

OFFICIAL JOURNAL OF THE AMALGAMATED TRANSIT UNION | AFL-CIO/CLC

# INTRANSIT

JULY - AUGUST 2019

## TWO PATHS TO A FIRST CONTRACT

NEW ATU MEMBERS WIN HISTORIC VICTORIES  
IN VIRGINIA AND MASSACHUSETTS



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# NEWS BRIEFS

## Driver Shortages Causing Transit Delays



From Denver to Miami; from San Francisco to Omaha; from New Jersey to Minneapolis, a bus driver shortage coupled with underfunded transit agencies has led to cuts and delays in bus service across the country. Low pay, poor benefits, and the increasing number of attacks on bus drivers has led to fewer people to pursue a job behind the wheel. "There aren't too many people who want to get into this occupation anymore," said ATU NJ State Council Chair Ray Greaves.

"Bus operators work crazy hours, split shifts, and 15-16 hour days.

It's not an attractive job to begin with, the hours and days off and sometimes pay isn't so good starting out." In northern New Jersey, ATU has helped to attract more drivers by working to increase NJ Transit bus operator starting salaries from \$16.90 to over \$20 along with a \$6,000 signing bonus.

## One of the last original striking Memphis sanitation workers dies



One of the surviving sanitation workers who participated in the historic 1968 Memphis sanitation workers strike that brought Martin Luther King Jr. to Memphis, recently passed away. Baxter Leach, 79, retired from the city of Memphis in 2005, after 43 years of service. In 1968, Leach was instrumental in signing up sanitation workers to the AFSCME-backed union as they protested already inhumane working conditions that worsened under Mayor Henry Loeb's administration. The strike and assassination marked a pivotal

moment for the civil rights struggle in America. ATU salutes Leach for heroism and commitment to worker and civil rights.

## ATU salutes Hamilton (ON) bus driver for 50 years behind the wheel



Called a "very humble, quiet, and patient man" by his daughter, Local **107**-Hamilton, ON, bus driver Maurice Powell recently celebrated 50 years as a bus driver. Powell, who starts his route at 4:30 a.m. every day, is the first Hamilton bus driver ever to reach the 50-year milestone. Asked what he likes about his job, Powell says, "The people are pretty good. They say good morning. They call me 'boss.' They say, 'Hi, boss.'" We at the ATU couldn't agree more, after 50 years Powell is certainly "the boss"

## INTERNATIONAL OFFICERS EMERITUS

International President Jim La Sala, ret.

International President Warren George, ret.

International Executive Vice President Ellis Franklin, ret.

International Executive Vice President Mike Siano, ret.



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# ATU Canada calls for transit worker and pedestrian safety act after brutal assault

ATU Canada is calling for a new law to protect transit workers and pedestrians after a vicious assault on a GO Transit bus operator in Hamilton, ON.

“As he has done for the past 30 years, an ATU operator working for GO Transit pulled up to a bus stop, except this time a passenger unleashed a barrage of punches and kicks on him resulting in hospitalization. Twenty-two other passengers had to witness this traumatic assault,” said ATU Canada President John Di Nino.



The victim is a 74-year old operator with many decades on the job. The incident occurred in broad daylight in a busy, urban centre in Hamilton. The man arrested taunted the operator after the assault. A suspect was taken into custody.

## ‘Serious preventative measures’

“The only salvation is in serious preventative measures on a national scale. All levels of government must come together and pass a Canadian version of the proposed U.S. *Transit Worker and Pedestrian Safety Act* in order to identify and assess the risk of violence on each and every transit system in Canada and approve concrete measures to mitigate violence,” said Di Nino.

ATU has been aggressively pushing the bill in the U.S., which has the support of more than 150 Members of Congress. The legislation calls for assault mitigation infrastructure, de-escalation training, modification to bus specs to address blind spot and ergonomic issues,

and a national database to track assaults on operators and pedestrians.

## Violence on public transit is rising

In the last four years, we have seen a fatal stabbing of operators in Winnipeg, MB and Tampa, FL; another operator stabbing in Edmonton, AB, and over 4000 sexual assaults against passengers.

“It’s a national crisis that Ottawa should be addressing through a national transit strategy with dedicated operational funding and a national database of operator and pedestrian assaults,” said Di Nino. “Politicians expect to leave their office alive at the end of the day; transit professionals do not have that luxury. Ottawa must take action now.”

In many cases, arguments over fares escalate into violent altercations with bus operators. ATU believes more cases like this will occur as provincial governments implement operating budget austerity in public transit.

“The Ford government and Metrolinx have announced cuts to discounted GO Transit fares. We believe that cutting operating funding creates the conditions for violence. We think Ford should think about reversing the funding cuts,” added Di Nino. ❖





JOHN A. COSTA, INTERNATIONAL PRESIDENT

# TOGETHER WE FIGHT, TOGETHER WE WIN!

Since I assumed the office of International President after the tragic and sudden death of International President Larry Hanley, it has been an exceptionally busy and hectic time. As we prepare for ATU's 59th International Convention—happening September 23-27 in Las Vegas, Nevada—the International remains focused on continuing the important work of the Union.

What has impressed me the most is the hard work and ingenuity of so many people who have devoted their lives to the betterment of our members and our union.

I have witnessed remarkable resilience in our time of great loss. When most organizations might falter, lose their energy, enthusiasm and drive, our union and our members have redoubled our commitment to the cause.

Case in point: the historic victory by our brothers and sisters at the Martha's Vineyard Transit Authority (VTA), who won their first-ever collective bargaining agreement after five years of intense union-busting. These new members of Local **1548**-Plymouth, MA, had enough of the abuse and greed of their employer, TCI, and decided to strike.

What followed were Locals across the U.S. and Canada rallying to support these striking drivers. Countless members dropped everything to travel to Martha's Vineyard – not an easy place to get to by the way – to walk the picket lines in solidarity. Members and Locals from coast to coast reached into their own pockets to donate more than \$50,000 for their strike fund – yes more than \$50,000!

After 28 days on strike and thanks to the support from you – our members – they reached an agreement. Our Martha's Vineyard brothers and sisters won critical wage gains, job protections, and other improvements they

had been denied for years. Their story is profiled on page 11 of this magazine.

Meanwhile, Local **1505**-Winnipeg, MB, has engaged riders and community allies in their fight to improve safety and service as they wage a bitter contract dispute with the City.

In the U.S. we trained our Locals for years in anticipation of the treacherous U.S. Supreme Court decision on union dues known as the *Janus* decision. And a funny thing happened.

Rather than devastate our ranks, the *Janus* decision actually energized our union. We have seen our ranks grow to more than 200,000 – the largest in our storied history.

Now our Canadian brothers and sisters are taking part in Right-to-Work Readiness trainings - using lessons learned from our U.S. trainings - to prepare for the possibility of a *Janus*-like law coming to Canada.

And guess what?

If Right-to-Work legislation does come to Canada, I know our Locals, leaders and members will be ready to rise up to the challenge.

We are a union of many unsung heroes that comes together in both good times and bad.

Because *Together We Fight, Together We Win!* ❖



JAVIER PEREZ, JR., INTERNATIONAL EXEC. VICE PRESIDENT

# ATU to prepare members for autonomous vehicles

A few years back I penned a fictional article about transit workers of the future. I wrote about all of the new technological developments that transit workers will need to become familiar with, in the years to come.

Throughout our history, our Union has learned and adapted to industry technology changes – computerized scheduling, electronic fare cards, bus cameras, natural gas buses, to name a few. Most of the technology being developed now, however, is directed toward the development of autonomous vehicles (AV's), and ATU is committed to preparing its members for that too.

The U.S. Department of Transportation, Federal Transit Administration, think tanks, universities, independent researchers, and other entities have commissioned research and studies on the development and implementation of autonomous vehicles.

## Operating issues

Of particular concern are the significant operating issues plaguing AV vehicles with regard to weather conditions, such as fog, heavy snow, rain, and intersections with complex traffic signals.

Many states, provinces, and cities have passed laws authorizing the testing and limited operation of autonomous vehicles on public roadways while also enacting laws prohibiting local jurisdictions and transit agencies from regulating the operation of autonomous vehicles at the local level. And there are minimal federal safety laws and regulations governing testing, certification, and operation of autonomous vehicles.

## Safety issues

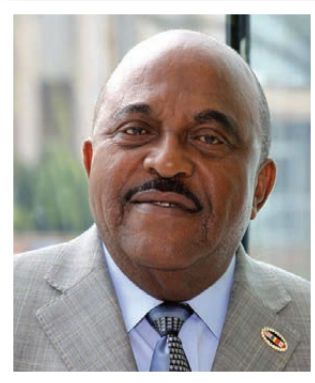
ATU recognizes that the serious and unresolved safety

issues involving the eventual deployment of autonomous vehicles requires constant monitoring and evaluation by the Union.

Subsequently, the International will propose that the delegates to the 59th Convention approve a resolution that will require the Union to track and analyze developments in AV technology in both the private and public sectors; track federal, state, provincial, and local laws, regulations, rulings, and executive action regarding AV technology and deployment; review ongoing safety research studies and record safety issues involving AVs, including accidents causing death, injuries, or substantial property loss.

In addition, ATU will present local training and educational information on AVs and technological developments; compile contractual language on the introduction of new technology, strategic approaches, and media coverage; continue to raise safety, training, and ethical concerns regarding the deployment of AVs; and work with the Transportation Learning Center and other organizations to develop the best practices for training and skill development, including apprenticeships, certifications, and mentoring.

ATU must prepare as mass transit changes in the 21st Century, just as it has over the last 125 years. ❖



OSCAR OWENS, INTERNATIONAL SECRETARY-TREASURER

## Solidarity — more powerful than hate

No doubt most of you, like me, were sickened by the news of the mass shootings in El Paso, TX and Dayton, OH. Of course, those terrible events have re-ignited the gun debate.

No matter which side of that discussion you're on, I think you'll agree that there are some very serious divisions in society which should concern us all.

I was born in the segregated South; I served in Vietnam; I participated in the civil rights and labor movements. I've seen more injustice, hate, and violence than I care to talk about. But I can tell you this: those things are like a poison coursing through the body politic. They destroy us from within.

There's no winning a conflict based on hate — it only generates more of the same. It needs to stop before we lose all sight of what it means to be human.

But what can any of us do?

I think the labor movement can show the way.

### Hope

One of the things I love about our Union is that, no matter what our race, religion, gender, sexual orientation, nationality, etc., we are all brothers and sisters united in a common cause.

And that's what gives me hope.

In a world where too many think the solution to their problems is to attack people who aren't like them, we belong to an organization that brings together very different kinds of people, who help each other attain a better life.

In a world where too many think the solution to their problems is to attack those who aren't like them, we

belong to an organization that brings together very different kinds of people, who help each other attain a better life.

That's something to be proud of. And, I think, if more people followed that example we would abandon hatred and prejudice to start working together on the problems at hand.

