations, and criminal arrests. You might have seen an announcement for the Union's first ever Family Day Picnic, where members are encouraged to bring their kids and spouses into the Union family.



Maybe you attended an open and honest monthly section meeting, where hundreds of your Union brothers and sisters have come this past year to express their views and frustrations and ask tough questions of the leadership. Or, finally, you may have heard about our new Union hall on Montague Street, which we share with TWU's flagship, Local 100.

In less than a year, Local 101 has come a long way. We have unlocked the Union's toolbox, gotten busy, and have had some measure of success. The same thing needs to happen nationally and even internationally, where workers' rights are eroding. There is a long road ahead, both for us and for the union movement as a whole. We're fired up. We know what's facing American workers. We must face them in solidarity.

On the Local level, we need to get ready for contract negotiations with National Grid in October of 2014. We're armed with the knowledge of what other unions have experienced at the bargaining table. We're well versed in the ways other unions have been tricked and beaten into contract concessions, and we'll be going into contract negotiations smarter for that reason. We

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President's Message continued from front page...

have unlocked the tools that lead to success — because we are communicating, we are attentive, and we have constructive solutions. Your Union leadership is looking forward to navigating new challenges in the service of our membership. Thank you all for your hard work and your support of Local 101.

In Solidarity,

 Michael Conigliaro, President

Local 101 Heroes Honored

In Orlando, Florida on May 22, Service Technicians Cleon-Sean Christie and Collin Cathnott were awarded the American Gas Association's Meritorious Service Award in recognition of their "conspicuous judgment, intelligence and bravery in saving a human life."

On January 21st, while driving down Merrick Boulevard in Queens on their lunch break, the two men spotted a man violently assaulting a woman on the sidewalk. "At first, I thought he was punching her," said Cleon-Sean. "I shouted out the window, 'This man has no respect for women,' and then, 'Leave her alone.'"

"Then the lady fell to the ground, and I saw there was blood running down her face. He was stabbing her. It's a very busy street and people were

passing them, but they were just letting it happen."

Cleon-Sean and Collin contacted their dispatcher, and after an ambulance arrived, they were able to lead the police directly to the assailant, who was attempting to escape the scene by blending into the crowd.

Later, the two appeared in court to testify as witnesses by the victim's side.

The American Gas Association is an umbrella organization, representing over 200 local energy companies in the United States.

At the awards ceremony, employees and management from across the country were



Service Technicians Cleon-Sean Christie and Collin Cathnott receive the AGA's Meritorious Service Award after saving the life of a Queens woman while on the job.

recognized for a diverse set of achievements. Cleon-Sean and Collin were the sole recipients of the Meritorious Service Award.

New CB Agreement Knocks 3 Yrs Off Path to Max Pay

All Local 101 members who hold a CB title and have fewer than 10 years on the job are going to see a salary jump in the near future, when the Union's much-improved CB agreement goes into effect.

President Mike Conigliaro jump-started negotiations back in January, hoping to do away with the previous agreement, which had been in place for approximately three years. Under the last agreement, all brothers and sisters in Customer Service received salary increases in steps over the course of the first 13 years on the job, until reaching maximum pay in year 13.

After talks with Mike Courtien, National Grid's Vice President of Customer Service, the Union was able to negotiate that 13-year progression down to a 10-year progression with the same maximum pay salary.

All CB members with fewer than 10

years on the job — a couple hundred — will see their salaries move up one step in the new progression path once it goes into effect. We have been assured that this change shouldn't take more than a few months at most. All future CB members, without exception, will reach top pay three years sooner.

In the coming months, HR will be sitting down with every individual in the CB title to figure out their new pay rate going forward.

"I just felt that it needed to be done to bring a little parity with the job function," said Mike Conigliaro. "Thirteen years was too long. It was something that I wanted to do for the membership to lessen the gap. They do lock and unlock, respond to gas leaks, survey work, collection work, investigation work—that's no walk in the park. In the end, it took me about three months to work it out with the company."

