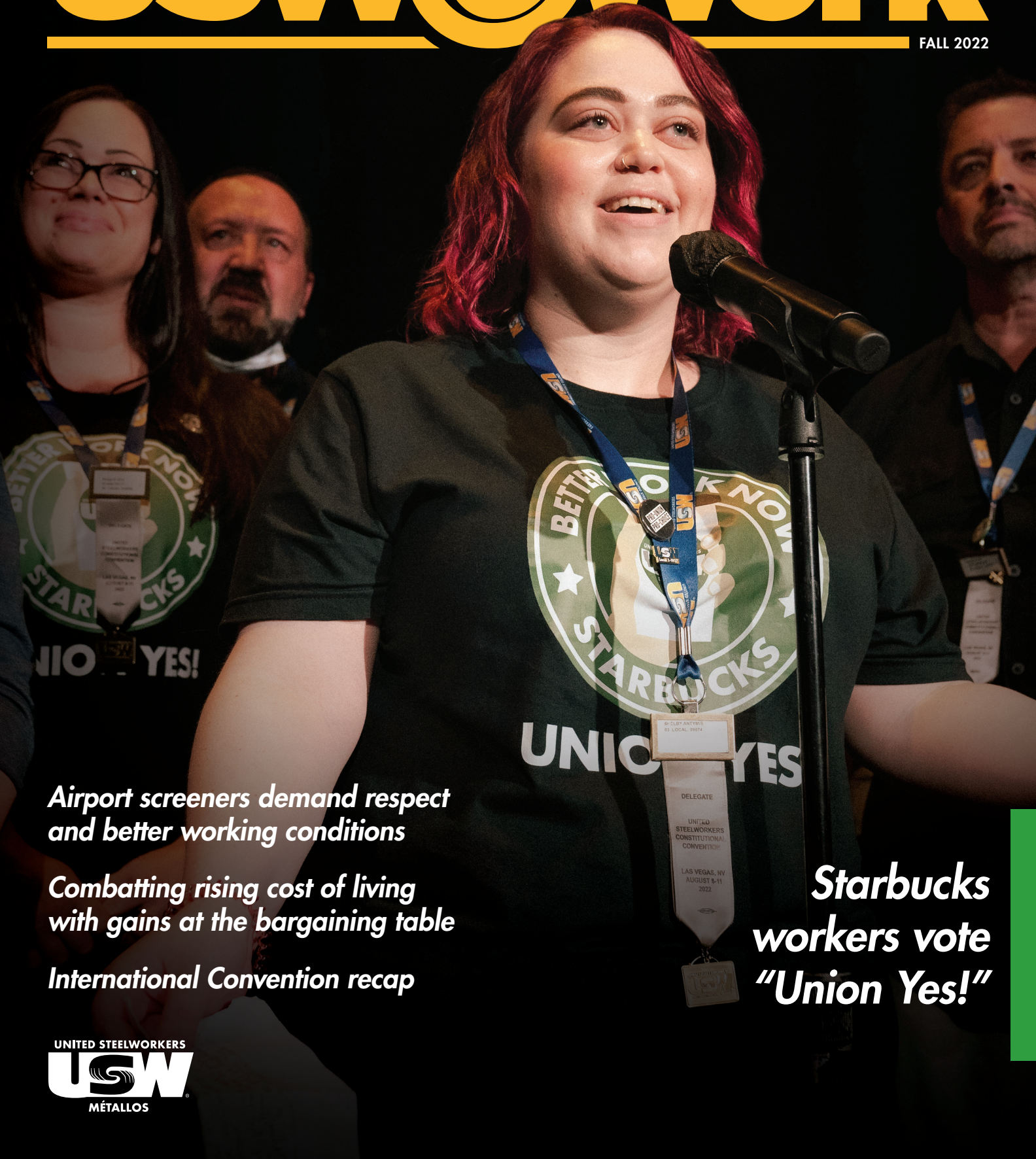


A MAGAZINE FOR THE UNITED STEELWORKERS UNION

USW@Work

FALL 2022



Airport screeners demand respect and better working conditions

Combatting rising cost of living with gains at the bargaining table

International Convention recap

Starbucks workers vote "Union Yes!"

USW@Work | Fall 2022

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ON THE COVER:

The breakthrough victory by Starbucks workers in Victoria, B.C., who joined the USW in 2020, has inspired employees

at many of the coffee chain's other outlets to unionize to improve their working conditions. Shelby Antymis from the Calgary Millrise Starbucks store speaks to delegates at the USW International Constitutional Convention in Las Vegas.

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Steelworkers ... Why having a union voice at work matters

Across the country, Steelworkers are taking on employers at the bargaining table, demanding better working conditions, higher wages and benefits to compensate them for the rising cost of living for them and their families, for the hard work they do every single day, including throughout the pandemic.

Steelworkers have reported to work often at incredible risk to themselves. The pandemic has laid bare the true cost of capitalism and how urgently trade unionists must band together to fight for the meaningful change all people need to thrive.

In this issue, you will find an account of new agreements in the steel sector – some of the best agreements I have seen in my career – won by local union bargaining committees who knew deep in their bones that members deserved more – more respect and better wages, benefits and language. A voice in the workplace is a valuable tool!

