



2021 Fourth Calendar Quarter Newsletter

Hello Brothers & Sisters,

First, let me wish everyone a happy and safe holiday.

As we reflect back on the last quarter and the last year, a lot has happened. While effects of the pandemic are still with us for what is now two years, we have seemed to have figured out how to work through most things with the exception of the short staffing. Short Staffing is affecting every bargaining unit throughout the union. I believe in time it will sort itself out, but it will take time. Short staffing is something that has affected not just us, but many businesses throughout the USA. I wish I had the answers or could say it's just one thing, but it's complicated and beyond my scope of reach. What I can say is I do have conversations about staffing with most of the companies and what they're doing and stay on top of the open positions to the best of my ability. There is somewhere around 250+ open positions throughout our union.

Despite all the challenges the pandemic has brought. We have accomplished quite a bit in this last year. For starters, as promised I visited every single location over the course of the year. We also held another successful GMM where one of the photos taken made its way on the IUE Bolt Newsletter.

At Visionworks, we ratified a new 3-year contract, that saw some of the biggest raises in the history of the bargaining unit and many other changes to try and help make your work life a little easier. We also just negotiated a new incentive plan that we think will be better than the previous plan.

At the other units; Value Visions we agreed to terms that saw significant wage increases to many of the members. Balister Optical won small lab of the year. Versant Health Latham we won or settled all three class action grievances (which included reinstatements of workers).

Finally, I am working on a few things right now that I hope to talk about very soon for Versant Health NTS and Balester Optical/Value Visions.

As we turn our attention to the rest of this year and next year. I will be focusing on the things I just mentioned above that I hope will come to fruition soon. I am also hoping that 2022 is the year we finally get the pandemic behind us and continue to staff our locations with those open positions.

We have quite a few things planned for 2022 including our annual GMM and the Balester Optical Contract in the fall. I look forward to sharing the details of those plans with you as soon as there finalized.

Last but not least, remember if your ever unsure about something, you contracts and steward contact information are all online on our website at www.opticalworkers.org. Please remember to utilize your stewards if your ever told something that contradicts your contract.

In Unity
Jason