



2020 4th Calendar Quarter Newsletter

Hello Brothers & Sisters,

First let me start by wishing everyone a happy and safe holiday.

As we close out 2020 and reflect back, we see a year that not only was challenging for the union, but all of us had to face some of the most difficult times in our lives. Not only in the work place, but our personal lives were impacted as well.

While I still anticipate a few more months of hard times in front of us. I know we will all prevail, because that is what we do.

Saying all that, not all was a loss in 2020. First, we successfully bargained not one but two contracts, where each contract saw increases to wages during the life of the contract. There were also many improvements to the contract when it came to things such as mandatory OT, and the use of vacation and sick time, etc.

We also were able to hold a GMM safely in October and get all of your stewards trained to better serve you. We appointed additional stewards and held an election. (For which I am proud to say that all of your current executive board will be here to serve you for the next three years.)

We were able to make temporary agreements with the business of each bargaining unit to make sure that you could all work safely, while also making sure that all of your CBA were still honored, while protecting as many jobs as possible.

We also recently launched our very own app. If you are not on it yet, simply text the code **cwa81408** to the number **47-177** Or click <https://unionstrong.app.link/cwa81408> and follow the prompts. (Make sure to allow notifications!)

Financially, we had to make many cuts in our budgets, and despite those cuts, we were still able to provide you the representation you have all come to expect, and stayed on budget, despite these cuts.

As we look forward to 2021, I will finish this year by going on vacation from 12/19-1/3, so that I can prepare for what I anticipate will be a very busy 2021. Please remember to get in touch with your stewards if you have any issues. All of your stewards are trained and equipped to handle your concerns. Your steward's information can be found on our website at www.opticalworkers.org and up to minute information is constantly shared on our union facebook page.

In 2021 the big item we will be preparing for is the Visionworks Bargaining unit Contract. I will be sending surveys out between March and April, with anticipation that bargaining will take place around May. I am also hoping to start getting on the road again and visiting as many locations as I can before May, with the plan to visit all the locations by the fall. (depending on Covid)

I also plan to visit all the bigger locations quarterly and we will be planning our yearly GMM for September/October.

Finally, as we begin 2021, there is a change to our executive board that I want to remind you all of:

As of 1/1/21, Jose Taveras of the Versant Health Latham bargaining unit will go from being the Vice President to a Trustee and Jason Dornford of the Visionworks bargaining unit will go from being a Trustee to the Vice President.

I just want to take this moment to thank Jose for everything he has done as a Vice President over these last three years. He has been everything and more that I could ask for and I couldn't have had a better Vice President. I truly appreciate everything that he has done not only for me, but for this local. I couldn't have done this without him and I know he will continue to serve as valuable part of this union as a Trustee.

I also want to welcome Jason to the new role. I know Jason will also serve as a fantastic VP as both of these gentlemen have been an outstanding and critical part of our local these last three years regardless of title.

I want to thank all of you for giving me the opportunity to lead this union over the last three years, and I am looking forward to start my next term, the first of the year.

In Unity
Jason