Similarly, in approximately 40 airports across Canada, Steelworker security screeners have been taking action for decent contracts that compensate their hard work – particularly during this harrowing pandemic. Early on, the union actually had to fight for stronger health and safety protections and employer-provided PPE (personal protective equipment) for screeners.

For too long, these members have endured substandard wages and benefits that don't recognize their stressful and challenging work environments. Through an unprecedented, nation-wide solidarity campaign, Steelworkers from St. John's, N.L., to Whitehorse, Yukon, are taking on the federal government and the Canadian Air Transport Security Authority (CATSA) to demand better!

Another important fight being steadfastly waged by Steelworkers focuses on the Westray Law and our Stop the Killing, Enforce the Law campaign.

As you would have seen in the last issue of *USW@Work* magazine, May 9 of this year was the 30th anniversary of the Westray mine disaster, which killed 26 miners. I travelled to Pictou County, N.S., to be with families, Steelworkers and community members to recognize this

sombre day. On June 6, we lost another member, Quoc Le, 51, at National Steel Car in Hamilton, represented by USW Local 7135. Le's death was the third fatality at this facility in 21 months. Pushed by the strong activism of Steelworkers, the Hamilton Police Department is investigating this industrial homicide using a criminal lens.

On Sept. 2, we were reminded again of the urgency of our health and safety work when a massive explosion struck the Come By Chance Refinery in Newfoundland and Labrador, injuring eight workers, several of whom are represented by USW Local 9316. As of writing, two workers had been released from hospital, but at least five remained in critical condition.

Our union is proud of the health and safety work we do every day, but examples like these demonstrate we cannot ever let up. It is unions, above all others, that make workplaces safer, and despite this devastating news I am proud of the selfless work of our health and safety representatives, our Emergency Response Team (ERT) program, local union leaders and USW staff.

Please enjoy this issue of *USW@Work* and I hope you will be as proud of the work of our great union as I am – today and every day.

In solidarity,



Marty Warren
USW National Director



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USW INTERNATIONAL CONVENTION RECAP **WE ARE EVERYBODY'S UNION**



"We make things. We help people. We are the backbone of the economy," said Tom Conway, International President of the United Steelworkers union as he welcomed nearly 5,000 delegates, guests and staff to the USW's 2022 Constitutional Convention in Las Vegas.

Under the convention theme Everybody's Union, delegates gathered to guide the USW's work and make it possible for the union to remain inclusive and relevant while bringing the benefits and strength of the union to more working people.

"If the pandemic taught us anything, it's that workers are hungry for unions," said Conway.

As they assembled, USW members were also eager to be

inspired by the host of speakers and presenters on the agenda.

Highlights included remarks by U.S. President Joe Biden via video, who credited the Steelworkers with rejuvenating manufacturing. "Steelworkers built the middle class."

U.S. Vice President Kamala Harris took to the podium on the third day. "The USW is charting a new era," she said. Harris spoke about the U.S. administration's efforts to pass the Protecting the Right to Organize (PRO) Act to make it easier for workers to join unions and crack down on employers

HEALTH, SAFETY AND THE ENVIRONMENT

"I lost a friend, father of three and a co-worker. Phillippe mixed chemicals in the factory – the chemical explosion killed him right on the spot and no one was blamed for it."

– Sylvain Beaulieu, USW Local 9328, Repentigny, Que.

who try to silence them.

Canadian Labour Congress President Bea Bruske emphasized the need for the labour movement to be aggressive in organizing new members, pushing boundaries and looking to new industries. "This is our moment to seize. It's our time to use our influence and make substantial, lasting change happen."

"We need politicians to show up for workers, to respect workers and to deliver the help that workers need. ... The New Democratic Party will always be

there for workers,” said Jagmeet Singh, Leader of Canada’s NDP, in his address.

Noting 2022 marks the USW’s 80th anniversary, Conway said, “We’ll support each other and ensure our union and our communities can keep growing and thriving for 80 more years, and another 80 years beyond that.”

Catch up on everything convention including resolutions, videos, hundreds of photos, delegate profiles and daily recap newsletters: usw.org/convention.

BUILDING POWER IN EDUCATION, HEALTH CARE, SECURITY AND TELECOMMUNICATIONS

“On a daily basis, our members were spit on, hit and cursed at. I think a lot more needs to be done for our security industry.”

- Sherry Charette, USW Local 9597, Windsor, Ont.

BERNARD OBED

USW Local 9508, Vale, Nain, N.L.

How will you put the convention to work back home? “Solidarity – it’s the thing that sticks out the most. I can see how strong and united our union is and I hope for that for my local union also.”



SHELBY ANTYMIS

USW Local 1-207, Starbucks, Calgary

What issues will be important in your next contract? “We are just beginning our bargaining process, to reach our first agreement. I know a few things that have come up are safe working conditions and consistent hours.”

AMAN CHUMBER

USW Local 2009, Cipa Lumber, Delta, B.C.

What issues will be important in your next contract? “With the rising level of inflation and the cost of living in the Vancouver area, our big issue will be keeping wages in line with inflation.”