- MIKE CONIGLIARO**
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- JOSEPHINE ARROYO**
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 Tel. (718) 745-7597 • Fax. (718) 238-4489
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IN MEMORIAM: RIP to Our Brothers

Joseph Audaine, 57 *Meter Service Technician, 17 years of service*

Eulogy Delivered by Sister Rochelle Murray

A lot of people don't realize it, but most of us spend more time at work with our colleagues than at home with our families. So, as much as he was family to you, he was to us as well.

He touched the lives of many of us — and on a daily basis, whether it was with a smile, a friendly gesture, or him telling someone they were doing it wrong, we were touched. We are all grateful to have had Joe in our presence.

He came to work smiling every morning, almost as if nothing bothered him no matter what he was going through or how bad his back pains were, he never stopped smiling. He never stopped helping and never said no to any task given. I'm sure our supervisors will agree that no matter what they threw his way he completed it.

As one of the younger employees, I, like many others, had the privilege of being trained in a variety of job functions by him. He had a great deal of patience. Except if you didn't

get it right or you were moving too slow—then he might scream at you, but overall he took the time to teach us anything we asked.

It is very sad to say goodbye to a brother, an honorable man, and a model employee. But his work ethic, his humor, and his camaraderie will never be forgotten.

So on behalf of his Union brothers and sisters and National Grid: Farewell, Brother. And to his family, you are our family as well.

So as we would say as we finished our day's work, I say for him for the last time: 5-5-5-9 87 out.



Thomas O'Leary, 52 *Greenpoint Security Guard, 7 years of service*

Brother Thomas O'Leary was known within the Union as a knowledgeable coworker, a dependable and friendly presence, and a dedicated family man.

"He was somebody you could rely on," said Frank Brucella, a fellow Security Officer who worked on his shift for several years after Frank came on the job in 2006.

"He was a happy-go-lucky type of guy," said



Frank. "If you ever had a problem, he was there to help you out. Above all, he was a really big family man."

"He was somebody you could rely on. If you had a concern on the job or wanted to think something through, he was the guy you'd bounce ideas off of. Generally, he was a really good all-around worker and a great man."

Denzel Lionel, 22 *BPI Gas Construction Helper, 4 years of service*

The son of CMS Service Person Sebastian Lionel, Denzel had worked at National Grid since the age of 19. He passed following a tragic motor vehicle accident on July 26th.



Percell Smith, a CB for the past 5 years, worked alongside Denzel as a Meter Reader, often sharing runs across the street. "He was quiet, he did his job, he was on time, eager to learn," said Percell. "He was a kid who was trying to get better at his job and in life."

"He was a big basketball fan and would sit around after work with the guys and talk about sports. He had a lot of style to him. And he had a girlfriend who he really cared about."

"People were very sad when they heard. Everyone is still in disbelief. You see a similar car to his and you expect him to get out of it — you picture that in your mind."

Elegy by Brother Percell Williams

*I can't believe it's that time again
 Time to put on the black suit and hard bottoms
 Our only consolation to hide our sorrow
 Telling ourselves that GOD's got him
 Telling ourselves he's in a better place
 Telling ourselves we will meet again
 Looking at your picture, Denzel
 You're the true definition of forever young
 In the back of my mind hoping you will
 Recognize our faces old, wrinkled and gray
 When it's our time to walk through the pearly gates
 Take us on a tour through heaven
 Floating through the clouds with your wings
 Rest in peace young prince, FLY! Spread
 Your wings continue watching over
 Forever young!!!!!!*

Spotlight on Women in Nontraditional Roles TWU Local 101 Women Break Ground

In a hole in the middle of a city street, braving the elements, with a jackhammer—a day's work that commands the respect of Union brothers. But for women on the street who pass Rea Plummer, BPI Construction C-Trainee Operator, the experience is often emotional.

