

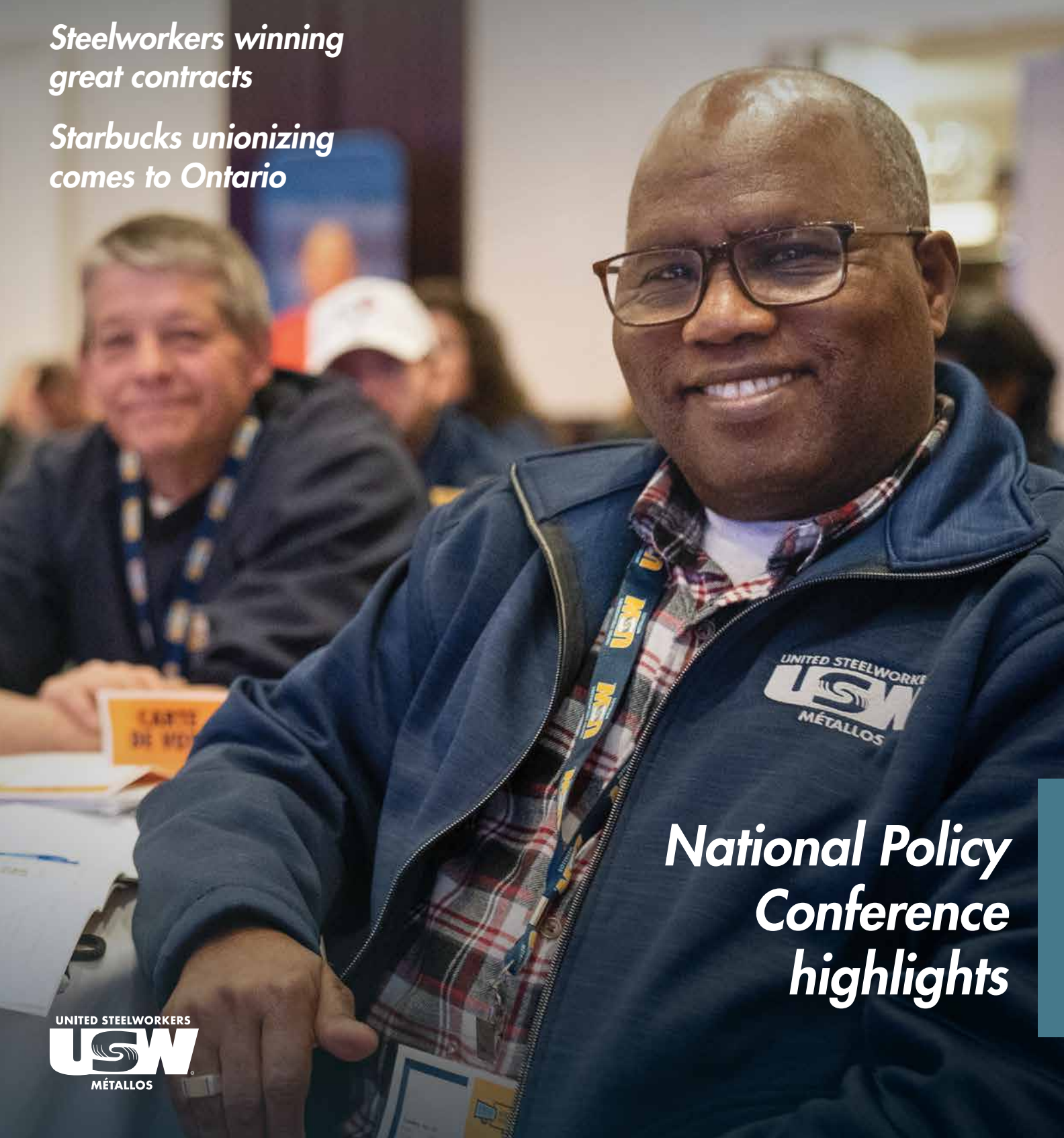
A MAGAZINE FOR MEMBERS OF THE UNITED STEELWORKERS

USW@Work

SUMMER 2023

*Steelworkers winning
great contracts*

*Starbucks unionizing
comes to Ontario*



*National Policy
Conference
highlights*

UNITED STEELWORKERS
USW
MÉTALLOS

USW@Work | Summer 2023

Official publication of the
United Steelworkers union in Canada

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ON THE COVER:

Nearly 600 local union leaders, activists, staff and guests came together for the National Policy Conference in Toronto from April 25-28. Here is James Anampiu from the USW Peel Halton Injured Workers Program in District 6 taking part in the week of discussion, debate and strategizing for a strong future.

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Engage, mobilize, organize is how we build power

On the heels of our USW National Policy Conference, I am more motivated than ever by the accounts of hard work and of triumph of Steelworker local union leaders, activists, members and staff.

