



**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 | **Winter 2023**

LOCAL 79 NEWS

CONSTRUCTION & GENERAL BUILDING LABORERS



UPCOMING EVENTS

Call Melissa Siciliano at
212-465-7976 to RSVP

March 22 at 5pm
General Membership Meeting
St. Vartan Church, 630 2nd Avenue

March 24 at 7:45am
Windcreek Casino
77 Windcreek Blvd, Bethlehem, PA

April 5 at 1pm
NY Yankees Baseball Outing
Yankee Stadium, Bronx, NY

May 19 at 12pm
Retiree Spring Luncheon
Marina Del Rey, Bronx, NY

June 1 at 1pm
NY Mets Baseball Outing
Citifield, Queens, NY

www.local79.org



MIKE PROHASKA
Mason Tenders District Council
& Local 79 Business Manager

MIKE HELLSTROM
LiUNA Vice President
& Eastern Region Manager

Prohaska and Hellstrom Rise to New Positions of Union Leadership

TWO LOCAL 79 MEMBERS, MIKE PROHASKA AND MIKE HELLSTROM, HAVE REACHED NEW LEVELS OF LEADERSHIP

in our union. Prohaska is now Business Manager of the Mason Tenders District Council in addition to his role as Local 79 Business Manager. Hellstrom now leads as LiUNA Eastern Region Manager and LiUNA Vice President. Both have a strong track record of fighting for the interests of unionized laborers. We congratulate outgoing leaders, Bobby Bonanza and Ray Pocino, on their retirements and thank them for leaving our union in good, capable hands.

Organizing Wins Landmark Rezoning Union Careers and Affordable Housing Approved

THE HISTORIC APPROVAL OF THE INNOVATION QUEENS AND BRUCKNER BLVD REZONINGS MEANS THAT LOCAL 79 MEMBERS WILL WORK ON MORE THAN 15 BUILDINGS

totaling over 3,500 residential units. These projects represent the most recent successes in our union's organizing campaign for the creation of union jobs and affordable housing for our members in the communities where we live. Fifty percent of all units created will be at affordable rents including specific allocations for seniors, veterans and the homeless along with the provision of much-needed community space and services. Local 79 members from these neighborhoods joined organizers to collect over 5,000 petitions to support our vision for these projects. "We rallied, we marched, we organized, and we lobbied tirelessly," said Business Manager Mike Prohaska. "It's a big win for our members, their communities and for all of New York City." Throughout the process, Local 79 was heralded for our consensus-making role in finding sensible solutions in negotiations between developers, council members and community activists.

13th Check Sent to Pensioners

The trustees of the Mason Tenders Trust Funds agreed to send a 13th check this year to all enrolled retirees. Although the funds do not send an additional check every year, this was a tough year economically. No matter what, the trustees continue to safeguard our funds while expanding benefits to our members. For any questions about your retirement plan, contact the Membership Advocate at 212-452-9716.

LEARN MORE > www.local79.org

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 to change your email, phone or address, you can write a letter to Local 79 with your new contact information along with your name, book #, signature and date. Remember you must send a separate letter to the Trust Funds. For any questions, call 212-465-7912.

TRAINING FUND UPDATE

Sean Brennan, longtime Director of the Mason Tenders Training Fund, announced his retirement after three decades as a LiUNA member. Sean began his career in Local 66 working in asbestos abatement and building construction. He was a Shop Steward and Auditor on Local 66's Executive Board. He later became an instructor for Local 66 before serving as our Training Fund Director for 17 years.

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
Anthony Williamson, Auditor
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

Seeing all of you at our first holiday party since COVID was an important milestone that many in our union have been working towards. We will never forget those we have lost, but our union stood strong, stayed together and we have much to celebrate.

Despite a challenging economy, our union easily surpassed our goal with over 11 million hours worked last year and our out-of-work list at 400. Never count New York out. Thanks to President Biden's infrastructure bill our city has a large pipeline of public and private work that will keep our members busy working on projects like the NY Blood Center Applied Sciences Hub, NYCFC Soccer Stadium and Arverne East coastal community.