Some people will think this idea hopelessly naïve. I understand.

But, I have seen things that were thought impossible happen, when union brothers and sisters came together and steadfastly refused to be treated with anything less than the dignity which is their birthright. It takes hard work and persistence, but the solidarity of good people will always conquer injustice.

So don't despair. If you want to do something about the negativity and meanness in society today, perhaps the best place to start is your own local union meeting. ❖



# TWO PATHS TO A FIRST CONTRACT

NEW ATU MEMBERS WIN HISTORIC VICTORIES  
IN VIRGINIA AND MASSACHUSETTS



New organizing is the life blood of any union. New organizing victories grow our ranks and with it our power as a union. They serve as an opportunity for existing members to sharpen their campaign skills and for new members to experience solidarity for the first time, to realize they have a voice on the job, and to witness just how low their employers are willing to stoop to keep them silent and poor. But too often we forget that a new organizing campaign is only the beginning. The rubber really meets the road as new members begin negotiating their first contract.

In the spring and summer of 2019, Locals **689**-Washington, DC, and **1548**-Plymouth, MA, won two historic first contract victories – the former in Alexandria,

VA, and the latter in Martha's Vineyard, MA. While the bargaining units, bosses, local unions, members, and communities were different in each place, leaders on the ground adopted a similar strategy to gain the upper hand in negotiations and win.

## DC Local triumphs in anti-union stronghold

Transit in the Washington, DC, area is heavily unionized. Until recently there was one stubborn holdout – the Alexandria Transit Company, branded

as the Driving Alexandria Safely Home (DASH) bus system, in Alexandria, VA. The city debuted DASH 35 years ago as a private service to create a cheaper, nonunion alternative to the regional Metrobus service run by members of Local 689-Washington, DC.

To ensure they paid the lowest wage rates in the region, DASH spent hundreds of thousands of dollars on union-busting consultants, promised change, and curried favor with particular workers to keep their loyalty. Despite multiple attempts by DASH employees and ATU to organize, the company succeeded in keeping the Union out time and again. Whenever the latest organizing drive receded, it was always back to business as usual. “There was no respect for the drivers,” said veteran driver Charles Barrett. “When a customer complaint came in, they’d always side with them, but they’d never give us a compliment.”

### ‘There ain’t no bars on the windows’

“There ain’t no bars on the windows. You can always leave,” is what the ham-fisted operations manager would say whenever someone brought up a problem. And people did leave. DASH was a place where “people take a job to get a commercial driver’s license so that they can go get another job someplace else,” said driver Tyler Boos.

Meanwhile, a generation of DASH drivers saw Alexandria transform from a backwater into a posh hub of development, and none of this newfound prosperity trickled down to the bus operators. In one of the most expensive places in the country for housing, they were making do on a starting salary of \$35,000. Each year of the wage scale was \$3 to \$10 less per hour than at unionized facilities. And it took 20 years to reach top pay, so the majority of workers were making less than \$20 per hour.

### The last straw

The last straw came when, five years into a wage freeze, management withheld the end-of-year bonus that drivers had always counted on. Workers again contacted Local 689. Organizers quickly signed up the drivers on union authorization cards and built an organizing committee that could reach all pockets of the workforce.

The company caught wind of the drive and hired a union-busting consultant called the American Labor Group. Workers were press-ganged into captive-audience

meetings and subjected to a barrage of propaganda. Union-busters even boarded the bus, sitting right behind the operator to continue the anti-union barrage while the operator was meant to be focusing on safety.

To counter the union-buster, ATU met with members of the entirely Democratic city council. The union confronted them: why were taxpayer dollars being spent to hire a union-buster to squash the rights of city servants? After an all-out press by the Union, the city forced DASH to fire the union-buster.

### Workers win election

Freed from the union-buster’s coercive influence, the workers won their union election 97 to 13.



DASH management was stung and embarrassed. Led by the vindictive operations manager, DASH continued its anti-union campaign with a vengeance. First came the firing of two key activists. Latonya Robinson had been perhaps the most indispensable leader during the organizing drive. Robinson, a single mother of two, coordinated the collection of many union cards and served as one of the union’s observers at the vote.





The union's other election observer was Yonas Aemiro, who anchored the sizeable group of Ethiopian immigrants. Not long after the vote, Aemiro had to travel to his homeland to be with his sick mother. One way that DASH had retained immigrant drivers despite its low wages was by routinely allowing them to travel home for extended periods in excess of what the handbook allowed. Suddenly the company decided to enforce the rules strictly and fired Aemiro for job abandonment.

Next, two-thirds of the ATU's bargaining committee were sent in for "random" drug tests. Clearly, the company was out for blood.

To fight back, the union looked to its strength – the membership. Organizers put out a contract survey, and ATU activists drove up the participation past 75 percent of the workforce. The survey showed that DASH operators were tired of doing the same work as their unionized counterparts for much less, so they decided they would accept nothing less than equality.

The union's committee turned members out in droves to union actions. At a city council forum, a sea of red union shirts occupied most of the seats. Drivers took the microphone one after another to speak out about unfair conditions.

Meanwhile the company's opening economic proposal was a meager \$1 raise – which it had dangled in front of



workers before they ever organized – and a compression of the 20-year wage scale into 10 years. In lieu of a real retirement, DASH offered to restore the two percent year-end bonus it took away right before the union drive.

### Once-in-a-lifetime opportunity

Meanwhile, the region was preparing to shut down most of Virginia's commuter rail system for repairs. Thousands of local residents who commuted to DC every day would be relying exclusively on bus service all summer. Seeing a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity, the union held a strike authorization vote. The results were unanimous. Unless management agreed to match regional union standards, drivers were ready to bring the capital's commute to a standstill.





With a potential strike on the horizon, it was time to educate the riding public. Union activists spent a week handing out 10,000 flyers at the busiest rush-hour transit hubs.

Even still, management tried to get the union to settle for half a loaf. DASH presented a “final offer.” But the Union knew it was in the driver’s seat and made its own final offer – take it or we strike. Management surrendered.

The contract achieved all the union’s objectives. Workers won complete wage parity with Local 689 members at Metrobus. The 20-year wage scale was compressed to seven years. Funding for retirement grew to match the public pension. Drivers won more vacation, sick time, holidays, and even retiree health benefits. Ratification was unanimous, 111-0. One of the sweetest prizes? The two fired activists were reinstated, and DASH terminated the reviled operations manager who had fired them.

“Before the union, I would see drivers from other companies and feel inadequate,” said driver Didier Balagizi. “I used to be embarrassed to wear the DASH uniform. Today, I am proud to work at DASH. I’m proud to be 689. I’m proud to be a bus driver.”

## Plymouth Local strikes in Martha’s Vineyard – and wins

Like the Washington, DC region, transit in Massachusetts is mostly unionized. But on the island of Martha’s Vineyard, bus drivers at the Martha’s Vineyard Transit Authority (VTA) have long been at the mercy of their employer.

The VTA was established 39 years ago to help relieve congestion on the island’s narrow roads. While Martha’s Vineyard is home to just 17,000 year-round islanders, the population swells to more than 100,000 as tourists and summer residents flock to the island for their seasonal getaways. Some bring their cars along on the 45-minute ferry ride from the mainland, but many opt to rely on VTA service instead.

As required by Massachusetts law, the VTA subcontracts day-to-day operations to a private contractor. For years,

the Florida-based Transit Connection, Inc. (TCI), has filled that role. That means the three-dozen year-round VTA drivers are private sector employees.

Much like DASH in Alexandria, the VTA and TCI have worked together for years to crush union organizing drives. Noting the drastic shift in ridership between the winter and summer months, the VTA prioritized protecting TCI’s profit margins by supporting the company’s efforts to keep wages low, benefits non-existent, and as many workers as possible classified as seasonal or casual rather than full time.

### Drivers join in 2015

The latest chapter in the drivers’ struggle for a union began in 2015. Driven by concerns about bus safety, a severe driver shortage, dangerous reliance on overtime, wage stagnation, poor benefits, and abusive management within both the VTA and TCI, the drivers voted to join ATU.

But TCI refused to recognize the union. ATU filed an unfair labor practice charge with the NLRB, which ruled in the union’s favor and found the company was in violation of federal law for “failing and refusing to recognize and bargain with” Local 1548-Plymouth, MA.



TCI threw a fit. They challenged the NLRB and took their case all the way to the 11<sup>th</sup> Circuit Court of Appeals in Atlanta. The court agreed with the NLRB and again ordered the company to begin bargaining with the union. TCI’s contract with VTA is what is known as a “pass-through” agreement, meaning all legal fees for this failed union-busting effort was paid for by the public agency using taxpayer funds.

## Bargaining begins in August 2018

After nearly three years of legal wrangling, the parties finally began bargaining in August 2018. But TCI still stalled. CEO Edward Pigman, too busy living in Florida and managing several other firms that extract money out of public transit agencies, hired union-buster Greg Dash of Pennsylvania to negotiate for the company. Dash and TCI immediately adopted a delay strategy, choosing to again dispute the eligibility of employees and classifications that could be included in the bargaining unit.

“They just don’t want the union,” VTA driver Richard Townes told the Vineyard Gazette newspaper at the time.

Under TCI’s thirteen-year nonunion wage progression, Townes, who had been behind the wheel for 21 years, hadn’t received a raise in recent memory. Most of his coworkers, regardless of their seniority, hadn’t received a raise in at least five years. Meanwhile, Angela Grant, the longtime anti-union public administrator at VTA, saw her salary increase four times over the same period. She went from making about \$100,410 to taking in \$135,200 in base salary – a whopping 35% increase.



While Martha’s Vineyard is home to thousands of working-class islanders, the island’s status as a vacation destination for the rich and famous makes it an expensive place to live. “The cost of living on Martha’s Vineyard is on average sixty percent higher than it is in the rest of America,” noted Senator Elizabeth Warren, D-MA, in a video of support she sent to the drivers. “Yet wages fall far short of the national average. That’s wrong.”

VTA driver wages topped out at \$23.50, making them the lowest paid bus operators in the region. As a result, few young people saw a VTA job as a path to the middle

class. Instead, most drivers in the bargaining unit relied on retirement income from past careers, were forced to take second jobs to make ends meet, or were considering quitting and moving off-island to find work.

## Glaring injustice

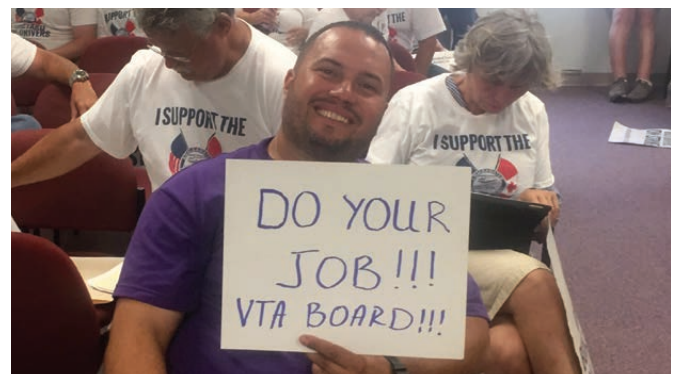
This glaring economic injustice in one of the world’s richest locales would not sit well with its overwhelmingly liberal residents and visitors, if they only knew about it. With that in mind, VTA drivers worked with Local 1548 and the International to launch a community campaign.

