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Transport Workers BULLETIN



Repeat Offender Targets Transit Workers

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Union Rallies at Utica Avenue

Pres. Davis & RTO VP Gomez at Train Operator's Hospital Bed on October 11th.



Transit Worker Artifacts Displayed At 9/11 Museum

PAGE 10

Member Strong

RICHARD DAVIS, PRESIDENT

Close to the Edge

LAWLESSNESS IN OUR TRANSIT SYSTEM HAS BECOME endemic. This is particularly egregious when repeat offenders are coming back, again and again, to abuse the public transit system by attacking those who make it run. More can be done. Let's get down to specifics.

Even if police are on the platform, they will not be able to prevent all crimes. Consider the case of Train Operator Myran Pollack, who was set upon October 9th by a violent ex-con with an extensive criminal record. Jonathan Davalos, 27, took out a knife, which was over a foot long, and proceeded to stab Brother Pollack for no apparent reason. Cops were nearby – and they saved his life.

Yet Davalos, who had a prior conviction for assaulting a Conductor in January of 2020, should not have been in the transit system at all. He was recently released from Sing Sing for assaulting an MTA train conductor back in

“Whenever anyone assaults an MTA worker, the judge needs to establish the transit system as a no-go zone for that person, expanding the order of protection for the immediate victims to cover every transit location.”

January of 2020. That means one thing – he should have been banned from the system for life.

MTA CEO Janno Lieber declared that Alexander Wright, another felon with a long record, who brutally beat CTA Anthony Nelson, is banned from transit. That should be the standard for every perp who attacks a transit worker – and the MTA's own police force, which is mainly assigned to the LIRR and Metro North – must be redeployed to enforce these bans.

Whenever anyone assaults an MTA worker, the judge needs to establish the transit system as a no-go zone for that person, expanding the order of protection for the immediate victims to cover every transit location. In addition, the MTA needs to step up and assign two Train Operators to each train so that they can double up to clear trains at terminals – which is what got Myran Pollack accosted by Davalos.

As RTO VP Canella Gomez said, if the MTA has hundreds of millions to spend on elevators, on renovations, and on new projects, they have the money to ensure our members can go home safe to their families.



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Transport Workers

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BULLETIN

5 Bus Service Cuts Reversed

When management abruptly stopped covering open work, we won a court injunction after the MTA was found to have not followed the law.



8-9 Family Day Returns to Brooklyn

Brooklyn has the most Local 100 members – and it's only fitting that Family Day is back on the boardwalk at MCU Park.



13 Union Pushes MTA Policy Changes

After another brutal stabbing, Union leadership calls for specific changes in MTA policy to protect public-facing workers.



30-33 The Past Lives in New Photos

Summer interns have opened a window on our past, scanning ancient negatives with state-of-the-art equipment.



On the Cover

We rallied at the Utica Ave. stop where Train Operator was brutally stabbed, calling for changes in MTA policy; Pres. Davis and RTO VP Gomez at his bedside at the Kings County Hospital ICU.

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Union Injunction Stopped Summer Bus Cuts

On Friday, July 12, TA management decided not to cover any open work throughout the system, from Staten Island to the Bronx. Over 150 runs weren't covered in just two Brooklyn depots. Schedules were blown out of the water and service was immediately affected. The situation was the same across all five boroughs.

The union moved fast and filed multiple grievances, attacking management's violation of agreements on safety, pick rights, and wages. Union Attorney Arthur Schwartz was assigned the job of filing a court injunction by President Richard Davis, and did that forthwith, conferring with the VP's of TWU Local 100's three Bus Departments – TA Surface, MaBSTOA, and MTA Bus.

We notified the media about the real reason for the MTA's service cut – an attempt by the MTA to make a political point. The current budget was locked in for this fiscal year – so there was no justification for the cuts.

On July 18th, less than a week after management hit the City with service cuts, New York State Justice Arthur Engoron heard arguments from both sides, with Schwartz going up against the MTA's white shoe law firm of Proskauer Rose, which denied that cuts were actually taking place.

In court, TWU Local 100 attorney Arthur Schwartz offered to put the TASurface VP JP Patafio, MaBSTOA VP Donald Yates, and MTA Bus VP Danny D'Amato — all of whom were in the audience — on the stand to testify to the reality of the cuts.

Proskauer's attorney offered no evidence, so the judge signed a temporary restraining order enjoining New York City Transit from allowing service cuts that were implemented on buses system-wide to continue. He ordered that the agency restore service levels to what they were before the cut began on July 12. Speaking from the bench, Judge Engoron said that he found that the harm to riders from the service cuts was significant and that the union would likely prevail in litigation.



JP Patafio, Don Yates, and Danny D'Amato stand with President Davis and officers in the courthouse



ABC-TV News reports on our court injunction

Speaking outside the courthouse, TWU Local 100 President Richard Davis hailed the decision as a major victory for riders and workers. "The MTA possesses more than sufficient resources to maintain current services — but chooses to withhold them," he said, "exacerbating hardships during a heat wave and displaying complete disregard for commuter safety. This is a big win for the riding public. Our members are the backbone of this city, unlike this dysfunctional authority that legislators hesitate to trust with money."

TAS VP JP Patafio added, "We just stopped the biggest job action against the public by the transit authority and we were glad to do so. The passengers don't deserve service cuts and workers don't deserve to work under such duress. This was a great win for the public. We want to make sure that Transit lives up to its legal obligation, which is to serve the public and not jam them up."

AROUND THE SYSTEM:



Pres. Davis at RTO crew quarters at Stillwell Terminal.