"It's something you don't usually see — a woman driving a truck, working in the street, using a jackhammer," said Rea. "There's been so many times that I've been driving down the street in a company truck, and a woman will look up and see another woman behind the wheel. They'll honk or shout something positive. I meet a lot of women in the street who are proud of me, and they don't even know me."

"Personally, I think that most women who would consider the job feel that the work is a little too tough for them," said Rea. "They get caught up in the stigma. Yes, women are more limited in the things they can do physically, but as far as the technical side, women can learn the skills and what you need to know as well as men can. There is no reason why a woman who has the physical ability to do the job should not go into it because most people in the field are men."

When Rea applied to work as a Meter Reader at National Grid, it didn't occur to her during hiring to ask about the other women in her department. Her first day in the field, she found that — including herself — there were a total of three. Two years later, she moved over to the Customer Service side assisting mechanics with gas leaks, meter upgrades, and large volume. Again, she had only two women coworkers.

"Once I got out into the field, the person who was training me told me that there weren't going to be a lot of women out here," said Rea. "That was the first time I really learned what the situation was. I knew I just had to go forward and tell myself this is what it is. But I was very surprised that in the 21st century there weren't more women doing this work. I thought that things would be different by now."

At BPI in Greenpoint, Rea hasn't had a woman coworker in two years, which comes as no surprise

because — other than Rea — there hasn't been a woman at BPI since Local 101 Delegate Louise "Weezy" Barnes worked as an A-Mechanic there more than 25 years ago.

Along with Delegate Yolanda Daniels, Weezy is the newest member of the TWU International Women's Committee. And if you've ever been to a Local 101 General Membership Meeting, you already know that supporting Union women in nontraditional jobs is Weezy's first and last priority.

"My goal in joining the Committee is to bring men at the company to respect that a woman can do the job," said Weezy. "The Women's Committee has to empower all women in the Local. We need to make it so that women are not intimidated by their male supervisors. Two weeks ago, I saw a woman cowering because she was afraid of her male supervisor. We can't have that. Men think that they have the right to dominate a woman. Right now, as women in nontraditional roles, we have no voice. Women are very disgruntled because they feel that the opportunities for growth are not afforded to them in their career."

Weezy's involvement in the TWU Women's Committee is a jumping off point for her work at the Local. "What I'm focused on is making it happen here," she said. "I need to take care of home first. My vision comes from my pain, from the disparity that I've had to deal with for the past 30 years."

For Rea, Weezy serves as a mentor and confidant as she grows in her career. "There are certain issues that only women go through, and that you need to talk to another woman about," said Rea. "What Weezy does for me, I would love to do that for another woman. If there is any way I



Local 101 Delegates Yolanda Daniels (left) and Louise "Weezy" Barnes (right) are the newest members of the TWU International Women's Committee.



can help another woman work her way up at the company or just get through another day, I would love to help. The way I think about it, you just take it one step at a time and try to do your best at every stage."

Rea acknowledges but doesn't dwell



Rea Plummer, C-Trainee Operator at BPI Construction, is the Local's first Union sister at BPI in more than two decades.

on the difficulties inherent in her work. "It's very hard work, and it's taxing on the body," she said. "But it's a good trade. You learn a lot. You learn skills that you take into your own house, and you become very handy. I think that women don't have all the facts about the job. If they knew what is required and what they would be doing and it were less of a mystery, it wouldn't be thought of as something they couldn't do."

"I get a lot of support from the men out in the field," she said. "They feel that as long as you can do the job, they have no problem having you in the ground next to them. Some people say that they'd rather work with me than with some of the other men because they say I work a little harder."

Being a woman, I feel I have to prove myself and show everyone that I can do the job just as well as anyone else.

"I definitely see myself here for the long haul. I want to go to Maintain and fix leaks in the street and go over to the hub. I would love to see all the different aspects of construction. There are a lot of other people doing work behind the scenes that we don't see, and I would like to know about all of the work that goes into what I do."