The theme of our policy conference, "Engage, Mobilize, Organize," speaks to the source of our union's power and our collective ability to make a difference in our workplaces, in our communities and in our society.

It also reflects a truism that I've held onto since my early days as a shop floor activist – the union's power comes from the grassroots.

I have been inspired by the stories of organizing and the determination that new members show to improve their lives at work, harnessing the power and strength of the union. I was also touched by the hope and deeply rooted belief that better is always possible, among longtime Steelworker activists.

Our conference in Toronto celebrated an important Steelworker win – pension protection in the case of corporate bankruptcies. You will read more about this critical achievement in our political update on page 16. In the meantime, I sincerely thank every member and SOAR activist who put themselves forward over the last two decades to win this legislation. Without you, it would not have been possible.

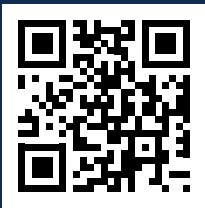
Our union is now focused on winning federal anti-scab legislation, which would ban replacement workers in the case of a labour dispute. Like pension protection, this can be the next big Steelworker win. Having anti-scab legislation in federally regulated sectors would help 80,000 USW members alone and hundreds of thousands of other workers across the country. Currently, anti-scab legislation exists in Quebec and B.C., with Quebec's law dating back to 1977.

I believe wholeheartedly that now is the time to double down on pushing the federal Liberals to introduce anti-scab legislation – immediately. With the opportunity created by the federal NDP-Liberal supply-and-confidence agreement, we must move to get this legislation introduced and passed as quickly as possible and then work to do the same in all other parts of the country.

During our policy conference, 520 delegates sent letters to Liberal cabinet ministers and NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh, and more than 60 people got up to the mics to volunteer to lobby their Liberal MP. To all those who have taken this action so far – thank you!

If you are interested in lobbying your Liberal MP to demand anti-scab legislation now, I urge you to get in touch with our Legislative Staff Representative George Soule. Our union has the materials and the guidance to help you succeed in this lobby and every voice counts! gsoule@usw.ca

Take a moment to send a letter now by scanning this QR code below or going to usw.ca/antiscab.



Thank you for your action and I believe together, we will win!

In solidarity,

Marty Warren
USW National Director



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United Steelworkers 55th National Policy Conference

Creating our shared futures

“We will celebrate our successes, tackle our challenges, and chart the course to build our union, defend our members and create our members’ future,” said USW National Director Marty Warren, in his opening address to 600 USW delegates, staff, retirees and guests, at the union’s National Policy Conference in Toronto.

Over four days, delegates made moving, personal contributions as they debated and passed 48 resolutions on bargaining, health and safety, anti-racism, action for equality, education, legislative advocacy, the green energy economy and more – an ambitious agenda for the USW’s next three years.

Immediately prior to the conference, members of the Steelworkers Organization of Active Retirees (SOAR), NextGen and USW National Locals held their own gatherings.

“We will celebrate our successes, tackle our challenges... and create our members’ future.”

Marty Warren, USW National Director

Guest speakers at the conference included federal NDP leader Jagmeet Singh, Canadian Labour

Congress President Bea Bruske, USW International President Thomas M. Conway and *Toronto Star* Work and Wealth investigative reporter Sara Mojtehdzadeh.

“The economy is going through such dramatic change and it brings to the labour movement tremendous opportunities that we haven’t really seen in generations. It also brings tremendous challenges and threats to our jobs,” Conway said.

“We need to be prepared to make organizing our focus for the next decade.”

The USW’s organizing efforts will include workplaces where new jobs will be created as a result of huge investments in public infrastructure and cleaner industries.

“No one is going to hand us those jobs. We’re going to have to go out and get those cards signed,” said Conway.

Roxanne Brown, USW International Vice-President at Large, reminded delegates that the words engage, mobilize and organize “are a blueprint that lays out the approach we take as a union to maintain what we have now and to continue making gains.”



USW Canadian leadership with USW International President Tom Conway (l-to-r): Dominic Lemieux (District 5), Conway, Marty Warren (National Director), Scott Lunny (District 3) and Myles Sullivan (District 6).

Brown congratulated Canadian Steelworkers on the recent passage of Bill C-228, which protects workers and pensioners in the event of corporate bankruptcy. The win was largely due to USW members and pensioners who committed to engaging the membership, mobilized their allies and communities and relentlessly organized.

“We need to be prepared to make organizing our focus for the next decade.”

Tom Conway, USW International President

“It’s always impactful for lawmakers to hear from our members. You are the best messenger of your story, our story,” said Brown.

Keynote speaker Mojtehdzadeh credited the union’s track record on health and safety. “The USW has been on the forefront – particularly on worker compensation and workplace safety,” she said, noting that precarious workers – often newcomers – are most at risk of mistreatment and danger.

Throughout the conference, delegates heard from insightful panels including the National Anti-

Racism Working Group presentation on how to be a good ally. Delegates subsequently voted to pass a resolution to enshrine the working group into a standing committee of the union.

