82% YES!
Samuelsen Calls Vote a ‘Mandate for a United TWU’

Full Details Pages 16-19

TWU Local 100 President John Samuelsen announces results of membership ratification at May 19, 2014 press conference, above, and inset, at April 17th announcement of settlement with Governor Andrew Cuomo.
THANK YOU BROTHERS AND SISTERS FOR YOUR overwhelming endorsement of our new contract with the MTA. This ratification brings to a close one of the most difficult and lengthy negotiations in our union’s history, conducted in one of the harshest bargaining climates ever for the public sector in New York.

Thank you for standing strong with your union’s leadership against an employer that was determined to drastically undermine our livelihoods. Their efforts to slash our medical benefits, privatize chunks of the system and eliminate hundreds of jobs by instituting part-timers, throwing our conductors off the trains and shoving the “state pattern” of three years of zero wage increases down our throats all fell apart in the face of a united membership.

But fighting back together, we won raises in every year, not the zeroes the MTA was convinced they were going to get. We won full retroactivity to January 16, 2012 – the expiration date of our last contract. We achieved important benefit increases in areas of particular concern – dental and optical. We broke through with first time ever paid maternity and paternity leave; full spousal bridge benefit health care coverage until Medicare eligibility in the event of the death of a retiree, and big increases in the line of duty death benefit and the active service death benefit.

We also achieved important commitments from the MTA for improved safety for our Bus Operators and better restroom facilities for our female Operators. Finally, we took a huge step toward a Universal MTA pass by negotiating free LIRR and Metro North passes for our members who live in zones covered by the commuter rails.

We intend to use the contract as the foundation for negotiations for our members at MTA Bus.

Looking back on the long campaign, I am proud to say that TWU Local 100 fought back when others folded; we achieved success covering years in which the economy was in free fall; and we defended our work rules. No part timers; no expansion of OPTO, and no privatization of Station cleaning and maintenance.

I accept the outcome of our vote as an absolute mandate for unity inside Local 100. This contract campaign proves what can be achieved when we lock arms together against a common enemy. Let’s build on this victory in the months and years ahead.

Our 80th Anniversary

We recently marked the 80th anniversary of the founding of our union in 1934 by Michael J. Quill and many others who believed deeply in industrial unionism.

Quill, an Irish immigrant, was profoundly influenced by the writings of Irish patriot James Connolly, who himself had been a founding member of the Irish Transport and General Workers Union in 1909.

Quill built our TWU on the industrial union philosophy that advocates organizing all workers in an industry under one union, regardless of the specific trade or skill level, and more importantly regardless of race or ethnicity.

This philosophy has served us well through 80 years. And it served us well during our just concluded contract fight with the MTA.

May our great union and its leaders always be guided by these core union values.

William Pena Funeral

I along with hundreds of other transit workers said a sorrowful goodbye to a good man, a devoted father, and union brother in late February at the funeral of Brother William Pena at St. Paul’s Church. Hundreds more, including Mayor Bill de Blasio, comforted William’s family at his wake the previous day.

William’s death under the horrific tragic circumstances it occurred shined yet another spotlight on the difficult work we do and the dangers we face every day on the job.

As a union, we will not forget Brother Pena. We will continue to support his family through our Widows and Orphans Fund, as we do for the families of other transit workers killed on the job.

I can only hope that the City he served so well for so many years will remember his sacrifices, and the sacrifices that all transit workers make for the millions of New Yorkers who depend on us every day.
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Daily News Honors Transit Heroes
Nine Local 100 members were among the 15 MTA employees honored at this year’s New York Daily News Hometown Heroes in Transit Awards breakfast.

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Cuomo Helps Close Deal
Gov. Andrew Cuomo congratulates Local 100 President John Samuelsen on contract settlement at April 17, 2014 press conference at the Governor’s office in Manhattan.

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Celebrating Black History
The dynamic singing group, Thokoza, provided the entertainment at this year’s Black History event, which honored CBTU founder Bill Lucy, and TWU International Administrative Vice President John Bland.
Killed in the Line of Duty
Local 100 Mourns Brother

EARLY ON THE MORNING OF FEBRUARY 12, Bus Operator William Peña was cheerfully greeting passengers boarding his M14 Bus. It was just like any other morning on the crosstown 14th Street run. But then in a blink of an eye, Brother William Peña was dead, the victim of a reckless, criminal act that stunned the City, leaving his immediate family, his partner Nancy Rodriguez and daughter Gabriella Peña, devastated along with hundreds of fellow transit workers at the Mike Quill Bus Depot in Manhattan, where Peña worked.

TWU Local 100 President John Samuelsen went to the Quill Depot that morning to address the membership. He gave a sad report of what he found. “The Depot is in a real state of mourning right now,” he added. “A lot of tears are being shed.”

Richard Davis, Union Chair of Brother Peña’s division of MaBSTOA, said, “It’s such a terrible tragedy. Everyone around here is in a deep depression. Brother Peña was such a good person, a good family man and father. He was a great worker, great record on the job, really well liked. I’ve never seen the depot this quiet.”

The sadness was amplified by the fact that many Bus Operators at Quill were used to seeing his adoring daughter come to visit her dad there, and sit by him at his accustomed seat during his swing shift. She was also often...
Daughter’s heartbreaking letter to her Dad

Editor’s Note: William Pena’s daughter posted this letter to the internet a few days after his passing on a site created to remember her father, www.williampena.org

“Daddy, if you’re listening I want you to hear me, this is for you. I miss you but you’re gone, you’re not coming back; writing this is the hardest thing and never thought I would have to do. We were inseparable always together and always being clowns with each other.

“We were looking through pictures yesterday and all I saw was pictures of us and it made me smile. When I heard about your accident on the news I couldn’t believe it. I thought it was a lie, but God had to take a precious person from my life and since you’re not coming back, you will be missed. I hope while you’re up there, you will tell Ruben, Allen, Rubio, Reina and all the family members that passed away, I said hi. Tears are streaming down my face while I write this message. Also, I know you had a lot of customers, friends and family that are heart broken over this tragedy. Just know dad I love you and I’m always here no matter what. I will never forget you and all the things you taught and made me remember for the future. Ray, your best friend, was very heart broken over your death pops. Everyone says you’re in a better place now but God took a person which is now an Angel in Heaven. Love you Dad Always and Forever.

