



# LOCAL 79 NEWS

CONSTRUCTION & GENERAL BUILDING LABORERS



## Community Organizations Honor Local 79 Business Manager Mike Prohaska

On three separate evenings in October, November and December of 2014, Local 79 Business Manager Mike Prohaska received awards honoring him for the work that he has carried out for the working men and women of Local 79 and New York City. La Fuente, an organization that focuses on immigrant and workers' rights, presented him with its "Bridge Builders" award on October 7. On November 19, Make the Road New York, an organization that works to build the power of Latino and working class communities, presented Prohaska with its "Power" award at its annual "Dignity, Community, and Power Award" gala. Lastly, Community Voices Heard, an organization that works with low-income workers, primarily women, presented him with one of its "Lights of Freedom" awards at its annual gala on December 2.

All three awards recognized the importance that Mike Prohaska and Local 79 place on forging alliances between Local 79 and community based organizations and expanding opportunities for workers to get good, solid, family sustaining jobs in the unionized construction industry. In his comments at all three events, Prohaska went out of his way to note that the award he was being given rightfully belonged to all members of Local 79. "These were not just words," said Prohaska. "The members of Local 79 are the heart and soul of this union, the people who show up after a hard day's work at rallies and hearings and volunteer in their communities on the weekends. I would be thrilled if all our members could get their own plaque in recognition of what they do for this City."

## LOCAL 79 HEALTHCARE BENEFITS EXPANDED as ELIGIBILITY RULES are CHANGED



On January 1, 2015, a major change in Local 79 healthcare eligibility rules went into effect. The change will enlarge the pool of Local 79 members who are eligible for healthcare benefits as well as significantly increase the length of their coverage. At the same time, the change ushers in an in-depth examination of Local 79's healthcare plan, which will attempt to align Local 79's plan with national efforts to focus on preventive care and reduction of overall healthcare costs.

Members recently received a letter explaining the eligibility changes in detail. In summary, the change in the rules makes members eligible for 12 months of coverage if they have worked at least 700 hours during the prior 12-month

eligibility period. To transition to the new plan, members who worked 400 hours from May 1, 2014 through October 31, 2014 will also be eligible for 12 months of benefits during the entire 2015 calendar year.

The significant increase in member healthcare benefits was the result of the good thinking, fiscal responsibility, and hard work of LiUNA Vice-President and Eastern Regional Manager Ray Pocino, Mason Tenders' District Council Business Manager Bobby Bonanza, Local 79 Business Manager Mike Prohaska, Local 78 Business Manager Edison Severino and all the management-side Trustees. "I am incredibly grateful to all my fellow Trustees for helping shape this expansion in benefits for our members," said Local 79 Business Manager Mike Prohaska. "This is a gigantic step forward. Many more members will have year-round healthcare benefits. An added benefit is that it will prevent eligible members from losing coverage during the calendar year and then having to purchase a plan on the healthcare exchanges or pay a penalty, as per the Affordable Care Act, for not doing so."

## DUES NEWS

Monthly dues increased to \$34 as of January 1, 2015 as per the LiUNA Constitution. Retiree dues are \$8 per month.

Dues payments must not go over two months without being paid or the member will be suspended. The readmission fee is \$56 for every month that the dues payments are behind plus \$34 for the current month.

### REMINDER:

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, provide their book number, and pay by credit card.

## OUT-OF-WORK LIST RE-REGISTRATION NOTICE

All persons on Local 79's Job referral list must re-register for the list during the first five business days of each quarter to maintain their position on the list.

**THE NEXT RE-REGISTRATION PERIOD WILL BE:**  
April 1, 2, 3 (until Noon), 6, 7 & 8

## LOCAL 79 EXECUTIVE BOARD

Mike Prohaska, Business Manager

Kenneth Brancaccio, President  
John Norbury, Vice President  
Joe Cestaro, Recording Secretary  
Victor Rizzo, Secretary-Treasurer  
Anthony Vita, Executive Board member  
Carl Cully, Executive Board member  
Jose Andino, Sergeant-at-Arms  
Luis Montalvo, Auditor  
Anthony Williamson, Auditor  
George Zecca, Auditor

### Construction and General Building Laborers' Local 79

520 Eighth Avenue, Suite 679, New York, NY 10018  
Phone: 212-465-7900 Fax: 212-465-7903

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.