Warren talked about the urgency of moving quickly to push Liberal MPs to support anti-scab legislation without delay, seizing the opportunity created by the NDP-Liberal supply-and-confidence agreement. As part of the agreement, NDP leader Jagmeet Singh secured a commitment from the Liberals to introduce anti-scab legislation before the end of the year.

Anita Bryan, District 6 Co-ordinator, led delegates in a “how-to” session on lobbying politicians on crucial issues such as anti-scab legislation. “A scab is a scab is a scab,” said Bryan, to a cheering room.

Following adjournment on April 28, a crowd of USW delegates joined the Toronto and York Region Labour Council’s National Day of Mourning ceremony to honour those who have been killed or injured at work.

Catch up on the USW National Policy Conference at usw.ca, and on the USW’s social media feeds: YouTube, Facebook and Instagram. Daily photo albums from the conference are posted at usw.to/photos.



WHAT'S THE BEST THING ABOUT BEING A STEELWORKER?

"It forces you to get out of your comfort zone. Five years ago, I would never have thought of getting up on a stage and speaking in front of people.

With the Steelworkers, you learn to trust yourself, it made me grow, develop as a person."

KIM DALLAIRE-PARENT



**DISTRICT: 5 • LOCAL: 5778
MONT-WRIGHT MINE, FERMONT, QUE.**

SHEKU KOROMA



**DISTRICT: 6 • LOCAL: 5296
SECURITAS, BRAMPTON, ONT.**

WHAT IS ONE PIECE OF ADVICE YOU HAVE FOR ANYONE WHO IS A NEW STEELWORKER AND IS UNSURE HOW TO GET MORE INVOLVED IN THE UNION?

"You can start anywhere. Don't be shy. Attend meetings, which are eye-openers for new members. Read communication that is sent out. Also seek out info to know your rights as a worker."

GEORGE FINLEY



**DISTRICT: 3 • LOCAL: 2009
IATSE 891, BURNABY, B.C.**



WHAT THINGS HAVE YOU DONE OR HOPE TO DO WHILE YOU'RE HERE?

"I'm hoping to one day enter the political realm of the USW, and look forward to doing more organizing, both externally and within our membership."



Starbucks union movement comes to Ontario

The unionization wave at Starbucks coffee shops across North America, launched by Steelworkers in British Columbia, has moved into Ontario. Workers at the Starbucks Waterloo Town Square location, in Waterloo, Ont., voted to join the USW in May.

"We started this campaign after being inspired by other stores showing us that it was possible," said a barista involved in the organizing drive. "We want to be able to protect and improve the workplace to make it better for everyone."

The new USW members in Waterloo join Steelworkers at several Starbucks stores in Western Canada, including:

Edmonton:

Workers at the Terrace Plaza Starbucks store in Edmonton joined the Steelworkers in April of this year, after deciding to take a stand for fairness on the job and better morale, working conditions and wages.

Vancouver:

Workers at the Dunbar Street Starbucks store in Vancouver made a similar decision in February. "I chose to join the USW to improve workplace safety, seek better wages in the current economic climate and demand better staffing to protect the mental health of our co-workers," said worker Frédérique Martineau.

Other recent USW organizing successes across the country include:

Société des traversiers du Québec:

Some 80 employees of Québec's public ferry services agency, working on the St. Lawrence River crossing between Sorel and Saint-Ignace-de-Loyola, voted to leave another labour organization to join hundreds of other Steelworkers employed by the provincial agency. "In past negotiations, we could see things were going better for those who were Steelworkers," said Pier-Klaud Dallaire, vice-president of the bargaining unit under the previous organization.

Enviro Industries:

Some 40 workers at Enviro Industries in Sorel-Tracy, Que., voted to leave another labour group and join the Steelworkers this spring. The workers provide industrial cleaning services to large industrial operations in the region, where workers also are USW members. "With the Steelworkers, we're with a union in our field ... where there's a spirit of solidarity and where we'll be supported in what we do," said new USW member Réal Dupéré.

Canadian Phoenix Steel Products:

More than 40 workers at Canadian Phoenix Steel Products in Etobicoke, Ont., voted to join the Steelworkers to improve their health and safety, wages and gain greater respect in the workplace. The workers produce steel pipe and mesh products.

Queen's University residence dons:

In March, residence dons at Queen's University in Kingston, Ont., voted emphatically to join the Steelworkers to gain a meaningful voice for their working conditions. The student workers, who act as a critical resource for students living in university residences, join dons at other university campuses as USW members.



Breaking ground on women's issues

National Women's Conference recap

"Don't close your eyes. Don't stay indifferent. As men and women, we all have a role here – and we can all take collective action," said Anita Bryan, USW District 6 Co-ordinator, as she addressed hundreds of members and allies at the USW National Women's Conference in October 2022.

