



THE DISPATCHER

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ITF West Coast Coordinator Jeff Engels (center, white cap) celebrates with the crew of the ASL Uranus after helping to secure the wages and safety of the seafarers with the help and solidarity of Local 23 members and other workers at the Port of Tacoma.

ILWU, ITF, help to secure wages, safety of foreign seafarers in the Port of Tacoma

The actions of the Jeff Engels, Puget Sound Inspector for the International Transport Workers Federation (ITF), with support and solidarity from members of Local 23 in the Port of Tacoma, helped to protect a group of vulnerable foreign seafarers who were being grossly underpaid and who feared for their safety after receiving threats for standing up for their rights.

On February 7th, seafarers aboard the ASL Uranus (IMO: 9317511), an ocean-going grain ship, docked at an export grain facility in the Port of Tacoma, contacted ITF Inspector Jeff Engels to report that they were not being paid the proper wages. The crew, a mix of Vietnamese, Chinese, and Burmese nationals, are employed by a third-party hiring agency based in Yangon, Myanmar. The ship is

owned by Agricore Group, a Chinese-based company, and is registered in Liberia.

Engels communicated with the ship's owner and agent to secure the payment of back wages for the crew, and on February 8th, the company finally agreed to pay the improperly withheld wages. Engels said that before receiving their pay, the crew reported to the ITF that their families had already been contacted by the shipping line and hiring agents and told that they would need to "return the money."

A shipping agent delivered \$73,458 in cash to the ship on February 8th, and payments were made to the 15 seafarers. As a safeguard, the ship's captain signed a declaration agreeing that the crew and their families would not be blacklisted, harassed, intimidated, or threatened for asserting their basic right to be paid the rate they were owed; guaranteeing their safe passage; and

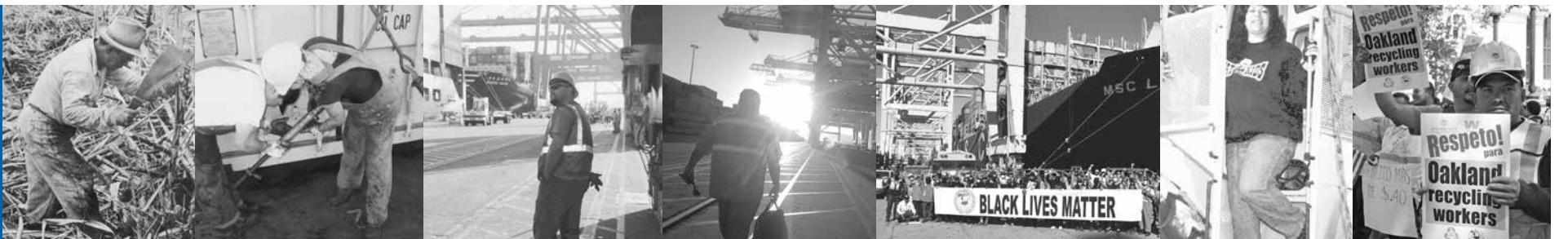
promising to repatriate the crew in their next port of call. The payment and declaration were witnessed by the ITF and management representatives from the grain export facility.

Despite these guarantees, Engels said the crew reported to the ITF that they were receiving threats on their cell phone and told that they had to return the money to the captain once the ship left U.S. waters. The ship was scheduled to depart Tacoma for China on Friday, February 10th in the afternoon. According to Engels, the crew expressed concern that without the protection of the ITF, their lives may be in danger once the ship reached China.

The dockside unions, including the ILWU, drafted letters to the Washington State congressional delegation, the U.S. Coast Guard, and law enforcement in case the crew needed to be escorted off the ship for their safety and flown directly home.

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Third-generation longshore worker elected to Oxnard City Council

‘There are people out there struggling. We have to remember that when considering policy.’

Local 46 B-registrant Arthur Valenzuela, Jr., was elected to the Oxnard City Council in the special election held on March 7th. Valenzuela is a third-generation longshore worker and a B-man at Local 46 in Port Hueneme, CA. He will represent District 6, which covers south Oxnard. Valenzuela was endorsed by Locals 46, 13, and 56, and the Southern California District Council.

Quick learning curve

Valenzuela won the race over two opponents. He received over 42% of the vote. Approximately 13% of the district’s 12,092 registered voters turned out in the election. The special election was held to fill the seat vacated by Councilmember Vianey Lopez, who was appointed by Gov. Gavin Newsom to serve out the

term of Supervisor Carmen Ramirez on the Ventura County Board of Supervisors. Ramirez, who Valenzuela called a friend and mentor, was tragically killed in mid-August after she was fatally struck by a car while walking across the street in downtown Oxnard. Valenzuela will serve out the remainder of Lopez’s term which expires in less than two years.

“I am jumping onto a moving carousel, with only a year and a half left to go,” Valenzuela said. “I definitely am on a quick learning curve and making sure I can impact city policy to benefit residents of south Oxnard, District Six.”

Oxnard native

Valenzuela, who was born and raised in Oxnard, is no stranger to politics. He was a student trustee on the Ventura County Community College Board, worked for former Assemblymember Das Williams in

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Local 46’s Arthur Valenzuela, Jr. (left) addresses a group of volunteers before heading out to talk to voters. Valenzuela won a seat on the Oxnard City Council by less than 100 votes.