See more delegate profiles at usw.to/profiles

Workers everywhere are joining ‘Everybody’s Union’

From Starbucks coffee shops, to university campuses, to heavy industry, workers in all sectors of the economy are joining the Steelworkers, exemplifying the motto that the USW is indeed Everybody’s Union. Recent USW organizing successes include:

Starbucks, B.C. and Alberta

The breakthrough victory by Starbucks workers in Victoria, B.C., who joined the USW in 2020, has inspired employees at many of the coffee chain’s other outlets to unionize to improve their working conditions. Recent victories include:

- Two Starbucks stores in Sherwood Park, Alta., where workers joined the USW in two separate votes in August.
- Starbucks workers at the Calgary Millrise Centre won their vote to join the USW in July, establishing the first unionized Starbucks in Alberta.
- Workers at a Starbucks store in Langley, B.C., joined the USW in July, under B.C.’s new single-step certification laws.
- Workers at a Starbucks store in Surrey, B.C., joined the Steelworkers in June. The Langley and Surrey workers have joined forces as members of the same USW bargaining unit.

“This is an exciting time for our Starbucks crew to be uniting with the USW – a moment in history. I look forward to a united and strong future with the USW,” said Sara Doran, a barista at one of the unionized Sherwood Park stores.

The USW is supporting workers at several other Starbucks stores who are mobilizing to join the union and to overcome the corporation’s notorious anti-union tactics.

Magotteaux foundry, Magog, Que.

When management changes contributed to deteriorating labour relations, one worker recalled how a union organizer had left business cards at the plant – two years earlier. The card was found, contact was made with the USW and workers were soon mobilizing to join Local 7531. The victory was led by two workers, Oscar Pinto and Pascal Gaudreault. The plant manufactures steel grinding balls for ore crushers in mining operations.

Vale, Sudbury, Ont.

Security guards working at Vale’s mining operations in Sudbury became Steelworkers in September after voting overwhelmingly to join the USW. The 49-member bargaining unit includes permanent and casual employees alike.

Sodexo, Prince George, B.C.

Sodexo workers, who provide catering and facilities management services at Centerra Gold’s Mount Milligan Mine, voted 92.9% to join the USW in June. About 70 workers joined the union after struggling with numerous issues, including a lack of benefits, coverage for personal protective equipment and uncompetitive wages.

Maxi-Metal, Saint-Georges-de-Beauce, Que.

In a swift and entirely internal organizing campaign, workers decided to join USW Local 9153 to address deteriorating labour relations and working conditions. The wisdom of their decision was soon confirmed when the locally owned company, which manufactures fire trucks and utility vehicles, was bought by an American corporation.

University of Toronto, residence dons

In an emphatic statement, residence dons at the University of Toronto’s Mississauga campus voted 100% to join the USW in September. The 52 student workers, who act as a critical resource for students in university residences, join colleagues at other University of Toronto residences as members of USW Local 1998.

Alutrec, Laurier-Station, Que.

Three years after a single Alutrec employee first contacted the Steelworkers about the prospects of unionizing, a groundswell of support in the workplace led to workers deciding to join the union. Engaging Latino workers in the plant, which manufactures transport truck trailers, was a key factor in the campaign’s success.



USW National Director Marty Warren.

Prices are on the rise and so is the need for strong Steelworker bargaining

The last couple of years have been hard and now life is getting more expensive.

As USW National Director Marty Warren recently said, “Coming out of these tough times, workers have been demanding more from their employers and calling for better from all levels of government. And, as we’ve always known, the best chance any worker has in securing better working conditions and fairer wages and benefits is to be a member of a union – especially a union as strong and diverse as the USW.”

The USW’s organizing has been attracting workers in industries ranging from manufacturing to coffee shops, who have taken the step to unionize. These new members are not only benefitting from the union’s solidarity, they’re also making the USW’s collective power even stronger.

As a union, Steelworkers use that strength at the bargaining table and beyond.

In British Columbia, Starbucks workers were the first to take advantage of the NDP government’s new

card-check law. Nationally, the union’s work helped the federal NDP secure clear commitments and timelines from the government on a number of key priorities, including dental care, pharmacare and the first federal anti-scab legislation.

There has also been movement on protection for workers’ pensions in the case of bankruptcy and better access to employment insurance. And the union secured big wins on the trade front that will protect Canadian jobs now and in the future.

The worst of the pandemic seems to be behind us, but the threat of inflation is still very real. So are corporate greed, excess profits and outsized CEO bonuses.

But what’s also real is the strength of the union and that together, Steelworkers can keep fighting and winning for members and all workers.

Leading the fight for fairer trade for workers

With Canadian jobs at stake, the USW has consistently made leading the fight for U.S. and global trade laws that are fairer for workers a key priority.

“Workers – and their unions – are in the best position to know when products and materials are being unfairly dumped into the market,” said USW National Director Marty Warren. “Canadian jobs are at stake.”

Recently, after fighting for and winning the right to file trade complaints on behalf of their members, the USW filed the first union-led trade complaint in Canadian history and recently won an interim victory that led to an investigation by the Canada Border Service Agency (CBSA) into alleged dumping and subsidizing of mattresses produced in China.

At the time of printing, this landmark case is still being heard, but the interim victory is a good sign, and already precedent-setting for other sectors.

Beyond global trade, USW also fights to make sure workers in both Canada and the U.S. come out ahead when either government brings forward legislation affecting cross-border supply chains.