For months, drivers reached out to strengthen relationships with their riders and neighbors. They spoke out at selectmen meetings in each of the island’s six towns. Selectmen are the most local form of government on the Vineyard, and each town selects one representative to serve on the VTA’s Advisory Board.

Drivers delivered a petition with hundreds of community signatures to Darren Morris, TCI’s on-the-ground general manager. They launched a Facebook page, “Support Vineyard Bus Drivers,” and printed yard signs that neighbors placed along roads, island-wide, to show solidarity.

## Ludicrous proposals

Nonetheless, the company continued to hold its position. It submitted ludicrous proposals, like demanding the right to cancel the collective bargaining agreement at its convenience. For her part, Administrator Grant adopted an increasingly public anti-union position, accusing ATU of being an “off-island” group trying to divide the island community.





ATU negotiators requested a federal mediator join negotiations to try to talk some sense into the company, but TCI refused to budge.

## Strike authorization in April

Fed up, the drivers overwhelmingly voted to authorize a strike in April 2019. They floated Memorial Day weekend as a potential strike date, then pulled back, hoping the company would come to its senses. Instead, TCI abandoned negotiations and submitted its “last, best, and final” offer at the end of May.

The time for drastic action had finally arrived. Working with the International, drivers kicked their campaign into high gear. They launched radio ads calling out TCI, requested and received statements of support from state elected officials and U.S. presidential candidates, including Senator Bernie Sanders, I-VT, and organized a community town hall to prepare riders for the possibility of a strike.



At the town hall, TCI negotiator Dash told veteran driver Roland Goulart that the company believed that unhappy drivers were at fault “because they chose to live here.” “I didn’t choose to live here,” Goulart shot back. “I was born here. I’m going to die here.”

With the island’s busiest week – 4<sup>th</sup> of July – on the horizon, ATU set June 28 as the strike date. As drivers took to the picket line, TCI and VTA scrambled to recruit scabs and compel the nonunion seasonal drivers to stay on the job, even illegally threatening them with eviction from their employer-sponsored summer housing. The result was that, while the strike disrupted service in the first few days, TCI was able to run on average 80% of service through much of the strike.

For riders who boycotted in solidarity, strikers and supportive neighbors ran courtesy shuttles in their personal vehicles, transporting an estimated 1,568 people over the course of the strike. Unfortunately, tourists continued to cross the picket line in droves. ATU offered to end the strike if TCI agreed to binding arbitration, but the company refused.

By day six of the strike, the drivers needed a morale boost and a new strategy.

## Standing ovation

They managed to get into the lineup for the July 4<sup>th</sup> parade and received cheers and chants of “we support you” from parade-goers. A few days later, presidential candidate Pete Buttigieg held a town hall-style fundraiser on the island. Buttigieg spent thirty minutes listening to the strikers, then invited them into the packed auditorium. Without prompting, nearly 800 islanders rose to their feet for a standing ovation as the drivers entered the room.



Their spirits renewed, strikers decided to get more aggressive. While they kept the picket lines going, a core activist team began putting direct pressure on VTA Board members. Strikers showed up uninvited to Board members’ places of work and picketed in public places near their homes, demanding that the Board hold a meeting and fill two long-vacant at-large seats.

ATU also developed new materials to inoculate selectmen and other influential local officials against lies and misinformation spread by the VTA administrator. Drivers also developed deeper alliances with local community groups like the MV Dems, the Chamber of Commerce,



and various faith congregations, all of which had expressed concern about the VTA's union-busting and the impact of the strike on local business.

The shift in strategy began to bear fruit. First, the Town of Tisbury voted to work with other towns and the VTA to determine whose turn it was to fill the vacant ADA and rider seats on the Board. Then, the Town of West Tisbury voted to organize other towns and demand the VTA Board meet to address the crisis.

## The Board buckled

Feeling the pressure, the Board buckled and in week three of the strike held its first meeting in months. It was flooded with riders, strikers, selectmen, and community allies demanding that the Board compel the company to enter into arbitration or at the very least return to negotiations. After nearly two hours, the Board voted unanimously to send TCI back to the table.

Despite significant progress, ATU and the strikers didn't rest. They began planning a solidarity rally in Boston, hoping to pressure the Commonwealth to audit VTA finances. Attendees to the ATU CAN-AM conference raised more than \$50,000 to support the Vineyard

strike fund, ensuring drivers could remain on the picket line for weeks to come.

## Agreement at week four

Week four began with two days of intense bargaining, the first time TCI and ATU had been in the same room since spring. The dam finally broke. By Thursday, the parties had reached a tentative agreement. That Sunday, members ratified their first-ever collective bargaining agreement, with 97% voting in favor.

The wage scale was compressed from 13 years to seven. By the end of the agreement, the top rate will rise from \$23.50 to \$27.40 and the starting rate from \$16.50 to \$20.50. For the first time, seniority will be recognized in route selection, and hourly rates of pay will be doubled for holiday shifts.

After 28 days, the historic strike was finally over, and the drivers were back on the job with the riders they loved. With a union and first contract finally secured, they are already gearing up for the next steps: enforcing what they've won and reforming VTA so the next contract fight doesn't require a strike to win. But if it does, these new members of Local 1548 will be ready. ❖



# Brockton operator punched for refusing to make extra stop



A 24-year-old homeless man has pleaded “not guilty” to charges of assault and battery resulting in serious bodily injury, assault and battery on a public employee, and wrongful interference of a 48-year-old Brockton, MA, bus driver. The alleged assailant punched the ATU operator several times because he refused to let the rider off before the next regular stop.

Other passengers tackled the young man to the floor of the motor coach. However, the driver blacked out as the bus careened into a car and crashed into a utility pole.

## Assaults happening ‘every day’

Assaults like these are happening “every day throughout the country, if not multiple times a day,” says International President John Costa. The international president pointed to two examples of two attacks in which drivers were stabbed to death in the past 2½ years – Irvine “Jubal” Fraser of Local **1505**-Winnipeg, MB, on Feb. 14, 2017, and Thomas Dunn of Local **1593**-Tampa, FL, on May 18.

Sixteen people, including the driver, passengers, and occupants of the car were taken to the hospital with non-life-threatening injuries.

Witnesses said that the young man became very agitated when he was not immediately let off the bus. After several requests to stop the bus, he said, “If you don’t stop the bus, I will punch you in the face,” said an assistant district attorney.

Local **1547**-Broxton, MA, President John Troxell said this was actually the second time this driver has been assaulted on this run.

## ‘You get a lot of angry people’

Troxell says one of the reasons for the angry outbursts on this line is that Brockton buses are not allowed to pick up passengers headed North or to drop off passengers on the southbound trip. That’s to avoid a conflict with the MBTA buses that follow the same route.

“You get a lot of angry people because of this,” said Troxell, “It causes a lot of problems.”

Troxell said he will ask Brockton management to install safety barriers on buses used on the run.

## ‘Could have been much worse’

“It’s not just to protect the driver, it’s to protect everyone else,” he said. “As bad as [the assault] was, it could have been much worse,” he said.

Troxell says the driver who was attacked suffered a head injury and is recovering. He wanted to attend the young man’s arraignment, but it was over before he could get there.

“He wants to make sure this guy gets prosecuted,” Troxell said.

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# Electric buses without throwing workers under the bus

Public transit agencies in the United States are in the early stages of what agency experts and industry professionals expect will be a large-scale transition from diesel and compressed natural gas (CNG) buses to zero-emission, battery-powered electric buses (BEB). The number of BEBs in use or on order domestically has multiplied dramatically over the past decade.

BEBs are expected to have lower total costs than conventionally fueled buses, and are seen as an important step that cities can take to improve urban air quality and reduce greenhouse gas emissions.

Some mechanics worry that the move to electric buses will make their skills obsolete, but that doesn't have to be the case. In fact it's an opportunity for workers, employers, and communities.

## 'Convoluting debate'

"In the convoluted debate about the future for American workers, very few thought leaders have focused on the potential that we — as taxpayers — have to shape the type and quality of jobs that can be created and retained," says *Jobs to Move America* Executive Director Madeline



Janis, who recently discussed this issue with more than 80 ATU bus mechanics.

A recent report by *Jobs to Move America* outlines how plans and policies for cities to move to electric-powered buses is an opportunity to retrain workers and improve the quality of the new technology.

"We can't just expect frontline workers to wait on the sidelines while we move towards new technology," said Janis. "This report encourages cities and states to consult with and listen to bus operators, maintenance workers, and unions to determine what technical skills training is necessary." ❖

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## CT driver saves small wandering child



ATU wants to give a shout out to Local 1209-New London, CT, bus operator Ed Ewing for going above and beyond the call of duty. Last week, while operating his bus, Ed noticed a small child wandering unattended along the sidewalk.

He stopped his bus immediately, secured the child, and notified the dispatcher, who promptly notified local authorities who retrieved the child. We, at the ATU, understand that even the best children can wander off even with the most well-meaning parents. We are glad this child was not hurt, thanks to the quick actions of brother Ed. ❖



# HART proposes new sales tax to fund transportation charter plans



The Hillsborough Area Regional Transit Authority (HART) in Florida is making plans to fulfill the All For Transportation charter approved by voters in November. HART proposes to pay for the transit plan with new sales tax revenue.

HART wants to use the money to restore previously canceled service, expand weekday and weekend bus service,

and to explore new bus rapid transit and rail options.

An Independent Oversight Committee will review the proposals to ensure spending plans align with the tax charter's intent.

The board also renewed its commitment to the downtown streetcar partnership with Tampa under consideration for expansion and expressed support for a bus rapid transit study.

## Sales tax challenged

The plan is made possible by the 1 percent sales surtax passed last year. That funding, however, is being challenged by a county commissioner.

All For Transportation organizers, however, are confident that they will win the appeal and are celebrating HART's efforts to move forward with the charter. ❖

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# Phoenix voters defeat Koch brothers-funded effort to kill light rail

In a blow to the conservative Koch brothers' anti-transit crusade, Phoenix voters overwhelmingly rejected a proposal that would have halted the expansion of the city's light rail system.

Turnout for the special election was a record high and surpassed a prior ballot initiative four years ago when only 21 percent of Phoenix voters went to the polls and approved a tax increase to fund light rail projects.

New Phoenix Mayor Kate Gallego praised unions, business, and transit advocates for their victory for light rail in Phoenix. "Light rail expansion is not stopping— not today, not tomorrow, not ever," she tweeted. "We have and will continue to protect our rail because this is not about one route, this is about equity for our entire community."

