



Local 1277

News

January, 2022

1744 North Main Street • Los Angeles, CA 90031 • (323) 222-1277

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Doing the Leg Work

By Mauro Varela - Treasurer, Local 1277

Brothers and sisters, there is nothing more I like than to represent you and your needs. However, sometimes it is an uphill battle when we are not fully prepared to go to war. I have heard several members' concerns about specific issues, and we (your Executive Board) always want to address those issues. *However, we cannot do it alone and we cannot do it without you.*

I know I sound like a broken record when I say, "*File the grievance*", but doing your part and doing the first part of the grievance procedure is fundamental in any CBA or MOU. Yes, I know: It is a long and sometimes drawn-out process, but doing so lays the foundation we need to get something addressed. If it is in the CBA/MOU already, file that grievance. *This is the tool we need to fix things.*

Think about it this way: If you take your car to a mechanic because of an electrical issue, that mechanic wouldn't be able to fix it without using a voltmeter, test lights, or even possibly a computer, if needed. Those are the tools that help to diagnose the problem your car may have.

In the business of representation, grievance forms are the tools we need so we can address what's broken. Although the grievance might get denied, *we have started a paper trail.* With enough paper behind it, we can possibly make a strong statement to the agencies during negotiations. So even if we don't get it fixed right that instant, it may give us some support when we go to the table during negotiations. Who knows? We may even catch management on a good day and get the grievance granted. The point is, your Executive Board will keep on fighting for all of you. But when we don't have the paperwork to back us up, we can only get so far.

I'll use an example out of our RTA unit. Article 16, Section G, Meals and Rest, spells out the process to report loss of time on paddles. Loss of time is one of the biggest issues with our Operator brothers and sisters, because they do not get the proper amount of rest time that is supposed to be built into their paddles. There is no shortage of complaints amongst us, but when it comes to putting it on paper and following this process, we have none. Yes, I've heard this before: "I file it and they don't fix it." Or: "They fix that paddle but screw up something else." I hear you. However, this goes back to the point I made earlier: *Paper trails.*

During our past negotiations, we called RTA's attention to the fact that due to the way they schedule their runs, our Operators are not getting their scheduled rest time. When asked, where's my proof, *we had no paper to show it.* Management sat there and said, "This is the first we've heard about this, why haven't they filed the grievance?"

The thing to remember is that this is not a one and done; *you must file a grievance every time there is a contract violation.* Imagine if we had stacks and stacks of grievances to show that there had been a pattern. Doing the leg work and building the foundation gives us a much better chance at getting the change that you all expect and need.

Brothers and sisters, you have the tools. Grievances are the Union's tools. Let's use those tools provided to us. Doing the leg work now helps lay and build the foundation for a better fight. Thank you in advance for your understanding and cooperation.

Together, Let's Continue to Make a difference!

By Art Aguilar - President, Local 1277

Once again, brothers and sisters, I am so proud—and truly humbled—to receive your continuing confidence in my leadership of our great Union. Once again, I am pleased to lead ATU Local 1277 for another three years of working for stronger contracts, benefits improvements, and *expanding* an on-going commitment to social, economic, racial, and gender equality in our communities. Further, I will continue to make sure that our Union—*your voice*—is heard loud and clear in political campaigns and deliberations throughout Southern California.

Together, we have made a difference, with your support and determination, we have accomplished a number of good things. We have successfully bargained for fair contracts at our properties that are good for your careers and the future of your families. We have strengthened and improved all-important healthcare coverage, secured wage increases, and resolved numerous grievances—while always working to make your work-sites safer and healthier. And you can be *sure* that going forward, when we re-negotiate new contracts in the future, we will continue to work for the best wages, benefits, and safety conditions we can get. *Together, we will get it done!*

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Speaking of health, we seem (hopefully!) to have come through the worst of the global COVID pandemic. My heart aches over the loss of Local 1277 members, as well as the *far* too many ATU brothers and sisters we have lost throughout the United States and Canada since the initial virus outbreak in early 2020. ***But we more than coped! Our political muscle ensured that all public transit workers across California were jumped to the head of the line when the anti-COVID vaccines first became available! Your Union forced management at our properties to make your health and that of your families the top priority!*** In the midst of this unprecedented global catastrophe, Local 1277 and its brothers, sisters, and families came through *far* better than many other unions and, indeed, communities. *Together, we made a difference!*

