



**Construction & General Building
Laborers' Local 79**
131 W 33rd Street, 7th Floor
New York, NY 10001
Phone: 212-465-7900 Fax: 212-465-7903



RETIREE NEWSLETTER | **SUMMER 2022**

LOCAL 79 NEWS

CONSTRUCTION & GENERAL BUILDING LABORERS



UPCOMING EVENTS

October 19 at 5pm
General Membership Meeting
St. Vartan Church, 630 2nd Avenue

November 16 at 5pm
General Membership Meeting
St. Vartan Church, 630 2nd Avenue

December 1 at 12pm
Retiree Holiday Party
Russo's On The Bay, Queens, NY

We are planning future retiree events according to government & venue regulations. Further updates will be mailed and posted on our website. All events remain subject to change. For any questions about upcoming events, call Melissa at 212-465-7976.

www.local79.org



RETIREMENT OF BOBBY BONANZA AND ANTHONY WILLIAMSON

LONGTIME MASON TENDERS DISTRICT COUNCIL BUSINESS MANAGER BOBBY BONANZA RETIRED AFTER MANY YEARS

serving our union with honesty, integrity and character. "Bobby always put the membership first," said Mike Prohaska. "There is no one that I would have rather been in the trenches with over these last 18 years than him." Anthony Williamson, auditor and longtime organizer, stepped down due to his ongoing battle with a cancer named multiple myeloma. In his message to the membership, Anthony said: "I am no stranger to challenges, and I plan on winning this battle."

NYCHA ORGANIZING WIN!

30,000 Unit Portfolio Covered by PLA

A HUGE PORTFOLIO OF NYCHA WORK WILL BE COVERED BY PROJECT LABOR AGREEMENT AFTER A CAMPAIGN LED BY LOCAL 79 WITH MTDC PAC, LEROF, GNY-LECET AND

our community and political partners. The creation of the NYCHA Preservation Trust unlocks billions of dollars in financing for long, overdue repairs covering 30,000 units of public housing. This is part of an overall shift by NYCHA to increase its federal funding for repairs by accessing increased and more stable funding through section 8 project-based vouchers. The deterioration of our country's public housing has led to partial privatization through a program called "RAD", which our union has been the only trade to successfully organize with agreements covering over 5,000 units. Instead of the previous piecemeal approach, the NYCHA Preservation Trust is an innovative, first-of-its-kind model to unlock further financing without privatization and includes protections for project labor agreements. "This is the largest residential portfolio of work our union has ever signed," said Executive Board member Barrie Smith. "We are proud to do the work that will create good union careers and dignified living conditions for NYCHA residents."

Get Your Updated Aetna Card

For retirees still using the union's medical coverage, call Aetna member services helpline at 866-658-2455 to get an updated insurance card which will reflect that Aetna also now covers our prescription plan in addition to medical and dental. This phone number also offers support for any other questions you have about your coverage. Your current card will continue to work and you can also print a copy of the new version online at Aetna's website.

LEARN MORE > www.aetna.com

DUES NEWS
Member Dues: \$37/month
Retiree Dues: \$8/month

REMINDER: Dues payments must not go over two months without being paid or the member will be suspended.

Members' Union Book numbers must be written on their checks or money orders when paying dues by mail. Members may also call the Dues Department and provide their book number to pay by credit card.

MAKE SURE TO UPDATE
YOUR CONTACT INFO

If you want change your email, phone or address, you can call the union hall at 212-465-7912. Remember to also update your contact details with the trust funds by calling 212-452-9700 and pressing 3 for the eligibility department for proper procedure.

TRUST FUNDS SUMMARY

The Annuity Fund's net return was 7.79%, the Pension Fund was over 100% funded and the Medical/Welfare Fund had approximately two years in reserves for the calendar year 2021. The Trust Funds continue to maintain and improve comprehensive benefits for members while safeguarding our investments.

LOCAL 79 EXECUTIVE BOARD

- Mike Prohaska, Business Manager
- John Norbury, President
- Chaz Rynkiewicz, Vice President
- Anthony Vita, Secretary-Treasurer
- Wendy Webb, Recording Secretary
- Bernard Callegari, Sergeant-at-Arms
- Luis Montalvo, Executive Board member
- Barrie Smith, Executive Board member
- Kenneth Robinson Jr., Auditor
- Steve Andujar, Auditor

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An affiliate of: the Mason Tenders District Council of Greater New York and Long Island, LiUNA; the New York City Central Labor Council; the Building and Construction Trades Council of Greater New York; and the New York State AFL-CIO.