New 3-Year Contract Negotiated with HomeServe Union Makes Major Strides in Wage Increases and Benefits

In June, Local 101 hammered out a solid contract with HomeServe, picking up yardage in salary increases, differential shift pay, health insurance coverage, the pension plan, and stock matching for 401K. Our 60 brothers and sisters at the company unanimously ratified the contract at our June 29th meeting.

The new agreement, which carries us through 2016, is effective as of April 1, 2013. The contract brings with it 3% per year in salary increases, improvements in 401K, an enhanced cash balance pension plan, and a lower cost health insurance plan. Anyone with at least 13 years of service will get four full weeks of paid vacation. Shift differential pay was brought back.

"The decrease in health insurance costs was big for us," said President Mike Conigliaro of the Union's negotiations to



Local 101's HomeServe membership voted unanimously to approve the contract on June 29, 2013.

bring in a new carrier. "The members will be bringing home more in wages and spending less in costs. That makes a huge difference."

"The negotiations were relatively easy, honest, and upfront," said Mike. "I'd like to thank our HomeServe Delegates John

Demorata and Mark Green for assisting us in securing a good contract for the guys. They were both on top of what the membership was looking for in the contract and helped us get the necessary information across to management."

National Grid to Pay \$700K in SAP Settlement

All Local 101 Members Will Receive a Check for \$500

On May 16, in the face of a class-action lawsuit filed by Local 101, National Grid negotiated a settlement after two months of SAP chaos: \$500 for each TWU Local 101 member, whether they had been affected or not by the payroll blowup.

Right now, the Local is negotiating with the company for more money on top of the \$500 because all payroll disputes were not addressed in a timely fashion after the settlement was reached.

Time after time, when Local 101 sat down in front of labor dispute arbitrator Howard Edelman, the company's lawyer swore up and down that actions were being taken to address SAP screw-ups. In one meeting, National Grid promised TDC resolver teams, time keepers, subject-matter

experts, and SAP programmers would be "deployed to field locations" to clean up the paycheck mess like special ops parachuting into a disaster zone. No one came.

And in the last arbitration, President Mike Conigliaro lost his patience with the company's excuses and delays. "Wrap it up! Put a bow on it! It sounds beautiful!" said Conigliaro, after Director of Employee Relations Robert Greenbaum trotted out his newest plan for field clinics in Canarsie. "I'm tired of this! You're giving a beautiful speech about how the system should have worked! We're going to need 500 appointments at your field clinic tomorrow!"

After delaying judgment and allowing the company more time, even the arbitrator grew tired of National Grid's payroll circus and ordered the company to pay a fine to all Local 101 members for the inconvenience.

Local 101 was the first union to file a lawsuit against the company after the payroll system went south in November, and we were the first to bring home a cash award from National Grid that will be paid directly to members.

YOUNG WORKERS CARRY THE TORCH AT MAY DAY MARCH

coming together to form a national network for activism and volunteerism

Surging out into the cordoned-off streets of Lower Manhattan, Local 101 led the TWU contingent in this year's May 1st parade — in step with our sister union TWU Local 100. Delegate Yolanda Daniels was out in front — a whistle in her mouth, both hands holding the Union banner aloft. 2013 marked the first time in more than 10 years that this Union has marched alongside the tens of thousands of fellow workers that May Day celebrations draw into the streets.

The origins of May Day and its meaning in this age are not known to many American workers—even those who are members of an industrial union such as ours. Like the eight-

“ Many of you are thinking of the Union as separate from you. ... But you *are* the Union. ”

— Delegate Greg Bimbras

hour workday, many of the rights we take for granted as union members were hard-won in deadly clashes decades ago.

More than 125 years ago in Chicago, the fever of industrialization had given rise to large-scale factories where men, women, and often young children toiled in the soot and steam from daybreak into the night. On May 4, 1886, labor leaders called for a peaceful rally in the city's Haymarket Square in support of a national effort to pass eight-hour workday legislation. But then bombs, set off by persons whose identity still remains unknown, exploded.

By 11 o'clock, more than 10 people lay dead.