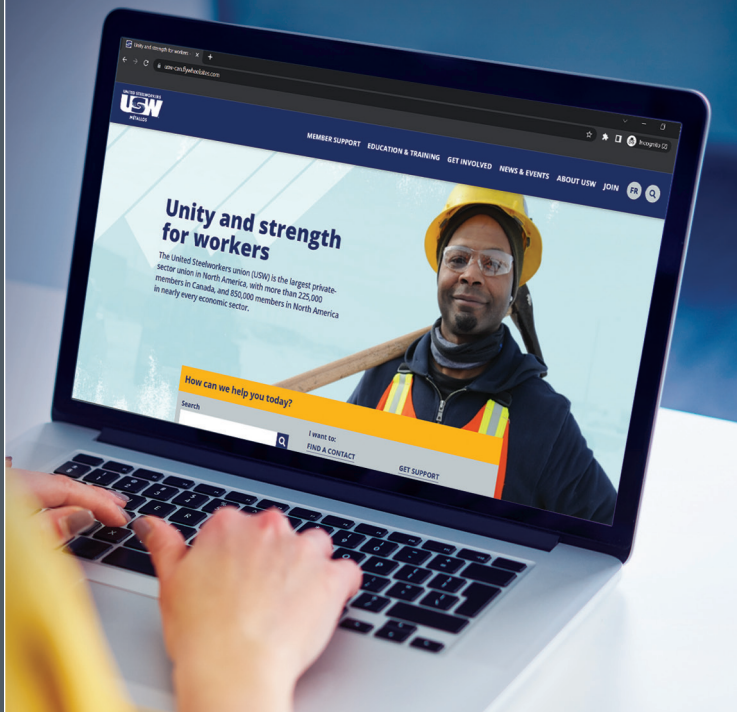
In August, U.S. Senate Democrats passed the Inflation Reduction Act to help workers struggling with the rising cost of everything and increased taxes for the richest corporations in America. After early drafts of the bill shut-out Canadian workers, Senators and President Biden’s administration amended the bill to ensure increased demand for low-carbon materials and products from both Canada and the U.S., including electric vehicles.



Federal NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh joined USW Local 9599 members on their picket line at Océan Remorquage in Sorel-Tracy, Que., where the employer has been using scab labour to try to break the strike. Singh assured the strikers that the NDP will push forward to ensure its commitment to federal anti-scab legislation – part of the party’s supply and confidence agreement with the governing Liberals – will be debated and enacted in 2023.

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Let's Raise the Bar on women's health and safety!

Get information and action ideas for supporting women and health and safety committees. Address hazards and health issues women and female-identifying workers face.

Free action guide!
usw.ca/raisethebar



Looking to strengthen your local and boost its popularity with members?

Hoping to energize and identify union activists?

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National Policy Conference Save the dates - 2023

April 23-24:
SOAR Conference

April 24:
NextGen Conference
National Locals Conference

April 25-28:
USW National Policy Conference, Toronto

Registration coming soon.

Ongoing struggle for union rights in Bangladesh



Left to right: Caroline Le May, USW Local 9700, and Michelle Ravary, USW Local 1944, witnessing the living conditions of Bangladeshi garment workers.

“Life-changing.” “Heartbreaking.” “Courageous.” These are some of the takeaways for USW members who visited Dhaka in Bangladesh last July, with the Steelworkers Humanity Fund.

The trip was part of the fund’s ongoing partnership with the Bangladesh Centre for Workers’ Solidarity (BCWS), to support the centre’s efforts to win union rights, health and safety, end harassment and abuse and gain a living wage for the garment workers in Bangladesh.

“There are more than 3,500 garment factories in Bangladesh and a majority of the workers are women,” said Michelle Ravary, a member of USW Local 1944.

The delegation spent a day with 20 women union leaders and heard about their struggles to form unions. When managers discover union activity, they send thugs to intimidate the workers and their families. Many have suffered beatings, torture and

kidnapping. Reporting to police is futile, as authorities have been bribed to stay out of it or perpetrate similar horrors.

Despite these struggles, the workers are committed to trying to win their union to make the workplace better for future generations.

Visiting the workers’ homes and seeing their living conditions was heartbreaking.

“All these families can afford is a small room often made out of corrugated metal. They have no fridge, so most families survive on rice,” said Alex Lourenco, a member of USW Local 2894.

Workers make about 8,000 Taka a month, equivalent to USD \$80.

“Women tell us they don’t eat or drink during their shift because they don’t want to lose time. They work six days a week and often the equivalent of two consecutive, eight-hour shifts,” said Caroline LeMay, USW Local 9700 Vice-President and Unit Chair.

Following the trip, Lily Chang, Secretary-Treasurer for the Canadian Labour Congress (CLC), wrote to the High Commissioner of Canada to Bangladesh: “Canadian brands have a responsibility to respect the human rights of workers throughout their global supply chains, including the women who make their clothes in Bangladesh. So far, Canadian brands have skirted this responsibility.”

usw.ca/campaigns/justice-for-global-garment-workers



The Steelworkers Humanity Fund delegation spent a day hearing from courageous women garment workers who are committed to form unions to improve workers’ lives in Dhaka, Bangladesh.

NDP wins big gains for workers in agreement with government

Just six months after Canadians elected a Parliament that looked a lot like the one they elected two years earlier, NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh announced he had secured big gains for workers and their families by getting the federal government to agree to a package of commitments, known as a confidence-and-supply agreement.