Ridership on Phoenix's light rail system has risen steadily since it launched a decade ago.

This marks the fourth time since 2000 Phoenix voters have given their approval for light rail. The \$1-billion project will extend the rail line five miles. Construction on the line is expected to begin in 2020 and service will start by 2023.

The Koch-backed groups have bankrolled dark-money campaigns to convince voters to vote down transit proposals in southeast Michigan, Arkansas, Indiana, and Tennessee. Their defeat in Phoenix is a good sign that voters are recognizing the importance of the public transit to the future of their communities. ❖

# Canadian locals energized by ‘Right-to-Work Readiness’ training

ATU leaders in Canada gathered in Calgary, AB, Toronto, ON, and Saint John, NB, for the first three “Right-to-Work (RTW) Readiness” trainings.

The trainings used important lessons learned from U.S. locals dealing with the recent U.S. Supreme Court’s treacherous decision barring public sector unions from collecting fees to cover the costs of representing employees who refuse to join the union.

The unions, however, remain legally responsible to provide union benefits to these workers who do not pay for them.

The attendees learned important skills and strategies for building power and unity in the Union. These trainings are part of a series to take place for locals across Canada to prepare for the possibility of Right-to-Work laws coming to Canada. ❖



*Participants at the ATU Western Canada RTW Readiness Training*



*Participants at the ATU Ontario Locals RTW Readiness Training*

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## Toledo Local applauds dismissal of transit chief after DUI



The Toledo Area Regional Transit Authority (TARTA) board of trustees voted unanimously to terminate General Manager James Gee, a move recommended by Local 697-Toledo, OH, President Carley Allen, after bodycam footage was released showing Gee struggling to complete sobriety

tests and slurring answers to questions during a traffic stop by two police officers.

“I’m supportive of the board’s decision. It’s the fairest outcome,” said Allen, who had written two letters to the transit board calling for Mr. Gee’s dismissal after the DUI

charge was lodged. Allen said Mr. Gee should be treated like “any other safety-sensitive TARTA employee would be treated given a similar situation.”

As to the future, Allen said the TARTA board needs to find a successor who is “innovative and responsive — we need to do some reforming and transformation.” ❖



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# New book exposes Kochs' ruthless rise to power, campaign to kill unions

Christopher Leonard's just published, *Kochland, The Secret History of Koch Industries and Corporate Power in America* uses the extraordinary account of how one of the biggest private companies in the world grew to be that big to tell the story of modern corporate America.

The annual revenue of Koch Industries is bigger than that of Goldman Sachs, Facebook, and U.S. Steel combined. Koch is everywhere: from the fertilizers that make our food to the chemicals that make our pipes to the synthetics that make our carpets and diapers to the Wall Street trading in all these commodities. But few people know much about Koch Industries and that's because the billionaire Koch brothers want it that way.

## Deepest secrecy

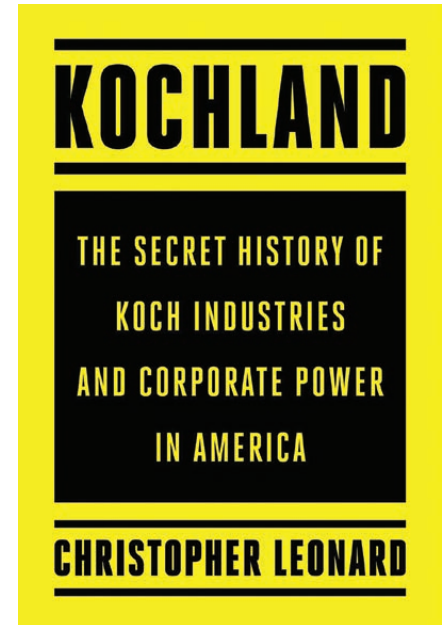
For five decades, CEO Charles Koch has kept Koch Industries quietly operating in deepest secrecy, with a view toward very, very long-term profits. He's a genius businessman: patient with earnings, able to learn from his mistakes, determined that his employees develop a reverence for free-market ruthlessness, and a master disrupter. These strategies have made him and his brother David together richer than Bill Gates.

But there's another side to this story. If you want to understand how we killed the unions in this country, how we widened the income divide, stalled progress on climate change, and how our corporations bought the influence industry, all you have to do is read this book.

Seven years in the making, *Kochland* reads like a true-life thriller, with larger-than-life characters driving the battles on every page. The book tells the ambitious tale of how one private company consolidated power over half a century—and how in doing so, it helped transform capitalism into something that feels deeply alienating to many Americans today. ❖

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*Kochland, The Secret History of Koch Industries and Corporate Power in America* by Christopher Leonard, published by Simon and Schuster, August 13, 2019, available from Amazon.com in hardcover, paperback, kindle, audio CD, and audiobook at: <https://amzn.to/2Z266qQ>



*Kochland, The Secret History of Koch Industries and Corporate Power in America* exposes how one of the biggest private companies in the world grew to be that big to tell the story of modern corporate America.





# Tampa agency holds symposium on driver safety



In the wake of the tragic murder of Local 1593-Tampa, FL, brother Thomas Dunn, Hillsborough Area Regional Transit (HART) gathered national safety experts and transit peers from across the country for the first statewide Transit Safety & Security Symposium. The attendees explored solutions and protections to prevent attacks, including driver shields, cashless fare systems, left-side bus driver exit doors, better security cameras, lighting, and more.

In what will come as no surprise to ATU members, reported the number one cause of transit worker assaults is fare disputes. Other issues included routes in high-crime areas,

waking a sleeping passenger, and dealing with passengers who are intoxicated or have a mental illness.

“ATU Local 1593 is glad to see this community-based campaign, especially featuring Local 1593 union members - HART professional operators,” said Curtis Howard, ATU International Vice President. “The ATU will continue to partner with HART, Hillsborough County and the rest of the communities we serve. As we do our best to move the residents of Hillsborough County in a safely and timely manner, we need them to treat our Operators with respect each and every day.”

In addition, HART has launched a new campaign urging bus passengers to “Ride with Respect.”

“It is a positive; did it come too late? Yes, most definitely. But it is a step forward in ensuring that all of our members are coming to work safely, and able to go back home to their kids, family, loved ones safely,” says Tunishia Jordan, a HART bus operator. “We do what we do because we love it, not because we have to.” ❖



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# LONG-TIME LABOR REPORTER LOOKS AT PAST, PRESENT, FUTURE OF AMERICAN UNIONS

In an era when corporate profits have soared while wages have flatlined, millions of Americans are searching for ways to improve their lives, and they're often turning to labor unions and worker action. Wage stagnation, low-wage work, and blighted blue-collar communities have become an all-too-common part of modern-day America, and behind these trends is a little-discussed problem: the decades-long decline in worker power.

Long-time *NY Times* labor reporter Steven Greenhouse in his new book, *Beaten Down, Worked Up – The Past, Present, and Future of American Labor* sees this decline reflected in some of the most pressing problems facing our nation today, including income inequality, declining social mobility, the gender pay gap, and the concentration of political power in the hands of the wealthy. He rebuts the often-stated view that labor unions are outmoded – or even harmful – by recounting some of Labor's victories, and the efforts of several of today's most innovative and successful worker groups.

He shows us the modern labor landscape through the stories of dozens of American workers, from GM workers to Uber drivers, and we see how unions historically have empowered – and lifted – the most marginalized, including young women garment workers in New York in 1909, black sanitation workers in Memphis in 1968, and hotel housekeepers today. Greenhouse proposes concrete, feasible ways in which workers' collective power can be – and is being – rekindled and reimagined in the twenty-first century.

*Beaten Down, Worked Up – The Past, Present, and Future of American Labor* by Steven Greenhouse, published by Penguin Random House, is available in hardcover, Kindle, and audiobook from Amazon.com. ❖

**BEATEN DOWN, WORKED UP**  
**The Past, Present, and Future of American Labor**  
**STEVEN GREENHOUSE**



# Tired St. Louis members resume talks after delays caused by overtime refusal



St. Louis MetroLink members have returned to the bargaining table after delays caused by workers refusing to work overtime.

The Local **788**-St. Louis, MO, says that not working overtime wasn't an attempt to pressure the transit agency to come to a settlement in their contract negotiations. "What they're doing is they are tired," the Local said. "This

is individual drivers [acting] on their own." Some drivers have even been penalized for refusing shifts.

A MetroLink spokesperson said the agency had no choice but to require the overtime due to the difficulty transit agencies in North America have had in attracting and retaining drivers. Metro is about 50 drivers short.

Wages, working conditions, and driver security are among the key issues keeping the two sides apart.

## 'Aggressive assaults'

Local 788 President Reginald Howard says "aggressive assaults" are increasing and that Metro security officers don't respond quickly enough when operators report problems. "Our operators are left on their own anywhere from 20 to 40 minutes," he said despite that operator barriers have been installed on new buses in recent years. ❖

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# Kelowna members giving up vacations due to driver shortage

Bus drivers are cancelling summer vacations to keep the Kelowna (BC) Regional Transit system running.

Staffing is often a problem in the summer in Kelowna, "But we've never seen a situation like what's been happening this summer. It's pretty bad," says Local **1722**-Kelowna, BC, President Scott Lovell.

"Nobody likes to have to give up their holidays – that's what you work all year for, to get that vacation time," he said. "But we also know we have to come back to work to provide transit service for our fellow citizens."

Even with the cancelled holidays, the Local contends that service has suffered.

Kelowna has 110 full-time drivers, and a "casual" workforce of 60 drivers. But because the casual drivers have other jobs it's sometimes difficult to find enough drivers when they are



needed. That's when the contract says full-time workers can be called in from their vacations.

The Local would rather see a "spare board" created of full-time drivers ready to fill in when operator shortages arise. "Then people aren't left at bus stops, wondering where their ride is," Lovell says. ❖



# Spokane members win First Amendment victory



In a victory for Local 1015-Spokane, WA, the Ninth Circuit Court affirmed a federal court decision that the Spokane Transit Authority (STA) violated the First Amendment rights of the Spokane members by refusing to allow the Local's advertisement to appear on STA buses.

In August 2016, the Local submitted an ad to run on STA buses, reading "Do you drive: Uber? Lyft? Charter Bus? School Bus? You have the Right to Organize! Contact ATU 1015 Today at 509-325-2955."

STA claimed the ad was not allowable under the agency's policy because it addresses a "public issue." The Local sued.

In October 2017, the U.S. District Court of Eastern District of Washington ruled in favor of the Local stating their First Amendment rights. The judge ruled that STA's decision "was an unreasonable interpretation" of its own policies and that the ads qualified as commercial and promotional advertising.

## 'Unreasonable'

STA appealed the decision, arguing that the ad was rejected "simply because it is [from] a union. The content restrictions imposed by the defendants under color of state law are unreasonable." The U.S. Court of Appeals for the Ninth Circuit subsequently upheld the district court decision.