R.I.P. 2/10/1965 - 2/12/2014

– By Gabrielle Peña
The Accident

Bus Operator William Pena’s life ended on February 12 at around 5:30 AM, when a box truck driven by a drunken Dominic Whilby collided with his M-14 bus near West 14th Street and 7th Avenue. Both bus and truck wound up against the corner of a building that houses a Chase bank. A coffee vendor’s cart and an SUV were also caught in the collision, and the coffee vendor was also injured.

TWU Local 100 Secretary-Treasurer Earl Phillips, the former Director of Safety for the Union, responded to the scene along with Safety Directors Frank Austin (Buses) and Tom Carrano (Subways). Phillips briefed the press on the accident. Austin diagrammed the scene, which was also photographed by the Local 100 Communications Department.

At press time, the MTA’s official board of inquiry report on the accident has not been released. The impact forced the bus into the side of a tall office building, pinning it in a maze of scaffolding and jamming it into the railing of the 14th Street entrance to the IRT subway. Pena was ejected from his seat by the impact.

In his remarks, Samuelsen told the family, “We will help bear your burdens.” The union presence was strong throughout, not only at the funeral but also in court. When the Peña family set up a website to take donations, Local 100 put up a link on our website and shared it widely. OA Division 1 Chair Richard Davis has been constantly at the family’s side, helping them navigate the court system and seeing to their needs in this difficult time.

Part of the burden the family must now endure is what is expected to be a long round of court appearances. We can all share their pain by attending and showing our solidarity with the Peña family.
Union, Family, Management Mourn

William Pena Swing Room Dedicated at Quill

The saddest moment at the April 30 dedication of the swing room at the Michael J. Quill Depot in honor of slain driver William Pena came when his friends, led by Bus Operator Ray DalCortivo, uncovered the top of an old table where he used to eat lunch. The table was beautifully restored and covered with photos of Brother Pena. His wife, Nancy Rodriguez, and daughter Gabriella hugged each other and cried.

MaBSTOA Division 1 Chair Richard Davis served as emcee for SRO event. TWU Local 100 President John Samuelsen, Secretary-Treasurer Earl Phillips, Recording Secretary LaTonya Crisp-Sauray, and other top officers joined MTA brass including NYCT President Carmen Bianco and Buses Senior VP Darryl Irick to dedicate a plaque with William’s likeness that will remain in the swing room as long as the building stands. The plaque reads: “Dedicated to the Memory of Bus Operator William Pena, Who Lost His Life While Serving the People of New York City. Run 3 M14. February 12, 2014. You will always be in our thoughts and prayers – Members of TWU Local 100.”

DalCortivo, William’s closest friend, said: “We worked together for 18 years. We started the day laughing, and ended the day laughing. Not a day went by when we didn’t have a great time. The passengers loved him. I will miss him dearly.”

President Samuelsen assured William’s family of the union’s unwavering support as they go through their court ordeal and the aftermath of William’s death. NYCT President Carmen Bianco said, “I consider all of us a family. He’ll be forever in our prayers, as you will, Nancy and Gabriella.”

William’s wife Nancy, stepping up to the mic with her eyes wet, urged union members to attend the court dates for Domonic Whilby, who is facing a manslaughter charge for killing her husband. The next date is set for June 18th in New York State Supreme Court. “Every day,” she said, “when Bus Drivers come into this room they will remember him. His memory will stay alive. And we appreciate everybody who made that happen.”
AN AUTHENTIC “WHO’S WHO” OF NEW YORK CITY politics and media turned out earlier this year to participate in the 2nd Annual New York Daily News Hometown Heroes for Transit awards breakfast. Nine Local 100 members, five supervisory personnel and one member of the United Transportation Union from Staten Island Rapid Transit were honored for going “above and beyond” to assist fellow New Yorkers in danger.

Mayor Bill de Blasio and Police Commissioner William Bratton were among the award presenters. Both de Blasio and Bratton, who served as Commissioner of the New York City Transit Police Department 20 years ago, heaped heartfelt praise on the award winners, as well as on all transit workers for their daily contributions to the City of the New York. Both men said that the Daily News event highlighting the heroics of transit workers is “long overdue.”
Local 100 President John Samuelsen told the crowd of nearly 300 well wishers at the Edison Ballroom on West 47th Street that transit workers are “truly the unsung heroes” of New York.

MTA Chair Tom Prendergast echoed Samuelsen’s sentiment, saying that the MTA “deeply appreciates” the hard work and dedication of its employees.

Other presenters included Mary Calvi, anchor of the WCBS Morning News; Darlene Rodriguez, co-anchor of the WNBC Today show; actress Tamara Tunie of Law and Order, SVU fame; New York Giants great Carl Banks; Lionel and Howard Thompson of WPIX, Cheryl Wills of NY1 News, and Colin Myler, Daily News Editor-in-Chief.

Pat Kiernan, the morning news anchor at NY1 News, served as emcee for the second year in a row.

The TWU Local 100 honorees include:

Cleaner Felicia Williams, who came to the aid of a mugging victim and helped police collar the culprit.

Power Maintainer Roger Bell, who jumped on the tracks to hoist a legally blind man to safety at Broadway Junction.

Signal Maintainer Frank D’Erasmo, who helped save an unconscious young man who had tumbled to the tracks at Queens Plaza.

Train Operator Danny Hay, who helped save an unconscious man from the tracks as well as two would-be rescuers.

Bus Operator Jihad Abed, who risked life and limb to save a young passenger who was being beaten by a gang of teens in the Bronx.

Structure Maintainer Johnny Goings, who rescued co-workers, a police officers and several civilians near the Stillwell Terminal during the height of Hurricane Sandy.

Conductor Denise Davis, who protected her passengers during a wild shoot-out between police and an ex-con they were trying to arrest.

