



2024 First Calendar Quarter Newsletter

Hello Brothers & sisters,

The first thing I would like to do is congratulate the Executive Board that was elected to service the union over the next three years. Vice President Jason dornford, Treasurer Charles Brein, Recording Secretary Gunnar Lennihan, Trustees Jose Taveras, Kim Idzinski & Michelle Fielding. I would also like to thank Conniebeth Myers for once again serving as the Sergeant of Arms. Lastly, I would like to thank the membership for showing me support and re-electing me as your President. Our first Executive Board Meeting was held on Friday January 19th.

We hit the year running with a lot going on, right out the gate.

I want to start by saying I am proud to share that we secured a new 4-year contract with Park Sher Optical. The contract was ratified at 100%. Highlights include 11% wage increases over the next 4 years. And large increase to the minimums, (where a few members will instantly see \$3-\$5 wage increases). We also secured more contributions towards the medical premium and have secured compensation for apprentices and sponsors for licensed opticians. We also saw some positive changes of transferring of workers from one store to another.

In February, five members of the Executive Board received new or additional training from the IUE on how to run the local.

Also, in February I travelled to NYC and Atlanta, Georgia meeting with the unions from Italy that services optical workers in their country and we met with workers in Georgia that are trying to form a union. The purpose of this meeting was to begin the process to partner with the unions overseas to help optical workers across the world organize and continue increase workers' rights in the optical industry.

Finally in February, ballots were sent for changes to the constitution and bylaws. The vote was ratified at 95.5% and the new constitution is uploaded on the website now..

In March, I made my first quarterly visit to the labs in PA, and held the first quarterly virtual meeting with the Davis Vision call center.

Also, in March we held our first Quarterly Zoom membership meeting. We will start holding these 3 times a year, along with the annual GMM.

Finally, Shop Steward of NTS and Diversity Committee Member Alim Leggett traveled to Washington DC at the end of March to attend the IUE Diversity Ambassadors Program.

As we look to next quarter, the first and most important item we are planning for is the Empire Visionworks Contract Negotiations. Surveys went out on 3/28/24 and we will be meeting with the company in late May and early June. The Committee Consist of Myself, IUE Staff Rep Rob Macherone, Jason Dornford, Charles Brein, Kim Idzinski, Michelle Fielding and Dave Bucholz.

For those that work for Visionworks, please make sure you return you survey ASAP as that guides us to what to fight for in the contract negotiations.

In May, Shop Steward of Visionworks and Women's Committee member, Carmel O'Hanlon will be attending the IUE National Women's Program in Chicago Illinois.

In June, four members of the Executive Board will be attending the IUE-CWA Divisional Meeting. And myself and 2 members of the PAC committee will be attending the CWA Presidents Meeting and CWA PAC Conference.

Also, over the next Quarter, I will once again be visiting the labs in PA, hold a virtual meeting with the call center, hold another zoom membership meeting and hold a local Executive Board meeting.

So needless to say, the next quarter will be just as busy as the first quarter, but I look forward to seeing or talking with many of you over that time and keeping you up to date with everything going on. Finally as always remember if you ever have any issues at the shops to contact your stewards so we can look into those issues for you.

In Unity
Jason