Recording Secretary Constance Bradley and Keshia Simmons gear up for the May 1st march.



Seven of the “usual suspects” — labor activists — were rounded up and later executed after a sham trial. Workers who witnessed these events named May 1st as a day of remembrance for those who had



TWU Young Workers spread the word at Local 101's March General Membership Meeting. At left: Local 101's Keith McLaurin and Greg Bimbras. At right: TWU Local 100's Kisha Rousseau and Erica Guerrido.

died and celebration of the righteousness of the workers' struggle.

The TWU Young Workers was founded at the start of the summer at a TWU conference in Washington, DC — in part as a response to a call by the AFL-CIO to broaden the reach of the labor movement, which is aging, along with the American population as a whole.

Younger people are often turned off by unions — whether as a result of constant

talk show and newspaper rhetoric against “big labor” or due to a lack of understanding of why workers founded unions in the first place.

So 15 of our younger brothers and sisters from around the country came together for a heavy lift: to bring our union activism to the younger workers who need to be inspired anew. “There's a big feeling that there's a lack of solidarity among unions and specifically among the young members,” said elected Young



Local 101 takes the May Day labor march by storm. From left to right: Steward Yvonne Bailey, Delegate Greg Bimbras, Kevin Dunne, Delegate Keith McLaurin, President Mike Conigliaro, Recording Sec'y Constance Bradley, Keshia Simmons, and Delegate Yolanda Daniels.

Workers Co-Chair and Local 101 Delegate Greg Bimbras. “I think that the Presidents of all the locals did a really good job in picking the young members they sent to the conference because once we started talking to each other, everyone started getting really fired up.

“We all realized that we had the same drive and we were all struggling with the same issues and frustrations as a

generation of union members. More than anything, we had the same goals in mind.”

They decided to march on May Day as a link to the activist past. May Day still carries an association with the Haymarket Square riot, and brings with it the turbulent emotions of the time.

Of the six core members of the Young Workers' leadership, two



the media that covers this type of thing, like Citizen Radio and a number of college

Shop Steward Yvonne Bailey and Delegate Yolanda Daniels march in the May Day parade.

radio stations,” said Greg. “The police all assumed we were going to the banks. But they're not the only problem, and they weren't our target. We were looking to bring attention to union-busting in other white collar industries. I think it was a good turnout, and I had a lot of fun. It was a great learning experience.”

“With the older leadership, a lot of people are getting ready to retire,” Greg added. “It's going to be left to the younger workers to dig their heels in and try to make real changes before things go too far in the opposite direction. The changes

that I'm focused on are much larger than the work that can be done on the level of our individual locals. We want to attack income inequality and increase union membership nationally. Workers need higher wages. We need a stronger middle class.

“If you look at the movements that young people are involved in, they don't seem that organized. With Occupy Wall Street, everyone looked at them and just saw these people hanging out and sleeping in the park. They didn't have a clear goal and there was no structure. I'm a homeowner, I have a full-time job, and I'm going to school. Young workers need to come together and show the public that it's not just a bunch of kids who are interested in fighting for change in America. Labor is alive, and it's no joke.”

Local 101's membership is young. “To new people that just joined the company, many of you are thinking of the Union as separate from you—like it's a totally different entity,” said Greg. “But you *are* the Union. You may not see that yet. You have a voice. For example, if you are constantly getting beat on your schedule, you can speak up and there are people who know what's going on and will help you.”

“In terms of Local 101 vs. National Grid,” said Greg, “when the contract comes around, I'd like to be able to reach out to other young workers and have a network of committed people from locals across the country who we can call on to stand with us. That's the power that the Young Workers can have on the local level. But in the moment, I'm thinking that our vision for the Young Workers is more the big picture.”



Our young union brothers and sisters from across the country convene for the founding meeting of the TWU Young Workers in our nation's capital on June 5, 2013. Local 101 Delegate Keith McLaurin pictured sixth from left. Delegate Greg Bimbras pictured third from left.