



2021 First Calendar Quarter Newsletter

Hello Brothers & Sisters,

As we navigate through the first calendar quarter of 2021, you can almost say there finally might be light at the end of a very long tunnel.

While we lost about 25% of our bargaining unit over the last year, and there are numerous challenges throughout each bargaining unit. No one is on furlough and there are over 100 postings at Visionworks, over 30 postings in NTS, about 25 open spots at Davis Latham and Value Visions is growing. We know the key to getting relief is getting those positions filled and we have expressed to the companies that we want those positions filled ASAP.

I can't believe it has been 1 year since the pandemic hit us. The hope is by 5/1 anyone that wants to get a vaccine will have that opportunity and maybe our personal lives will start to return to normal as well.

As stated previously, I am going to begin getting back on the road and visiting labs, and visiting retail stores as early as this month. My hope will be to visit at least 60 Visionworks retail shops by the time we start negotiations for the upcoming Visionworks Retail contract. I have already updated the calendar on the union website reflecting my plans over the next 90 days.

Recently Surveys were sent to all the retail stores of Visionworks so that I can get an idea of what's most important to you as we begin negotiations (since I will not be able to get to every store over the next 90 days). I believe negotiations will start late May or early June. Look for those surveys, as they also include instructions on how to get on our app and union cards were also sent. (For the other bargaining units, union cards will be given when I make visits soon.)

I am proud to announce who the negotiating committee will be for the Visionworks bargaining unit. That list includes:

Jason Johnson IUE-CWA Local 81408 President
Rob Macherone IUE Staff Rep
Sarah Ruhlen Legal Counsel
Jason Dornford Vice President, Visionworks Co Lead Steward
Chuck Brien Treasurer/Financial Secretary, Visionworks Co Lead Steward/
NYC/Westchester Region Steward.
Dave Buchholz Trustee, Visionworks Western Region Steward
Heather Duby, Trustee, Visionworks Central Region Steward
Kim Idzinski Visionworks LI region Steward
Michelle Feilding Visionworks MA region Steward *Alternate

As far as the ongoing challenges at each bargaining unit, we are working really hard to resolve as many issues as we can, some of these issues are not necessarily contractual issues, but they are things that do impact you, so we are doing what we can in those areas.

I am also pleased to announce that we have organized two more committees. A Political Action Committee and an Organizing Committee. The Political Action Committee consist of Jason Dornford (Chair), Jose Taveras and Andrei Yermokov. The Organizing Committee consist of Ron Taylor (Chair) Jose Taveras and David Simmons.

I would also like to welcome our newest steward, Carla McClain from the Versant Latham Facility and Ron Taylor to the Diversity Committee.

There is still a steward vacancy at Versant NTS. We are looking to fill that vacancy with someone that is English/Spanish speaking. At Visionworks, there are two vacancies. I am looking for someone from the Western Region and the NYC/Westchester.

Finally, Davis Latham, the company recently did a "InContact" investigation that saw 14 people get terminated and 4 people get written up. We are aggressively fighting these disciplines, as we believe these are all known system issue, and we will take the necessary action to defend our members. As we stand here today, we are on step 2 of the grievance process.

I really hope over the next quarter we start to see some positive things, and I look forward to seeing a lot of you really soon.

In Unity
Jason