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Contact information, events calendar, news, and general information can be found at [www.local79.org](http://www.local79.org)

## Message From Business Manager MIKE PROHASKA



I hope all of you had a happy, healthy, and peaceful holiday season. As 2015 is now upon us, I wanted to take the opportunity to reflect on some of the highlights of 2014.

**WORK HOURS:** Work hours in 2014 were up 478,120 hours from 2013, a year that included tens of thousands of "one-time" hours due to Sandy relief work. The increase in work hours is in large part a result of the great job our Organizing Department has done.

**WEBSITE:** Local 79's website was completely redone. It is now the place members go for news about Local 79, upcoming events and rallies, member services, contact information, and much more. [www.local79.org](http://www.local79.org)

**HEALTHCARE:** As you have read on page one of this newsletter, there have been significant changes to our Welfare Funds which will expand the number of eligible Local 79 members and increase the length of their coverage. Member benefits were also expanded to help cover dental implants, Lasik eye surgery, and ED drugs.

**FINANCIAL SERVICES:** Local 79 affiliated with the Actors Federal Credit Union, which has given and will give members the opportunity to use a non-profit institution for all of their banking needs.

Local 79 worked alongside the Training Fund to create financial literacy workshops for first-year apprentices. In 2015 Local 79 will expand this effort by offering financial planning workshops for current and future retirees.

**IMMIGRATION:** In April, Local 79 offered an Immigration Forum, attended by over 400 members and many LiUNA leaders and politicians. As a follow-up to this Forum, Local 79 added Make the Road New York as a provider of immigration- and naturalization-related legal services to its Legal Services plan.

Local 79 will be offering workshops throughout the winter to educate members about President Obama's executive order on immigration.

**LIFE INSURANCE:** Local 79 was able to work with the National Income Life Insurance Company to increase the free Accidental Death and Dismemberment benefit to \$4,000. All Local 79 members and retirees are automatically eligible to receive this benefit.

**CHILDCARE:** Local 79 has agreed to work with The Worker Institute to carry out a membership-wide survey related to childcare.

In the year ahead, all of us at Local 79 will work hard to ensure that Local 79 continues to grow. We will also continue to create new programs to serve the needs of our members. As always, if you have any ideas about things you would like to see Local 79 do, please do not hesitate to contact me directly.

Fraternally,

Mike Prohaska

  
Laborers' International Union of North America  
**LiUNA!**  
Feel the Power

## Organizing Victory at Astoria Cove!

**IN A MAJOR VICTORY FOR WORKING MEN AND WOMEN THROUGHOUT NEW YORK CITY, ON NOVEMBER 25, 2014, THE CITY COUNCIL GRANTED FINAL APPROVAL TO THE ASTORIA COVE PROJECT.**

The developer, Alma Realty, initially planned to build the over 2.2 million square foot mixed-use development with non-union labor and to set aside 17% of the residential units at below-market rates. However, due to a sustained organizing campaign, the final agreement requires that union workers will build, maintain and service the project and that 27% of the residential units will be affordable housing, with some monthly rents as low as \$800. The area, which is nearly a mile from the nearest subway stop, will also receive ferry service.

The difficult path to victory at Astoria Cove was paved by members of Local 79, Build Up New York City, and local community groups who began grassroots organizing months ago in the community of Astoria. The effort to fight against the initial plans for the development took

many forms: outreach to affected community members; a large-scale presence at community meetings, Community Board meetings and hearings, and at hearings held by the Queens borough president; and unrelenting pressure on politicians. In the end, the developer understood that this project would not go forward until it met the demands of unions and community groups.

"I am incredibly grateful to Local 79 members, especially the hundreds who live in Astoria, who have been involved in this struggle from the beginning. I also want to express my appreciation to Build Up New York, which worked tirelessly on this," said Local 79 Business Manager Mike Prohaska. "This victory shows that Local 79's strategy of keeping its ear to the ground and organizing at the community level will ensure that future development in this City brings with it good, middle-class jobs and affordable places for people to live."