Follow us on Facebook & Twitter

Contact information, events calendar, news, and general information can be found at www.local79.org

MESSAGE FROM
BUSINESS MANAGER
MIKE PROHASKA



With an out-of-work list now below 250 and over 5.5 million hours worked for the first half of the year, we are on pace to meet our goals to work a million hours more than last year. Unlike many other unions, Local 79 did not lose membership the last two years.

Our union was prepared for this moment by negotiating strong contracts and expanding to new markets. In the pipeline, important milestones have been reached for the \$22 billion Penn Station area redevelopment and an additional \$9 billion was finalized this summer to construct a new JFK Terminal One. Thanks to the power of our membership, Local 79 is developers' first and sometimes only call for upcoming projects due to our quality craftsmanship, local hire agreements, community partnerships and in-the-streets organizing.

For those of you paying attention to your annuity online, you should have noticed that the funds now post investment returns monthly to determine annuity withdrawals. The trustees instituted this change to ensure fund stability during market swings like we are facing now.

This is not the first market downturn we've faced. It is important to remember that if you had \$100,000 in your annuity when our union was founded in 1996 and didn't add another penny, you would have \$382,636 at the end of 2021 and since I've been Business Manager members have experienced a 92% total return. Your retirement security is our union's sacred promise to the membership and is of the utmost importance. Rest assured that our trust funds finances remain healthy in the short and long term.

I am happy to report the following improvements in our legal services plan: 1) after a member death, unlimited consultations for a year for your spouse about estate matters; 2) coverage for family court and divorce appeals of merit if you initially used our lawyers; 3) defense of owners of 1-3 family primary residences in housing court for qualified tenant disputes; 4) unlimited hours for immigration and naturalization matters.

With in-person meetings returning this May, it's been great to be back at St. Vartan's with the membership and not speaking to a screen. We made the tough but necessary decision to cancel the Spring retiree luncheon due to rising covid rates, but thankfully we were able to go forward with trips over the summer to Tropicana and Yankees Stadium.

I thank you all for your patience and loyalty during these uncertain times. We will continue to carry on and overcome any challenges that come our way.

In solidarity,

Michael Prohaska

LiUNA!
Feel the Power

LOCAL 79 RETIREE COUNCIL



PRESIDENT

MARLON ALSTON



VICE PRESIDENT

JUAN MAZYLMIAN



TRUSTEE

BRIAN PRESSLEY



TRUSTEE

LEO OGNIBENE



SEC-TREASURER

SAL PAGANO



REC-SECRETARY

FIL ORTIZ



TRUSTEE

WILLIAM STRONG



ALT-TRUSTEE

MARK ALBRITTON

Working-Class
Prioritized in
Washington D.C.

There is not always good news from Washington D.C., but we should all feel better knowing that President Biden's American Rescue Plan of 2021 is actively protecting pension funds, many from the Midwest, who were decimated by automation and the 2008 financial crisis. At the same time, the historic \$1.2 trillion bipartisan infrastructure plan is well underway and is the largest investment in union construction jobs ever. The recently-passed American Inflation Reduction Act will pay down our national debt and lower energy costs. Investing in all fuel types with prevailing wage standards strengthens our country's energy security and puts food on the table for working-class families. Finally our government is investing in the working-class, not bailing out Wall Street.

We also are proud of the work done so far by one of our own in the federal cabinet. Under the leadership of Secretary of Labor Marty Walsh, who is a card-carrying LiUNA member, the NLRB processed a 60% increase in union representation petitions including major organizing wins at Amazon, Starbucks and Apple. We are proud to join Marty as he serves as Grand Marshal of the NYC Labor Day Parade as our union continues to be leaders of a reenergized labor movement.



"We all need to go back to being Americans, and learn how to compromise with one another, so we can act as one union to do what is best for our families," said Secretary-Treasurer Anthony Vita.

Angelakos Named
LECET Director;
Oona Adams
Returns to 79

At our June membership meeting, BM Mike Prohaska announced Dean Angelakos as the new Director of GNY-LECET and Oona Adams' return to Local 79 as Assistant Director of Organizing. Dean first worked with our union 20 years ago on prevailing wage enforcement with the Comptroller's office. "Dean was always there for us, now he is one of us," said President John Norbury. Oona started her LiUNA career as an organizer in New England and was recruited by Prohaska to come to the city. "Oona brings a unique set of skills that have played a pivotal part in our strategic campaigns, most recently as LEROF Research Director" said VP Chaz Rynkiewicz. "She's a true unionist who gives her all to our local."