“Even at the time it was introduced, this was a big win. Jagmeet managed to get the Liberals to agree to anti-scab legislation, dental care and pharmacare – all things they had repeatedly voted against in the past,” said USW National Director Marty Warren. “Now, even before we’ve hit the first deadline, the NDP is already getting results and forcing the Liberals to deliver on the first of these promises.”

In September, just halfway into the first year of the agreement, the government and NDP announced that direct payments would be made to eligible families to cover dental costs for their children while a permanent federal program is finalized. Funding was

also announced to provide support to those who are drowning with rental costs and nearly \$500 for close to one-third of all Canadians to help them handle the rising costs of necessities.

“Making life more affordable for those who need it the most helps all of us. It opens the door for workers to win more at the bargaining table,” said Warren. “When programs like the NDP’s dental plan and pharmacare are fully rolled out, Steelworkers will take that space to get even better benefits for the workers we represent.”

While Warren praised the NDP’s deal for early signs of success, he was clear that Steelworkers will keep fighting to make sure all workers get the direct support they need.

“We won’t take our foot off the gas and will be especially focussed on getting the anti-scab legislation we’ve been promised.”

Jagmeet Singh, leader of Canada’s NDP, at the USW International Convention in Las Vegas.

Standing strong to demand long-overdue, significant improvements to their working conditions, Steelworkers across the country are achieving some of the best collective agreements in a generation.

Leading the way are some of our union's largest industrial locals, where members are demanding – and winning – a fair share of the pie from corporations that are reaping massive profits.



Locals 2251 and 2724 • Algoma Steel, Sault Ste. Marie, Ont.

In separate agreements, two locals with a combined membership of nearly 2,800 workers won five-year contracts with 3% wage increases annually, as well as annual cost-of-living adjustments, annual pension improvements and numerous improvements to contract language and benefit plans, including improved health benefits at retirement. Local 2251 represents some 2,200 production and maintenance workers at Algoma, while Local 2724 represents roughly 550 salaried employees, including office, technical and frontline supervisory staff.



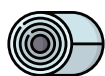
Local 480 • Teck Resources' Trail Operations, Trail, B.C.

The 1,300 Steelworkers in two bargaining units at Teck's smelting and refining operations in Trail, B.C., made monetary gains in five-year agreements. New contracts provide 2% annual wage increases, a \$12,000 ratification bonus and a \$2,000 bonus in each subsequent year, for total bonuses of \$20,000 per member. The contracts include annual pension improvements, increased long-term disability (LTD), maternity leave top-up and an increase to the group RRSP.



Locals 8782 and 8782-03 • Stelco Lake Erie Works and Pickle Lines, Nanticoke, Ont.

Two locals, representing a total of 1,150 members at Stelco's steel-making and pickling operations in Nanticoke, ratified five-year contracts with big gains including annual wage increases of \$1.50 per hour, as well as cost-of-living adjustments, a \$6.50-per-hour market adjustment for skilled trades, pension and benefit improvements, improved profit-sharing provisions including a new annual profit-sharing plan, and a new domestic violence leave clause.



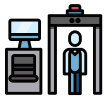
Local 1005 • Stelco Hamilton Works, Hamilton, Ont.

A five-year deal covering 600 workers at Stelco's steel-finishing operations in Hamilton meets members' demands for significant improvements, including annual wage increases of \$1.05 per hour, cost-of-living adjustments, a \$6.50-per-hour market adjustment for skilled trades, pension and benefit improvements, improved profit-sharing provisions including a new annual profit-sharing plan, layoff protections and a new domestic violence leave clause.



Local 9449 • Raglan Mine, Nunavik, Que.

Demanding respect from their employer, resource giant Glencore, 630 members at the Raglan Mine waged their first-ever strike and stood tall for 15 weeks until they achieved a five-year contract with numerous gains. The workers at the isolated, fly-in, fly-out mining camp won total wage increases of nearly 20%. A previously negotiated 10% wage bonus was rolled into the general wage structure and improvements were made on issues including vacations, work schedules, travel stipends and contracting out.



Local 8922 • Industry-wide agreement benefits 16,000 security guards

Some 16,000 USW-represented security guards across Quebec have a new contract with total wage and premium increases ranging from 19.2% to 27.8% over five years. The contract increases existing premiums and introduces new ones, which vary from 50 cents to \$2 per hour each. The agreement covers several professional development training courses. All security guards are covered by the agreement under a Quebec government sector-wide decree.



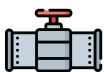
Local 4297 • PTI Transformers LP, Winnipeg

A five-year agreement will provide 130 Steelworkers at PTI Transformers with total wage hikes of 16.15%, as well as a \$3-per-hour average increase for new hires, improved wage protection language and increased premiums. The contract also improves sick leave, adds massage therapy to the benefit plan, introduces a vacation pay bonus for senior employees and revises the agreement to be gender-neutral.



Local 9400 • Aer Rianta, Montreal Dorval Airport

The 90 members working for Aer Rianta in shops located throughout Montreal's Dorval airport ratified a four-year contract with total wage increases of 20%. Other gains include an additional statutory holiday for Remembrance Day, an additional paid sick day and a sixth week of vacation granted after 20 years of service, rather than 25 years.