### IMPORTANT REMINDER

### FIRE DEPARTMENT CERTIFICATES OF FITNESS

As the cold weather sets in, companies frequently request members who have Fire Department Certificates of Fitness. If and when you complete Fire Protection courses at the Training Fund, you must take a test to receive a Certificate of Fitness from the Fire Department. You must then bring the Certificate to the Job Administration Department at Local 79.



### WHEN

Jan 18, Feb 15, and March 1  
Sundays at 1pm

### WHERE

Make the Road New York  
92-10 Roosevelt Avenue  
Jackson Heights, Queens

### SPACE IS LIMITED!

Members must register by calling  
Juan Mazyliam at: 917-881-5767

## Local 79 to Offer Workshops ON NEW IMMIGRATION POLICIES

On November 20, 2014 President Obama announced that he was taking executive action on immigration. His announcement is expected to affect approximately five million undocumented immigrants living in the United States. The two major provisions of this action are as follows: An expansion of the number of people eligible for Deferred Action for Childhood Arrivals (DACA) and allowing undocumented parents of U.S. citizens or lawful permanent residents to apply for a three-year temporary deportation deferral and work permit if they have documentation to prove they have lived in the United States for more than five years.

Local 79 and Make the Road New York will be offering a series of workshops to inform Local 79 members about the new policy and the ways in which it might affect members and their families (*see left*).

In the meantime, Attorney General A.G. Schneiderman has warned immigrants to avoid becoming victims of potential scams involving immigration services. He said that in the past, "scammers have been quick to seize on moments of reform by taking advantage of desperate families seeking a pathway to citizenship." Eligible Local 79 members have access to free immigration and naturalization legal services through Make the Road New York or through the law firm Gorlick, Kravitz, and Listhaus, so there is no need for eligible Local 79 members to seek legal representation elsewhere.

# Shop Steward Refresher Courses

TO BE OFFERED BY LOCAL 79



As of January 1, 2015, Shop Steward Refresher classes will be taught by Local 79 staff. The classes, available in English and Spanish, will be offered a number of times each month in classrooms in Manhattan. "I am very happy that Local 79 staff members are going to teach these classes," said Local 79 Business Manager Mike Prohaska. "This offers an opportunity for Shop Stewards to work with and learn from members of our Organizing Department and Local 79 Business Agents."

Prohaska noted that all certified Shop Stewards must take a four-hour Shop Steward Refresher course every two years. Members have a sixty-day grace period after the expiration of their Shop Steward certificate. If they do not take the course within that sixty-day window, they have to take the full-day Shop Steward class.

For a schedule of classes, times, dates, and location, go to [www.local79.org](http://www.local79.org) and click on "Member Services" then choose "Classes." Members must register for the class by calling Ursula Kirwin at 212-465-7972.

## Jobsite Visits

### CONNECTING THE MEMBERS WITH THEIR UNION

Periodically, members of Local 79's Executive Board visit jobsites around the city where Local 79 members are currently working. These events are sponsored by Greater New York LECET, the labor-management fund whose mission is to work on behalf of our signatory contractors and Local 79 to increase the number of projects that our signatory contractors win, thereby increasing jobs for our members. While the jobsite visits often include lunch, they serve a much more important function. Business Manager Mike Prohaska uses the visit to share important information with members and also to get feedback, concerns and suggestions from members. Simply put, jobsite visits play an indispensable role in ongoing communication between the union leadership and its members.



## SPOTLIGHT > Grievance Department



The Grievance Department works to resolve issues related to Local 79 signatories not adhering to one or more provisions of the collective bargaining agreement to which they are bound.

The Director of the Grievance Department, Anthony Vita, has been a member of Local 79 for 33 years, the head of the department since 1997 and a member of Local 79's Executive Board since 2005. "Serving the members as head of the Grievance Department is an honor for me," says Vita. "What better job is there than to make sure that our members are getting all the benefits that are laid out in the collective bargaining agreements that Local 79 has worked

so hard to negotiate." Vita notes that members should not call the Grievance Department directly about worksite problems that may result in formal grievances. Instead, members should report the problem to their Shop Steward who will, in turn, report the problem to the Business Agent, who will then file a grievance. If necessary, members can speak directly to their area Business Agent.

