



# Local 1277

News  
August, 2023

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Website: [www.atu1277.com](http://www.atu1277.com)

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## President's report

### Alive and kicking!

#### Organized Labor Makes Its Presence Felt Throughout L.A.

By Jeff Shaffer  
President, Local 1277

*Editor's note: While possible or continuing job actions may still be taken by members of the Screen Actors Guild and Unite Here Local 11 in the near future, the overall point of this article, written in late July, is still accurate.*

The doom-and gloom crowd, the people and the groups that just *love* being anti-union, anti-working people, and anti-working families like to run around saying organized labor is on the ropes, a force that is no longer relevant or effective. Its day is done, they say.

Oh, really? Welcome to Los Angeles!

Yes, it's true that nationwide union membership as a percentage of the overall labor force has—unfortunately—dropped to just above 10% of employed wage and salary workers. *But in California, where we live, work, and raise our families, organized labor's membership rose to over 16% of the workforce!*

And we're not a quiet, passive 16% either. Let's look around greater Los Angeles County and see what working men and women are doing—*united and strong together*—to call attention to their grievances and improve their lives, jobsites, and future.

In recent weeks:

- West Coast dockworkers disrupted the huge, busy ports of Los Angeles and Long Beach, demanding better wages, safer jobsites, and improved benefits. It looks like they won their battle with a tentative new contract.
- **In early July, the brothers and sisters of Unite Here Local 11—representing 15,000 hotel workers—walked off their jobs at hotels across the region (in Los Angeles and at Disneyland) to demand higher wages, better work schedules, and an all-important intangible: *respect for their work and their lives.***
- Across the city, schools were shut down for three days when bus drivers, cafeteria workers, and teachers walked out.
- **Motion picture and television screenwriters—the backbone and *creators*—of our region's largest and**

most prestigious industry have been out on strike for months, bringing production to a halt, while they rightly demand a bigger share of the enormous (and growing) pot of streaming and other revenue sources.

- In mid-July, some *160,000* actors added their muscle in shutting down all Hollywood productions since they could not reach a fair and equitable contract.
- **And, closer to home in a way, 98% of the member of our sister union, ATU Local 1756 in Arcadia, have okayed a strike against their employer, the Transdev Agency, seeking improved wages and benefits, along with stronger retirement packages and safer working conditions.**

Bottom line: Organized labor is flexing a hell of a lot of muscle and solidarity across the region as it fights to better the lives and jobsite conditions of the hard-working men, women, and families it represents.

#### What Are They Striking For?

Higher wages to meet rising inflation and prices and, in the case of many Unite Here Long 11 members, allow them to live closer to where they work. Better and safer working conditions. Expanded benefits, including more reasonable schedules and retirement packages. But, perhaps above all, *long-overdue respect from management in the affected fields—hospitality, transit, longshore, education, and entertainment—for their work, their skills, their dedication and, finally, themselves as human beings!*

Consider, for example, the brothers and sisters of Unite Here Local 11. Far too many of them simply can't afford to live reasonably close to their places of work. *They can't afford to live in Los Angeles.* On top of miserable, stressful daily commuting, these hard-working, under-appreciated working people are often forced to work unreasonable, family-crushing schedules (shifts), while facing meager wages and ever-present staff cutbacks.

These housekeepers, who help maintain the hotels that are the backbone of the region's important tourist/visitor industry, are victims of Southern California's hugely expensive living costs. Local 11 leaders want an immediate wage hike of \$5.00/hour, followed by \$3.00 bumps in each year of a three-year contract. Hotel workers just want to survive in and around L.A., but apparently management doesn't care enough about the people who keep their places running.

*Continued to page 2...*

Here is a typical example of the workers' economic crisis: A housekeeper at the Waldorf Astoria Beverly Hills Hotel earns \$25.00/hour. She lives in a rent-controlled one-bedroom apartment in Hollywood, paying \$1100.00/month for a place with sporadic hot water and decaying floors. This is all she can afford; the alternative would be leaving the city and either increasing her commute or losing her job altogether. Some choice!

And hers is only one of thousands of such stories. Another Local 11 sister says, "*All we do is work and work and get by with very little. We take care of the tourists, but no one takes care of us.*" She works at the downtown InterContinental Los Angeles Hotel and is terribly worried about how longer she can afford to live with her family in a one-bedroom apartment in El Sereno. Her pay simply does not keep up with inflation.

These two stories are just depressing examples of how hard it is for working people and families to get by in and around Los Angeles, supporting families while earning sub-standard pay and facing crushing commutes and uncaring management. In fact, the hotel association has the nerve to criticize *Unite Here Local 11* and its members for pushing what it calls "non-labor" issues during their job action.