This a victory for the First Amendment rights of all workers." says Local President Thomas Leighty. ❖

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## 150 Members of Congress co-sponsor transit worker protection bill

This year has seen two more brutal attacks on transit workers. In Hamilton, ON, a 74-year-old bus driver was left bloodied and battered by an "agitated" rider, who jumped on his bus without paying.

Meanwhile in Portland, OR, a pregnant woman was being harassed by another woman at a bus stop. When the bus arrived, the pregnant woman hopped to safety on the bus and the driver stopped the attacker from following her. The assailant then hit the bus driver repeatedly.

### Contact your House Member, Senators

These attacks can be prevented, and ATU has already laid out a plan to do just that.

Congress must pass *the Transit Worker and Pedestrian Protection Act* (S.436 and H.R.1139) to ensure agencies make the changes needed to eliminate these senseless acts of violence against transit workers and keep riders and pedestrians safe, too.

**150 Members of Congress have co-sponsored the bill so far, but we need more support – especially from Republicans, only six of whom have signed on so far.**

**Please visit <https://bit.ly/protecttransitworkers> to send a letter to your House Member and Senator to tell them: "Not One More" life can be lost to legislative inaction.** ❖

SAVE THE DATE



# ATU/MS RESEARCH FUNDS

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# IP Costa gets firsthand look at model apprenticeship program at San Jose Local



Strengthening the voice of ATU members at their agencies is a top priority for International President John Costa so, he wanted to get a firsthand look at the successful apprenticeship program developed through a partnership of Local 265-San Jose, CA, and Santa Clara Valley Transportation Authority (VTA).

The Joint Workforce Investment program (JWI) has served as model in the industry to improve the working

conditions, careers and lives of ATU members at the VTA. The brainchild of now-retired bus operator and Local 265 Executive Board member Tom Fink, the program provides mentors and college accredited courses for VTA bus and light rail operators, mechanics, and light rail overhead line and track workers.

“I’m glad to see the pride here in how you work together,” Costa told the gathering of ATU/VTA program participants, VTA General Manager and CEO Nuria Fernandez, and other integral players in the groundbreaking program. “This is good stuff, working together.”

Costa wants to integrate the concept into the ATU International training programs, and encourage other ATU locals to bring it to their transit agencies.

“We’re going to try to encourage other locals to do the same because it’s benefitted the workers’ voice,” said Costa. “We’ve seen the success here and we want to push that to other agencies.” ❖

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## Salt Lake City may create free-fare transit

With many European cities and the entire nation of Luxembourg already offering free public transit, Salt Lake City is now considering being the first American city to make public transit free.

A recent poll found 71 percent of Salt Lake City voters said they “strongly” or “somewhat” support eliminating fares as a way to stimulate transit ridership and reduce air pollution from private vehicles. In addition, two candidates for mayor have pledged to eliminate transit fares and eight others would consider it.

Salt Lake City has already experimented with free transit days — with some success in boosting ridership. Transit ride increased 16 percent during two free days in February and March.



The state legislature recently signed off on a \$1.2 million bill that would pay for 17 free transit days over three years.

Let’s hope Salt Lake City adopts fare free transit and other U.S. cities follow suit. ❖



# ATU says border agents can only search Greyhound buses with warrant

“Happy hunting!” That’s what Maine Customs and Border Patrol (CBP) agents were told as they began boarding Greyhound buses, recently, searching for undocumented persons traveling to Canada.

The practice isn’t new, but it’s increased substantially since the Trump administration instituted new radical, punitive immigration procedures at America’s Mexican border.

CBP agents have been searching buses without a warrant anywhere within a 100 miles of the U.S. border – a surprisingly large territory – in Maine, Florida, California, Detroit, New York, Washington, Vermont, and elsewhere. They’re asking passengers where they were born or to see their identifying documentation. That’s entirely legal.

However, some passengers have reported witnessing agents choosing persons of color for extensive questioning, while paying little or no attention to white riders. That’s not legal and just wrong.

The American Civil Liberties Union (ACLU) has been calling on Greyhound’s parent company First Group to protect their customers and tell Greyhound to stop CBP from racially profiling and deporting riders

“ATU supports the ACLU’s call for Greyhound to prohibit CBP agents from boarding buses, questioning passengers, or searching their belongings without warrant or probable cause,” says International President John Costa.

It is unconstitutional for passengers to be detained and questioned without reasonable suspicion that they are deportable – and that suspicion cannot be based on skin color or the ability to speak English.

## Agency denies profiling

CBP denies it is conducting racial profiling. However, agents have singled out citizens, green card holders, and DACA recipients for questioning, and detained legal immigrants who were told their documentation was fake.

The Obama administration restricted when these transportation checks could occur. It required clear intelligence about smuggling or other criminal activity,



and approval from Border Patrol headquarters before a search could move forward. The Trump administration, however, dropped the headquarters requirement in 2017 – a move that was enthusiastically welcomed by the Maine sector of CBP.

## Passengers have right to refuse and should ‘know their rights’

“We encourage Greyhound to make available to passengers “know your rights” cards so that all passengers understand their rights,” Costa continued.

One thing most passengers don’t know is that they have every right to refuse to be searched, or answer questions. They can also leave the bus at any time. But witnesses who have experienced these inquiries contend that the agents give quite the opposite impression.

Some passengers have begun to fight back, filing grievances, seeking monetary damages.

“The ATU believes that Greyhound is about transportation, not about harassment and racial profiling of passengers, regardless of their immigration status,” Costa continued. “Our objective is to assure Greyhound remains a safe mode of transportation for our passengers and drivers.” ❖



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## ¡JUNTOS LUCHAMOS, JUNTOS GANAMOS!

Desde que asumí el cargo de Presidente Internacional después de la trágica y repentina muerte del Presidente Internacional Larry Hanley, ha sido un tiempo excepcionalmente ocupado y frenético. Mientras nos preparamos para la 59ª Convención Internacional de ATU, que se celebra del 23 al 27 de septiembre en Las Vegas, Nevada, el Internacional sigue centrado en continuar la importante labor del Sindicato.

Lo que más me ha impresionado es el trabajo duro y el ingenio de tantas personas que han dedicado su vida al mejoramiento de nuestros miembros y de nuestro sindicato.

He sido testigo de una notable resiliencia en nuestros momentos de gran pérdida. Cuando la mayoría de las organizaciones pueden flaquear, perder su energía, entusiasmo e impulso, nuestro sindicato y nuestros miembros han redoblado nuestro compromiso con la causa.

Un buen ejemplo de esto es la histórica victoria de nuestros compañeros y compañeras en la Autoridad de Tránsito de Martha's Vineyard (VTA), que ganaron su primer acuerdo de negociación colectiva después de cinco años de intensa represión sindical. Estos nuevos miembros de Local 1548-Plymouth, MA, se hartaron del abuso y la codicia de su empleador, TCI, y decidieron hacer huelga.

Lo que siguió fueron los Locales a través de nuestros EE.UU. y Canadá que se unieron para apoyar a estos conductores en su huelga. Innumerables miembros dejaron todo para viajar a Martha's Vineyard, que por cierto no es un lugar al que sea fácil llegar, para caminar en las líneas de piquete en solidaridad. Miembros y Locales de costa a costa rebuscaron en sus propios bolsillos para donar más de \$50,000 para su fondo de huelga. Sí, ¡más de \$50,000!

Después de 28 días en huelga y gracias al apoyo de ustedes, nuestros miembros, llegaron a un acuerdo. Nuestros compañeros y compañeras de Martha's Vineyard ganaron ganancias salariales críticas, protecciones laborales y otras mejoras que se les habían negado durante años. Su historia está descrita en la página 11 de esta revista.

Mientras tanto, en Winnipeg, MB, el Local 1505 ha involucrado a pasajeros y aliados de la comunidad en su lucha por mejorar la seguridad y el servicio mientras libran una disputa contractual amarga con el ayuntamiento.

En los EE.UU. entrenamos a nuestros Locales durante años en previsión de la traicionera decisión de la Corte Suprema de los Estados Unidos sobre las cuotas sindicales conocidas como la decisión *Janus*. Y sucedió algo gracioso.

En lugar de devastar nuestras filas, la decisión *Janus* realmente energizó a nuestro sindicato. Hemos visto crecer nuestras filas a más de 200,000, las más grandes en nuestra historia registrada.

Ahora nuestros compañeros y compañeras canadienses están participando en capacitaciones de preparación para el "Right-to-Work", utilizando las lecciones aprendidas de nuestras capacitaciones en los Estados Unidos, para prepararse para la posibilidad de que una ley similar a *Janus* llegue a Canadá.

¿Y adivina qué?

Si la legislación sobre el "Right-to-Work" llega a Canadá, sé que nuestros Locales, líderes y miembros estarán listos para hacer frente al desafío.

Somos un sindicato de muchos héroes no reconocidos que se unen tanto en los momentos buenos como en los malos.

Porque *Juntos Luchamos*, y juntos ganamos. ❖

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## ENSEMBLE NOUS LUTTONS, ENSEMBLE NOUS GAGNONS !

Depuis que j'ai assumé les fonctions de Président international après le décès tragique et soudain du Président international Larry Hanley, ces derniers temps ont été exceptionnellement occupés et mouvementés. Nous nous préparons à la 59e Convention internationale de l'ATU, du 23 au 27 septembre à Las Vegas, Nevada—et l'International demeure axé sur la continuation du travail important du Syndicat.

Ce qui m'a impressionné le plus, c'est le travail acharné et l'ingéniosité de tant de gens qui ont consacré leur vie à l'amélioration de nos membres et de notre syndicat.

J'ai été témoin d'une résistance remarquable en ce temps de deuil. Alors que la plupart des organisations s'affaibliraient peut-être, perdraient leur énergie, leur enthousiasme et leur dynamisme, notre syndicat et nos membres ont redoublé leur engagement à la cause.

Bon exemple : la victoire historique remportée par nos frères et sœurs de la *Martha's Vineyard Transit Authority* (VTA), qui ont gagné leur toute première convention collective au bout de cinq ans d'anti-syndicalisme intense. Ces nouveaux membres de la Section locale 1548-Plymouth, MA, en ont eu assez des abus et de la cupidité de leur employeur, la TCI, et ont décidé de faire la grève.

Les Sections locales ont suivi dans tous les États-Unis et le Canada pour soutenir ces

chauffeurs en grève. D'innombrables membres ont tout laissé tomber pour se rendre à Martha's Vineyard – et il n'est pas si facile d'y aller – pour faire la grève en solidarité. Les membres et les Sections locales d'un bout à l'autre du pays ont puisé dans leurs poches pour donner plus de 50 000 \$ à leur fonds de grève – oui, plus de 50 000 \$ !