Walsh steps down; Julie Su appointed next Secretary of Labor



(Left to right): ILWU International President Willie Adams, former Secretary of Labor Marty Walsh, and former UAW President Ray Curry.

Marty Walsh stepped down from his position as Secretary of Labor to take the position of Director of the National Hockey League Players’ Association. President Biden nominated Deputy Labor Secretary Julie Su to be the next Secretary of Labor and now awaits confirmation by the Senate. “Marty Walsh comes from the labor movement and is a proud union member. He was unapologetic about supporting the working class while he served as Secretary of Labor,” said ILWU International President Willie Adams. “Julie Su is the right candidate to succeed Secretary Walsh and advance Pres. Biden’s pro-worker agenda. She is experienced and dedicated to protecting workers. I urge the Senate quickly vote to confirm Julie Su as the next Secretary of Labor.”

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MEMORANDUM

TO:

All U.S. ILWU Locals and IBU Affiliates

FROM:

Willie Adams, International President

SUBJECT:

ILWU Canada Young Workers Conference

DATE:

March 24, 2023

Dear Brothers, Sisters, and Fellow Workers:

We are pleased to announce that ILWU Canada is holding their 5th Biennial Young Workers Conference September 27-29, 2023 in Vancouver, BC. As they have done in the past, they have graciously opened participation to ILWU members outside the Canada Area.

Local unions or affiliates may nominate participants who are each required to fill out an online application. Priority will be given to workers aged 35 and younger who have not participated in any previous ILWU Canada Young Workers conferences. Due to space considerations, we anticipate having to limit each affiliate to one (1) participant, but we will create a waiting list in case of cancellation or non-participation by any locals.

The conference will be held at the Maritime Labour Centre, 1880 Triumph Street, Vancouver, BC, Canada, V5L 1K3. It will run from Wednesday, September 27, 2023 through Friday evening, September 29, 2023. Registration begins at 8:00 a.m. on September 27th.

The ILWU International and ILWU Canada will cover the cost of training materials, breakfast and lunch from September 27-29, and a banquet on the evening of September 29th. The ILWU will also cover hotel accommodations for US delegates only (based on double occupancy for check in on September 26th and check out on September 30th). This means that individuals willing to share a room with another participant will have no hotel costs. *Neither the ILWU International nor ILWU Canada will cover lost wages or other travel expenses.*

Each applicant must register online at <http://www.ilwu.org/2023-YWC>.

The registration deadline is June 16, 2023.

If you have any questions, please contact ILWU Education Director Robin Walker here at International headquarters.

DISPATCHER

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The Original “Rock”: Wrestling Hall of Famer & ILWU pensioner Don “The Rock” Muraco on life in the ring and on the docks

Former professional wrestler and ILWU Local 142 Hawai'i Longshore Division pensioner Don Muraco was born in Oahu, Hawai'i in 1949. He is of Hawaiian heritage and was adopted into an Italian and Portuguese family.

The ‘Original Rock’

Muraco began his wrestling career in the 1970s, coming up through the regional wrestling circuits known as “territories.” He is affectionately called “The Original Rock” because he had the nickname before it was adopted by the well-known wrestler-turned-actor Dwayne Johnson. In fact, Muraco once wrestled Rocky Johnson, Dwayne’s father.

From face to heel

Muraco started his career as a “face” (babyface) – a fan-favorite “good guy” character in professional wrestling who plays by the rules and behaves respectfully to the audience and referees. Later in his career, Muraco became a “heel” – a “bad guy” in wrestling. These are often characters the audience loves to hate – rule breakers known for using illegal moves and tactics, and berating the audience, announcers and referees. Later in his career, Muraco returned to being a face.

Debuting the WWF

In 1981, Muraco made his way to the World Wrestling Federation (WWF), then run by Vince McMahon, Sr. In 2002, the WWF changed its name to World Wrestling Entertainment (WWE) after losing a trademark lawsuit to the World Wildlife Fund. During his career, Muraco performed on the biggest stages in wrestling, headlining matches in Madison Square Garden and other major arenas, and was a regular on television.

He performed with the biggest legends in wrestling, including Hulk Hogan, Jimmy “Superfly” Snuka, Rowdy Roddy Piper, Mr. Fuji, Captain Lou Albano, and others. At the age of 38, Muraco had his last match for the WWF in 1988 when he was let go by the company after an argument with his manager. Afterward, Muraco continued wrestling in smaller promotions in the US and internationally into the 1990s. He was inducted into the WWE Hall of Fame in 2004.

Muraco knew several people working on the docks in Hawai'i, including Henry Kreutz, father of current ILWU International Vice President (Hawai'i) Sam Kreutz, and he was eventually able to get hired on as a longshore worker in 1991. He retired from his longshore career in 2016.

Muraco sat down with the *Dispatcher* in December of last year at the Local 142 office in Honolulu to talk about his career in wrestling and as an ILWU longshore worker.

DON MURACO: I was a professional wrestler for almost 20 years. When I left the WWE in 1988, I was living in New Jersey. I missed living in Hawai'i, so I

picked up my wife and two kids at the time, and moved back here. I was looking around for something to do. Luckily, I was able to get hired by McCabe, Hamilton, and Renny in 1991. I didn't know a padlock from a hammerlock.