What do the next three years hold for the Local 1277 family? Hopefully, labor peace and the satisfaction that comes from doing your important and skilled jobs well and safely as you progress in your careers at LACMTA, LBT, RTA, STA and Metrolink. ***You***—every ATU Local 1277 brother, sister, retiree, and family—are my one and only priority. ***You***—your needs and goals—are the reason I come to work. Along with your experienced and dedicated Executive Board, I pledge to continue to make a difference and to work on your behalf, and make our Union as strong and effective as possible. I still truly believe that *“Together We Can Make a Difference.”*

In recalling the memorable words of President John F. Kennedy, I say to you, *ask not what our Union can do for you, but what you can do for our Union.* Thank you again, brothers and sisters, for this opportunity to continue to serve you.

It's Been a Wild Three Years! Thank You for Letting Me Serve Again

By Errol Frazier - Vice President, Local 1277

Three years ago, when I sat down to write my thank you for your confidence in me, I absolutely had no idea about all the turmoil we were headed for. How could I, how could *anyone*? The global Covid pandemic started and the world we all lived in changed, maybe forever.

The challenges created by the pandemic were (and still are) trying: Long days and nights, many, many zoom meetings, and the securing of PPEs became the daily norm for us. And yet, despite facing the many and unprecedented hurdles, we simply hardened our resolve and pressed on.

There was some good news for us at ATU Local 1277: We were able to *extend* two contracts (at the Los Angeles County Metropolitan Transportation Authority and Long Beach Transit), and *open and finish* two others (Metrolink and Riverside Transit Agency). Currently, we are working on a contract at our other property, SunLine Transit Agency. And we have been doing all this during the Covid pandemic!

I most gratefully thank every Local 1277 brother, sister, and retiree for trusting me and giving me the opportunity to serve every one of you and our Union. I thank you for trusting *your* Executive Board to guide our great Local Union. If nothing else, these last three years have taught me that *when we unify, trust, and believe in each other, nothing can stop us, and there isn't anything we can't accomplish!*

Thank you, again, brothers and sisters.

Thank You for Allowing Me to Continue To Help Make Our Union Stronger And Even More Responsive to Your Goals

By Jeff Shaffer - Financial Recording Secretary

Thank you, brothers and sisters, for re-electing me as Financial Recording secretary for the next three years. I do not for a moment take this election and honor lightly, and I pledge to continue to work long and hard for your best interests and those of our Union.

During the last three years, I have seen your Executive Board deal with a great number of issues: Contract negotiations; grievance and arbitration procedures; local and global health concerns; workplace safety, and our Union's continuing role in the political and community affairs of the greater Los Angeles region.

I will continue to always be available and open to the questions, problems, and ideas of any Local 1277 member, from any of our properties. You can count on me to help you in any way I can. It is nothing less than an honor for me to do this.

I look forward to taking on the continued challenges and responsibilities of being your Financial Recording Secretary. I look forward to helping strengthen our Union in any way that I can. Thank you again, brothers and sisters, for giving me this great honor!

Thank You!

By Mauro Varela - Treasurer, Local 1277

Good morning, afternoon, and evening, brothers and sisters. I hope everyone was able to celebrate everything they were thankful for this past Thanksgiving. I know I am thankful for the vote of confidence you all gave me by allowing me to serve you for another term. I know that the fight for working families is a never-ending battle, and I will continue to fight for you all.

The last 20 months have been difficult beyond imagination, no one could have predicted or planned for this pandemic, but rest assured brothers and sisters, we have learned so much. I hope, once we are out of this, that we never have to go through this again, but we have taken notes and we will work to put provisions in place so that we hopefully never have to go through this again. So, again, thank you!

A Heartfelt Thank You

By John DiRito - Executive Board Member-at-Large

Good morning, afternoon, and evening, brothers and sisters. I hope this newsletter finds you and your family well. It was roughly three years ago that a need arose from within our local union, a retirement was on the horizon and it was leaving an opening in our Executive Board. It was at this time that a question was posed to me: Would I be willing to help out our Union? Quite frankly, being a Shop Steward at the time, I felt I was already helping our Union. More accurately, I was actively working to improve my own workplace, as well as that of my coworkers. In all earnestness, I had never considered becoming an officer, because there was always someone else who was willing to wear the mantle of leadership; someone who we would learn to trust, and who would strive to make our local stronger.

