DL54 President and Directing Business Representative T. Dean Wright Jr. has announced the retirement of DL54 Business Representative Jack Baker, effective April 1st, 2019.

“District 54 is immensely thankful to Jack for his work on behalf of thousands of IAM members in Ohio, West Virginia, and Northeastern Indiana,” said PDBR Wright. “From his work in representing our members and organizing efforts, Brother Baker served our members well. Jack is a true friend and unionist. We thank him for his service and wish him a happy retirement.”

Baker has been a member of the IAM since his initiation into Local Lodge 1297 in 1999 while working at Pentair Pump in Ashland, Ohio. Baker held various shop committee positions and served as President of Local 1297 for two terms.

Baker joined the staff of District 54 as a Business Representative in 2008. He also served as a delegate to the Ohio State Council of Machinists (OSCM).

“It’s hard to believe this time came so fast. I have been very fortunate and blessed by the opportunity I was given,” said Baker. “The chance to defend workers and work with the shop committees has been an honor. Working with Dean and my fellow BRs has been a privilege. No matter what someone always had your back. I will always look back and cherish the memories.”

Thank you, Brother Jack!
Nikki Brown serves as the first woman President of Local 1349. Sister Brown was initiated into the IAM almost five years ago, but previously joined a union for 10 years as a Corrections Officer. She now works at Bard Manufacturing in Ohio.

Elected in late 2018, Sister Brown started her term in January of this year with the goals of organizing and modernizing. She recently traveled to the Winpisinger Center to attend an organizing class and hopes to encourage organizing in her local by building a strong team, adding technology and social media to their tool set, and visiting shops in Indiana within Local 1349 to take lessons garnered from shops under Right-to-Work (for less) laws.

“As we look toward the future of Local 1349, I have no doubt that Nikki will do great things,” said District 54 PDBR T. Dean Wright, Jr. “The District looks forward to working with her and aiding in her leadership goals.”

Brown’s advice for the younger generation is to step-up and get involved. “CEOs take advantage of younger workers; we need to stand strong and stand up for ourselves,” said Brown. “Unions hold companies accountable and give workers a voice, without them whatever the company says goes.”

Congratulations Nikki!

If you know someone who is interested in joining a union or if you would like to volunteer in an organizing campaign, please contact one of our staff members at;

Address: 2625 Winchester Pike, Columbus, OH 43232
Phone: (614) 239-0401
Email: 54@dl54.com
Website: www.iamdistrict54.com

Mission Statement:
The vision of the International Association of Machinists & Aerospace Workers District 54 is to establish and support economic and social justice for all workers-regardless of their sex, race or national origin, ensuring that all work is performed by union workers, by furnishing job training and retraining, by enforcing safe and healthy workplaces, by providing fair and reasonable wage rates and benefits, and by establishing secure and portable retirement pension plans.
CMTI Employees at NASA Glenn Research Center Join District 54

Thirty-eight full- and part-time custodial maintenance employees working for Creative Management Technology, Inc. (CMTI) at NASA Glenn Research Center in Cleveland, OH unanimously voted to join the International Association of Machinists and Aerospace Workers (IAMAW), District Lodge 54 on April 1.

“I want to personally congratulate and commend our new Brothers and Sisters, by joining the Machinists Union they have empowered themselves,” said President & DBR T. Dean Wright, Jr. “We look forward to negotiating a strong first contract and bettering their wages and benefits. I’d also like to thank District Lodge 54 staff, Local Lodge 439 volunteers, and the regional office for their support and assistance with this victory.”

Welcome to the IAM Family!

Members at Bionetics Ratify First Contract

Congratulations to our members at The Bionetics Corporation in Heath, OH on ratifying their first agreement on January 22nd, by a 91% margin. Our recently organized Brothers and Sisters fall under the Service Contract Act (SCA) guidelines, which allow for wages, benefits, and working conditions to be set by union bargaining.

Members received substantial initial wage increases in the agreement, in addition to a 2.5% wage increase in the first year and 3% wage increase in each additional year of the contract life. Hourly wage rates range from $21 to $41 and include paid benefits previously unprovided.