I was a wrestling fan as a kid. I used to train in Waikiki at Dean Higuichi's gym. He became Dean Ho. As a professional wrestler, he changed his name – like Don Ho, he was Dean Ho. In those days, all the wrestlers had tours in Australia and Japan. Everybody would stop in Hawai'i on the way there or the way back. They would get booked here for a show so they could write it off on their taxes. All the wrestlers used to work out at Dean's gym. I met a lot of wrestlers there – Luther Lindsay and Karl Gotch. I was a wrestler in high school. I was a kid. I was lucky. If I was a grown man, they probably would have really beat the hell out of me.

There was a great wrestling program over here in the 60s. Ed Francis was the promoter in Hawai'i. He was doing stuff like they do in the WWE now. Not so much the filming, but he had a great array of characters. He'd have all the talent coming back and forth from Japan or Australia so when they had their big shows, there were four or five guys that they could throw on the card. Watching those guys spend all their time at the beach, you know, it seemed like they were having fun.

When I started my wrestling career I was – we called them baby faces – I was a ‘good guy.’ I was too young to be anything else. After a few years, I switched over and learned to do some heeling in San Francisco for Roy Shire. You kind of had a character that you traveled with. I was young and didn't have much bargaining power. After four or five years, I wanted to switch it up and become a heel.

“I created a lot of friendships in both of my careers, a lot of close bonds with the wrestlers, Briscoe Brothers, Roddy Piper, Fuji, and different guys, and longshore is the same way. It becomes like it's like a family.”

In 1974 I moved over to Championship Wrestling from Florida, which is an area that I used to go to a lot. Jack Brisco was the World Champion at the time, and we were compared in looks and ability and stuff, so they drove a big storyline there.

In Florida, I was able to switch it up and become a heel. Buddy Rogers and Eddie Graham, two of the biggest names before my era in professional wrestling, created the “Magnificent Muraco.” They brought me into Florida under a mask – a villain called “The Magnificent M.” I'd been in that territory quite a bit, so everybody knew, that's Muraco. After two or three weeks, another wrestler, Steve



ILWU Hawai'i Longshore Local 142 pensioner Don Muraco at the Local 142 office in Honolulu.

Keirn, got on TV and exposed me as Don Muraco. Which wasn't good. You never gave the masked guy's name away. So naturally, I was enraged and something happened, and we ended up in a fight in the ring, and they sent everybody down to pull us apart. And as they were pulling us apart. He pulled the mask off and I was bald as a cue ball. I had shaved my head. The crowd went crazy.

I enjoyed being a heel – pissing people off, the booing and stuff, you know, all the stuff going on with it. It was easier. You were living in your own fantasy world. I could really exaggerate a lot of things.

In 1980, I went up to New York. I got in with Vince McMahon, Sr., Junior's father, and I started with him first. I started kind of backwards. Normally you come in, they give you six, eight, weeks on TV there in the old style what they called squash matches – two or three-minute matches, where

you just go out and murder somebody and come back and do your interviews, and after those, you go to Madison Square Garden to fight the World Champion. I was the first to do it in reverse. I started with Pedro Morales and won Intercontinental Title first.

I was lucky. I was there with Hulk Hogan and the whole thing – the complete transition. When I started my feud with Jimmy “Superfly” Snuka in Madison Square Garden, it was the largest viewing audience on a cable network at the time. About a year and a half or so later, Hulk came in, and the whole transition was made to an international audience.



A younger Don Muraco from his days as a WWE wrestler.

I wrestled Hulk Hogan many times, all over the world including three big shows at Madison Square Garden that finished up in a cage match. I was Hulk's first opponent coming out of Wrestlemania.

In my time, wrestling was different from the way they are killing each other now. I feel sorry for these guys, because they're all going to be a lot worse off than I am. I see the things that they're doing – jumping over the ropes and jumping on tables, and even the women as well. They take as many bumps in one night as I would take during a whole week. It was different. It was a lot of mat work and wrestling holds. You were aware that you were wearing your body down, but not like they're doing it now.

By the time I was let go by the WWF, I was already a step slow. I had torn my groin and things were starting to go. I was always quick, one of the more active, more physical wrestlers – a lot more movement, more excitement. But I could feel that I had lost a step.

The day I was let go by the WWF was the best thing that ever happened to me. I was able to come back here

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We are the ILWU



Lisa Gyerman Local 63 Pensioner LA/Long Beach

I entered the waterfront because I was a single mom. I was divorced with my two girls. I used to be a secretary for the LA Unified School District. When I entered the waterfront, I knew no one. It was this humongous shocker for me, because I'd never been there. I'd never stepped foot on the waterfront. It was overwhelming.

A whole new everything. It was the scariest thing. Where do I go? But I was fortunate that there were people at the casual hall who were really good to me. Because I worked here in town, a lot of the people with kids at the school recognized me. I was just very lucky, everybody was good to me. If I needed help, or needed to learn how to do something, people would help.

My youngest daughter used to go to the hall with me when I would have to go see if there was a job. And if I got a job, my dad would pick her up and take her home. When I got off, I would go to work at the school.

I'll never forget my first longshore paycheck. I mean \$110 for driving a UTR. I was absolutely thrilled. I just saved and saved my money. When I finally got in as an ID, my daughter, Sunshine, went to school as a reefer mechanic in Phoenix. That's when they started opening it up again. Fortunately, she got it in. I was registered in 1995 and Sunshine was registered and 1997. She is now a foreman. My youngest daughter got her casual card and she's working as a casual; she also works as a Watchman with Local 26.