Under the conference theme Women of Steel are Raising the Bar, Steelworkers from across the country gathered together in Quebec City to continue the important work of fighting for women's health and safety and advancing women's rights in their communities and the union.

Through various plenaries and equity caucuses, USW members heard from fellow Women of Steel who are active in their local unions and explored how they can push for real progress on equality at work, mental health supports and bargaining fair contracts, as well as how allies can properly support and advocate for the women in their workplaces.

Other highlights included remarks from Véronique Hivon, former member of the National Assembly of Quebec, who spoke passionately about her

experience as a leader in politics and the challenges she faced when running for elected office – many of which mirror the same challenges that women face when trying to take on more leadership roles within the union.

Members also participated in a morning rally through the streets of Quebec City, in a powerful and beautiful display of strength, solidarity and respect for all those who are victims and survivors of gender-based violence.

Over the course of three days, the union continued its tradition of breaking new ground on women's issues and participants left with a renewed passion to continue the vital work of educating, bargaining, lobbying and organizing for women's health and safety, equality, leadership and inclusion. For photo albums from the conference, visit: usw.to/photos.



Steelworkers marched together at the National Women's Conference in Quebec City at an early-morning rally to end gender-based violence.

New contract ratified, TELUS workers now fighting to save Canadian jobs

After 18 months of difficult negotiations with telecommunications giant TELUS, USW Local 1944 members across the country ratified a new collective agreement in March. The gains they achieved were the result of a remarkable, sustained solidarity campaign.



"Every improvement won in this contract is the direct result of hearing from TELUS workers that they expect better. I am proud of the way that members held strong and pushed back, allowing us to make important gains in this new agreement," Local 1944 President Donna Hokiro said.

The new contract, which extends to March 2027, provides total wage increases of 11.5%, as well as a \$10,000 lump-sum payment for all employees. It includes enhanced language on technological change, paid domestic violence leave, improved benefits and pensions and other language improvements.

Soon after the collective agreement was ratified, Local 1944 was forced into another battle. TELUS issued 4,000 severance package offers as part of a devastating plan to eliminate more Canadian jobs, on top of the thousands that have already been offshored. The local and the union at all levels are fighting to defend these Canadian jobs.

"Telus has essentially become a foreign telecom company," Hokiro and USW National Director Marty Warren said in a joint letter to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau. "We are calling on your government to undertake and support efforts to publicly investigate TELUS's latest schemes surrounding Canadian jobs, and to enact policies that will keep Canadians answering calls from the customers in their communities."



Locals 9554, 1976 • Quebec airport screeners secure best increases in sector

Negotiating for the first time as a united front, airport security screeners across Quebec secured two-year agreements with 12.5% wage increases – the highest in the sector in recent years. The wage hikes, as well as monetary gains on pensions and overtime, holiday and vacation pay, apply retroactively to March 2022. Full-time screeners received \$1,200 signing bonuses and part-time workers received \$600. The contracts cover screeners in Montreal, Quebec City and 12 regional airports.



Local 5442 • Strong mandate leads to good contract at Gerdau Manitoba

Backed by an overwhelming 98% strike mandate from the 330 members at the Gerdau steel mill in Selkirk, Man., the Local 5442 bargaining committee reached a solid, five-year agreement with gains in wages, benefits, pension, language and apprentice pay rates. Lump-sum payments over the first two years will amount to \$4,500, followed by wage increases totalling \$1.80 an hour over the ensuing three years. The new contract also maintains uncapped cost-of-living provisions, which paid an additional \$3.35 an hour over the past three years.



Local 6285 • 24.5% wage hikes over five years for Labrador mine workers

More than 270 workers at the Tacora Resources mine in Wabush, N.L., will see their wages rise by 24.5% over the term of a five-year agreement, including a 12.5% increase in the first year. The contract improves vacation allowances, the retirement plan, shift premiums, contract language and other monetary allowances and funds a full-time local union president.



Locals 7065, 9414 • School bus drivers' strikes pay off

When their employers refused to provide them with a fair share of provincial funding increases, school bus drivers in two Quebec communities hit the streets. Their strikes quickly paid off. After a one-week dispute, school bus drivers in Saint-Jean-sur-Richelieu (Local 9414) won a five-year contract with gains including 18% wage hikes and a bonus based on government funding levels. Bus drivers in Sept-Îles (Local 7065) maintained their picket line for nearly a month until they achieved a five-year deal with total wage hikes of 21.5%.



Local 8883 • Saskatoon manufacturing workers make wage, pension, benefit gains

Members at Andritz Separation in Saskatoon, recently negotiated wage increases of 12.5% over four years, including a retroactive first-year increase of 4%. Pensions were improved with higher employer contributions, short-term and long-term disability coverage was increased, and a \$750 signing bonus was paid. Members include welders, machinists and labourers who manufacture centrifuges for the potash and oil and gas industries.