Our organizing initiatives in the residential sector, including market-rate, NYCHA and affordable housing, have our union highly prepared to address changing market conditions. It's no secret that our city's housing crisis is getting worse. We need to build housing faster and smarter, while boosting wages for struggling New Yorkers so more residents can afford to stay here.

Our apprenticeship program is more than ready to continue training the next generation of skilled union laborers who build our city. The strength of our training fund is due to the dedication of our member instructors, recently retired Director Sean Brennan and his successor, Local 79's own, Timmy Warrington. I have no doubt that Timmy will continue Sean's legacy, as the two have worked in tandem to make our training fund the best in the business for many years.

In other positive moves, I am proud to announce that Sergeant-at-arms Bernard Callegari will be joining Mike Hellstrom at the LiUNA Eastern Region. Justice Favor also has moved from our organizing department to become GNY-LECET's Director of Strategic Partnerships and Nicole Vecchione has been promoted to LEROF's Research Director. I look forward to us all working together as we always do to take our union to new heights.

As for my own new position at the District Council, I want to thank you, the members, first and foremost for increasing the stature of Local 79 in LiUNA and throughout the city. My heart will always be with the membership of Local 79 and I will continue to represent our union to the best of my ability.

I want to finish by encouraging you all to make sure everyone in your family is not only registered to vote but actually votes. I have no crystal ball about what happens next for our country, but the only certainty I have right now is that 100% of America thinks 50% of Americans are crazy. We must overcome our divisions to focus on the bread and butter issues that best protect the interests of working-class people in our country.

In solidarity,

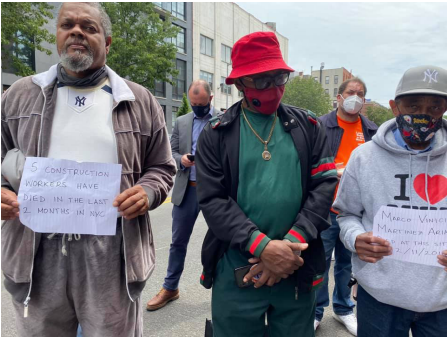


LiUNA!
Feel the Power



Carlos' Law Signed by Governor Hochul

Carlos Moncayo's death at 161 Maiden Lane was entirely preventable and the maximum fine for the non-union employer held responsible for his death was \$10,000. From day one, our union held vigils for workers like Carlos and we rallied in their memory calling for killer contractors to be held accountable. As Francisco Moya, the original sponsor of the bill and now councilmember, said: "New York should be built by the sweat not the blood of NYC construction workers." Our union worked with Moya and subsequent sponsors, Senator James Sanders and Assemblymember Rodneyse Bichotte Hermelyn, to build support for the bill throughout the state. On December 23, 2022 Governor Hochul signed the bill into law increasing the penalties for criminal corporate liability for the death or serious physical injury of an employee up to \$500,000. "Construction is an inherently dangerous business. But it doesn't have to be a deadly one. On our jobsites, we protect the workers. We thank all those involved for standing up for the non-union construction workers who needlessly lost their lives due to corporate greed," said Vice President Chaz Rynkiewicz.



Williamson Returns, Montalvo Retires

At our December meeting and Holiday Party, the Local 79 Executive Board announced Anthony Williamson's return to Local 79 as a Business Agent and reinstatement to his role as Auditor on the Executive Board. Anthony's recovery from his battle with cancer is an inspiration to all. We look forward to continue fighting with him on the frontlines for union jobs and serving our community. His return is testament to Anthony's determination and the importance of our union's healthcare.

At our January membership meeting, Luis Montalvo's retirement was announced in celebration of a career that spanned over 40 years. Luis proudly served our union as a Business Agent and Executive Board member. Previously Luis worked as an organizer for LEROF and with Business Manager Mike Prohaska on the historic campaign to organize the demolition industry in the 1990s. Luis is active in multiple community service and Ecuadorian-American organizations including H.E.A.R.T. 9/11 and as President of the Federation of Pichincha New York. "My sincere thanks to the membership of Local 79," said Luis upon joining the ranks of retirees. "It's been an opportunity of a lifetime to work with all of you towards advancing justice in the workplace."