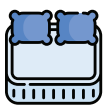
Locals 6673 and 5890 • Evraz, Calgary and Regina

Despite challenges created by uncertainty over the ownership of Evraz PLC, members at the steelmaker's Western Canada operations succeeded in negotiating four-year contracts with the company. Through joint bargaining, Local 6673 in Calgary and Local 5890 in Regina reached agreements, retroactive to August 2020, providing wage increases of 7.5%, cost-of-living adjustments amounting to \$2.35 an hour, pension contribution increases of \$3.25 per hour worked, and benefit and language improvements.



Local 2010 • Queen's University, Kingston, Ont.

Constrained by the Ontario Conservative government's regressive law restricting wage and benefit increases to 1%, 1,400 administrative and support staff at Queen's University achieved several gains on working conditions and quality-of-life issues. The three-year agreement improves language on issues including workloads, flex time, job evaluations, pay equity, parental leave, remote work and tuition and child-care benefits.



Local 1-207 • Tempur Sealy Canada, Edmonton

Steelworkers at the Tempur Sealy Canada mattress production facilities in Edmonton reached a four-year collective agreement providing a \$450 lump-sum payment on ratification and annual wage increases in each of the contract's last three years. The agreement includes annual improvements to language and members' pension and benefit plans, vacation entitlement and health spending accounts.



Local 9599 • Micro Bird, Drummondville, Que.

The 350 Steelworkers at Micro Bird, who manufacture school buses, commercial buses and multi-purpose vehicles, reached a five-year contract with a 16% wage increase retroactive to Jan. 1, total increases of 11% over the following four years, and annual cost-of-living adjustments. One-third of members will receive additional wage increases. The contract improves holidays, sick days, shift premiums, contracting-out provisions and creates a new, defined-benefit pension plan.

District 3 Update



This is our moment to grow our union and make gains

It has been a busy and exciting year in District 3. As we head into the fall, we look forward to our District 3 School in Kimberley, B.C., the National Gathering of Indigenous Steelworkers, the National Women's Conference and the (re)launching of the District 3 Women of Steel Committee.

It made me so proud to see all the District 3 delegates in attendance and participating at the USW International Constitutional Convention in August. Our delegation truly represented "Everybody's Union," with members from all industries, occupations and locals from Thompson, Man., to Vancouver Island and everywhere in between.

It was particularly inspiring to hear from District 3 delegates on stage representing their committees and at the mics speaking on human rights, NextGen, Veterans of Steel and so much more. Comments from USW 1944 delegate Michael Phillips reflected important ideas on what I agree is a key priority for our union – organizing. Michael noted that we're living in a historic moment that needs to be taken full advantage of, highlighting a growing public trust in unions and loss of trust in businesses. Workers are looking to unions as a way forward.

Over the past few years, workers have experienced a shared hardship and needed to have each other's backs to get through a challenging time.

We have to take full advantage of this moment to grow our membership and make gains at the bargaining tables, but also to revitalize our movement. Previous generations took full advantage of their own waves of discontent and made lasting gains that we take for granted today. Now it's our turn.

The activism and energy I see in District 3 make me optimistic that we are up to the challenge.

In solidarity,

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

Scott Lunny
USW District 3 Director



USW District 3 Director Scott Lunny (left), with NDP Leader Jagmeet Singh (right) and Starbucks workers at Clayton Crossing in Surrey, B.C.

District 5 Update



Bringing a strong, determined approach to the bargaining table

In this period of great economic upheaval, our union's role of demanding better for our members is critical.

Employers are scrambling to fill vacancies, with reports estimating there are fewer unemployed people than there are jobs to be filled – specifically 0.6 workers for every vacant job. Wages must reflect this scarcity – in order to recruit and retain workers.

Our demands for better wages are further justified by high inflation, which for example fluctuated between 7.1% and 8.1% this summer in Quebec. That's a lot more money being spent to buy groceries. Workers need similar increases in wages to avoid falling further behind.

This high inflation is due to disrupted supply chains and increased profit-taking by corporations, as bosses try to take a bigger piece of the pie following pandemic-related economic slowdowns. This means we must bring a strong, determined approach to the bargaining table to maintain, if not increase, our members' share of the pie.

When times are tough, we've been asked to make concessions. Many workers have endured wage freezes and/or cuts to pensions and benefits. Now, with business profits rising, the pendulum has swung back and our members are entitled to their fair share.

With recent interest rate increases now creating a greater risk of an economic downturn, we must capitalize on the labour shortage to protect our members' living standards. If we fall behind, it may be harder to get back on track.

Now is the time for strong, determined bargaining. The best approach to achieve our goals is to engage, mobilize and support our members. It is by channelling our members' strength and energy that we succeed in winning the respect and better working conditions they deserve.

Dominic Lemieux
USW District 5 Director



Steelworkers at Mécár Métal in Saint-Bruno, Que., won respect and better working conditions following a 17-day strike.

Quebec Steelworkers engage federal minister on protecting woodland caribou and forestry jobs



Quebec Steelworkers welcomed federal Environment Minister Steven Guilbault to Chibougamau and Chapais for discussions on protecting woodland caribou and supporting forestry sector jobs.

Federal Environment Minister Steven Guilbault recently accepted a call from Steelworkers to consult with workers on measures aimed at protecting woodland caribou and supporting jobs in Quebec's forestry sector.