Oh, really? *Non-labor* issues? The ability to live in decent housing—alone or with a family—so that one gets rest and a release from job stress is *not* a labor issue? Having a safe, affordable, adequate home doesn't improve a worker's morale and productivity? *Of course, it does.* And does management really believe that soul-crushing, stressful commutes throughout Los Angeles County *don't* contribute to lower employee morale, tiredness, and increased chances of jobsite accidents?

The hotel association must live in a different world than you and I do. Organized labor, of course, rightly bargains for better wages, benefits, and safer workplaces. But we in the union movement also understand something that management either overlooks or doesn't care about: *Outside influences like housing, family life, commuting, and the day-to-day battle to stay ahead of inflation also count heavily.*

And, brothers and sisters, so does *respect* from management—in any profession—for the work, dignity, and worth of the people who make their organizations work and profit. From hotels to the docks, from schools to mass transit, from entertainment professionals behind and in front of the camera, the bosses must learn that their workforce is both valuable and worthy of respect and a decent, life-affording contract.

Listen to what Lorence Bradford, ATU Local 1756 President had to say earlier in July: "***It's only been three days of negotiations and Transdev is already not bargaining in good faith. Charges may be filed against them with the National Labor Relations Board. Transdev is refusing to consider Union proposals to improve employee wages, benefits, retirement, and other working conditions.***"

As long as management, anywhere, in any field, thinks like that, organized labor will have an important role to play in protecting working men and women and their families. As long as management disregards its workforce in pursuit of the holy "bottom line", union members will rally and walk off the job in pursuit of better wages and benefits, safer jobsites, and *respect* for the work they do every day!

The union movement is declining? Oh, yeah? *Come to Los Angeles!*

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## Let's Not Make a Deal!

By John DiRito  
*Financial-Recording Secretary*

Good morning, afternoon, and evening, brothers and sisters. I hope this newsletter finds you well and healthy. It is my continuing fortune to be your representative, and as such I see a fair amount of issues that requires Executive Board attention. Surprisingly, perhaps, sometimes these issues aren't always the fault of management. Well, at least not directly in the cases I want to discuss. Recently, I have had a slew of issues come across my desk regarding work conditions and, this one that I really don't like, *Local 1277 member vs. member.*

The latter has been especially true when it comes to newer employees mixing in with the more seasoned members. Oftentimes, there is a 'flow' or expectation of work, almost as if we were working piecemeal. I guarantee you, *there isn't a single ATU Local 1277 contract that allows for piecemeal work, or even quotas.* So then why are we behaving as though it does?

## The Poisoned Pill

Often management comes up with a solution which requires our members to work harder or faster in the same span of time they normally work, and for the same rate of pay. Then why, you might ask, would any rational worker tolerate this kind of work ethic? Because it often comes with a caveat that "*Management won't look for you*" or "*You can take an extended break*", or some other promise that management could not possibly uphold for very long. In fact, not only should it **not** be upheld, but it shouldn't be made to begin with! *We*, our brothers and sisters, have contracts in place! At all our properties. And those contracts afford you worker protections. Why, oh why, are you placing your career and livelihood in jeopardy?

In most all our classifications, workers bid for their shift and days off, and are expected to work safely within the context of an eight-hour shift. Yes, we have some longer shifts, but the expectation is the same. Work safely. Work like you expect to be here for years to come, because more than likely you have a career job that will provide for you and your family. And one that your family has come to depend on for getting and keeping those important benefits you have. Don't make side deals, brothers and sisters. Don't give your power and rights away to management!

Brothers and sisters, we have often discussed the absolute value of education. For either or both of these reasons: First, to advance your career for your benefit and that of your families, and second, simply for the joy of learning new things.

Once again, Los Angeles' famed Trade Tech is offering informative and relevant courses in a variety of fields. Your Executive Board, as always, strongly recommends that you take the time to examine the course schedule and find an opportunity to attend some of these classes. You will gain from the experience and grow both professionally and personally.



## FALL 2023 LABOR STUDIES CLASSES

Start August 28 End December 17, 2023

All Labor Studies classes - transferable to CSU

### ONLINE CLASSES (3-UNIT) 16WKS 3hrs + 10min/Week

#### LS 4 Labor in America Class #20420

The role of unions in creating and maintaining the middle class standard of living for all workers. Labor's impact on issues such as wages, benefits and job security, and economic justice issues such as public education and social security.

**Instructors:** Ericka Willis & Josh Young

#### LS 5 Grievance & Arbitration Class #20373

How to identify, investigate, write and present grievances, and handle arbitrations. Emphasis on participants' own contracts, grievance procedures and experiences.

**Instructors:** Tanya Akel & Jody Klipple

#### LS 11 Labor in Public Sector Class #25084

Public sector unions, workers and services are under attack. How to protect and defend your members, your union and collective bargaining now and for the future.

