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WORKERS MEMORIAL DAY • APRIL 28



2022 WORKERS MEMORIAL DAY APRIL 28



Greetings Brothers and Sisters,

April 28th, Worker Memorial Day, is day of remembrance honoring all those who lost their lives, were seriously injured or were sickened by their work. But it is also a day to re-commit ourselves to the promise that every worker has a fundamental right to a safe job. Fulfilling this promise requires that we recommit to the fight for a workplace free of hazards.

April 28, 2022 marks 52 years since Congress passed the Occupational Safety and Health Act of 1970 into law. The OSH Act was passed because of the relentless efforts of the labor movement. When OSHA was formed fifty years ago, the daily toll was 38 workers killed on the job. Enforcement of OSHA regulations, as well as the hard-fought victories by labor unions and our allies, have reduced the number of workplace fatalities to less than 14 per day, a 62% reduction. Unfortunately, many rules are still 50 years old, out of date and too lax for the 5,000 workers who die on the job each year. An additional 50,000 workers die prematurely each year from occupational diseases that could be prevented by reducing exposures to the myriad of hazards unaddressed by OSHA rules.

OSHA's rules and activities cannot replace strong union advocacy and the protections we gain from collective bargaining. Through negotiations, the UAW achieves health and safety provisions that bolster OSHA rules but also go far beyond those basic regulations to reduce ergonomic hazards, workplace violence, chemical exposures, noise and unsafe equipment.

Union contract language gives us a voice at the workplace and protects those who use their voice to demand safe and healthy work. The weakness of OSHA's protections for workers who speak out for safety is well known to those who have lost pay, been disciplined, an even fired for reporting hazards. Nonunion workers who complain about safety hazards rely on the weakest whistleblower provisions of any other government agency. But union workers have the power of the contract to protect their right to speak out and make change happen.

We all recognize that the COVID-19 pandemic has been devastating on working families. Throughout this global public health crisis, the importance of a safe environment for every worker has become even more apparent. As a union we have taken action to demand protections for our members from this virus and we continue to fight for fresh air, ventilation, personal protective equipment, testing, contact tracing and health care treatments for the long-term effects of this disease.

Our Union has always led the fight for safer working conditions so that our members can return home each day to their loved ones and enjoy a retirement free of disease. On April 28th, our UAW family mourns for those who have tragically lost their lives and we honor them by continuing the fight for the living.

In Solidarity,

Ray Curry
President

Fatal Incidents at UAW-Represented Facilities

The UAW Health and Safety Department received notification of 5 work-related deaths among UAW members since the last remembrance of Workers Memorial Day.

December 19, 2020
Vania Underwood
Age: 36
Local 2213, Region 2B
Registered Nurse, St. Vincent's Hospital
Toledo, Ohio

Vania Underwood was a recent graduate from nursing school and her first assignment was on the frontlines of the pandemic. Underwood was a registered nurse who was assigned to the COVID unit at St. Vincent's hospital in Toledo, Ohio. She is one of the many UAW members who lost their lives to this illness.

April 21, 2021
Terrance Garr
Age: 57
Local 1264, Region 1
Crane Operator, Sterling Stamping Plant (Stellantis)
Sterling Heights, Michigan

Brother Garr was assigned to operate an overhead crane during die setting procedures on a progressive metal press at an automotive parts stamping plant. Normal safety procedure is for the crane operator to work with a die setter; Garr was working alone. After raising the die Garr walked around the die several times then attempted to set the die on the mobile bolster next to the press. At 9:30 PM Garr was operating the crane while attempting to align the die to the bolster locating pins. The suspended die dislodged and swung crushing him between the die and the door of the press.

July 16, 2021
Khaled Nasser
Age: 50
Local 600, Region 1A
Skilled Trades, Instrument Repair/MTE, Cleveland Cliffs
Dearborn, Michigan

Brother Nasser was an instrument repairman/electrician at the integrated steel mill owned by Cleveland Cliffs in Dearborn, MI. He was part of a three-person maintenance crew assigned to replace light bulbs in a high bay. He had accessed a catwalk and walked approximately 125-feet when a 3 square foot section of the grating collapsed underneath him. He fell approximately 50-feet and suffered fatal head injuries.

July 20, 2021
Javarlowe Banks
Age: 48
Local 469, Region 4
Skilled Trades, Machinist, Master Lock
Milwaukee, Wisconsin

Brother Banks, skilled trades machine repair, was assigned to the plastic injection molding department on second shift. After completing his shift he went to the break room and was found unconscious by co-workers. He received CPR and was transported to the hospital where he was pronounced dead at 12:09 AM. Autopsy results, a history of asthma and air contaminant sampling results indicate that workplace exposures were potential contributing factors in this fatality.

November 3, 2021
Patrick Archer
Age: 50
Local 1219, Region 2B
Skilled Trades, Machine Repair, Ford Lima Engine Plant
Lima, Ohio

Brother Archer, a machine repairman, was killed during maintenance of a CNC machine. In response to a brush fault, the energy control procedures (lock out/tag out) were applied to the primary equipment. As maintenance was performed the CNC machine access door as well as the overhead machine delivery door remained open. The gantry system designed to deliver parts and position tooling through the overhead door cycled in error. Brother Archer was standing up in the machine with his body protruding through the overhead door. He was crushed between the gantry and the top door opening of the CNC machine.