The Grievance Department issues members checks that result from successful resolution of grievances and distributes checks for demolition workers on Mondays, Wednesdays, and Fridays from 9:00 am until 5:00 pm.

### Local 79 Retirees Annual Retiree Holiday Party at Russo's On The Bay



### Local 79 Members Annual Holiday Party at Terrace on the Park

## MENSAJE DEL GERENTE COMERCIAL, MIKE PROHASKA

Espero que todos ustedes hayan tendido una temporada de fiestas felices, saludables y pacíficas. Como ya casi empezamos el 2015, quería aprovechar esta oportunidad para reflexionar sobre algunos de los aspectos más destacados del año pasado.

**HORAS DE TRABAJO:** En el 2014 las horas de trabajo aumentaron en 478,120 horas respecto de las del 2013. (Debo señalar que 2013 fue un año que incluyó decenas de miles de horas de "una sola vez" debido a la labor de socorro de Sandy). El aumento en horas de trabajo se debe en gran parte a la gran labor realizada por nuestro Departamento de Organización.

**SITIO WEB:** El sitio web del Local 79 se ha renovado completamente. Ahora es el lugar al que pueden acudir los miembros para enterarse de las noticias del Local 79, próximos eventos y mítines, información de contacto y mucho más. ([www.local79.org](http://www.local79.org))

**ATENCIÓN DE SALUD:** Como han leído en la página número uno de este boletín informativo, han habido cambios importantes en nuestros Welfare Funds/Fondos de Bienestar que aumentarán el número de miembros del Local 79 elegibles y aumentarán la duración de su cobertura. También, hay nuevos beneficios para ayudar pagar una porción de los costos de los implantes dentales, cirugía ocular LASIK, y drogas para disfunción eréctil.

**SERVICIOS FINANCIEROS:** El Local 79 se ha afiliado a la Actors Federal Credit Union, lo cual ha dado y seguirá dando a nuestros miembros la oportunidad de utilizar una institución sin fines de lucro para todas sus necesidades bancarias.

El Local 79 trabajó junto al Training Fund para crear talleres de conocimientos financieros básicos para aprendices de primer

año. Los planes para el 2015 requieren ampliar este esfuerzo mediante la oferta de cosas como talleres de planificación financiera para jubilados y para aquellos miembros que planean jubilarse pronto.

**INMIGRACIÓN:** En abril, el Local 79 ofreció un Foro sobre Inmigración, al que asistieron más de 400 miembros y muchos prominentes líderes de LiUNA y políticos. Como seguimiento de este Foro, el Local 79 incorporó a Make the Road New York/Se Hace Camino Nueva York como proveedores de servicios legales relacionados con inmigración y naturalización en su plan de Servicios Legales.

El Local 79 ofrecerá talleres durante todo el invierno para educar a sus miembros acerca de la orden ejecutiva del presidente Obama sobre inmigración.

**SEGURO DE VIDA:** El Local 79 logró trabajar con la National Income Life Insurance Company para incrementar el beneficio por Muerte Accidental y Desmembramiento a \$4,000. Todos los miembros y jubilados del Local 79 son automáticamente elegibles para recibir este beneficio.

**CUIDADO DE LOS NIÑOS:** El Local 79 ha acordado trabajar con The Worker Institute para realizar una encuesta de todos los miembros relacionada con el cuidado de los niños.

En el año por venir, todos nosotros en el Local 79 seguiremos trabajando esforzadamente para garantizar que la Local 79 siga creciendo. También seguiremos desarrollando nuevos servicios y ofreciendo programas para satisfacer las necesidades de todos nuestros miembros. Como siempre, si tienen nuevas ideas acerca de cosas que querrían que hiciera el Local 79, no duden en comunicarse directamente conmigo.