Au bout de 28 jours de grève et grâce à votre soutien, – vous, nos membres, ils sont arrivés à un accord. Nos frères et sœurs de Martha's Vineyard ont remporté d'importants gains de salaire, la protection de l'emploi et d'autres améliorations qu'on leur avait refusés depuis des années. Leur histoire est décrite à la page 11 de ce magazine.

Pendant ce temps, à Winnipeg, MB, la Section locale 1505 a incité les usagers et les alliés communautaires à les soutenir dans leur lutte pour améliorer la sécurité et le service, lors du conflit contractuel difficile qui les oppose à la ville.

Aux États-Unis nous avons formé les Sections locales pendant des années en anticipation de la décision traitée de la Cour d'appel suprême, du nom de *Janus*. Et une chose curieuse s'est produite.

Plutôt que de dévaster nos rangs la décision *Janus* a en fait stimulé notre syndicat. Nous avons vu nos rangs croître pour compter plus de 200 000 personnes – le plus grand nombre de notre longue et riche histoire.

A présent, nos frères et sœurs canadiens prennent part à des formations sur le droit et la préparation au travail - en se servant des leçons apprises à nos formations américaines - pour se préparer à la possibilité qu'une loi semblable à *Janus*-survienne au Canada.

Et vous savez quoi ?

Si la législation sur le droit au travail arrive au Canada, je sais que nos Sections locales, nos leaders et nos membres seront prêts à relever le défi.

Nous sommes un syndicat composé de nombreux héros méconnus qui se rassemblent dans les bons comme dans les mauvais jours.

Parce que *Ensemble nous luttons*, et ensemble nous gagnons. ❖

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## Deux voies différentes vers un premier contrat

### De nouveaux membres de l'ATU remportent des victoires historiques en Virginie et dans le Massachusetts

Les nouvelles campagnes constituent la force vitale de tout syndicat. Les nouvelles victoires syndicales nous agrandissent et nous rendent plus puissants. Elles servent d'occasion pour les membres actuels d'affaiblir leurs compétences en matière de campagnes et pour les nouveaux membres de se rendre compte pour la première fois de ce qu'est la solidarité, de réaliser qu'ils peuvent faire entendre leur voix et de constater que leurs employeurs sont prêts à tout pour les garder pauvres et silencieux. Mais nous oublions trop souvent qu'une nouvelle campagne de syndicalisation n'est que le début. Le fer commence vraiment à chauffer lorsque les nouveaux membres commencent à négocier leur premier contrat.

Au cours du printemps et de l'été 2019, les Sections locales 689- Washington, DC, et 1548 - Plymouth, MA, ont remporté deux premiers contrats historiques – le premier à Alexandria, VA, et l'autre à Martha's Vineyard, MA. Bien que les unités de négociation, les patrons, les sections locales, les communautés et les membres aient été différents dans chaque endroit, les leaders sur place ont adopté une stratégie similaire pour gagner : les membres ont pris le dessus lors des négociations.

### La Section locale de DC triomphe dans un bastion anti-syndical.

Les transports en commun dans la région de Washington, D.C., sont fortement syndicalisés. Jusqu'à récemment, nous avions un irréductible – *L'Alexandria Transit Company*, présentée comme le système de bus « Driving Alexandria Safely Home » (DASH), à Alexandria, VA. La ville a commencé à utiliser le DASH il y a 35 ans à titre de service privé, pour créer une alternative non syndiquée au service Metrobus régional, géré par des membres de la Section locale 689 - Washington, DC.

Pour s'assurer que les salaires soient les plus bas possible dans la région, DASH a dépensé des centaines de milliers de dollars en consultants anti-syndicalistes, tout en promettant des changements et en cherchant à plaire à certains travailleurs pour qu'ils leur restent loyaux. Malgré de nombreuses tentatives de syndicalisation par les employés de DASH et l'ATU, la société a réussi maintes fois à exclure le syndicat. Après la dernière campagne de syndicalisation, c'était toujours comme si rien n'avait changé. « Il n'y avait aucun respect pour les chauffeurs, » a rapporté Charles Barrett qui conduit depuis fort longtemps. « Lorsqu'un client se plaignait, ils étaient toujours de leur côté, mais ils ne nous faisaient jamais de compliments. »

'Il n'y a pas de barreaux à la fenêtre»

« Il n'y a pas de barreaux à la fenêtre. Vous pouvez toujours partir, » c'est ce que le gestionnaire maladroit des opérations disait chaque fois qu'on lui faisait part d'un

problème. Et les gens partaient effectivement. DASH était l'endroit où « les gens venaient pour obtenir leur permis de conducteur de véhicule commercial afin qu'ils puissent ensuite trouver un autre emploi ailleurs, raconte le chauffeur Tyler Boos.

Pendant ce temps, toute une génération de chauffeurs DASH ont vu Alexandria se transformer en un centre chic, mais cette nouvelle prospérité ne s'est pas étendue aux chauffeurs. Dans l'un des endroits du pays où l'immobilier est le plus cher, ils devaient se débrouiller avec un salaire de départ de 35 000 \$. Chaque année l'échelle de rémunération horaire était de 3 à 10 \$ inférieure à celle des installations syndiquées. Et il fallait 20 ans pour atteindre le salaire maximum, si bien que la majorité des travailleurs gagnaient moins de 20 \$ de l'heure.

### La goutte qui a fait déborder le vase

La goutte qui a fait déborder le vase se produisit au moment où, au bout de cinq ans de gel salarial, la direction a refusé de verser la prime de fin d'année sur laquelle les chauffeurs avaient toujours compté. Les travailleurs contactèrent à nouveau la Section locale 689. Les organisateurs ont rapidement inscrit les chauffeurs, leur ont remis des cartes d'adhésion syndicale et ont créé un comité organisateur qui pouvait atteindre tous les niveaux de la main d'œuvre.

La société a appris l'existence du mouvement et a employé un consultant anti-syndicaliste qui s'appelait *American Labor Group*. Les travailleurs ont été rassemblés dans des réunions à auditoire contraint et soumis à des volées de propagande. Les briseurs de syndicats sont même montés dans les bus, s'asseyant derrière le chauffeur pour continuer leur propagande anti-syndicale alors que le chauffeur était censé se focaliser sur la sécurité.

Pour contrer le briseur de syndicats, l'ATU a rencontré des membres du conseil municipal de la ville, entièrement démocratique. Le syndicat les a mis au pied du mur : Pourquoi l'argent des contribuables était-il dépensé pour embaucher un briseur de syndicats et faire fi des droits des fonctionnaires de la ville ? Après un appel du syndicat à la presse, la ville a forcé DASH à congédier le briseur de syndicats.

### Les travailleurs gagnent l'élection

Libérés de l'influence indue du briseur de syndicat, les travailleurs ont gagné l'élection de leur section locale de 97 à 13.

La direction de DASH a été humiliée et gênée. Menée par son directeur des opérations vindicatif, DASH a continué de plus belle sa campagne anti-syndicale. D'abord il y a eu le congédiement de deux activistes clés. Latonya Robinson avait probablement été le leader le plus indispensable au cours de la campagne de syndicalisation. Robinson, mère célibataire de deux enfants, a coordonné la collecte de nombreuses cartes syndicales et a servi d'observatrice au moment du vote.

L'autre observateur de l'élection, Yonas Aemiro, était le point d'ancrage d'un groupe important d'émigrants éthiopiens. Peu après le vote, Aemiro a dû se rendre dans son pays auprès de sa mère malade. Un des moyens de DASH pour garder les chauffeurs immigrants malgré leur faible rémunération, était de leur permettre régulièrement de rentrer chez eux pour des périodes, plus longues que ce que le manuel permettait. Tout à coup, la société a décidé d'imposer les règles de façon stricte et a congédié Aemiro pour avoir abandonné son emploi.

Ensuite, les deux tiers des membres du comité de négociation de l'ATU ont dû subir des dépistages de drogues « au hasard ». Il était clair que la société était sur le sentier de la guerre.

Pour riposter, le syndicat s'est servi de son point fort - les membres. Les organisateurs se sont servi d'un sondage et les activistes de l'ATU ont fait passer la participation au-dessus de 75 pour cent de la main d'œuvre. Le sondage a indiqué que les chauffeurs de DASH en avaient assez de faire le même travail que leurs collègues syndiqués pour un salaire très inférieur; ils ont donc décidé qu'ils n'accepteraient rien d'autre que l'égalité.

Le comité du syndicat a invité de nombreux membres à participer aux actions syndicales. Lors d'un forum municipal, des rangées de t-shirts rouges occupaient la plupart des sièges. Les chauffeurs ont pris le micro l'un après l'autre pour parler des conditions injustes.

Pendant ce temps, la proposition économique d'ouverture de la société se limitait à une piètre augmentation de 1 \$ - qu'ils avaient fait miroiter aux travailleurs avant la syndicalisation - et une compression de l'échelle salariale de 20 ans à 10 ans. Au lieu d'un vrai régime de retraite, DASH offrait de restaurer la prime de fin d'année de deux pour cent qu'elle avait retirée juste avant la campagne de syndicalisation.

### Occasion unique

Pendant ce temps, la région se préparait à fermer pour des réparations la plus grande partie du réseau ferroviaire de banlieue de Virginie. Des milliers de résidents locaux qui se rendaient chaque jour à Washington DC pour travailler seraient obligés de prendre exclusivement le bus pendant tout l'été. Apercevant une occasion unique, le syndicat a organisé un vote pour l'autorisation de grève. Les résultats ont été unanimes. A moins

que la direction n'accepte de se mettre aux normes syndicales régionales, les chauffeurs étaient prêts à immobiliser les transports en commun de la capitale.

Avec une grève potentielle à l'horizon, il était temps d'éduquer les usagers des transports. Les activistes de la section locale ont passé une semaine à distribuer 10 000 prospectus aux heures de pointe, aux endroits où la circulation est la plus dense.

Malgré tout, la direction a encore essayé de négocier en ne payant qu'une brouille. DASH a présenté une « offre finale. » Mais la section locale savait qu'elle était aux commandes et a fait sa dernière offre - acceptez ou nous faisons la grève. La direction s'est rendue.

Le contrat a atteint tous les objectifs de la section locale. Les travailleurs ont obtenu la parité salariale avec les membres de la Section locale 689 de Metrobus. L'échelle salariale de 20 ans est passée à sept ans. Le financement des retraites a augmenté pour correspondre au régime public. Les chauffeurs ont obtenu plus de vacances, de congé maladie, de jours de congé et même des prestations d'assurance maladie pour les retraités. La ratification a été unanime, 111-0. Un des résultats les plus sympathiques ? Les deux activistes congédiés ont été réintégrés et DASH a licencié le gestionnaire honni des opérations qui les avait congédiés.