Signal Maintainers Colombo Solimo and Devin Puma, who along with four supervisors, performed heroics during Hurricane Sandy.
FOR THE FOURTH YEAR IN A ROW, COLLEGE bound children of 25 more good standing members got a financial head start thanks to $25,000 in grants provided by M3 Technology, the union’s voluntary insurance administrator for life, disability, critical illness, home owner and auto benefits. That brings to 100 the number of young people who have received the scholarships.

On December 10, 2013 M3 hosted a luncheon to present certificates to the lucky winners, which had been chosen in a random drawing at a Local 100 Executive Board meeting. The scholars received their awards from John Pescitelli, President and CEO of M3, and together with their family members were congratulated by Local 100 President John Samuelsen.

### 2012 M3 Technology, LLC - TWU Local 100 Scholarships Winners

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This year’s event hosted the current winners, as well as the 2012 winners whose luncheon was cancelled in the wake of Hurricane Sandy.

Pescitelli told the 2012 and 2013 winners at the ceremony: “I am honored to be presenting the annual TWU Local 100 scholarship awards. We at M3 Technology believe that you students are the future of our country and the future of the union movement. Work hard. Set your sights high and be the best that you can be, no matter what your career path.”

All TWU Local 100 members in good standing are eligible to submit the names of children or grandchildren – or themselves if they are going to school – who are entering or attending a 2 or 4-year colleges.

Our congratulations to the winners, who carry our heartfelt hopes for a successful course of study at the school of their choice.

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TWU, World Labor Mourn the Death of RMT’s Bob Crow

BOB CROW, THE DYNAMIC AND MILITANT LEADER of London’s bus and subway workers union and a leading voice for the working class worldwide, died of a massive heart attack on March 10, 2014. He was a close ally of TWU Local 100 and the International union, and a frequent speaker at TWU events here in New York. He was only 52 years old and had been the elected General Secretary of the Railway, Marine and Transport Union (RMT) since 2002.

TWU Local 100 President John Samuelsen said: “Bob’s death is a crushing blow to Britain’s and the world’s labor movements. He was without question the most important and profound voice for industrial unionism and the working class in the world. He was a true friend and mentor. I don’t think we can even begin to quantify how devastating this loss is to our great labor movement.”

TWU International President Harry Lombardo said: “Bob was a tireless advocate and crusader for workers across the globe. This is a great, great loss — and not just for his members and working people in the UK, but for workers everywhere.”

The RMT’s assistant general secretary Steve Hedley said: “The RMT has lost a great leader and a great man and the whole working class has lost a true leader.”

RMT President Peter Pinkney said of Crow: “Bob’s humor, insight and passion were infectious and it inspired everyone who met him. He often told audiences that fear was conta-
egious ‘but so is courage.’ He instilled bravery, determination and confidence into all those who heard him and worked with him. He also created the conditions for unity under the most difficult circumstances, bringing together those with differing views and developing a way forward without personal rancor or bitterness.”

Bob’s older brother Richard said: “Bob was honest, he looked after the people he was supposed to look after. When people have a high office in life they fall for the big trappings of the flash cars and the big hotels and big houses. But Bob wasn’t like that, he was a genuine person of the people.”

Crow was scheduled to speak at Local 100’s Quill-Connolly Day Celebration on March 15, 2014. He spoke at last year’s Quill-Connolly day event; at the TWU International Convention in September 2013 and at a number of other TWU events over the years.

In his last speech to a TWU crowd at the International Union Convention, Crow displayed his trademark bluntness. He said: “I operate on the basis of militant trade unions in the workplace. I couldn’t give two monkeys about any boss’s agenda. The only agenda I want to front for is for working people.”

He also gave a high compliment to TWU, saying: “If I were in this country working in the transport industry, TWU would be the union I would join.”

Bob Crow was born and raised in East London. He left school at 16 to work for London Transport, as part of a rail-fixing and tree-felling gang.

He is survived by his partner, Nicola Hoarau, and four children.
TWU LOCAL 100 BECAME THE FIRST UNION IN the City to jump headlong into the hotly contested Democratic primary in the 13th Congressional District by endorsing State Sen. Adriano Espaillat.

Local 100 President John Samuelsen made the announcement at a press conference at union headquarters in Brooklyn on March 14, with a beaming Espaillat at his side.

Samuelsen said that more than 3,000 Local 100 members live in the 13th CD, which straddles Manhattan and the Bronx.

The Local 100 Executive Committee earlier voted unanimously to support Espaillat over long-time incumbent Charles Rangel and a second challenger, Rev. Michael Walrond.

Samuelsen said that the union’s endorsement is based on Espaillat’s long record of support for fair contracts for transit workers as well as safe and clean working conditions. “We view Adriano Espaillat as a powerful force for social justice and we are proud to be part of his coalition of support. We are confident that he is the best person to fight for us in Congress and we are ready to get to work to make him our next Representative in the 13th District.”

Espaillat said that TWU’s endorsement is “extremely important to me” because it comes from the “men and women who move this city, who get us to work and home safely every day.” He also said that transit workers contribute mightily to the City’s economic vitality.

“In Congress, I will fight tirelessly to secure the funding necessary to keep our transit system moving – rain, snow or shine – united we can strengthen our infrastructure,” Espaillat added. “I am honored to have TWU’s support and I look forward to working with you on my campaign and on capital improvements that help you do your jobs.”

Espaillat said that his other goals in Congress include: more funding for affordable and low-income housing; immigration reform; economic development focused on small and minority owned businesses, and healthcare campaigns to combat conditions plaguing minority communities like diabetes, obesity and childhood asthma.

In addition to TWU, Espaillat has received several key endorsements, including New York City Council Speaker Melissa Mark-Viverito, Senator Gustavo Rivera (SD-33), Assemblmembes Karim Camara (AD-43) and Gabriela Rosa (AD-72), Council Members Mark Levine (CD-7) and Ydanis Rodriguez (CD-10), the Barack Obama Democratic Club of Upper Manhattan, and the Democratic Club of El Barrio and East Harlem.
Pensions for Detroit’s city workers are in great jeopardy in a federal bankruptcy court. The events leading up to the current situation in Detroit are unique. But Tea Party Republicans across the country (and some Democrats as well) are using the tragic circumstances of Detroit as a hammer of hysteria against public employee benefits everywhere.