Local 252G • Big increases, elimination of two-tier language for glass workers

More than 200 members of Local 252G, working at Pilkington Glass in Collingwood, Ont., have a new three-year contract that will boost wages by 17.5%, including a 9% raise in the first year. Members, who manufacture automotive windshields, also doubled their 12-hour shift premiums, improved their benefits and prevailed in their commitment to eliminate two-tier contract language on short-term-disability benefits.



Local 1-405 • B.C. credit union workers bank big bonus and wage hikes

More than 110 employees of Kootenay Savings Credit Union in British Columbia achieved total wage increases of 10% as well as \$4,000 in bonus payouts in a three-year collective agreement. The workers at seven credit union branches across B.C.'s Kootenay region also negotiated increases in their health-care spending account, established a new personal spending account and added the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation as a new statutory holiday.



Local 1976 • Solid gains for Ottawa airport security screeners

More than 300 security screeners at Ottawa International Airport, achieved a three-year agreement that will increase base wages by 12.3%, as well as cost-of-living provisions. Members also won increased contributions from the employer, Garda World, to their pension plan and to the Steelworkers Trusteed Benefit Plan, while new sick leave provisions under the federal labour code were enshrined into the agreement.



Local 9344 • New deal counters inflation for rail, port workers

Some 400 workers at Rio Tinto's QNS&L (Quebec North Shore and Labrador Railway) and IOC port operations in Sept-Îles, Que., addressed inflation concerns with a collective agreement providing an 8.9% wage increase in the first year. The contract also raises an hourly "flexibility bonus" from \$1.25 to \$2, provides wage increases totalling 4.95% in the final two years and pays a \$2,500 lump sum to members.



Local 4120 • Freed from unconstitutional law, university workers win strong contract

Nearly 900 administrative and technical staff at the University of Guelph achieved a strong contract after courts struck down the Ontario Progressive Conservative government's unconstitutional restrictions on collective bargaining. Members won total wage hikes of 9.5%, improved benefits and recognition of the National Day for Truth and Reconciliation as a paid holiday.

Building relationships on the path to reconciliation

USW Indigenous Engagement Co-ordinators



Josh George and Julia McKay.

As Julia McKay developed her knowledge and skills as a USW activist, she recognized how Steelworkers and members of Indigenous communities share common values and aspirations.

“I see the Steelworkers kind of like an Indigenous community in some ways,” says McKay, an activist with USW Local 9346 in British Columbia who traces her Indigenous ancestry to the Tsim Shian First Nation, based on the B.C. Coast.

Within Indigenous communities, as in the union, “we try to be stewards and we try to educate ourselves, and others,” McKay says. “We work together and we support each other and those around us, so that everybody can be better. We try to support our Indigenous and non-Indigenous members and we try to be the best neighbours we can be to our Indigenous communities.”

The potential for building relationships based on shared values and aspirations is a key reason why McKay wanted to be part of a new project proposed by the USW National Indigenous Committee.

In January of this year, McKay and Josh George, an activist from USW Local 9597 in Ontario, began a 10-month pilot project in their new roles as the union’s first Indigenous Engagement Co-ordinators.

Based on the recommendation put forward by the USW National Indigenous Committee, USW directors approved the hiring of Indigenous Engagement Co-ordinators in Districts 3 and 6.

The pilot project calls for the new co-ordinators to offer strategic support to local unions to build stronger relationships with Indigenous members and Indigenous communities. The co-ordinators also are working with local unions and USW staff to create a practical guide that will be available later this year to all locals to build those relationships and promote respectful engagement with Indigenous members and communities.

“We’re reaching out to our locals and hearing what they’re doing to build these relationships, and how we can help them to expand on that work,” says George. “There is already significant progress and efforts that are being made by our local leaders, by our staff and by our members, and we’re building on that.”

George is a member of the Kettle and Stony Point First Nation, in southern Ontario. He also spent much of his youth living on the Aamjiwnaang First Nation. His ties to his community helped in his decision to seek the position of USW Indigenous Engagement Co-ordinator.

“It’s a way for me to get reconnected with our traditional ways and to bring that education and awareness forward to our members,” he says.

While much more work lies ahead, McKay and George say they’re proud of the USW’s commitment to engaging and supporting Indigenous members, to building relationships with Indigenous communities and to the ongoing process of reconciliation.

National Gathering of Indigenous Steelworkers makes spiritual and solidarity connections

The third National Gathering of Indigenous Steelworkers drew more than 120 USW members and guests to Sault Ste. Marie, Ont., in October 2022, to reinforce our union's commitment to advancing the rights of Indigenous workers and communities.

Steelworkers were honoured to be welcomed by Chief Dean Sayers of the Batchewana First Nation and Chief Andy Rickard of the Garden River First Nation. Participants discussed steps to address the crisis of missing and murdered Indigenous women, girls and gender-diverse persons, and learned about the efforts of local unions to engage with their Indigenous members and their Indigenous neighbours.