## ORGANIZACIONES COMUNITARIAS RINDEN HOMENAJE AL GERENTE COMERCIAL DEL LOCAL 79 MIKE PROHASKA

En tres noches durante los meses de octubre, noviembre y diciembre de 2014, Mike Prohaska, gerente comercial del Local 79, recibió premios en reconocimiento de la labor realizada por él en beneficio de los hombres y las mujeres del Local 79 y de la ciudad de Nueva York. La Fuente, una organización dedicada a los derechos de los inmigrantes y trabajadores, le presentó su premio "Bridge Builders" en su noche de gala anual el 7 de octubre. El 19 de noviembre, Make the Road New York/Se Hace Camino Nueva York, una organización que trabaja para establecer el poder Latino y dar apoyo a las comunidades de clase trabajadora, presentó a Prohaska su premio "Power" (Poder) en su gala anual titulada "Dignity, Community, and Power Award" (Premio Dignidad, Comunidad y Poder). Y finalmente, Community Voices Heard (Las voces comunitarias se hacen escuchar), una organización que actúa con trabajadores de bajos ingresos, principalmente mujeres, le presentó uno de sus premios "Lights of Freedom" (Luces de Libertad) de Shirley Chisholm, en su gala anual el 2 de diciembre.

Estos tres premios reconocieron la importancia que dan Mike Prohaska y el Local 79 a forjar alianzas entre el Local 79 y las organizaciones de base comunitaria y a ampliar las oportunidades de los trabajadores para obtener trabajos buenos, sólidos y sustentadores de la familia en la industria de la construcción sindicalizada. En sus comentarios sobre los tres eventos, Prohaska recalcó insistentemente que el premio que se le otorgaba le correspondía por derecho a todos los miembros del Local 79. "Lo que digo no son meramente palabras", dice Prohaska. "Los miembros del Local 79 son el corazón y el alma de este sindicato, la gente que se presenta después de un arduo día de trabajo en manifestaciones y audiencias y cooperan como voluntarios en sus comunidades durante los fines de semana. Me encantaría que todos nuestros miembros pudieran obtener su propia placa de reconocimiento de lo que hacen por esta ciudad".



## Local 79 Ofrecerá Talleres SOBRE NUEVAS POLÍTICAS MIGRATORIAS

El 20 de noviembre de 2014, el presidente Obama anunció que estaba tomando una acción ejecutiva relacionada con la inmigración. Se espera que su anuncio afecte a unos 5 millones de inmigrantes indocumentados que viven en Estados Unidos. Las dos disposiciones principales de esta acción son las siguientes: Una expansión de la cantidad de personas elegibles para la Acción Diferida para los Llegados en la Infancia (DACA) y permitir que los padres indocumentados de ciudadanos estadounidenses o residentes permanentes legales puedan solicitar un aplazamiento temporal de deportación y un permiso de trabajo por tres años, si tienen documentación para probar que han vivido en Estados Unidos por más de cinco años.

El Local 79 y Make the Road New York/Se Hace Camino Nueva York ofrecerán una serie de talleres para informar a los miembros del Local 79 acerca de la nueva política y las maneras en las que estas podrían afectar a los miembros y sus familias (*ver a la izquierda*).

Mientras tanto, el Fiscal General A.G. Schneiderman ha advertido a los inmigrantes que eviten ser víctimas de estafas relacionadas con los servicios de inmigración. Dijo que en el pasado, "los estafadores se han apresurado para aprovechar los momentos de reforma para explotar a familias desesperadas que buscan un camino hacia la ciudadanía". Los miembros elegibles del Local 79 tienen acceso a servicios gratuitos de inmigración y naturalización a través de Make the Road New York/Se Hace Camino Nueva York o de la firma de abogados Gorlick, Kravitz, and Listhaus, de modo que no necesitan buscar representación legal en otras partes.

## AUMENTAN LOS BENEFICIOS DE ATENCIÓN DE SALUD DEL LOCAL 79 AL REVISARSE LAS REGLAS DE ELEGIBILIDAD

El 1 de enero de 2015 entra en vigor un cambio importante en las reglas de elegibilidad para atención de salud del Local 79. El cambio aumentará el número de miembros del Local 79 que son elegibles para recibir beneficios de atención de salud además de ampliar considerablemente la duración de su cobertura. Al mismo tiempo, el cambio conduce a realizar un examen a fondo del plan de atención de salud del Local 79, el cual tratará de alinear nuestro plan con los esfuerzos nacionales dedicados a la atención preventiva y la reducción del costo total de la atención de salud.