Batten down the hatches, brothers and sisters. “Detroit” may be coming to a city or town near you.

Detroit and its public employees, both active and retired, have been under the gun since 2011. That is the year Tea Party-inspired Republicans gained control of the Michigan governorship as well as both houses of the legislature.

In 2011 and 2012, the state government slashed taxes on corporations and the wealthy, enacted punitive taxes on the poor and pushed through a “right to work” law stripping workers of union protection.

Detroit – a strongly working class, majority African-American and defiantly anti-Tea Party city – was in the Republican crosshairs.

Economic decay had made Detroit vulnerable. Over the years, as the auto industry declined, so had the population and tax base. So much of the city has been left empty that hundreds of acres are being converted to farmland. The public workforce has been downsized, schools have been closed, and public services across the board contracted and eroded. City government survived by cannibalizing itself. Yet, bankruptcy was not on the horizon.

Then two further blows hit.

First came the crisis precipitated by the Wall Street meltdown. Jobs, sales and real estate values fell into a sinkhole. This further eroded revenues while also opening a hole in the pension funds. And then Tea Party dogma struck. As the city government wrestled with cash flow problems, the Michigan Republicans drastically cut state funding for Detroit, leaving the city temporarily without cash to pay the bills.

Declaring Detroit in danger, the governor appointed an emergency manager with sweeping powers. The emergency manager did not arrange state help to get through the cash flow crunch. Instead, he took the opportunity to go to federal court and file for bankruptcy.

Immediately, the public pension plans became the focus of attention, as though they had caused the crisis. As part of the proposed bankruptcy reorganization, the emergency manager is demanding deep cuts in pension payments, and has been sparring with the bankruptcy judge over how deep. The emergency manager is proposing cuts in the range of a quarter to a third for non-uniformed employees. Financial interests, in turn, have gone to court to claim that the proposal discriminates against bondholders and the pension cuts should be still deeper.

Putting Detroit in bankruptcy was a political move, not an economic or legal necessity. The same is true for cutting the pensions. These proposed cuts highlight a key point of agreement between Wall Street and the Tea Party: make people whose only crime was to go to work every day pay for the crisis.

The extremity of Detroit’s situation makes it seem unique. But key elements of the story are not. Budget problems are not limited to Detroit. Neither are tax breaks for the rich, which underlie those problems as much as economic decay. And, above all, public pensions everywhere are in the crosshairs of Wall Street and the Tea Party. We should not forget that in 2012 Governor Cuomo proposed replacing public sector pensions for new employees with a 401(k).

Together with supporting public employees in Detroit who are trying to resist this onslaught, we want to learn from their difficulties to make sure it does not happen here.
Vice President Tony Utano and Signal Chair John Chiarello stopped by to say hello to a class of Signal Helpers prepping for the Signal Maintainer’s practical exam.

TUF-ing It Out in Brooklyn

OUR TRAINING & UPGRADE AND CHILDCARE funds have a new home on the 4th floor of 195 Montague Street in Brooklyn.

The move brings the funds’ offices and classrooms back into close proximity with Local 100’s union hall, one floor away.

This has numerous benefits, including the ability to use Local 100 meeting rooms as additional classroom space when needed, as happened recently with a special program to prepare Signal Helpers for the Signal Maintainers practical exam.

The Montague Street location is highly accessible by subway, the A, C, F, R, 2, 3, 4, and 5 trains, as well as a number of bus lines that stop half a block away.

Members shown at the defensive driving class at the new Training & Upgrading facility at 195 Montague Street, Brooklyn.
Local 100 TA/OA members have given their stamp of approval in landslide fashion to the union’s new 5-year contract with the MTA that shatters the “state pattern” of three years of zeroes, and substantially exceeds the projected City pattern of at least 18 months of zero increases. The final tally was 12,458 to accept and 2,681 to reject, an impressive 82 percent YES vote. The American Arbitration Association (AAA) conducted the secret mail ballot vote. The Local 100 Executive Board had voted 33-0 to endorse the agreement and urge the membership to accept its terms.

The TWU package provides raises in every year, full pay retroactivity to Jan. 16, 2012, new dental and vision plans, and millions more in other benefits (see sidebar). In all, the contract includes $525 million in new wages over the five year period and in excess of $100 million more to cover improved and new benefits, including several breakthrough benefits covering transit families from the cradle to the grave.

The contract was reached in the early hours of April 17, 2014 after several days of intense negotiations between Local 100 President John Samuelsen and MTA CEO Thomas Prendergast.

The window of opportunity opened just days after the union’s annual Lobby Day pilgrimage to Albany in late March during which hundreds of transit workers, wearing “MTA MUST PAY” t-shirts, spread the message among the state’s decision makers that the union would not settle for the “state pattern” of zero increases for three years. That impressive showing came just a few months after nearly 8,000 transit workers flooded lower Manhattan for a rally on the first anniversary of Superstorm Sandy to demand a fair contract.

In the critical hours before settlement, Samuelsen reached out to Gov. Andrew Cuomo to involve himself in the process to break the more than two-year stalemate in the negotiations.

Gov. Cuomo sent in top aide Howard Glazer, the Director of Operations for the State of New York, to assist in the talks, and then stepped in himself at the end to close the deal.

Gov. Cuomo, Mr. Glazer, MTA CEO Prendergast and Local 100 President Samuelsen, finally announced the settlement at a press conference at the Governor’s offices in Manhattan at 2:30 pm on April 17, 2014.

Gov. Cuomo said that the new agreement is “fair, on the financial terms. I think it’s also innovative in some of the developments for the employees, and their families, that takes into consideration the challenges that people are facing today.” Cuomo lav-
lished praise on the workforce for their efforts in restoring service and rebuilding damaged portions of the system after Superstorm Sandy, calling transit workers “the epitome of great public servants.”