The gathering was a meaningful experience for delegates including Chelsea Olar, a Métis woman, NextGen Steelworker and activist with USW Local 2251 in Sault Ste. Marie. It provided a safe space that allowed her to share her story of traumatic personal experiences and how those events were connected with her Indigenous identity, Olar said.

"It was a warm, welcoming environment," she said. "The experience was spiritually overwhelming."

USW National Director Marty Warren said the National Gathering was "one of the most inspiring events I've experienced in my role as National Director.

"It demonstrated the important work the National Indigenous Committee is doing to engage and educate our members, staff and leadership, and to build relationships outside of our organization."



Youth Indigenous rights activist Nevaeh Pine from Garden River First Nation spoke at the USW National Indigenous Gathering in Sault Ste. Marie, Ont.

Get money for what your local does best!

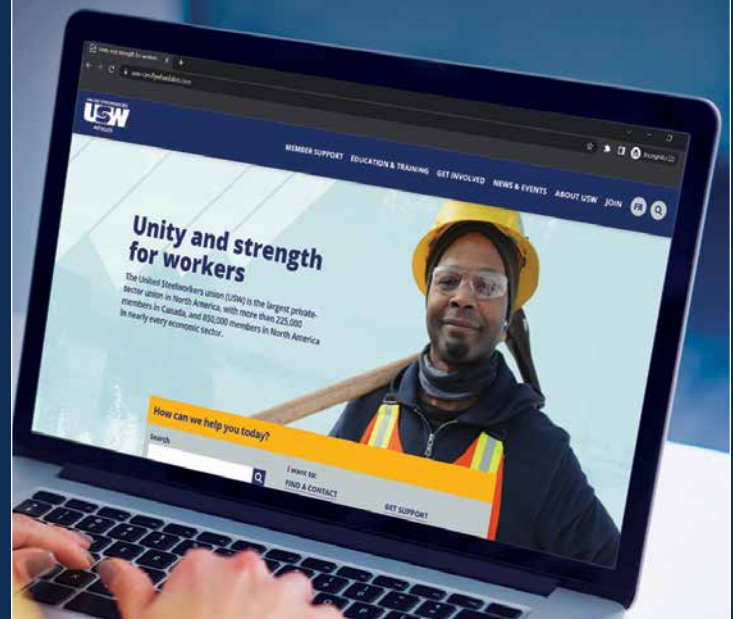
The USW Family and Community Education Fund (FCEF) can help pay for member and community events in your area. From hosting picnics and family fun days, providing scholarships and subsidies or organizing community meal programs – there are so many ways to bring Steelworkers together, support your local community and also build strength in your local union!

To learn more about the fund, please reach out to FCEF Co-ordinator Gabriele Simmons at fcef@usw.ca or visit usw.ca/fcef.



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Workers in every sector across Canada



The words “United Steelworkers union” or “the USW” sometimes evoke images of tough workers in resource extraction and manufacturing, represented by an equally proud and strong union that stands up to employers and delivers for its members and their communities.

True as those images may be, the union has evolved and built on that solid foundation, now representing workers in nearly every industry.

Even as rising resource prices have helped USW members get back to their jobs in factories, mills, plants, mines and refineries, security has become one of the fastest-growing sectors in the union. Membership is also growing on university campuses – in and out of the lecture hall. At the University of Toronto, for example, word of the strength of the USW is spreading and so too, is membership.

As the first union to unionize workers at stand-alone Starbucks stores, precarious workers in other sectors

are also looking to join the USW. From call centres to credit unions, restaurants to rubber plants, forestry to pharmacies and pipelines to wind turbines, Steelworkers are nearly everywhere.

Beyond the diversity of workplaces, the USW is focused on making sure all workers feel included in their workplaces and in their union. From NextGen, which focuses on engaging young workers (age 35 and under), to Women of Steel and the USW Anti-Racism Working Group, as National Director Marty Warren reminded delegates at the 2023 National Policy Conference, “Our work to engage and empower our membership must be inclusive. It must reflect the diversity and experiences of all our members. We’re committed to ensuring USW members have the opportunity and the support they need to participate in union life and activities.”

The diversity of the membership makes USW representation as strong as steel.

Local 9700's Caroline Lemay (white hat) led members of the Mexico Labour Solidarity Project on a tour of the ABI aluminum smelter in Bécancour, Que., as part of the delegation's visit to Canada in April and May.



Visit to Canada strengthens ties among Mexican activists

Labour activists from Mexican unions and workers' rights organizations were in Toronto to speak at the USW National Policy Conference in April.

The visit was part of the Mexico Labour Solidarity Project, established to support long-overdue labour reforms in Mexico. These reforms are possible thanks to labour provisions in the Canada-U.S.-Mexico Agreement (CUSMA) and to a progressive Mexican government that includes labour hero Napoleón Gómez Urrutia, the Los Mineros union's General Secretary who also serves as a federal Senator.