Members now receive extra paid time of 48 hours per year, paid bereavement, and a peak of $1.25 per hour over the course of the new agreement into the IAM Pension. In addition, the new agreement includes increases in healthcare and to the 401k Savings Plan, the company at its cost will invest up to $2 per hour for every hour worked into an employee’s 401k.

Congratulations!
Talking Right-To-Work With Non-Union Workers

Editors' note: Union members and their allies in Missouri beat back an effort to establish so-called right-to-work in their state in August. Shannon Duffy reflects on how he talked with voters, at their doors, about opposing anti-union policies when most don’t have unions.

Back in the eighties, when I was a steward at Ozark Air Lines, a co-worker was suspended for three days without pay over something that was understood by everyone to be totally arbitrary and unfair. A grievance was promptly filed, but the union knew that the process would take months to resolve and that, in this case, justice delayed meant justice denied. Our co-worker was going to be seriously short on his next paycheck and winning the grievance and getting him his money back could take almost a year. Help was needed now.

So on the morning of the third day of his suspension, we launched a “safety campaign.” (We called it a safety campaign because slowdowns are illegal). So there we were, being really safe and doing everything by the book, an action known as “work to rule.” Everybody was mindful of how they moved, looking where they walked and runway traffic was moving at or below the posted speed limit of 15 MPH.

Soon planes started to back up in St. Louis. Flights would arrive and then spend an incredibly long time waiting for gates. The terminal was packed with irate passengers. Meanwhile, union workers kept paying careful attention to how they picked up a bag or piece of mail or freight and management started to lose its mind.

Our union’s grievance committee was made up of one older guy and one younger guy. They were summoned upstairs and told that, if they didn’t put a stop to this right now, they would be fired. They came back downstairs and the senior guy said, “Hey, you guys, this is serious. I might lose my job if you don’t knock this off!” The junior member walked outside on the ramp, looked around to make sure no supervisors were near, smiled, and said four words: “It’s working. Go slower.” And everyone nodded and went back to doing what they had been doing before.

It soon became clear that management had no clue about how to deal. Over on the B-concourse, a senior member of management approached a group of workers who were behaving very safely and he began screaming at them. He yelled and cursed and said that, unless they started moving faster, they would all be fired. Their response? They smiled at him and went right on being safe and conscientious workers. When no one did as he commanded, he staggered over to the steel pier that held up the jetway and leaned heavily against it. He seemed to be trying to catch his breath, and more than one person thought he might very well expire right on that spot.

However, he caught his second wind when he spied a bag runner pulling three or four carts of bags, crossing from the C-concourse to the B and going about two miles an hour. He stopped the driver and demanded to know why he was driving so ridiculously slowly. The driver said,
TALKING RIGHT-TO-WORK WITH NON-UNION WORKERS

(continued)

"It hurts to go any faster." It was a great reply because there was ice on the ground and driving over it was bumpy as hell and it did hurt if you went very fast. That had never mattered before; we all drove over that stuff really fast all the time. But it was still a great reply because no one could claim that it didn’t hurt. I believe the driver may also have said something logical, like how driving too fast over all those bumps might cause bags to fall out. In any event, the manager said nothing, walked dejectedly back to his vehicle, and drove away.

Scenes like that repeated all over the airport that day. At three o’clock our grievance committee was called upstairs again. This time, they were informed that our suspended brother would be paid for the three days he had missed and the letter of discipline would be removed from his file. So would they please go back downstairs and get the workers to stop what they were doing?

It is not an exaggeration to say it was one of the best days of my life.

WHY UNIONS SCARE THE POWERFUL

Because the right wing is usually pushing right-to-work, we’re often asked two important questions: “Why should a non-union worker vote against right-to-work?” and “Since unions comprise only nine percent of the workforce, why are anti-union forces so intent on doing this? Why is right-to-work so important to them?”

To answer that, it’s important to understand how a workplace can be a source of great strength. An active union presence in the workplace is often the basis for other, perhaps larger, mobilizations that occur outside the workplace and in the community. When strong unions forge coalitions with other social movements, there is enormous potential for change. An organized and mobilized workforce is capable of creating all kinds of change—and that is what scares them.