The contract settlement brought words of praise from many quarters. Mario Cilento, President the New York State Federation of Labor, AFL-CIO, said that the agreement “will ensure the economic security and well-being of thousands of transit employees and their families.” He added: “groundbreaking provisions such as first time ever paid maternity and paternity leave, as well as measures to ensure bus operator safety, are testaments to the union’s perseverance.”

Vincent Alvarez, President of the New York City Central Labor Council, AFL-CIO, said: “The TWU Local 100 contract is a great victory for the dedicated workers, and for the riding public who have come to depend on the first class service provided by our city’s transit professionals.”

Danny Cassella, president of ATU Local 726, said: “Two years ago, all NYC transit workers were facing a disastrous situation . . . now there is a contract settlement which has shattered the state pattern and moved the MTA far off their initial ‘three zeroes’ bargaining position.”

Gov. Cuomo Praises Transit Workers at Contract Press Conference

Gov. Andrew Cuomo, with MTA CEO Tom Prendergast seated to his right and Local 100 President John Samuelsen to his left, announced settlement of TWU’s contract dispute with the MTA at a press conference on April 17, 2014 at the Governor’s midtown Manhattan offices. Following are the Governor’s words, verbatim, as he referenced the union and transit workers:

“President John Samuelsen is a phenomenal labor leader. I’ve worked with many, and he is truly a tough negotiator on behalf of his union, as he should be. And I want to applaud him on this contract and on these terms. It’s fair, on the financial terms. I think it’s also innovative in some of the developments for the employees, and their families, that takes into consideration the challenges that people are facing today. And I applaud him on a piece of work well done.

“I also applaud the transit workers, who have done a great job. They are the epitome of great public servants. What they did during Hurricane Sandy I watched first hand under truly difficult circumstances. And they were there, day after day after day, day in and day out, dealing with things no one had ever seen before. You never saw a flooding of tunnels before, you never saw flooding of subway systems before, the way we saw it. And the transit workers were really magnificent.”

Gov. Andrew Cuomo, April 17, 2014
TWU Local 100’s arduous two-year contract campaign came to a successful conclusion on April 17 when Local 100 President John Samuelsen walked into a midtown conference room alongside Governor Andrew Cuomo to announce a tentative settlement with the MTA that brought raises in every year as well as retro pay and big benefit enhancements.

The 2012-2014 contract fight is a compelling new chapter in TWU’s contract legacy – decidedly different from many past fights when tough rhetoric, sabre rattling and strike deadlines often produced contracts, but also produced three city-wide strikes in 1966, 1980 and 2005.

As the clock ticked down toward January 15, 2012, the union’s leadership, with Executive Board approval, decided on a new course driven by national and regional economies in free fall, further complicated by a new “state pattern” set in late 2011 by the two largest state unions consisting of three years of zero increases, unpaid furloughs and big health care givebacks.

Local 100’s new course was to abandon the strike threat and hard deadlines. Instead the union would continue negotiating, organizing union strength internally, and building public and political support for our position through paid and unpaid public campaigns.

The New York City unions found themselves in a similar boat with Mayor Bloomberg taking a hard line against raises. Everyone battened down the hatches to wait for a better economy and a friendlier political atmosphere.

For the better part of 2012, former MTA CEO Joe Lhota preached the gospel of a “net zero” contract for transit workers, while ignoring a slowly recovering economy, the increased MTA
ridership on buses and trains, and his own agency’s improving finances. The union launched a public campaign, MTA CAN PAY, in which we highlighted the MTA’s improving numbers and pointed out agency accounts that could be tapped for a contract deal. A second campaign, MONEY THROWN AWAY, focused on the MTA’s gross inefficiency in managing its finances, in particular its mega projects which were routinely plagued by multi-year delays and cost overruns in the hundreds of millions of dollars.

When Hurricane Sandy roared in on October 29, 2012 the transit system was safely secured and transit workers were ready to ride out the storm and then restore service to millions of commuters. Our quick and efficient work garnered praise from all quarters. Even our most ardent detractors among the local newspaper’s editorial boards heaped praise on the workforce. Billions of federal dollars started pouring in, creating a mini-boom in transit construction, which shored up MTA finances.

Outside of transit, the economy was showing signs of life as it recovered from the Great Recession of 2007-2010. Yet nothing was on the table that TWU Local 100’s leadership considered acceptable.

MTA CEO Lhota threw another monkey wrench into negotiations by deciding to quit the MTA to run for Mayor, with his calling card the impressive job we had done during and after Hurricane Sandy.

The extra publicity didn’t hurt TWU Local 100. In fact, it added to a public awareness of the vital role transit workers play in the region’s economy. We began to cultivate that notion in a series of print, broadcast, and internet ads: that Sandy was the most clear-cut case in recent years of transit workers adding value to New York’s economy and deserving to be compensated for it.

It didn’t hurt our case in that election year when New York State Comptroller Tom DiNapoli – always a prominent friend of labor – went out on a political limb for Local 100 on September 28, 2013, telling WCBS that “the MTA is in better shape than it has been in a long time, with $1.9 billion in unanticipated savings.” We immediately affirmed that the new found cash go toward service restorations and to a contract granting raises for the workforce.

In the meantime, the union launched a union-wide organizational effort to build toward a major demonstration on the anniversary of Hurricane Sandy, underscoring our positive publicity campaign. Most observers in the press didn’t expect much, and many didn’t cover it. But those who came on October 29, 2013 were treated to a powerful demonstration of TWU Local 100 power, which brought back memories of the grand rallies and marches of decades earlier. We had done our internal preparation well, giving enough oxygen to union activists to bring out an energized rank and file and make the smoldering embers burst into flame.

In another positive for the public sector, the Mayoral contest was won by former Public Advocate Bill de Blasio. Had Lhota taken the City’s highest office, unions would have had a Bloomberg clone to contend with, and the former MTA manager would have had a big role in contract negotiations, keeping net zero alive.