Now there are teeth to enforce Mexico's labour laws. Reforms allow workers to vote for a real union through a guaranteed secret ballot instead of a corrupt system of company-controlled unions that was in place for over 80 years.

"Think of what it meant for workers who didn't even know they had rights? Now the workers are at the centre," said Rosalba Calva Flores, Co-ordinator with the Frente Auténtico del Trabajo (Authentic Workers'

Front, or FAT), speaking on a panel at the USW National Policy Conference.

Following the conference, the delegation, including representatives from Los Mineros, the Comité Fronterizo de Obreras (Border Workers' Committee), the FAT and the Red de Mujeres Sindicalistas (Women's Trade Union Network) travelled to Ottawa and Quebec for meetings and workplace visits.

As a side benefit of their time in Canada, the project partners deepened their ties, and developed further sharing and team-building plans to work on union organizing and worker education.

Why should workers in Canada care about improving conditions for Mexican workers?

"We have to close the gap on inequality. In the long run, we'll be helping workers in Canada," said Julia Quiñonez, Executive Director of the Border Workers' Committee. "If we improve the conditions in Mexico – it improves stability for all workers."

Political action = Real success

The USW is known for successfully fighting for workers at the bargaining table and in the halls of political power.

In just the last year, the union has moved the workers' agenda forward through Steelworkers Vote schools, getting involved in politics, lobbying politicians in Ottawa and at provincial capitals, and meeting with local elected representatives at home.

Pension protection and anti-scab legislation are just two of the recent examples of success.

Retirees first

For years, the USW has brought to Members of Parliament (MPs) and Senators the heartbreaking stories of workers who had their pensions robbed because they were forced to the back of the line when their employer went bankrupt.

In late April, with the support of opposition parties in Ottawa and partners in the labour movement, the USW won protection for workers' pensions, through the passage of Bill C-228. This will require insolvent employers to pay defined benefit pension plan entitlements before claims by secured lenders, such as banks.

Anti-Scab legislation

The federal Liberals have finally heard the USW's calls for anti-scab legislation to ban so-called replacement workers in the event of a strike or lockout.

While the announcement by the federal Liberals that they will make good on the commitment the NDP forced them into in the Supply and Confidence Agreement was encouraging, the USW continues to push the government to not only table, but also pass anti-scab legislation before the end of this year.

"We're happy the commitment to ban scabs is there, but there is no good justification to delay the legislation until the end of 2023," said Marty Warren, USW National Director.

At the recent National Policy Conference which saw the ramping up of the anti-scab legislation campaign, USW members committed to keep fighting for all workers and their families and communities, and to keep working to protect jobs for our members now and in the future.



Steelworkers deliver Alberta election

After forming government in 2019, the United Conservative Party (UCP) immediately started attacking workers. They gutted improvements to labour law that had been brought in by the Alberta NDP, cut the minimum wage and overtime pay, undermined the right for workers to refuse unsafe work, and violated the Canadian Charter of Rights and Freedoms by making it harder to join and participate in a union.

Last year, a UCP leadership race was called after then leader – and Alberta Premier – Jason Kenney was pushed out by his own party members. On the sixth and final round of voting, Danielle Smith was elected UCP leader and became Premier of Alberta.

As Premier, despite a string of criticisms and controversies, Smith was clear; she wanted to take the UCP's attacks on workers, their families and communities even further.

Faced with the choice of this increasingly extremist anti-worker premier and party and the worker-friendly Alberta NDP, led by Woman of Steel Rachel

Notley, the USW District 3 produced a special election issue of *USW@Work* for Alberta members, and signed onto an Alberta Federation of Labour email and text program, offering information on how and where to vote.

USW District 3 also organized Steelworkers Vote Schools in Edmonton and Calgary. Dozens of members took part and learned about the impact provincial governments can have on workers and their unions. They learned how to influence policy and got to see first-hand the impact of political action.

While the UCP did manage to form a majority government, Steelworkers helped the Alberta NDP form the largest and strongest opposition ever to sit in the legislature.

In the evenings and weekends, members volunteered in key swing ridings across Calgary. In two of the three regions where Steelworkers were trusted to connect with voters, the Alberta NDP narrowly won new seats in what was the closest election in Alberta's history.



District 3 Update



Steelworkers are making a difference in workers' lives

Earlier this year, District 3 took an important step toward truth and reconciliation through our Indigenous engagement project by appointing Julia McKay, an Indigenous member, as a full-time district co-ordinator. Julia is reaching out to locals and other Indigenous members to learn about best practices and how to better hear from and involve Indigenous members in our union and the communities where we live and work. We are also holding "Unionism on Turtle Island" education sessions throughout the district and at our annual District 3 School in September.