Los miembros han recibido recientemente una carta que explica detalladamente los cambios de elegibilidad. Para resumir, el cambio de las

reglas hace que los miembros sean elegibles para 12 meses de cobertura si habían trabajado al menos 700 horas durante el periodo de elegibilidad de 12 meses inmediatamente anterior. Para pasar al nuevo plan, los miembros que trabajaron 400 horas desde el 1 de mayo de 2014 hasta el 31 de octubre de 2014 también serán elegibles para 12 meses de beneficios durante todo el año calendario 2015.

Este aumento considerable de beneficios de atención de salud para los miembros es el resultado de los buenos razonamientos, la responsabilidad fiscal y el trabajo esmerado de Ray Pocino, Vicepresidente y Gerente Regional de la Zona Este de LiUNA, Bobby Bonanza, Gerente Comercial del Concejo Distrital de Mason

Tenders, Mike Prohaska, Gerente Comercial del Local 79, Edison Severino, Gerente Comercial del Local 78 y todos los Síndicos directivos. "Estoy increíblemente agradecido a todos mis compañeros Síndicos por haber contribuido a dar forma a esta expansión de beneficios para nuestros miembros", dijo el Gerente Comercial del Local 79, Mike Prohaska. "Este es un gigantesco paso hacia adelante. Muchos más miembros tendrán beneficios de atención de salud todo el año. Un beneficio añadido es que se evitará que los miembros elegibles pierdan la cobertura durante el año calendario y luego tengan que comprar un plan en los mercados de seguros médicos o pagar una multa, según lo prescrito por la Ley de Cuidados de Salud Asequibles (Affordable Care Act - ACA), por no hacerlo.

### CUÁNDO

Todos los talleres se darán a la 1:00 pm durante los siguientes domingos:  
18 de enero, 15 de febrero y 1 de marzo

### DONDE

Make the Road New York  
92-10 Roosevelt Avenue  
Jackson Heights, Queens

### ¡EL ESPACIO ES LIMITADO!

Los miembros deben registrarse para los talleres llamando a Juan Mazymlian al:  
917-881-5767



## Construction & General Building

### Laborers' Local 79

520 8th Avenue, Suite 679

New York, NY 10018

Phone: 212-465-7900 Fax: 212-465-7903

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## UPCOMING EVENTS 2015

Call Melissa Siciliano at  
212-465-7976 for more info

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### FEBRUARY 18

*No General Membership Meeting*

### FEBRUARY 26 at 10am

#### Retiree Awareness Breakfast

Vegas Diner, 1619 86th St, Brooklyn

*RSVP with Melissa Siciliano to attend this event*

### MARCH 4 at 5pm

#### General Membership Meeting

St. Vartan Church

630 2nd Avenue

### MARCH 27 - Buses depart at 8am

#### Retiree Outing

Sands Casino, Bethlehem, PA

*RSVP with Melissa Siciliano to attend this event*



## Laborers Care Great Room Dedication

On November 7, LiUNA leaders gathered for the dedication of the Laborers Care Great Room at St. Mary's Hospital for Children. Local 79 made a commitment two years ago to raise \$500,000 for the hospital, and in recognition of this gift, the room was named for Laborers Care, the umbrella organization established by Local 79 to raise the funds.

From left to right: John Virga, Mason Tenders' District Council Trust Funds Director; Steve Flanagan, Local 66 Business Manager; Paul O'Brien, Managing Director, Building Contractors Association; Robert Bonanza, Mason Tenders' District Council Business Manager; Terence O'Sullivan, LiUNA General President; Edwin F. Simpson, St. Mary's President and Chief Executive Officer; Michael Prohaska, Local 79 Business Manager; Raymond M. Pocino, LiUNA Vice-President and Eastern Regional Manager