By contrast, de Blasio promised to put retro pay back on the table. The negotiating climate was improving for all unions.

On December 21, 2013, the MTA’s long-held position that it was unable to pay raises fell apart. A Presidential Emergency Board, appointed by President Obama issued a recommendation for raises in every year for workers at the Long Island Rail Road. Now the government underscored TWU’s long held position that the MTA CAN PAY.

TWU Local 100’s Lobby Day, which brought over 1200 transit workers to Albany on March 25 with a new message that the MTA MUST PAY, seemed to pry open a window of opportunity for settlement.

Politics, it is said, is the art of the possible. As April began, both parties clearly had something to gain. The Governor wanted to end a labor dispute that was growing increasingly uncomfortable. And TWU Local 100 leaders knew that Bill de Blasio would soon have to put his offer to City unions on the table – and that could set a binding precedent for our contract, as it had in the past.

We knew the MTA had the money to deliver raises but we wanted something more: the opportunity to bargain contract items that would elude us in arbitration, such as improved dental and vision, better life insurance, and a free commuter pass. Most of all, we wanted to improve our health care benefits before City contracts were settled that shifted those costs onto the backs of workers.

The stage was set for intense meetings with the MTA and a quick huddle with the Governor and his top advisors where final positions would be staked out and a contract reached. That’s what happened on April 15th and 16th, clearing the way for a joint announcement on April 17.
SOME 1,200 LOCAL 100 MEMBERS PARTICIPATED in the union’s annual bus pilgrimage to Albany to speak directly to legislators about the issues of greatest concern to transit workers.

Buses left sites across the City at 6:00am on March 25th making the three-plus hour ride up the Thruway to the state capital. Members greeted legislators wearing t-shirts proclaiming the number one union goal – a fair contract with the MTA. The shirts read, “Net Zero, No Way: MTA Must Pay.”

Just days after the Lobby Day event, the MTA came off its “net zero” demands and serious talks began. A tentative agreement was reached on April 17, 2014.

The day’s program began with a series of addresses by prominent legislators, most notably State Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli. Other speakers included, Sen. Michael Genaris, Deputy Leader of the Senate Democratic Conference; Sen. Martin Golden, Asst. Senate Majority Whip; Assemblyman Walter Mosely, chief sponsor of the Bus Partition Bill; Sen. Adriano Espaillat, Chair, Senate Puerto Rican/Latino Caucus; Sen. Ruth Hassell-Thompson, Senate Minority Conference, and Sen. Joseph Roback, Chair, Committee on Transportation.

New York State AFL-CIO President Mario Cilento brought the greetings of New York’s 2 million union members, and pledged their support to the Local 100 contract fight.

State Comptroller Thomas DiNapoli scored the MTA
on refusing to share its $1.9 billion budget surplus over the next four years with the workers.

After the speeches, Local 100 President John Samuelsen was joined by two dozen lawmakers at a 1:00pm press conference in the Legislative Office Building pushing back against the Governor’s recent $40 million ‘sweep’ of dedicated transit funds from the MTA’s budget (the final state budget lowered that amount to $30 million).

Bus partitions to prevent assaults were also high on the agenda, with one politician after another vowing to enact

Continued on page 18
A7424/S5684, which would mandate their installation over a proscribed period of time.

After a lively program at the convention center and the press conference, where a group photo was taken, TWU Local 100 members staged a “sit-in” demanding a “fair contract now” on the ‘Million Dollar Staircase’ leading up to the State Senate chambers in the capitol building.

President Samuelsen briefed members on the day’s accomplishments while other top officers held the union’s “no concessions” banner.
Solidarity Pressures UPS to Rehire 250 Workers

Members of Teamsters Local 804 working for UPS joined political leaders and supporters from other unions including TWU Local 100 in a rally at City Hall to protest the firing of up to 250 workers after a walk-out staged by workers in solidarity with a fired brother.

At presstime, we are happy to report that the company, under tremendous public and political pressure, reinstated all 250.

TWU Local 100 was one of several unions in the forefront of supporting our brothers and sisters at Local 804 after management overreacted to a 90-minute walk-out on February 26 to protest the unjust firing of a union brother.

TWU Local 100 Recording Secretary LaTonya Crisp-Sauray took the lead in protesting the firings for Local 100. Her husband, Ronald, was one of the terminated UPS workers.

The dispute began when workers walked off the job February 26, to protest the firing of Jairo Reyes for allegedly changing his reporting time. Management called all 250 into their offices and announced that they would be fired for walking off the job – on a timetable to be decided by management.

Among the public officials expressing outrage the company’s heavy handed tactics included numerous City Council members, Assemblyman Tony Avella, and two citywide officials, Public Advocate Tish James and Comptroller Scott Stringer.

Ms. James said that when she went to UPS headquarters to discuss the matter, she was “shown the door.” She noted that UPS benefits from a lucrative discount program that exempts the company from paying for most of the parking tickets it incurs. Councilmembers noted the City’s $43 million in contracts with UPS, saying that these contracts should be reconsidered if UPS does not restate the fired workers.

WE MOURN OUR LOSS

Local 100 mourns the passing of the following Active and Retired members.


James Hopkins, retired MaBSTOA Bus Operator, on October 23, 2013.

William Bruce, retired Revenue Equipment Maintainer, on December 15, 2013.

Matthew Armstrong, retired TA Bus Operator, on December 1, 2013.

Joseph J. Davis, retired Train Operator, on November 17, 2013.

Solomon C. McNeillage, III, active Train Operator, on November 20, 2013.

Richard Dixon, retired Cleaner, TA, on November 12, 2013.

Leira Glenn, retired MaBSTOA Bus Operator, on November 19, 2013.

Kenneth R. Huguenin, active MaBSTOA Bus Operator, on December 2, 2013.

Dwyke C. Prescott, active Track Worker, on November 17, 2013.

Celeste Atkins, active Cleaner TA, on November 7, 2013.

Alfred F. Anderson, active Cleaner TA, on November 7, 2013.

Anthony Branch, retired Station Agent, on October 30, 2013.