« Avant le syndicat, j'observais les chauffeurs d'autres sociétés et je ne me sentais pas à la hauteur, » a confié le chauffeur Didier Balagizi. « J'étais gêné de porter l'uniforme DASH. Aujourd'hui, je suis fier de travailler chez DASH. Je suis fier d'être la section locale 689. Je suis fier d'être un chauffeur de bus. »

## La Section locale de Plymouth est en grève à Martha's Vineyard - et gagne

Tout comme la région de Washington, D.C. les transports en commun du Massachusetts sont presque tous syndiqués. Mais sur l'île de Martha's Vineyard, les chauffeurs de bus de la *Martha's Vineyard Transit Authority* (VTA) étaient depuis longtemps à la merci de leur employeur.

La VTA a été établie il y a 39 ans pour tenter de soulager la congestion sur les routes étroites de l'île. Bien que la population de Martha's Vineyard se compose de 17 000 insulaires qui y résident toute l'année, elle atteint plus de 100 000 personnes lorsque les touristes et les résidents d'été affluent sur l'île pour les vacances. Certains y vont en voiture et font la traversée en ferry, ce qui prend 45 minutes depuis le continent, mais beaucoup préfèrent compter sur le service de la VTA.

Comme l'exigent les lois du Massachusetts, la VTA fait appel à une entreprise privée pour les activités courantes. Depuis des années, la *Transit Connection, Inc.* (TCI), dont le siège est en Floride, remplit ce rôle. Cela veut dire que les trois douzaines de chauffeurs à l'année de la VTA sont des employés du secteur privé.

Tout comme le DASH à Alexandria, la VTA et la TCI travaillent ensemble depuis des années pour anéantir les campagnes de syndicalisation. Ayant remarqué l'énorme variation du nombre d'usagers entre l'été et l'hiver, la VTA a protégé en priorité les marges de profit de la TCI en soutenant les efforts de la société pour verser de faibles salaires, ne pas accorder d'avantages sociaux, et considérer le plus de travailleurs possible comme saisonniers ou provisoires, plutôt que des employés à plein temps.

### Les chauffeurs sont devenus membres en 2015

Le dernier chapitre dans la lutte des chauffeurs pour un syndicat a commencé en 2015. Motivés par des préoccupations sur la sécurité des bus, une grande pénurie de chauffeurs, une tendance dangereuse aux heures supplémentaires, la stagnation des salaires, des avantages sociaux médiocres et des pratiques de gestion abusive à la fois de la VTA et de la TCI, les chauffeurs ont voté pour rejoindre l'ATU.

Mais la TCI a refusé de reconnaître le syndicat. L'ATU a déposé une accusation de pratique déloyale de travail auprès de la NLRB, qui statua en faveur du syndicat et jugea que la société avait violé la loi fédérale pour « ne pas avoir reconnu et négocié avec » la Section locale 1548 - Plymouth, MA.

La TCI était furieuse. Elle a mis au défi la NLRB et l'affaire est remontée jusqu'à la 11<sup>e</sup> Cour d'appel de circuit à Atlanta. Le tribunal s'est mis d'accord avec la NLRB et a ordonné de nouveau à la société de débiter les négociations avec le syndicat. Le contrat de la TCI avec la VTA est ce qui est désigné « de transmission », ce qui veut dire que tous les frais de justice de cet effort manqué d'élimination syndicale ont été payés par l'organisme public avec l'argent des contribuables.

### Les négociations débutent en août 2018

Au bout de près de trois ans de querelles juridiques, les parties ont finalement débuté les négociations en août 2018. Mais la TCI a encore retardé les choses. Le directeur général Edward Pigman, trop occupé par sa vie en Floride et sa gestion de plusieurs autres firmes occupées à tirer de l'argent d'entreprises de transport en commun, a embauché Greg Dash de Pennsylvanie, briseur de syndicats, pour négocier au nom



de la société. Dash et la TCI ont immédiatement adopté une stratégie de retard, décidant à nouveau de contester l'admissibilité des employés et des classifications à inclure dans l'unité de négociation.

« Ils ne veulent tout simplement pas du syndicat, » a déclaré à ce moment-là Richard Townes, chauffeur de la VTA, au journal Vineyard Gazette.

Pendant les treize ans du régime sans syndicat de la TCI, Townes, qui conduisait depuis 21 ans, n'avait pas reçu un centime d'augmentation toutes ces dernières années. La plupart de ses collègues, sans égard à leur ancienneté, n'avaient reçu aucune augmentation depuis cinq ans au moins. Mais Angela Grant, l'administratrice publique anti-syndicale de longue date chez la VTA, avait reçu quatre augmentations de salaire au cours de la même période. Elle est passée de 100 410 \$ à 135 200 \$ de salaire de base, – une augmentation énorme, de 35 %.

Bien que des milliers de travailleurs modestes vivent à Martha's Vineyard, le fait que l'île soit une destination de vacances appréciée pour les gens riches et célèbres en fait un endroit où le coût de la vie est élevé. « Le coût de la vie sur Martha's Vineyard est en moyenne soixante pour cent plus élevé que dans le reste de l'Amérique », a noté le Sénateur Elizabeth Warren, D-MA, dans une vidéo de soutien qu'elle a envoyée aux chauffeurs. « Cependant les salaires sont loin d'atteindre la moyenne nationale. C'est inacceptable. »

Le maximum des salaires de chauffeurs chez la VTA était de 23,50 \$, ce qui en faisait les conducteurs de bus les plus mal payés de la région. De ce fait, peu de jeunes envisageaient un emploi chez la VTA pour s'élever à la classe moyenne. Par contre, la plupart des chauffeurs dans l'unité de négociation comptaient sur des revenus de retraite provenant d'emplois antérieurs, étaient forcés d'avoir d'autres emplois pour joindre les deux bouts, ou envisageaient de quitter l'île pour trouver du travail ailleurs.

## Injustice flagrante

Cette injustice économique flagrante d'un des lieux les plus riches au monde ne pouvait être tolérée par ses résidents et visiteurs aux idées majoritairement libérales, si seulement ils le savaient. Dans cette optique, les chauffeurs de la VTA ont œuvré avec la Section locale 1548 et l'international pour lancer une campagne communautaire.

Pendant des mois, les chauffeurs se sont efforcés de renforcer les relations avec leurs passagers et leurs voisins. Ils ont parlé à des réunions de conseillers dans chacune des six villes de l'île. Les conseillers (Selectmen) constituent la forme de gouvernement au niveau le plus local sur l'île, et chaque ville sélectionne un représentant pour siéger au Conseil consultatif de la VTA.

Les chauffeurs ont remis une pétition accompagnée de centaines de signatures de la communauté à Darren Morris, directeur général de la TCI sur place. Ils ont lancé une page Facebook, « Soutenez les chauffeurs de Vineyard » et ont imprimé des affiches que les voisins ont placées sur les routes dans toute l'île, pour montrer leur solidarité.

## Propositions ridicules

Néanmoins, la société n'a pas bougé de ses positions. Elle a soumis des propositions ridicules, comme d'exiger le droit d'annuler à son gré l'accord de négociations collectives. Pour sa part, l'administratrice Grant a adopté publiquement une position de plus en plus anti-syndicaliste, accusant l'ATU d'être un groupe « étranger à l'île » qui tentait de diviser la communauté insulaire.

Les négociateurs de l'ATU ont demandé qu'un médiateur fédéral se joigne aux négociations pour tenter de raisonner un peu la société, mais la TCI a refusé de bouger.

## Autorisation de faire la grève en avril

Dégoutés, les chauffeurs ont voté en grande majorité pour autoriser une grève en avril 2019. Ils ont prévu la fin de semaine du « Memorial Day » comme date potentielle de grève, puis ils ont changé d'avis, espérant que la société entendrait raison. Mais la TCI a abandonné les négociations et soumis fin mai sa « dernière offre, la meilleure, l'offre finale ».

Le moment des mesures draconiennes était enfin arrivé. Le fait de travailler avec les chauffeurs de l'international a propulsé leur campagne au premier plan. Ils ont lancé des publicités à la radio, en s'adressant à la TCI, et ont reçu des déclarations de soutien de fonctionnaires élus de l'état et de candidats à la présidence, notamment le sénateur Bernie Sanders, I-VT, et ils ont organisé une rencontre à la mairie pour préparer les passagers à la possibilité d'une grève.

A la mairie, le négociateur Dash de la TCI a déclaré au chauffeur chevronné Roland Goulart que la société pensait que c'était les chauffeurs qui avaient tort « parce qu'ils avaient choisi de vivre ici. » « Mais ne t'ai pas choisi de vivre ici, » a répliqué Goulart. « Je suis né ici. Je vais mourir ici. »

Alors que la semaine la plus chargée de l'île – le 4 juillet – approchait à grands pas, l'ATU a fixé le 28 juin comme date de la grève. Alors que les chauffeurs ont commencé

à faire la grève, la TCI et la VTA ont rapidement recruté des briseurs de grève et ont forcé les chauffeurs saisonniers n'appartenant pas au syndicat à continuer à travailler, menaçant même illégalement de les expulser de leurs logements d'être subventionnés par l'employeur. De ce fait, bien que la grève ait interrompu le service dans les premiers jours, TCI a pu le maintenir à 80 % pendant une grande partie de la grève.

Pour les passagers ayant boycotté en solidarité, les grévistes et les voisins favorables ont assuré le transport dans leurs véhicules personnels, transportant ainsi 1568 personnes pendant la grève. Malheureusement, les touristes ont continué à franchir les piquets de grève en grand nombre. L'ATU a proposé de mettre fin à la grève si la TCI était d'accord de se soumettre à un arbitrage, mais la société a refusé.

D'ici le sixième jour de la grève, les chauffeurs ont eu besoin d'un soutien moral et d'une nouvelle stratégie.

## Ovation

Ils ont réussi à s'intégrer au défilé du 4 juillet et le public les a acclamés et a lancé des slogans comme « nous sommes avec vous. » Quelques jours plus tard, le candidat présidentiel Pete Buttigieg a organisé une collecte de fonds sur l'île. Buttigieg a passé trente minutes à écouter les grévistes, puis les a invités dans l'auditorium plein à craquer. Les 800 habitants de l'île se sont levés spontanément pour une ovation quand les chauffeurs sont entrés dans la salle.

Réconfortés, les grévistes ont décidé de devenir plus agressifs. Pendant qu'ils continuaient la grève, une équipe centrale d'activistes s'est mise à exercer une pression directe sur les membres du Conseil d'administration de la VTA. Les grévistes sont apparus sans être invités dans les différents lieux de travail des membres du conseil et ont manifesté dans des lieux publics près de leurs domiciles, en exigeant que le Conseil tienne une réunion pour occuper deux sièges vides depuis longtemps.

L'ATU a également élaboré de nouveaux documents pour inoculer les conseillers et les fonctionnaires locaux influents contre les mensonges et la désinformation répandus par l'administratrice de la VTA. Les chauffeurs ont également forgé des alliances plus profondes avec des groupes de la communauté locale comme les MV Dems, la Chambre de commerce, différentes congrégations, qui avaient tous exprimé leurs préoccupations à l'égard des actes anti-syndicaux de la VTA et de l'impact de la grève sur le commerce local.