I couldn't have been more grateful to join this union. I've always been grateful to God and Harry Bridges. I drove UTRs all the time, and then I drove heavy equipment. I needed to make money for my two little girls. This job has allowed me to have flexibility. As a parent I could attend school functions and do things with my family. That's the greatest thing, you don't have that kind of flexibility at a regular job.

Camron Pate Local 29 San Diego

I first came to the waterfront in January of 1999. I was still employed by United Airlines. I was a Chief Pursuer. I would come down on my days off. I had 20 days off per month – so, ample time to come and see if I could get a job as a casual. In 2007, I was able to retire from United. That was when I got my B-book. I was the first African-American woman on the waterfront at Local 29. Five years after getting my B, I became a Class A. One year later, I became the first African-American woman titled officer at Local 29 when I became Secretary-Treasurer. This year I became the first registered African-American woman clerk at Local 29.

It's been an interesting career. I've seen some changes during my time. I've had the opportunity to work with longshoremen who knew Harry Bridges. It's been challenging at times, because before this I had never done anything manual or physical. But I was taught by wonderful experienced longshoremen and foremen that showed me what to do. That helped a lot. There have been some dips along the way, but you know, we managed to weather the storms and get past a lot of things. I highly recommend this job to everyone. In the last five or six years I've helped other people who might need help on the waterfront with arbitrations and the Labor Relations Committee (LRC) even though I'm not an officer. At some point, we all are going to need some help.

I share things with others and try to get them encouraged about what is going on with the local and other unions. I learned a lot from being involved. Part of participating is bringing back information to others.

During my time on the waterfront, I have experienced some things that were not positive. I tried to encourage others to advocate for themselves, I advocate for others, but also teach them how to advocate. That's why I was active. A lot of people don't understand the contract. They don't know their own constitution and that makes them fearful. Education really is my motivation. I want people to understand why they are going to work, and what the holidays mean. People get so caught up just going to work and not knowing the true values of what this union has to offer.



Alison Steichen Local 19 Seattle

I'm first generation, and a product of Local 19's first-ever lottery. I grew up in the longshore community of West Seattle. I grew up with many kids whose dads were longshoremen. My neighbor across the street was a longshoreman. I knew about it, but didn't really know about it.

Right after the 2002 lockout, my boyfriend at the time got in. I was a freshman at the University of Washington. I saw his first paycheck and said, 'I'm doing the wrong part-time job.'

I soon got involved with our Federated Auxiliary. As a spouse and having many friends on the waterfront, I was always around the longshore community but always wanted to actually be in it, on my own accord. When they had the first lottery, my now ex-husband gave me his interest card. I had to wait two years from putting in my card before my lottery number came up, in 2008. I don't think I have ever been more nervous for anything than I was for that lashing test. I showed

up two hours early and waited in the parking lot because I didn't want to fail on a technicality.

I was a casual for 10 years. We had shipping lines come and leave during that time. Piers opened, and piers shut. I went back to the UW and added a minor, Harry Bridges Center for Labor Studies during a time when work got really slow. It was hard to make ends meet even with another part time job. Thank God for financial aid, loans, and grants; they really made it possible for me. I could still stay available for nights and weekends if there was work. I didn't ever want to lose too many hours, but I wasn't quite sure that this is where I realistically should put all my eggs, because registration just was not happening in Seattle. One year, I barely squeaked out enough hours to get a boot voucher even though I was going down twice a day. I was finally registered in 2018. My five years are up and I'm set to go A-side at the stop work meeting here in Seattle on April 13. I am so glad I was able to stick it out.

My focus at the UW was political science, comparative history of ideas, social justice programs and labor studies. The ILWU's Guiding Principles just really spoke to me from day one. The May Day rally in 2008 was my first "I'm a longshoreman" moment. I hadn't gotten a shift yet. The fact that we were not working because we were participating in Seattle's May Day rally was powerful for me.

During the 10 years that I was a casual, we had some busy times, but more often it was slow. I bartended at night, but during the day, I would get bored and was always looking for something to do. Being involved in the union was the perfect activity for me: doing good, being involved in the union, learning something, and being able to give back to the community. Christmas for Kids and the Bloody Thursday Picnic and Education Committees were really the only things at that time that casuals could get involved with, or the times when the union called for all-hands-on-deck for pickets, rallies and marches. The Education Committee is always so near and dear to my heart, coupled with the UW Bridges Center, I was able to learn the kind of things that ILWU kids heard their parents discuss at the dinner table.

Members have said that our casuals are the lifeblood of Local 19, and I agree with that most times. I would add that the women are Local 19's heart and soul. Most of the volunteers are women who take care of the things that get forgotten or put on the back burner. Within the last couple of years, more women are becoming elected officials, in positions never held by women before. It is amazing to see. This year we have our first woman dispatcher, shop steward and we have our second woman hoot dispatcher. Our pensioners' president is a woman for the first time. In late 2022 for the first time in my longshore career a woman from local 19 was selected and joined our foremen's local.