I witnessed it firsthand at Gate 18-B back in the eighties. It’s why those in power have waged a relentless campaign against us all these years. The idea of workers realizing how we are all connected scares the bejesus out of them.

This has never been about workers receiving an extra 25 cents an hour or a 401(k) match; that’s small potatoes to them—an annoyance. Keeping workers disorganized and, if possible, at each other’s throats is the real goal: because a disorganized workplace, where workers feel powerless, prevents our ability to act collectively in the broader struggle for social and economic justice.

Last week I spoke with a nonunion single mother. We did not discuss fair share. Instead, we talked about the myriad of issues workers face in our state. While talking about medical coverage (and her lack of it) I asked her if she thought our odds were better for expanding Medicaid in this state with a strong union movement or with a weak one? And that is when she got it.

—Shannon Duffy is a business representative with the United Media Guild (CWA) in St. Louis, Missouri. A longer essay, from which this is adapted, was published by Labor Notes, www.labornotes.org. UCS thanks both Duffy and Labor Notes for sharing it with us.
Take up the fight in our nation’s capital for policies that actually benefit working people. Join hundreds of your fellow IAM members at the 2019 IAM Legislative Conference May 6-8, 2019 in Washington, D.C.

The MNPL Planning Committee Conference will take place on May 9-11, 2019 in Washington, D.C.

Communicators at all levels of the IAM are encouraged to take part in the 2019 IAM Communications Conference at Planet Hollywood in Las Vegas June 4-6, 2019.

In observance of the Easter Holiday, District Lodge 54 Headquarters will be closed Friday, April 19 – Monday April 22, and will reopen April 23.

On behalf of the Officers, Delegates, and Staff, we wish all of you and your families a very Happy Easter!
We are pleased to announce the retirement of Clyde Bell from the Recording Secretary Officer position of Local 818. Clyde has served on the executive board of the local since 1978, when he became a Trustee. In 1980 Clyde was elected as Recording Secretary and has held this position for the past 38 years. Clyde is a former machinist of Mull Machine Company in Wheeling, WV from which he retired in 2010. Clyde and his wife Linda have been married for 55 years. They have three children and five grandchildren. Clyde plans to spend as much time as he can with his family.

Please join with us in thanking Brother Clyde for his long-time service and dedication to Local Lodge 818! We wish him a joyous retirement!

Happy Retirement!

Charlie Basham, Local 598  
Ronald Burton, Local 1285  
Jeffrey Emick, Local 818  
Harold Giles, Local 1297  
Pam Harris, Local 598  
Jeffrey McRobie, Local 1285  
Jim Modock, Local 439  
William Dean Murphy, Local 1285  
Ray Picclominni, Local 439

Dave Proctor, Local 1027  
Ray Puda, Local 1297  
Russell Simmons, Local 1285  
Willard Skaer, Local 1285  
Betty Skidmore, Local 1027  
Al Strimpel, Local 439  
Jim Thornburg, Local 1297  
James Woodall, Local 1297  
Mark Yackey, Local 1285

Donald John Gede, 66 years of age, and a resident of Henrietta Township, passed away Wednesday, February 6, 2019. He was born November 4, 1952, in Elyria, Ohio. Brother Gede had been a lifetime resident of Henrietta Township, graduating from Firelands High School with the class of 1971. He was employed as a machine repairman at Nordson Corporation for 45 years before retiring in March of 2018. Don was a member of Local 1802, where he served as the President for over 20 years.

In Memoriam

Steven Cook, Local 598  
Dick Denger, Local 1802  
Bing Knepper, Local 1802  
Rick Milam, Local 439
During District 54’s January Delegate Meeting, DL54 Confidential Secretary, Donna Swaggery and DL54 Communications Representative, Regina Wright were sworn into the Machinists Union.

Welcome to the IAM Family!

Do you have any organizing leads? Contact us at 54@dl54.com

PDBR: T. Dean Wright, Jr.
ST/BR: Jerry Espy
VP: Fred Confer
CS: Jack Williams

ADBR: Duane Lukens
BR’s: Don Riffee, Jr.
Jim McClelland

ED: Peggy Montague
CM: Mary Napier
PE: Thomas D. Frisbie
Communications Rep: Regina Wright
Secretary: Donna Swaggerty