



2022 3rd Calendar Quarter Newsletter

Hello Brothers and Sisters,

Over the last 3 months, understaffing in every bargaining unit is still the hot topic. There are over 150 open positions through the bargaining units and that doesn't account for the cutting that each company has done to staff. It's a frustrating situation that is happening all over America still. The union continues to have conversation with the Companies about staffing and is closely monitoring the staffing levels to the best of our ability. But it is a daunting task as unfortunately the union ultimately doesn't get to dictate staffing. Hopefully more help is on the way soon. I have had some conversations with HR at multiple units and that does seem to be a priority.

At Visionworks a lot of the stores have seen the conversion to OTX. This should be complete in every location by November. Things have not started out very smooth but just remember the last conversion and how challenging that was. Add in the understaffing after coming out of 2 years of COVID and you got a recipe for frustration. That said I do believe over time this system will get better and easier.

Outside of that, things are starting to return to somewhat normal, it's definitely not enough, but some normalcy is very much welcome.

At Davis Vision Latham, the Union and the Company entered an agreement to make work from Home Permanent.

At Value Visions the Union and the Company just came to an agreement on a Company handbook. I suspect the Company will begin passing them out in the near distance future.

Contract negotiations for Balester Optical are coming up and surveys were passed out and a meeting was held in August to discuss the result of those surveys to prepare for the upcoming negotiations in early October.

At the local level the local has been pretty busy doing some things we haven't been able to do over the last 2 years. In July, myself and some of the Executive Board went to the IUE Divisional Meeting and Training. In August, 14 of your Stewards went to IUE Steward Training.

In September the Women's Committee Held a collection for Women's Hygiene Products, that they were donating to Women's shelters in the Capitol District and Long Island. Combined they raised between \$300-\$500 worth of Women's care products.

Also in September, The Organizing Committee held a "Picnic in the Park" for members and their families in the Long Island area. We are hoping to do more things like this in the future.

Finally, we have just relaunched our website and I encourage everyone to go check it out. All the information you need is always there. www.opticalworkers.org

Over the next few months and into next year we have quite a busy Schedule lined up. Starting in October, as previously said. Contract negotiations for Balster Optical will take place. October 9th is our annual GMM. In Late November I will be attending the CWA District 1 meeting. Early next year contract negotiations for Davis Vision NTS will begin. From March through September, I plan to visit all the retail locations again (while still visiting the labs on a quarterly basis as well.) The CWA Convention is in July and finally Davis Vision Latham contract negotiations will begin in August.

So, as you can see there is a lot going on and a lot that has been taking place, even if it feels like your daily routine is the same, day in and day out.

One thing that I am noticing is that many of you are starting to go to your stewards more often when there are issues. When we learn of those issues, we often can get those individual issues corrected. This is most encouraging as we only are aware of the things you bring to us and we can only help you if you let us know what's going on, so please keep doing that. Remember your Stewards have all received training and are equipped to help you and answer your questions.

I love serving this union, it makes me proud to see how far we have come over the years. Not everything is perfect at the job sites. But our local is strong. From membership engagement, to trained Stewards, strong contracts and active committees, etc. Just ask any of your Stewards that have gone to other IUE functions and what others are saying about local 408. We set the standard to what other locals want to be and we all should be union proud.

In Unity
Jason

In Memorial

Deborah Nogueira Visionworks MA