Women need to be in the room where decisions are made. This year with our local elections, we saw that. I think women are getting up there. With each new lottery, we are getting larger numbers of women. When I started, there was a tower on a terminal that didn't even have a women's bathroom. It is really inspiring to see everyone that's coming in and is contributing their own strengths.



Jessica Isbister
Local 502
ILWU Canada
Third Vice President

My career on the waterfront started in the year 2003, with my very first dispatch being one of four hold workers aboard a steel ship in the Fraser river. This was prior to worksite training programs being introduced on the waterfront. We navigated through these early days

with a learn on the go type of job training. My favorite job in my early years was on the log ships. Here I started out on the booms and eventually moved my way up to operating the ship cranes, loading logs. I was the first women in Canada to drive topside and after ten years as a casual worker I finally made membership. The day I was sworn into the union was a proud day for me, my family and especially my father, Dennis Noullett.

Once I became a member, I immediately got involved in the union's health and safety committees. I remember becoming aware of my first onsite safety compliant and speaking to one of our business agents, who then directed me to gather more information and report back to him with my findings. This was my first exposure to reading health and safety regulations, where I learned my three basic rights: the right to know, the right to refuse unsafe dangerous work, and the right to

participate. I learned my fourth right, the right to no retaliation later. I was instantly hooked on learning, participating, and defending health and safety standards for all my brothers and sisters on the waterfront.

At this same time, I began to get involved in training as I presented my proposal for log training to help reduce injuries and improve safety in the workplace. After a year of vocalizing our concerns, we were finally heard and a five-day training program for log ship workers was the result. I felt empowered as this new training program was implemented.

As I approach my first anniversary as ILWU Canada's Health and Safety Vice President, I endeavor to continue learning and striving to achieve safer workplaces for all my ILWU family.

I feel privileged to be a part of the great organization that is the ILWU, as I follow in my father's footsteps and my children follow their mother's.

Lynn Hay
Local 63 Pensioner
Financial Secretary,
Southern California
Pensioners
LA/Long Beach

I started on the waterfront in 1982. My dad was a longshoreman; my brother was a longshoreman. When I came down on the waterfront, there were only six women down here and now women are half the workforce.



Things really have changed. The new women are so assertive, and they know what they want. I have so much respect for them. I'm 78 years old now. When I was young, we didn't assert ourselves. We just went along, hoping everything would work out. Now the women out here are just wonderful, strong, and outspoken.

Before I came down here, I was a cannery worker. I cleaned fish in the cannery for 17 years. I won the lottery the day I got this job. It was hard at first. My finances tripled overnight when I became a longshore worker, and I wasn't even working that much in the beginning. It afforded me this wonderful life with respect and dignity. I have this great health care now.

I'm a union person and always have been an activist. I got involved with the union right away and started volunteering on committees.

"I'm 78 years old now. When I was young, we didn't assert ourselves. We just went along, hoping everything would work out. Now the women out here are just wonderful, strong, and outspoken."

Five years later, I ran for the Local 13 Executive Board, and I won. I was shocked. I was just hoping to get more than 30 votes. I was the first woman Executive Board Member of Local 13. A year later, I ran for caucus delegate and I won that too. I was the first woman caucus delegate along the coast. That was the most wonderful experience – going up to the International and it was a contract caucus. It was something else.

The 34 years down here have been wonderful. I've spent most of my 34 years volunteering and giving back. I ran for Secretary-Treasurer of the Local 13, but I lost. In 1998, I transferred over to Local 63 and retired in 2015.

I owe so much to the ILWU – everything I have. I was always going to be involved with the pensioners when I retired. I started going to the pensioners' meetings and Dave Arian called me one day when I was shopping, and said they were going to need a financial secretary and asked me if I was willing to run. At first, I said no. I'm also the Vice President of the Longshoremen's Memorial Association. I told him I was active and I didn't want to spread myself thin. He said, "Well, it's really easy. Don't worry. It'll take a couple hours a day." And so I said yes. I've been doing that for almost 10 years now.

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ILWU, ITF, help to secure wages, safety of foreign seafarers in the Port of Tacoma



there. After discussing the new safeguards, which included continued monitoring by the ITF to protect their safety and wages, the crew voted to continue on their journey.

“There’s no government agency in the world that’s looking after seafarers. So really, just other workers have to look out for them.”

– Local 23 President Jared Faker

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Local 23 President Jared Faker said that if the crew decided they wanted extraction, the nearly 2,000 ILWU longshore workers in Tacoma would not have waited for all the red tape to clear to make this happen.

“Seafarers are an invisible link in the global chain and are vulnerable to abuse and exploitation,” Faker said. “Workers in Port of Tacoma were not going to let this vessel go anywhere while these workers’ lives were in peril.”

Faker added, “These seafarers have working conditions with very little oversight or regulations in their work

environment, so they have extremely limited power. There’s no government agency in the world that’s looking after seafarers. So really, just other workers have to look out for them.”

Engels, who is months from retiring, said the seafarers’ courage to speak up amid threats and the outcomes of this case made him hopeful for the future of the ports.

With support from the tug workers, the pilots, and longshore line handlers, the ship stayed put until the issues were resolved to the satisfaction of the crew. Engels said a representative from the Liberian flag state went

aboard the vessel, and after a four-hour interview with the crew, issued five deficiencies of the Maritime Labor Convention, thus prompting a detainment by the Liberian flag state.