**Instructor:** Jody Klipple

#### LS 20 Workers' Rights Class #24709

Basic legal rights for workers, including: wage and hour laws, overtime, leaves, workplace privacy including e-mail and computers, accommodating disabilities, including pregnancy, and combating employment discrimination.

**Instructor:** Josh Young

#### LS 21 Working Class in Cinema Class #20421

Examines film portrayals of the working class and labor unions. Students learn to evaluate popular culture, dramatization of workers' rights struggles, and analyze how the movies help shape public perception and values.

**Instructors:** Ericka Willis & Josh Young

#### LS 24 Enforcing Workers' Rights Class #25879

Skills needed to investigate, prepare, and present cases filed by the State Labor Commissioner to enforce workers' rights.

**Instructor:** Jocelyn Lopez-Cisneros

### OFF-SITE EVENING CLASSES (3-UNIT)

16WKS  
6pm-9:10pm  
FREE PARKING

#### WEDNESDAY

##### LS 20 Workers' Rights Class #261016

See online class for class description

**Instructor:** Marcus Hatcher

Location: Teamsters 1932  
433 N Sierra Way, San Bernardino, 92410

#### THURSDAY

##### LS 9 Union Organizing Strategies Class #25588

Basic skills and techniques to organize new workers, and mobilize members to build and strengthen your union; includes relevant laws and winning strategies.

**Instructors:** Matt Hart & Derek Smith

Location: UFCW 324  
8530 Stanton Avenue, Buena Park

### DAY CLASSES AT LATTTC (3-UNIT) 16WKS in F5-201

#### Mondays/Wednesdays

10:10am-11:35am

##### LS 4 Labor in America

Class #26017

See online class for class description

**Instructor:** Jenny Galvez

#### Tuesdays/Thursdays

10:10am-11:35am

##### LS 21 - Working Class in Cinema

Class #20408

See online class for class description

**Instructor:** Mindy Chen

**\*\* Labor Studies 1, 4, & 21 meets  
GE requirements in Social Sciences at  
LA Trade Tech, CSU, and UC \*\***

### WEEKEND CLASSES AT LATTTC

Saturdays 8:30am-5:20pm  
(1-UNIT) F5-221

#### LS 127 Workers' Compensation

Class #24755

A basic understanding of Workers Comp, covers types of injuries and disabilities (temporary, permanent), benefits (medical care, rehabilitation and financial support), and procedures for filing a claim and appeals.

Sep 16 & 23

**Instructors:** Scott Ford & Cheryl Wallach

#### LS 136 When the Paycheck Stops Class #24500

Learn how to counsel members when the paycheck stops due to strikes, layoff, or plant closure. Overviews such services as retraining, food banks, unemployment, and negotiating with landlords, mortgage companies, utility companies and other creditors.

Oct 7 & 14

**Instructor:** Armando Olivas

#### LS 109 Union Building Strategies Class #26852

Skills and techniques to build a strong union through strategic planning, leadership development, communication techniques, including 1-on-1 and member mobilization.

Oct 21 & 28

**Instructor:** Susan Minato

#### LS 125 Labor Arbitration Class #26103

Survey of the arbitration process, covering: selection and authority of arbitrators, preparation of cases, how arbitrators decide cases, settlement techniques, tips for effective use of arbitration, and review of typical cases.

Dec 2 & 9

**Instructor:** Lou Zigman

**FREE PARKING  
for weekend Labor Studies classes  
during class hours only.**



Illustrated by, Marianna Freeman

You must pre-enroll on-line *at least a week before class starts.*

<http://www.laccd.edu/students/openccapply/applylattc/pages/default.aspx>

Fees: \$46.00/unit for CA residents. ASO Rep Fee: \$2.00/semester ASO Membership fee: \$7.00/semester,

Optional: Must opt out via student portal before start of semester. Health Fee; \$19.00/semester. Check payable to LATTTC.

For further information, contact: Labor Center (213/763-7129). E-mail:

[laborcenter@lattc.edu](mailto:laborcenter@lattc.edu) | <http://college.lattc.edu/laborcenter>