Our district continues to organize sawmills and mines, as well as workplaces in the communications, technology and service sectors. We now represent over 225 members in eight Starbucks stores, with more on the way, and we have just achieved the first contracts at Foothills Forest Products and the Red Chris mine.

With the help of our worker-friendly government in B.C., we now have a fairer Labour Code and there have been positive changes to the Workers' Compensation Board (WCB) and occupational health and safety regulations, employment standards, sick days, minimum wage and the implementation of Truth and Reconciliation Day as a statutory holiday.

While B.C. has made positive changes, workers in other provinces are falling further behind. That is why we were proud to mobilize our Steelworkers Vote team during the Alberta election, where Steelworkers helped to elect new worker-friendly MLAs to the Legislature. We look forward to mobilizing this summer in by-elections in B.C. and Saskatchewan and again this fall by electing a Manitoba NDP government led by Wab Kinew.

Along with our work at the bargaining table and servicing our collective agreements every day, our expanded efforts to organize, educate our members and engage in political and legislative action make a difference in the lives of workers and their families.

In solidarity,

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Scott".

Scott Lunny
USW District 3 Director



District 3 members attend a rally to support USW 1-1937 members working in Aquaculture on Vancouver Island.

District 5 Update



Proud of the contracts we're signing!

Annual wage increases of 6%, 8%, even 12%; cost-of-living adjustments; domestic violence leave; and more. Our members can be proud of the collective agreements we're signing these days. We're making real gains.

Of course, labour shortages are working in our favour. However, we're not just picking the low-hanging fruit. Our members are standing together to demand the best contracts.

We can be particularly proud of our smaller units, who are wielding their bargaining power and showing they're willing to strike if necessary to get what they've earned!

Hats off to Steelworkers at Océan remorquage

We salute the exemplary struggle of our members at Océan remorquage, a marine-towing operation in Sorel-Tracy, who waged a nine-month strike to secure decent wages and eliminate irrational work schedules.

With fewer than 10 members on the picket line, this group was supported throughout their battle by their greater Steelworker family – many of whom provided financial support and continually showed up in solidarity to reinforce the picket line, as the employer shamefully recruited scabs.

Our union proved once again that we will stop at nothing to support fellow Steelworkers who are fighting for better working and living standards, whether it's a 10-member or 500-member group.

Federal anti-scab legislation

The courageous strike by our members at Océan remorquage, whose jobs are federally regulated, reconfirmed the importance of our campaign for federal anti-scab legislation. It showed how the absence of such legislation undermines the collective bargaining process and exacerbates labour disputes.

Our union has ramped up our campaign to demand that the Liberal government honour its commitment – as part of its supply-and-confidence agreement with the NDP – to pass an anti-scab law.

I encourage all Steelworkers to take up the torch that was carried by our members at Océan remorquage and to mobilize and demand that the federal government finally pass this long-overdue legislation!

In solidarity,

Dominic Lemieux
USW District 5 Director



Steelworkers must mobilize and take action to demand the federal government finally pass anti-scab legislation, says District 5 Director Dominic Lemieux.

District 6 Update



We've got your back!

Across District 6, our activists have been hard at work on behalf of our diverse membership, across all sectors.

In our workplaces, local unions are taking the opportunity to mobilize their membership during bargaining. Workers understand that currently the wind is in our sails for good contracts.

Our local unions and bargaining committees are taking the time to engage their membership, mobilize and leverage worker unity and solidarity in cases where the employer attempts concessions. And these actions have resulted in good contracts for Steelworkers, across the many sectors we represent – congratulations!

Our committees – Women of Steel, NextGen, Political Action, Health and Safety and Human Rights – are working together to engage new members and provide training to those wanting to get involved. This grassroots work is expanding our network of activists and building solidarity and power within our union.

Our committees are often where union activism is lit up. It is where current and future leaders of our union have come from and will be made. Our committees are also where lifelong friendships and bonds of solidarity are formed. In the coming months, we are looking forward to starting up our Veterans of Steel Committee, as mandated in our union's constitution.

In organizing, we are maximizing our opportunities in this new wave of pro-unionization efforts. The pandemic exposed the many flaws in workplaces across Canada – unsafe workplaces, lower wages, the absence of benefits and pensions. Workers are leading the charge in changing their workplaces for the better by forming their own unions. We are right there with them to do so.

We are looking at our traditional sectors – mining, manufacturing and forestry, for example. But there is also ample opportunity for expansion in health care, hospitality, education and sustainable/green jobs. In the coming years, as operations expand and open up to accommodate the electric vehicle sector, we will be ready to support workers in these sectors, too!

No matter where you work in our district, always know that we've got your back!

In solidarity,

Myles Sullivan
USW District 6 Director



District 6 Director Myles Sullivan meeting a member of USW Local 9042 (NTN Bearings) in Mississauga, Ont., during a workplace visit.