On February 10th, the ITF, ship owners, and Liberian Flag State reached an agreement with the vessel’s owners and their manning agent to protect the wages of the seafarers and guarantee their safety.

Engels presented the crew with the finalized agreement; the crew was able to decide for themselves whether to disembark in the U.S. or continue to China and then return home from

“This outcome was possible because of the support of multiple organizations, working around the clock, and because strong labor unions like ILWU Local 23 were willing to stick up for the seafarers,” said Engels. “Seeing workers pull together to protect the crew was inspiring. I am getting set to retire this summer, but I will always remember this ship and how proud I am to have had the opportunity to serve as the ITF West Coast USA Inspector Coordinator.”

“The ship owners and agents ‘did the right thing’ because they want to continue doing business in Tacoma and other ports on the West Coast, and other ports around the world where dockworkers are organized,” Faker said. “We will not tolerate the abuse or mistreatment of seafarers. We will continue to monitor the safety of these seafarers through the ITF to make sure the crew make it home safely with their wages.”

ILWU Education Committees are on the move

Education and Young Workers committees have been busy the past few months hosting education events and planning new ones, up and down the West Coast.

- Local 21 in Longview, WA held its first Young Worker/Education event on March 8th. They rented a local theater and showed the documentary, *Eye of the Storm*, about the 2002 lockout of West Coast longshore workers by the PMA as well as a documentary made by a Local 21 member about the EGT grain dispute in Longview. Approximately 70 people attended the event.
- Local 19 in Seattle, WA recently hosted two educational events. On February 24th the committee hosted, *Black Futures and the Seattle Waterfront*, which featured, food, vendors, and educational booths for people to share their history and stories. In attendance were the Seattle Buffalo Soldiers, as well as family members of Local 19 legend Frank Jenkins. The event was well-attended by Local 19 and 52 members, casuals, and community members.

On March 1st, the committee also hosted a workshop on the Principles of Picketing. The standing-room-only event began with a brief history and a reading from Dr. Ron Magden’s, *Seattle’s Working Waterfront*. This was followed by a presentation about etiquette and expectations on picket lines. This was followed by a panel of pensioners who spoke about their experiences.

- In Southern California, 2022 LEAD Graduates from Locals 13, 63, 94, and 63 OCU hosted an educational outreach event, *What is a Union?* on February 23 at the Port Town Brewery in San Pedro featured an ILWU history exhibit and an opportunity to learn about the educational priorities and interests of ILWU members to help plan future events.
- Local 23 (Tacoma, WA) has an upcoming *Passing The Torch* education event in April aimed at educating new and young workers on what the ILWU is and does with an introduction to the ILWU’s *Ten Guiding Principles*.



Approximately 70 people came out to Local 21’s education event held on March 8th at a local theater and showed two documentaries about the ILWU.

The Original “Rock”: Wrestling Hall of Famer & ILWU pensioner Don “The Rock” Muraco on life in the ring and on the docks

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and become a longshoreman. I look around at other former wrestlers my age. They're still trying to make it to these card shows and autograph signings and stuff like that. You get there and sometimes there's no payoff. It's, you know, just BS, or whatever. I couldn't see chasing down paydays every weekend, maybe chasing autograph signings and stuff, Comic Cons and stuff around the country. I did a little bit of that, wrestled in a few promotions and it wasn't bad, but I moved my family and everything else back here.

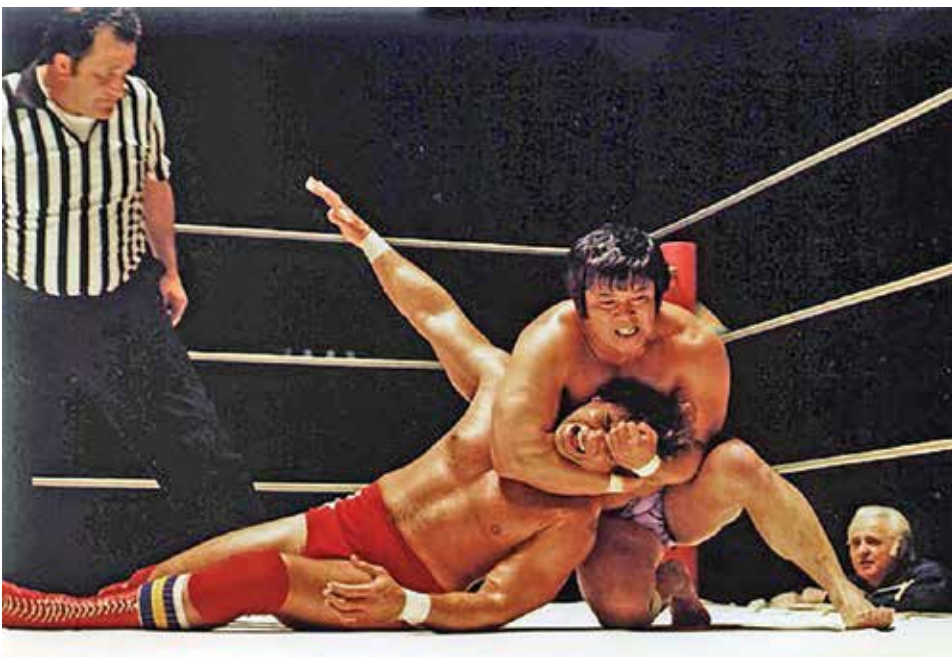
I couldn't see myself traveling around the country or waiting around hoping to get a call or something. I was able to stabilize my wife and family and everything else. Luckily, I had a couple of bucks saved and a few investments. I was pretty lucky to have a few good years, with the WWF, Florida a couple of other places where I was usually a main event. After about three or four years in the business, I pretty much held the top position, in whatever company I was in. So I was able to put away, you know, a few bucks.