Lennie R. Murray, retired Station Agent, on October 21, 2013.

Mamie G. Peterson, retired Station Agent, on December 8, 2013.

Kim Colwell, active Stations Cleaner, on December 26, 2013.

Rosalind Rivera, active Station Agent, on December 14, 2014.

George M. Varghese, retired Car Maintainer, on December 24, 2013.

Wilbur L. Carpenter, retired Triboro Coach (MTA Bus) mechanic, on January 8, 2013.

Rudolph Stevens, retired TA Bus Operator, on December 27, 2013.
Black History Event Honors Civil Rights Champions John Bland and Bill Lucy

GUESTS PACKED THE THIRD floor of Local 100’s new union hall at 195 Montague Street in Brooklyn for TWU’s 2014 Black History Celebration on Saturday Feb. 22, 2014—an event co-sponsored by the New York Chapter of the Coalition of Black Trade Unionists (CBTU).

Special guests included John Bland, TWU’s International Administrative Vice President and a stalwart of the civil rights movement in Houston, TX, and Bill Lucy, the founder and first President of the national CBTU.

Brooklyn Borough President Eric Adams, New York City Public Advocate Letitia “Tish” James and City Council member Robert Cornegy also attended.

Local 100 President John Samuelsen, Secretary Treasurer Earl Phillips, Recording Secretary Latonya Crisp Sauray, Administrative Vice President Angel Giboyeaux and Vice Presidents Maurice Jenkins and Tony Utano attended, as did TWU International President Harry Lombardo and International Vice President and Transit Division Director Jerome Lafragola. Current CBTU national President Terry Melvin, who is also Secretary Treasurer of the New York State AFL-CIO, was on hand as well.

Texas native John Bland spoke about his battles against Jim Crow through peaceful demonstrations in the early 1960’s. John’s activism played a key role in facilitating the racial integration of lunch counters, movie theaters and other community establishments in Houston.

Bill Lucy, the retired Executive Vice President of national AFSCME, spoke about the founding of the CBTU in 1972 as a means to insure that the concerns of black workers were being heard at the highest levels of the labor movement. Over the past four decades, CBTU has served as a springboard for the advancement of black labor leaders in the movement.
TWU LOCAL 100 MEMBERS AND INVITED GUESTS from other TWU locals turned out on March 15 to mark the Union’s annual Quill-Connolly day, which honors the legacy of TWU founder Mike Quill and Irish labor leader and patriot James Connolly, who was executed by the British for his role in the Easter Rising of 1916.

This year, attendees included Gerry Adams, President of Ireland’s Sinn Fein, and Mary Lou McDonald, a Member of the Irish Parliament for Dublin City, and Vice President of Sinn Fein.

Also at the Hall and speaking about working class solidarity and the fight for fair wages were Joe O’Flynn, General Secretary of SIPTU, Ireland’s largest union, and Eddie Glackin, former chief executive of SIPTU’s Irish Trade Union Trust.

A pall was cast over the gathering, however, by the untimely death of British labor leader Bob Crow, General Secretary of the Rail, Maritime, and Transport Workers, who was scheduled to speak at this year’s Quill Connolly Day event.

A stalwart friend of TWU Local 100 and champion of the working class, Crow was remembered by all who spoke including President John Samuelsen.

Steve Todd, head of the RMT’s maritime division, choked back tears as he eulogized his long-time friend.

President Samuelsen began the event with a moment of silence for Crow, whose death he called “an absolutely devastating blow to his union, the RMT, to the entire British labor movement, and the entire worldwide labor movement.”

The NYCT Emerald Society Pipe and Drum band entertained attendees, as did TWU Local 100’s own Irish tenor, Chris Dolan, a recent retiree from Quill Depot.
Thinking of Retiring?

Call the TWU Local 100 Retirees’ Association
212-873-6000 x 2076, 2077

We will schedule an appointment for you with Pension and Retirement consultant Norman Rosenfeld. Call 5 months before your projected retirement date, so your union can help you plan properly for this enormous decision your life.

THIS VALUABLE SERVICE IS FREE-OF-CHARGE TO ALL MEMBERS IN GOOD STANDING.

AND DON’T FORGET, when you do retire, plan on joining the TWU Local 100 Retirees’ Association!

We are an organization within TWU local 100. We have our own by-laws and Executive Board and make our own decisions. Our mandate and function are to protect, preserve and improve the social and economic status of retirees within the ideals of the trade union movement. We engage in political education, cultural, civic and charitable activities, with the goal of furthering the interests of the organizations and its members.

We engage in, and support through public education and activities, the ongoing efforts by TWU local 100 before federal, New York State and New York City governments to provide a secure and healthy retirement for retired members of TWU Local 100. We also engage in and support actions in Local 100’s efforts to negotiate fair and just terms of its labor agreements that relate to retirement benefits.

Retirees’ Association members have access to supplemental optical, dental, hearing aids, and in-hospital benefits. Find out more. Call the Retirees’ Association, 212-873-6000 ext. 2076, 2077.

TWU Local 100 Retirees’ Association
Mike Tutrone, Director

Upcoming Events Sponsored by the TWU Local 100 Retirees Association

Atlantic City (Bally’s) – Friday, June 27, 2014
Villa Roma Annual Retreat (Callicoon, NY) - Monday, August 18 – Friday, August 22, 2014
Annual Fall Dinner Dance – September 2014
LESS THAN 48 HOURS BEFORE TWU MEMBERS AT Mile Square School Bus were to walk off the job in a long simmering contract dispute, the union and the company reached a tentative settlement that was unanimously endorsed by the negotiating committee.

On Thursday, May 15, 2014 the Mile Square membership had overwhelming voted to strike the following Monday rather than consider the company’s inadequate “last and final” offer from a week earlier.

TWU Administrative Vice President Angel Giboyeaux informed company owner, Harry Rodriguez and the Yonkers, Mount Vernon and New Rochelle School Districts served by Mile Square that the strike would take place on May 19, 2014.