## **Tragedy at SunLine**

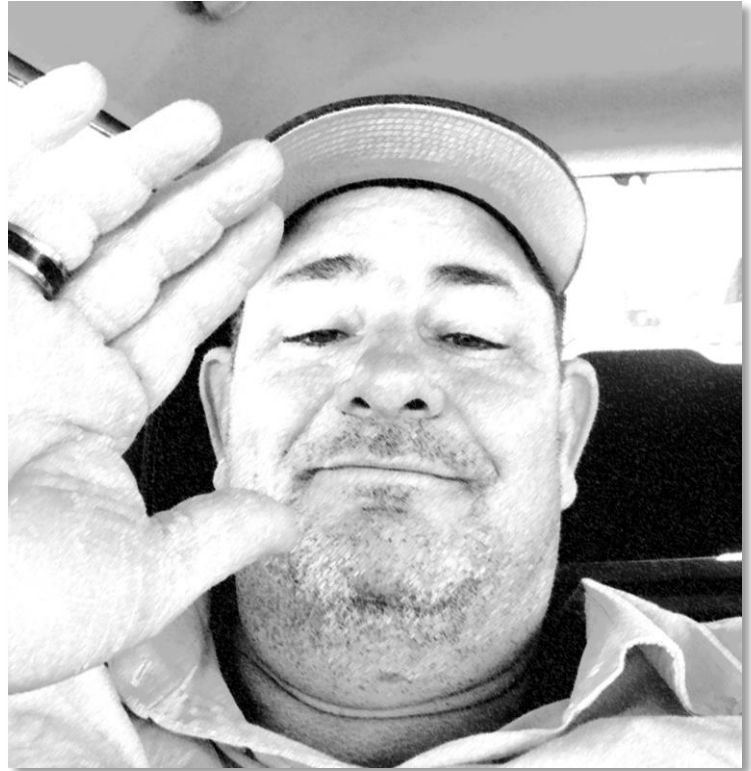
### **A Sad, Untimely Death Of a Local 1277 Brother**

*By Victor Rodriguez  
Executive Board Member-at-Large*

It greatly pains me to have to report that Brother *Jesse Payne*, passed away suddenly on May 27 at age 51. Brother Payne, a Bus Operator, in the Paratransit division of our Union's SunLine Transit Agency Unit, was a new member of ATU Local 1277.

I knew him from Unit meetings, where he was always a friendly and cordial member, eager to learn more about our Union and how it operates in the many ways it serves our members and their families. Brother Payne drove one of the shuttle buses which takes handicapped and special-needs people around the area so they can make their appointments. In his short time at SunLine Paratransit, Jesse was well liked by his co-workers.

Any death within the Local 1277 family is sad news, of course, but Brother Payne's sudden passing was a particularly shocking and surprising blow. Jesse leaves behind his wife, Cecilia, and two daughters. His life and outlook were neatly summed up by Cecilia: "*For Jesse, God was first, family second, and money isn't everything.*"



Rest in Peace, Brother Jesse Payne. You left us way too soon and you will be missed!

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### **Nine ATU Local 1277 members have retired from LACMTA after long and productive careers. They all were hardworking employees and loyal members of our Union.**

*Duane Anderson*, Senior Service Attendant, Division 24, 23 years, January 17, 2023; *Robert McNeese*, Property Maintainer, Facility Maintenance, 15 years, May 5; *Darryl Johnson*, Senior Service Attendant, Division 5, 33 years, May 15; *Anthanet Mays*, Senior Service Attendant, Red Line, 24 years, May 26; *Paul Rankin*, Master Mechanic, Division 15, 39 years, June 1; *Pat Lubash*, Track Inspector, Track Department, 33 years, June 10; *Jaime Sanchez*, Mechanic A, CMF, 26 years, June 12; *Robert Matthys*, Track Inspector, Track Department, 26 years, June 17, and *Vance Pozon*, Mechanic A, 30 years, Division 7, June 18.

**Local 1277's Executive Board and members wish these brothers and sisters long, enjoyable, and healthy retirements. They will be missed!**

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Here are the upcoming Local 1277 membership meetings for August and September. 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.

<b>Tuesday, Aug. 1:</b>	Los Angeles area members:
<b>Tuesday, Sep. 5:</b>	L.A. Building Trades Council, 1626 Beverly Blvd., Los Angeles. Morning Session 10:00 a.m. Evening Session 5:00 p.m.
<b>Wednesday, Aug. 2:</b>	Metrolink Unit members:
<b>Wednesday, Sep. 6:</b>	Local 1277 Office, 1744 North Main Street. Morning Session 8:30 a.m. Evening Session 5:00 p.m.
<b>Wednesday, Aug. 2:</b>	Riverside area members:
<b>Wednesday, Sep. 6:</b>	IELC Building, 1074 E. La Cadena Dr., Riverside Morning Session 10:00 a.m. Afternoon Session 3:00 p.m.
<b>Thursday, Aug. 3:</b>	SunLine area members:
<b>Thursday, Sep. 7:</b>	Hilton Palm Springs, 400 East Tahquitz Canyon Way, Palm Springs Morning Session 10:00 a.m. Afternoon Session 4:00 p.m.
<b>Thursday, Aug. 3:</b>	Long Beach area members:
<b>Thursday, Sep. 7:</b>	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.