I knew a number of people who worked on the docks. When I came back, people would tell me that it was the best job in town. I was thinking more along the lines of going to com-

mercials or TV. I did some movies and TV, Hawai'i Five-O with Gary Busey, and Magnum PI. That's a long, arduous process. They feed you well, but aside from that, you sort of sit there. You could put on 25 pounds in a couple of weeks.

I am so proud to be a retired ILWU worker. Looking back, I see what a brilliant move I made. I am very proud to have made the transition from one profession to another one. I've learned so many new things, you know, I was able to re-educate myself. I was familiar with doing TV work. I was never mechanically inclined with car engines or anything else. I spent 20 years in the wrestling business. And when I got out, I was still involved with promotions, appearances, and independent shows. I had really no practical knowledge of working. A turnbuckle to me was something they threw me into. Tightening rods and stuff – everything, was brand new, and a learning experience, driving forklifts and top loaders. I never got up to the crane. I ended up as a clerk.

Wrestlers are independent contractors. I heard Jesse Ventura tried to organize a union and was kicked out of the WWF when he was doing the announcing. It would be hard because the difference between a preliminary guy and the main event are so great. Wrestling is



Muraco held in a headlock by Dean Higuchi in a match early in Muraco's career.

not a real job like longshore is a real job. Down the docks, you get your check once a week. You don't have to think about getting your insurance, or preparing for your retirement. It's all done. My medical coverage and dental coverage in retirement are gold.

There are some similarities between wrestling and longshore. You get into a gang or a group – a group of heels or a group of faces or whatever you are. You're kind of dependent on other people and relying on others for safety measures and things like that. Wrestling is

a billion-dollar industry. Well, shipping is a trillion-dollar industry. I created a lot of friendships in both of my careers, a lot of close bonds with the wrestlers, Briscoe Brothers, Roddy Piper, Fuji, and different guys, and longshore is the same way. It becomes like it's like a family.

Longshore is a rewarding job. You make good money. It's a dangerous job, and you gotta pay attention and stay on your toes. The ILWU is a hell of an organization. They will back you. They will go to the wall for you.



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Susan P.K. Lake Local 142 Pensioner Oahu Pensioners Club President Hawai'i

I started as a cashier with Food-land in 2001. From that time on, I learned about the union through other members. I eventually joined the Executive Board. I attended a couple of conventions on the mainland. I enjoyed it because I never knew much about the union. It was a big blessing to be in the union. How

can we help others if we don't help ourselves first and then extend out? I got involved in the union by watching and listening during our union meetings. All of the information about what is going on came at those meetings and that is what steered me into wanting to get involved and learn. It was a big help to me to gain an understanding and knowledge about politics. That's what the union has to fight with for the membership and to help the whole community. That's all I wanted to do. I learned to help myself first and learned to help others.

I have six grandkids. They all want to get involved in the ILWU. There are a lot of us here that tell our children and grandchildren, "You gotta join a union." Of course, I would like them to join the ILWU because this union supports you in every way.

I wouldn't be where I am today if I hadn't joined the ILWU. This has been a big plus for me. I extend it out to people that I talked to and let them know how important being a union member is.

We're trying to get the information out to the active membership right now for them to let the pensioners know when they retire. Since I've been in the pensioners, I haven't seen many people coming in. That's the thing that I want to correct. I'm going to try my best to build up the pensioners' club before I disappear.

**HARRY BRIDGES:
LABOR RADICAL,
LABOR LEGEND**

**ON-LINE BOOK TALK
& DISCUSSION**

Robert Cherny's new monumental biography of Harry Bridges tells the life story of the person who built the International Longshore and Warehouse Union (ILWU) into a powerhouse that now represents some 30,000 workers.

Join the University of Washington's Harry Bridges Center for Labor Studies for an evening with author **Robert Cherny**, labor journalist **E. Tammy Kim**, and ILWU activist **Zack Pattin**, reflecting on Bridges's life and his legacy for the labor movement today.

REGISTER: [LABOR.UW.EDU/BRIDGES-BOOK](https://labor.uw.edu/bridges-book)

**WEDNESDAY
APRIL 12**

**5:00PM - 6:30PM
(PACIFIC)**

HOSTED ON ZOOM

March 10, 2023

ATTENTION: LOCAL 10 MEMBERS

The Trustees of the Smolin-Melin Scholarship Fund are prepared to accept applications for scholarships for the academic year 2023-2024. Now is the time to indicate your interest. **June 1, 2023 is the application deadline.**

Victor Smolin and Carlton Melin were longtime members of Local 10. They left a sum of money to establish the scholarship fund. They specified that scholarships were to be available to children of Class A Local 10 members to further their "collegiate" education. The Trustees of the Fund interpret "members" to mean **active members in good standing at the time of disbursement of scholarship funds**, deceased members and retired members. The Trustees interpret "collegiate" to apply only to **full-time** study (at least 12 units per semester or quarter) at either a four-year college or an academic junior college.