Guilbault met in late August with a Steelworkers delegation led by USW District 5 Director Dominic Lemieux and representatives of members working in the forestry sector, in particular the communities of Chibougamau and Chapais in central Quebec.

The meeting was held shortly after the federal and Quebec governments reached an agreement in principle to jointly develop a plan by June 2023 to protect the woodland caribou.

"Like the environment minister and many Quebecers, we are concerned about the decline of the woodland caribou," Lemieux said. "It's a bit like the canary in the coal mine – a sign that the current forest management model is not ensuring the renewal of the resource. What puts the caribou at risk also puts our jobs at risk."

Also meeting with the environment minister were representatives of USW Locals 9366, 8644 and 8895, representing workers at forestry companies Arbec, Chantiers Chibougamau and Barrette Chapais, respectively. USW Area Co-ordinator Pascal Loignon and staff representative Alexandre Fréchette also were part of the delegation.

The USW delegation strongly advocated for comprehensive measures and investments from governments to protect the caribou while developing value-added wood processing facilities to support sustainable forestry jobs.

"We want governments to put money on the table to mitigate the financial impacts and the impacts on the wood supply. If less wood is to be harvested, we must ensure that processing is given greater priority, in order to create added value and jobs," said Fréchette.

The environment minister publicly indicated his support for the union's position on creating value-added jobs in the sector.

District 6 Update



Bargaining in better times

It's been a successful, busy year for Steelworkers in District 6. We are bargaining new collective agreements in a time where workers are fed up with the status quo and demanding more from employers.

Over the last couple of months, various USW local unions from steel and forestry sectors have ratified new contracts with gains across the board. In the university sector, our local unions successfully bargained new progressive language in their contracts, despite wage restrictions under Ontario's Bill 124.

For far too long, working people have been under aggressive employer attacks, but workers are now turning the tables and fighting back for what they deserve. But we can't get comfortable now.

We've still got many of our members with some hard tasks at negotiation tables – particularly our screening officers working in airports in Atlantic Canada and Ottawa. Airport screeners in the rest of Ontario will soon be at the table too. There are still employers who willingly choose to ignore health and safety regulations and put our members' lives at risk every day. And those who vehemently oppose unions and try to break us every day.

So, as you continue to make gains in your own locals, let us also continue to share our Steelworker solidarity and support to all of our siblings in their challenges. After all, our unyielding commitment to having each other's backs is the Steelworker way.

As District 6 Director, I have committed to visiting workplaces where our members work every day. It is an opportunity for me to meet local union leaders and hear about the work they do and the activism that is stemming from the membership.

From Tenaris to Pepsico to Alexandria Moulding, IPEX and Voyant Beauty – one thing rang clear to me: the USW is everybody's union. I look forward to meeting with many more of you in your workplaces in the coming months.

In solidarity,

Myles Sullivan
USW District 6 Director



USW District 6 Director Myles Sullivan (second from left) and Assistant to the Director Kevon Stewart (right), with members of USW Local 0049M at IPEX in London, Ont.

Racing against the clock

Searching for former miners entitled to significant compensation

Steelworkers are leading an urgent, cross-Canada awareness campaign to find former miners and surviving family members who could be entitled to significant compensation for industrial disease.

The campaign stems from an Ontario government decision to finally recognize Parkinson's disease as an occupational illness linked to workers' exposure to so-called McIntyre Powder in the province's mining industry for decades. The decision makes

it easier for former miners and families to receive workers' compensation benefits from Ontario's Workplace Safety and Insurance Board (WSIB).

Now, the urgency is to spread awareness and to locate former miners and family members who are eligible for compensation.

"Time is of the essence to find these miners and surviving family members. There is an element of racing against the clock in many of these cases," says Janice

Martell, a USW member and the founder of the McIntyre Powder Project.

"Miners suffering from Parkinson's, or the surviving spouses of deceased miners, are of advanced age and most of them will be unaware that they are now eligible for compensation. Many of them are undoubtedly struggling financially, so this can have a significant impact on their lives," Martell says.



Janice Martell has been advocating for justice for miners and their families since the death of her father, Jim Hobbs, in 2017. A former miner subjected to aluminum inhalation "therapy," Hobbs developed Parkinson's disease and died without ever receiving compensation.

Between 1943 and 1979, mining companies in Ontario and elsewhere required miners to inhale an aluminum dust called McIntyre Powder as a condition of employment, without informed consent. Before every shift, miners were corralled into a sealed room and required to inhale the powder as it was pumped into the air.

The mining companies advanced an unproven theory claiming the McIntyre Powder “therapy” would protect workers’ lungs from silicosis. But the theory was false. Rather than protecting miners, McIntyre Powder made workers sick and led to many deaths.