So the question had been asked, would I help our Local? And I asked the question, how much more would I have to do? I had already volunteered for drives, phone banks, leafletting, and a variety of other organized-labor activities necessary to spread information and knowledge to support our cause. What did it take to become and perform the duty of an officer for ATU Local 1277? And then another question came to me: Was there no one else? Someone who would be fair, who would treat all members equally regardless of their beliefs and political affiliations? I felt I was such a person as a Shop Steward, so perhaps I could remain so as an officer.

Ultimately, I decided I would let the membership choose. Would I be someone they could trust, and in return be entrusted to perform the duties of an officer to the best of my abilities? That answer was yes. I won the election in 2018 to become your Executive Board Member-at-Large, and since then I have always strived to do better and learn more day after day in order to become an officer who would serve the membership justly.

With current nominations looming, I knew it was a possibility I would be challenged, and I would be willing to take that challenge and fight for the right to continue to represent our members—represent you. I did it because in the years of being an officer, I had learned that not just anyone would be able to do this job, and not just anyone could stay steady and continually push to strengthen our Local. It is that understanding that also enlightens me about the changes we need to make going forward so we can continue to strengthen our Local and continue to get you involved and actively interested in improving your working lives for yourselves and your families.

With the nominations for the 2021 term closed, it is with humble gratitude that I thank you for once again entrusting me to be your Executive Board Member-at-Large. I plan to continue striving to do better and to be better. Not only for myself, but for our Local as a whole. I look forward to being your representative and to working toward a better and brighter future for us all. I hope you enjoyed safe, healthy and happy holidays! Please stay safe, and by all means, take the time to enjoy your family and friends, because after all, isn't that why we work? In solidarity!

TRADE TECH SPRING 2022

**Spring 2022 • Labor Studies Classes
Starts February 7, 2022 • Ends: June 6,**

Online Classes (3 Unit)

16 weeks 3 hours & 10 minutes/week

- LS – U.S. Labor History** – Class 20308 • Instructor: Ericka Wills
- LS 2 – Collective Bargaining** – Class 20324 • Instructor: Tanya Akel
- LS 3 – Labor Relations Law** – Class 20318 • Instructor: Josh Young
- LS 10 – Identity & Diversity** – Class 20310 • Instructor: Ericka Wills
- LS 11 – Labor in Public Sector** – Class 23908 • Instructor: Jody Kipple
- LS 13 – Union Leadership** – Class 23905 • Instructor: Ericka Wills
- LS 24 – Enforcing Workers' Rights** – Class 20319 • Instructor: Jocelyn Lopez

In Person Off-Site Evening Classes (3-Unit)

16 weeks/6 pm –9:10 pm

WEDNESDAY

- LS 4 – Labor in America** – Class 24622 • Instructor: Marcus Hatcher
Location: Teamsters 1932 In San Bernardino
433 N. Sierra Way, San Bernardino, CA 92410

THURSDAY

- LS 2 – Collective Bargaining** – Class 24724 • Instructor: Marcus Hatcher
Location: Teamsters 952 In Orange
140 S. Marks Way, Orange, CA 92868

On-Campus Classes (3-Unit) 16 Weeks Building F5, Room 107

- LS 4 – Labor in America** – Class 20313 • Instructor: Lou Siegel

Mondays/Wednesdays from 10:10 am – 11:35 am

- LS 21 – Working Class in Cinema** – Class 23992 • Instructor: Mindy Chen

Weekend Classes On-Campus (1-Unit)

**2 Saturdays from 8:30 am-5:00 pm,
Building F5, Room 221**

- LS 123 – Steward Training** – Class 24382
Feb 26 & Mar 5, 2022 • Instructor: Marcus Hatcher
- LS 118 – Employee Benefit Plans** – Class 23825
Mar 12 & 19, 2022 • Instructors: Kathy Rallings & Sharon Hendricks
- LS 134 – CA Workers' Rights** – Class 23828
Apr 23 & 30, 2022 • Instructor: Josh Young
- LS 128 – Sexual Harassment & Discrimination** – Class 24553
May 7 & 14, 2022 • Instructor: Susan Minato