The Trustees have agreed that (1) no applicant will be awarded more than four scholarships, (2) a fifth scholarship would be considered after careful review of the applicant's record and if circumstances warrant and (3) in no event would an applicant be considered for a sixth scholarship.

Based always on available assets, the Fund historically has awarded scholarships in a range from \$1,000 to \$2,500 for full-time students at four-year colleges or universities, and from \$350 to \$1,750 for full-time students at two-year colleges.

The Trustees are Eleanor Morton, counsel for ILWU Local 10, Eugene Vrana, Retired Director of Educational Services and Librarian for ILWU, and Nicole Bridges, Fund Administrator and the granddaughter of Harry Bridges.

To request an application, simply email Nicole Bridges at:
nbridges@leonardcarder.com

She will then send you the application form with the necessary explanatory materials.

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Third-generation longshore worker elected to Oxnard City Council

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his Ventura office, and was president of the Greater Oxnard Organization of Democrats (GOOD Club), from 2016 to 2018. Valenzuela lost his first bid for City Council in 2013 when he was 21 years old. He also unsuccessfully ran for Community College Board in 2018.

From UCSB to the ILWU

"I submitted my lottery card to be a casual in December of 2011," Valenzuela said. "I got my letter to start the casual process starting in January 2016. It was convenient, because I had just graduated from UC Santa Barbara a month earlier. I got that letter shortly after I had accepted a job with Assemblymember Das Williams. I did both jobs for a couple of months before I went to work full time as a casual."

Valenzuela's first day as a B-man was June 4th of last year.

Back to basics

In an interview with the *Dispatcher*, Valenzuela said that his campaign relied on campaign basics — knocking on doors and talking directly to voters. "We've been knocking on doors for the past three months to make sure people knew that there was a special election," said Valenzuela. "We have the lowest voter turnout district of the entire city. Our goal was to let people know that there was a special election, let them know who I am, and why they should vote for me. I believe I was the most experienced candidate in the race." Valenzuela was joined by many ILWU members from South-

ern California along with other union members who volunteered their time to help his campaign.

Every vote matters

Valenzuela said that his years of working on the docks prepared him for the heat, cold, and winds that he faced talking to voters. "Working on the waterfront, we are constantly working in all types of temperatures," he said. "We just kept going because we knew every vote was going to matter." That hard work paid off — He won by just 67 votes.

Valenzuela is in a unique position to benefit from his political experience and working-class background. "I think sometimes we have an echo chamber within academic and political circles and forget the concerns that people have on the ground," Valenzuela said and added that he will bring his working-class values and perspective to his role in creating policy for the people of Oxnard. "I can't forget my working-class roots. There are people out there struggling. We have to remember that when considering policy."

TRANSITIONS

NEW PENSIONERS:

Local 8: Frank A. Mildenberger;
Local 10: Nordan A. Byers; Shelba Jasper; Gary D. Rodrigues;
Local 13: Jim G. Biehle; Antonio M. Dileva; Norma M. Garcia; Michael Lursen; Jeffrey Lyons; Michael C. Patterson; Martin A. Petrich; Steven M. Simich; Staci G. Thompson; Roscoe Tinsley; Arthur Vallejo; Gerard J. Vega; Jerry M. Vrbanovic; Marilyn Williams;
Local 34: Dan S. Sakuma; Kenneth Roberts; **Local 54:** Cynthia E. Mead;
Local 63: Richard N. Dineen; Natalie Gonzales; Debbie R. Holland; James T. Long; **Local 63 OCU:** Rosanna Tan; JB (Ying) Liou; Elizabeth Lopez Estrella;

DECEASED PENSIONERS:

Local 8: Arthur E. Reynolds;
Local 10: Clarence Cooper Jr.; Ealy Ezell; Terri A. Peretti ;
Local 13: Louie L. Ash; Joe E. Cobaugh (Cynthia); Mario A. Fierro; Normand R. Grandmaison; Guillermo Hernandez; Chester S. Mondor; Joe B. Quintana; Chris A. Razevich; Donald J. Ronnau;
Local 32: Carl E. Carlson;

Local 34: Isidore Natsios; Robert J. Williams; **Local 40:** Gilbert F. Baker; Gary D. Larsen (Donna); **Local 47:** Rodney Kehoe; William H. Osborn; **Local 50:** Randy D. Russell; **Local 63:** James P. Fallon (Helen); Robert Talamantes; Michael L. Widener (Barbara); **Local 63 OCU:** Elena Tan; **Local 92:** Elvis L. Carter Sr.; **Local 94:** Robert Chacon;

DECEASED ACTIVE MEMBERS:

Local 13: Norris J. Smith;
Local 19: David R. Kaster;

DECEASED SURVIVORS:

Local 8: Beverly A. Mace;
Local 10: Janet S. Galuzzo; Bernice Matier; Shirley Y. Neely; Ora L. Prince; Joanne Teixeira; **Local 13:** Nissan Fizseu; Patricia Olson; Mary Weckbacher; Francis K. Word;
Local 23: Evelyn Van Zanten;
Local 29: Raquel F. Contreras;
Local 63: Susan D. Flores;
Local 94: Alta K. Cook; Marain R. Stowe; **Local 98:** Mary V. Kresevich;

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