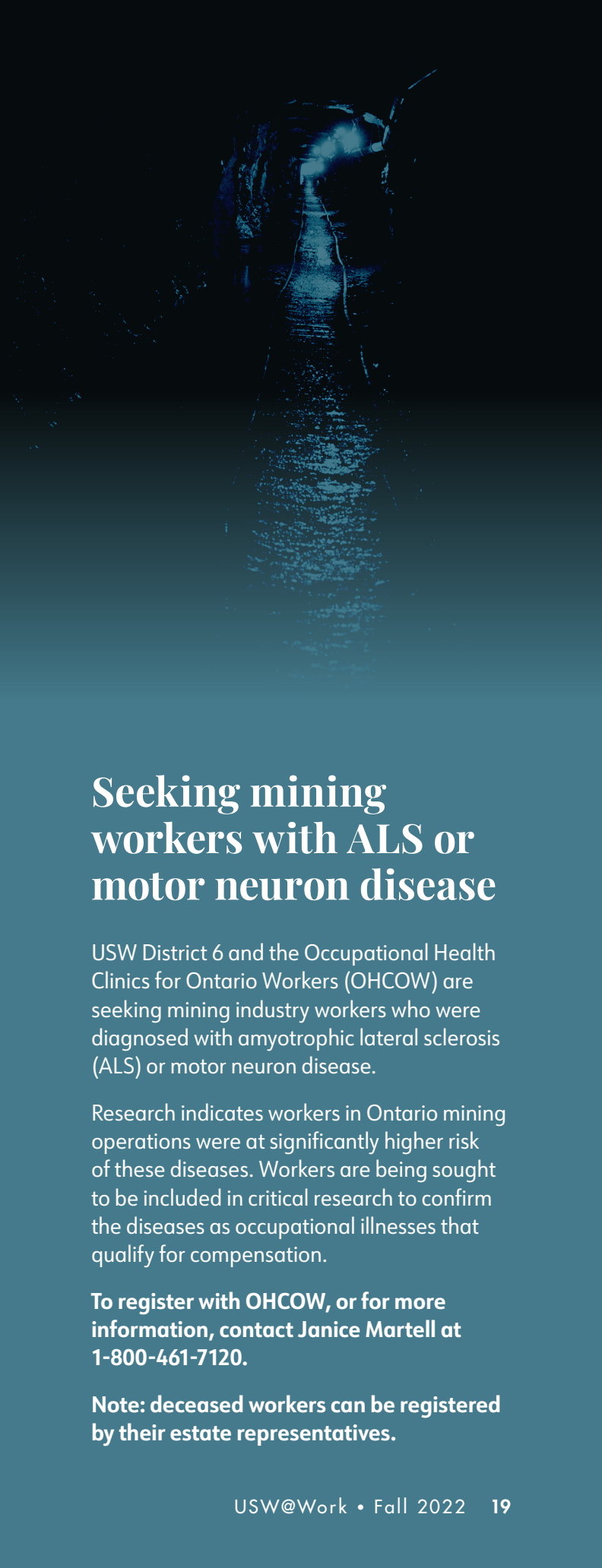
Martell founded the McIntyre Powder Project to seek justice for miners and their families following the death of her father, Jim Hobbs. Hobbs was subjected to the aluminum inhalation “therapy” while working as a miner in Elliot Lake. He developed Parkinson’s disease and died in 2017 without ever receiving compensation.

Martell, the USW and other workers’ advocates lobbied for years for the Ontario government to recognize medical evidence clearly linking Parkinson’s disease in miners to their exposure to McIntyre Powder.

Unlike her father, former miners and family members will now have an easier time in filing compensation claims and receiving the benefits they deserve, Martell notes.

“It’s not going to be the typical workers’ compensation hassle they may have heard about. So it is crucial that people know about this decision,” she says.

For information, including the process to file compensation claims, contact Janice Martell at 1-800-461-7120, or minersinfo@yahoo.ca.



Seeking mining workers with ALS or motor neuron disease

USW District 6 and the Occupational Health Clinics for Ontario Workers (OHCOW) are seeking mining industry workers who were diagnosed with amyotrophic lateral sclerosis (ALS) or motor neuron disease.

Research indicates workers in Ontario mining operations were at significantly higher risk of these diseases. Workers are being sought to be included in critical research to confirm the diseases as occupational illnesses that qualify for compensation.

To register with OHCOW, or for more information, contact Janice Martell at 1-800-461-7120.

Note: deceased workers can be registered by their estate representatives.



Airport security screeners demand respect, better working conditions

USW airport security screeners in every district of the union have mobilized in solidarity to strengthen their collective bargaining demands for greater respect and improved working conditions.

Airport security screeners are employed by private, multinational security corporations, which are funded by the federal government, through its Crown corporation, the Canadian Air Transport Security Authority (CATSA).

“The system put in place by the federal government provides healthy profits to private corporations, while frontline security workers are told there isn’t enough funding to give them the better pay and working conditions they deserve,” said USW National Director Marty Warren.

The union is calling on the federal government to provide the funds and mandate to finally address the issues facing airport security screeners who have been underpaid, undervalued and disrespected for too long.

The union’s solidarity campaign began in June with Casual Mondays, with screeners at some 40 Canadian airports wearing street clothes on the job to draw

attention to longstanding concerns. The solidarity action soon became a daily occurrence at many airports.

The union also launched a political action campaign including an online petition through which our members and many other Canadians have sent letters to federal MPs, urging them to pressure the government to take responsibility and fix the problems facing security screeners and air travellers.

In another unprecedented development, bargaining committees from four USW locals, representing security screeners at 28 airports throughout Quebec and Atlantic Canada, have come together to negotiate as a united group. The goal is to achieve the best-possible deal and to set a pattern for other screeners’ bargaining units.

“Airport security officers are the first line of defence in keeping our skies safe and they are crucial in keeping passengers moving through our airports. We will continue to fight to secure the respect, good wages and improved working conditions these workers deserve,” Warren said.