Le changement de stratégie a commencé à porter ses fruits. Tout d'abord, la ville de Tisbury a voté pour s'associer avec d'autres villes et avec la VTA pour déterminer à qui était le tour de pourvoir les sièges vacants de l'ADA et des passagers au Conseil. Ensuite, la ville de West Tisbury a voté pour organiser d'autres villes et exiger du Conseil de la VTA qu'il se réunisse pour gérer la crise.

## Le conseil a cédé

Sous la pression, le Conseil a cédé et dans la troisième semaine de la grève, il a tenu sa première réunion depuis des mois. Des passagers, grévistes, conseillers et alliés de la communauté y ont afflué, exigeant que le Conseil oblige la société à s'engager dans une procédure d'arbitrage ou tout au moins à continuer les négociations. Au bout de près de deux heures de délibérations, le Conseil a voté à l'unanimité de renvoyer la TCI à la table de négociations.

En dépit de ce progrès important, l'ATU et les grévistes n'en sont pas restés là. Ils se sont mis à planifier un rallye de solidarité à Boston, dans l'espoir de faire pression sur le Commonwealth pour qu'ils effectuent une vérification comptable des finances de la VTA. Les participants à la conférence Can-Am de l'ATU ont collecté plus de 50 000 \$ pour le fond de grève de Vineyard, s'assurant ainsi que les chauffeurs puissent continuer la grève pendant plusieurs semaines.

## Accord au cours de la quatrième semaine

La quatrième semaine a débuté par deux jours de négociations intenses; c'était la première fois que la TCI et l'ATU se trouvaient au même endroit depuis le printemps. La digue a finalement cédé. Avant le jeudi, les parties avaient conclu un accord de principe. Ce dimanche-là, les membres ont ratifié leur toute première convention collective, 97 % des membres votant en sa faveur.

L'échelle salariale est passée de 13 ans à sept ans. D'ici la fin de l'accord, le taux de rémunération supérieur passera de 23,50 \$ à 27,40 \$ et le taux initial passera de 16,50 \$ à 20,50 \$. Pour la première fois, l'ancienneté sera reconnue pour les itinéraires et les taux de rémunération horaire seront doublés les jours fériés.

Au bout de 28 jours, cette grève historique était finalement terminée et les chauffeurs étaient de retour au travail, au service de leurs passagers bien-aimés. Maintenant que la section locale et le premier contrat ont finalement été obtenus, ils se préparent déjà pour les étapes suivantes : faire respecter ce qui a été remporté et réformer la VTA pour qu'il ne soit pas nécessaire de faire la grève afin de remporter le contrat suivant. Mais si c'est le cas, ces nouveaux membres de la Section locale 1548 seront prêts. ❖





# In Memoriam

Death Benefits Awarded May 1, 2019 - June 30, 2019

## 1- MEMBERS AT LARGE

ORVILLE D MARSH  
CHARLES W TRAMMELL

## 85- PITTSBURGH, PA

PAUL P BAGDON  
ROBERT W EGGERTON  
ALAN W HECHT  
MARTIN E KANSLER  
BRIAN T PRICE  
CARVER J RAYBURN  
ROBERT W RIDGE  
KENNETH A SCHOLLAERT  
EARL D SWANSON

## 89- NEW CASTLE, PA

WILLIAM B STONER

## 113- TORONTO, ON

DEREK G BARLOW  
MIKE E BILOUS  
RAFFAELE CHIMIENI  
NEIL GREER  
MICHAELANGELO IACAMPO  
DANIEL LEGAULT  
FRANK MOORE  
ENZO RAGNO  
JOSEPH F SECORD  
JOHN G SWALLOW  
NICK ZONNI

## 164- WILKES-BARRE, PA

THOMAS J MENDRZYCKI

## 192- OAKLAND, CA

ALFRED L BIRD  
MURRAY FORD  
RONALD B JAMES  
SYLVIA M JONES  
RICHARD G LEOEUF  
ROBERT B MALONE  
ROBERT E MATTHEWS  
WAYNE L MEADOWS SR  
BILLY W PEEK  
J D SEGURA  
LINEOL C STUBBS  
ROMEO C TANEDO

## 241- CHICAGO, IL

NATHANIEL BRADFORD  
SHEM U CROSBY  
MENASCHE DALLAL  
ROBERT L DICKENS  
MURIEL C DUNLAP  
MICHAEL E JONES  
EARNESTINE MARTIN  
JAMES J O'NEILL  
LARRY PAYTON  
FRANCIS J PIRELLI  
STEVE M PRESTON JR  
HOWELL B RENEAU  
DWIGHT O ROGERS  
LAVERNE M SCHULTZ  
JESSE J SMITH  
JOSEPH W SPARKS  
CORNNELL SPRINGS

JOHN W WHITSELL  
ROBERT F ZIMMERMAN

## 265- SAN JOSE, CA

W MARK EVANS  
GARY W HAPE  
CAROL R ROSE  
DONALD E TREBEL

## 279- OTTAWA, ON

REYNOLDS G GUERTIN  
ELIZABETH HAMMERSLEY  
BRIAN P LAPIERRE  
ROBIN W STEVENARD

## 281- NEW HAVEN, CT

ELLSWORTH JOSEPH

## 282- ROCHESTER, NY

MAJOR F ANDERSON

## 308- CHICAGO, IL

RAYMOND JONES  
JOHN P MC CONVILLE  
MARION RICHARDSON  
ALVIN L STAFFORD

## 425- HARTFORD, CT

THOMAS D DAVIS JR  
JOE L HUTCHINGS

## 568- ERIE, PA

THOMAS LASKEY

## 569- EDMONTON, AB

DARCY W MATIER  
DONALD G MC CONNELL  
DONALD J SCHULTZ  
DONALD H WOODROW

## 580- SYRACUSE, NY

REYNARD HUTCHINSON

## 583- CALGARY, AB

CLAYTON W HUTCHINGS  
ROBERT MOSTYN  
NINO PEDRINI

## 587- SEATTLE, WA

DAVID W ALEXANDER  
ROBERT H COLVIN  
GERALD L HALL  
JOSEPH G KUHN

## 589- BOSTON, MA

SALVATORE DIMARTINO  
JOSEPH X DORSEY  
GERALDINE M FEENEY  
RUDOLPH P GOULART  
GEORGE D KELLER  
WILLIAM P KELLEY  
ELIZABETH KNIGHT  
LANCE LA FRENIERE  
ROBERT A LANE  
ARTHUR E LOGUE  
ANTHONY J MELIUS

RICHARD A SEELEY  
KAREN M TANGO  
JIMMY E THOMPSON

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SONIA DENEAULT

## 618- PROVIDENCE, RI

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PENELOPE CODY  
RONALD E DWYER  
FRANK R FAVINO  
DONALD J LOPES  
WILLIAM J SOUZA

## 627- CINCINNATI, OH

KEITH A CHAMBERS  
COY M LOVETT

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ANTHONY R BATTI  
CHESTER BILBRO  
CHARLES F BROWN  
PHILLIP MITCHELL  
GEORGE F HASKINS JR  
WALTER L JACKSON  
JAMES LAURANCE MARSH SR  
JOE L MATTOCKS  
JACQUELINE B MIZELLE  
ELSWORTH MURPHY  
WAGITH K TADROS

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FREDDIE E ECHOLS

## 726- STATEN ISLAND, NY

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NICHOLAS CRUZ

## 732- ATLANTA, GA

MELVIN A COLLIER  
AUDREY M SAUL  
JOSEPH A WISE

## 741- LONDON, ON

GERALD AUSTIN  
PETER L MC KICHAN  
GORDON PROCURE  
GARY WILLIAMS

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MELVIN WILLIAMS

## 757- PORTLAND, OR

MICHAEL D BEAMER  
VERN A COLLINS  
CECIL F STRAIT

## 825- ORADELL, NJ

JAMES F STRAUS

## 880- CAMDEN, NJ

WILLIAM BROWER JR  
CLARENCE NOURSE  
WILLIAM SMITH

## 998- MILWAUKEE, WI

IVORY DAVIS  
HAROLD E FITZGERALD  
ERVIN HUDSON JR  
LEROY JONES

## 1005- MINNEAPOLIS & ST. PAUL, MN

RICHARD T PRUDHOMME

## 1056- FLUSHING, NY

HORACE BRYAN  
ROSARIO T CASTRO  
STANLEY H ENGLERT  
JOSEPH E FEMENIA  
THOMAS J GIUNTA  
JOSEPH GRIFFIN  
PAUL R KOSTRZEWSKI  
EMANUEL PARRILLA  
JACQUELINE E THOMAS

## 1108- QUINCY, IL

EDWARD LENTZ

## 1177- NORFOLK, VA

ABDULKHABIR I MOHAMMAD

## 1179- NEW YORK, NY

VINCENT CASTIGLIA

## 1181- NEW YORK, NY

THOMAS E ABBOTT  
ANGELA BORZONE  
ROBERT CONIGLIARO  
LIZZIE CROMARTIE  
ROSE DE ROBERTIS  
JOANN M GIANNATASIO  
MARIE O HONORAT  
FRANK IANNELLI  
GILBERT JACKSON  
HULAS MAHARAJ  
THOMAS MATTES  
SALVATORE V MOSCOLA  
FREDERICK MUNROE  
EDWARD PRUDEN  
JOANNE B SANTAPAOLA  
FLORENCE SANTIAGO  
WALTER STEYERT  
FRANK WASHINGTON

## 1249- SPRINGFIELD, IL

CLARENCE E GATTON

## 1277- LOS ANGELES, CA

FRANK T BOYER  
CHARLES W CHRISTENSEN  
ARTURO S CONOZA  
JOE L DELA CERDA  
HYOK C KWON  
SIU K NG  
ENRIQUE L PONCE

## 1321- ALBANY & TROY, NY

GERALD W HACKSTADT

## 1342- BUFFALO, NY

NATHAN L BOLER  
CLARENCE BROWN  
VALERIE L BUSH  
PATRICIA CARUSO  
JOHN GAINES  
JAMES D GOUGH  
LEONARD S LELITO  
MICHELLE A MORCELLE  
JAMES M WALKER

## 1505- WINNIPEG, MB

WALTER D FARYNA  
PERCY STEVENSON

## 1512- SPRINGFIELD, MA

EDWARD C HOPE

## 1564- DETROIT, MI

ERICK S LEWIS

## 1572- MISSISSAUGA, ON

ROBERT G TILLEY

## 1573- BRAMPTON, ON

GARY KENT

## 1700- CHICAGO, IL

ALEJO CAMPOS

## 1724- VANCOUVER, BC

CINDY L PAINE  
DIMITRI SUVAJDZIC

## 1765- OLYMPIA, WA

GERALD R HOWARD





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