The membership handed out flyers to parents on the last day of school prior to the strike deadline, of the planned walkout.

On Friday afternoon, an emergency session of the Local 100 Executive Board convened to authorize the strike. The vote was 38-0 to approve the job action.

Company owner, Rodriguez, who had played hardball throughout the process, had a change of heart in the face of a unified membership. He reached out to Local 100 President John Samuelsen and asked for new talks.

The two sides met at the union’s satellite office on Saw Mill River Rd. in Yonkers on May 17 and hammered out a settlement within a few hours.

The contract settlement is the culmination of a long campaign which intensified some months ago. The union upped the ante earlier this year with a big rally and press conference in bitter cold outside the Mile Square school bus company’s main depot in Yonkers.
Our 80th Anniversary

By James Gannon

The remarkable, often tumultuous journey of TWU that has spanned six wars, 11 Mayors and three City-wide transit strikes, began ironically in unremarkable fashion 80 years ago at a long gone coffee shop called Stewart’s Cafe at Columbus Circle.

It was April 12, 1934, the day that a small group of transit workers led by IRT Change-maker Michael J. Quill met with representatives of the socialist party (the only organization willing to pledge substantial financial support) to plan formation of a union based on the industrial model of the auto, steel, clothing and mine workers.

1934 marked a dangerous but opportune time for unionization. The transit companies were taking full advantage of the nation’s deep depression, which had spawned unemployment rates as high as 25 percent. For every transit job available, there were thousands of applicants.

The transit companies used these hard times to hire and fire at will, slash wages and impose even harsher terms of employment on the workers. Yet by the same token, the workers were sick and tired of paltry wages, aggressive, Neanderthal bosses and medieval working conditions.

Numerous attempts to unionize New York’s vast population of transit workers along craft lines enjoyed some successes in previous years, but always ultimately failed. Strikes in 1905, 1910, 1916 and 1918 had been systematically broken by the transit companies, which spent huge sums of money to hire scabs and a veritable army of plain clothes goons and spies, known as beakies (named for the private security company’s boss, H.L. Beakie) to intimidate the workers.

The IRT further discouraged union organization by forming its own sham company-dominated “union” known as “the Brotherhood” that was largely despised by the workers.

But TWU’s founders brought a different message of hope, attacking the old order with the slogan: “One Industry, One Union, One Fight.”

The fledgling organization immediately began publishing its own newspaper called the Transport Workers Bulletin. Its first edition in 1934 showed the workers that TWU was going to be different. “After a long period of misery, the rank and file transport workers have definitely decided to launch a campaign for the building of a new union,” the Bulletin declared, and it called upon “all transport workers to join and build this new indepen-
dent rank and file Transport Workers Union.”

The Bulletin trashed the company unions as “tools of the bosses . . . and responsible for the present miserable wages, long hours, increasing speed-ups and rotten working conditions in the transport industry.”

That first edition of the Bulletin also printed the new organization’s mission statement, quite radical for the day. “The Transport Workers Union is the only militant union of workers on all city traction lines, controlled by the rank and file workers in the industry. Our aim is at all times to safeguard, protect and improve the working conditions and living standards of all transport workers regardless of race, color, creed, nationality, or political views or affiliations. We are based firmly on the principle of industrial unionism and militant struggle and against company unionism and craft unionism.”

Much of TWU’s early success must be attributed to a very special kind of leader. He was Michael J. Quill, an Irish-born militant who was a unique blend of courage and charisma. He was a dynamic public speaker and a public relations genius, who captured the media of the day perhaps better than any labor leader in history.

Upon TWU’s 25th Anniversary in 1959, Quill reflected on what had been accomplished. He said: “Perhaps our greatest and most lasting contribution is TWU’s achievement in restoring the rights of citizenship and dignity to the individual workers . . . freedom from fear, freedom from want, freedom to speak one’s mind – this is the measure of security established by our strong union organization.”
New Quality Agreement Establishes 401(k)

School bus drivers and mechanics at Quality/Brothers in Brooklyn got a respite from the turmoil in the school bus industry within the five boroughs when Local 100 negotiated a one-year contract upping wage rates and establishing a 401(k) plan with company matching money recently.

The members at Quality Transportation and Brothers Transportation, working out of two shops in Mill Basin and Cypress Hills, had voted to join TWU Local 100 a few months earlier. They voted in the new agreement by a margin of 65-10. Under the contract, which covers the current school year, all drivers not at top scale will see a $10/week pay bump and will keep the winter break as a paid vacation. Vacations increase with seniority and there are paid holidays when school is closed.

The 401(k), an important new feature at the Quality workplace, obligates the employer to match employee contributions with up to $1,800 in contributions for the current school year. Unlike provisions in many other school bus contracts, full-time drivers at Quality are guaranteed 40-hour work weeks while school is in session. The contract also obligates management to re-open negotiations if new routes or extensions are awarded to the company by the NYC Department of Education.

Supertrans Members Approve New Contract, Unanimously

In Riverdale, our members at Supertrans who drive pupils to three prestigious private schools are getting retro pay back to September of 2012 and increases of 10.75% through September of 2015. The contract was unanimously ratified by drivers, monitors and mechanics who voted in December of 2013. Local 100 represents some 130 employees at Supertrans who will also be receiving bumps in uniform, shoe and tool allowances. Also, 401(k) contribution limits were raised slightly in the memorandum of agreement, which further includes improved language on disciplinary procedures. The life insurance benefit was raised to $20,000.

New Westchester ‘Satellite’ Office Opens Its Doors

A majority of TWU Local 100 members in Westchester can now walk to their own union hall at 347 Saw Mill River Road in Yonkers. The new hall, better located and twice the size of the previous office, is just three blocks from Liberty Lines, a block from Mile Square, and six blocks from Royal Coach. It is now open for business. Union reps will be on hand during regular business hours, 9 to 5, and can be reached by phone at 914-595-0026 and by fax at 914-595-0012. Watch for a new TWU awning to go up on the storefront in the next few weeks as we gear up for a grand opening, according to Angel Giboyeaux, Administrative Vice President.
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