Must Pre-Enroll Online at least a week before class starts:
<http://www.laccd.edu/students/openccapply/applylattc/pages/default.aspx>

**Fees \$46/unit for CA residents • ASO Rep Fee \$2/Semester
ASO Membership fee \$7/Semester**

**Optional: Must opt out via student portal before start of semester
Health Fee \$19/semester • Check Payable to LATTCC**

**For Further information contact: • Labor Center (213) 763-7129
Email: laborcenter@lattc.edu • <http://college.lattc.edu/laborcenter>
Kathleen Yasuda, Director**

**Olga Garcia Support Staff
Max Mont Scholarships: For Labor Studies classes only
** Labor Studies 1, 4, & 11 meets GE requirements in Social Sciences at
LA Trade Tech, CSU, and UC****

Remembering those who have passed
In Memoriam

During the past year, a number of ATU Local 1277 brothers and sisters passed away. We mourn their passing. The Executive Board and all of our active members and retirees offer our condolences to their families and friends. We remember these members now and forever. They will be missed.



- Adam Grubb • 11-17-20 – Retired**
- Barbara Kenner • 11-30-20 – Retired**
- John Estel • 12-18-20 – Retired**
- Charles Clavijo • 12-26-20 – Retired**
- Pedro Delgado • 12-26-20 – Retired**
- Kevin Smith • 01-02-21 – Active**
- Ralph Therrio • 01-13-21 – Retired**
- Thomas Hatcher • 01-16-21 – Active**
- Duc Banh • 01-20-21 – Retired**
- Carlos Morales • 01-24-21 – Retired**
- Eveline Portier • 01-30-21 – Retired**
- Cleria Allen • 02-10-21 – Retired**
- Gil Gomez • 02-11-21 – Active**
- John Spata • 02-20-21 – Retired**
- Michael Medina • 02-26-21 – Retired**
- Richard Seamans • 03-06-21 – Retired**
- Christopher Young • 03-31-21 – Retired**
- Benjamin Aguilar • 04-02-21 – Retired**
- Richard Day • 04-05-21 – Active**
- Jaime Olivo • 04-13-21 – Retired**
- Aloysius Woo • 04-13-21 – Retired**
- Vanessa Moore • 04-22-21 – Retired**
- Quan Mai • 06-11-21 – Retired**
- Kenneth Buehner • 06-12-21 – Retired**
- Hildeberto Flores • 07-02-21 – Active**
- Billie Raines • 07-14-21 - Retired**
- George Arredondo • 07-25-21 – Retired**
- Ronaldo Alcaraz • 09-07-21 – Active**
- Horace Wooten • 09-07-21 – Retired**
- Georgina Retamosa • 10-03-21 – Active**
- Mark Forstall • 10-09-21 – Retired**

Rest in Peace, brothers and sisters...

Here are the upcoming Local 1277 membership meetings for January and February. Please make every attempt to attend the meeting for your unit. It's your Union, and we need your participation at our meetings! All members will receive credit for the meetings.

Tuesday, Jan 4:	Los Angeles area members:
Tuesday, Feb 1:	L.A. Building Trades Council, 1626 Beverly Blvd., Los Angeles. Morning Session 10:00 a.m. Evening Session 5:00 p.m.
Wednesday, Jan 5:	Metrolink Unit members:
Wednesday, Feb 2:	Local 1277 Office, 1744 North Main Street. Morning Session 8:30 a.m. Evening Session 5:00 p.m.
Wednesday, Jan 5:	Riverside area members:
Wednesday, Feb 2:	IELC Building, 1074 E. La Cadena Dr., Riverside Morning Session 10:00 a.m. Afternoon Session 3:00 p.m.
Thursday, Jan 6:	SunLine area members:
Thursday, Feb 3:	Hilton Palm Springs, 400 East Tahquitz Canyon Way, Palm Springs Morning Session 10:00 a.m. Afternoon Session 4:00 p.m.
Thursday, Jan 6:	Long Beach area members:
Thursday, Feb 3:	LBFA Local 372, 2201 Cherry Avenue, Signal Hill CA 90755 Morning: 10:00 a.m. Afternoon: 3:00 p.m. Evening: 6:00 p.m.