Pres. Davis Brings the 411 on Our Contract

Once our current contract was ratified by the membership and then approved by the MTA board last June, the process of contract implementation began. That meant holding Transit to the letter of the agreement and informing the members about what we won in the package.

In over a dozen visits to work facilities in Buses and Subways, President Davis and Secretary-Treasurer John Chiarello discussed the wage and benefit package, including some of the first-time-ever extras including a \$4,000 essential worker bonus, part to be paid on ratification and part to be paid at the end of 2024, a new autism benefit for families with autistic kids, and a big increase in paid time off for maternity/paternity leave.

They also went over increased bonuses and hourly raises for targeted titles, including \$1,000 for maintainers and an extra \$4 in pay for operating articulated buses.

At MOW quarters, Secretary-Treasurer Chiarello discussed staffing levels and the union's pushback against



Secretary-Treasurer John Chiarello comes into MOW crew quarters with Pres. Davis

contractors doing similar work to our members. He noted that we have been successful in raising pay rates for hard-to-fill titles but those pay rates still fall short of private sector union workers. However, healthcare and pension benefits won by Local 100 far exceed those enjoyed by the private sector. He cited the union's victory in stopping

management from privatizing building maintenance at 130 Livingston Street as an example of a recent pushback against contractors.

President Davis told work crews that he was putting the finishing touches on an enhanced dental benefit which is presented in this issue of the Bulletin.



Bus Operators and Maintainers at Grand Avenue



Davis at Quay Street talking to Station Department



MABSTOA Officers with Pres. Davis



Davis speaks at Bergen Shop

It's Back to Brooklyn for

Family Day made a big splash right by the Coney Island boardwalk as thousands of transit workers and their families showed up on June 1st for softball, face painting and bouncy houses for the kids, and departmental tailgate parties. And of course all the food you could eat (including ice cream). Kids and adults enjoyed video games, talent show performances, and basketball as well. For more photos, scan the QR.



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Family Day 2024!



2nd 9/11 Ceremony Held at Memorial Museum; Transit Artifacts are Displayed

By Alan Saly

Recognition has been a long time coming. 3,500 transit workers responded to the World Trade Center disaster on September 11, 2001, to do jobs no one else could do -- moving crushed cars so first responders could access the site, using work trains to haul out thousands of tons of debris underground, cleaning toxic dust, setting up lighting towers, and restoring communications. Track Workers worked on the pile. Bus and Train Operators brought FDNY and NYPD back and forth, also evacuating civilians.

NYC Transit produced three internal documentaries showing what transit workers did on the pile, and New York State Governor George Pataki praised our efforts. But in the eyes of the general public, transit wasn't recognized as having been there. That recognition was reserved for FDNY, NYPD, EMS, and the Port Authority Police.

When John Samuels was elected President of Local 100 in 2009, he determined to change the narrative and

bring recognition to our 9/11 responders. His efforts were continued by former President Tony Utano, and then by current President Richard Davis.

This summer, transit artifacts showing our operations at 9/11 were installed at the National 9/11 Museum and Memorial at 180 Greenwich Street, the site of the twin towers. They



Glass case in the Museum's Foundation Hall shows transit artifacts to the public. At the case, (left to right): 9/11 Responders Alan Grande, James Hehir, Dominick Spagnolo; TWU Local 100 Secretary-Treasurer John V. Chiarello, National 9/11 Museum and Memorial CEO Elizabeth Hillman, former Local 100 President Tony Utano, Local 100 President Richard Davis, Station VP Robert Kelley, Museum Assistant Curator Amy Weinstein, Acting NYCT President Demetrius Crichlow, Museum Curator Jan Ramirez, and Mario Galvet.



CTA Germany Gordon receives his 9/11 medal



T/M Kevin McCauley and EEM Mario Galvet were instrumental in creating the 9/11 recognition campaign that has led to the installation of transit artifacts at the Museum



Structure Maintainer Tom Sommo receives 9/11 medal



President Davis at the Podium

include two helmets, a work train operator jacket, flashlight, and an ID card carried by a transit worker at the site and a front-page photograph which appeared in the New York Times on September 13, showing a Track Worker on the pile.

In a ceremony on September 18th, seven transit workers – each of whom came down with a 9/11 related health condition and were compensated by the federal government, received medals (one posthumously) designed by Local 100 Executive Board Member Mario Galvet, who was also part of the rescue and recovery effort.

In awarding the medals, Local 100 President Richard Davis said, “Twenty-three years ago, when tragedy struck our City, over 3,500 of

us from New York City Transit didn’t hesitate. We answered the call, heading to Ground Zero with one mission – to aid in the rescue and recovery efforts.

“In one of our finest hours, we stood shoulder to shoulder with first responders, united in service, and driven by our commitment to the City that we love. Today, the 9/11 Museum unveils an exhibit that tells our story. For the first time, the public will see the helmets, radios, and tools that were used by transit workers like you, who stepped forward without a second thought.

“This exhibit cements our place in history, not only as workers but as essential contributors to the recovery of New York after the worst disaster our City has ever faced.”

Elizabeth Hillman, who is the CEO of the National 9/11 Memorial and Museum, also addressed the audience of transit workers who

continues on next page



Brooklyn Councilwoman Inna Vernikov was the driving force behind the first street renaming for a Local 100 9/11 hero, George Atsaves, last May. Brother Atsaves died from a 9/11 related cancer in 2021. His widow Louise and his sons, both NYPD Officers, accepted a 9/11 medal from the Union after his death. 100 Exec Board Member Mario Galvet represented the Union at the renaming of East 13th Street in Brooklyn.





TM John Dunne's widow, Lianne, and children accept posthumous medal from President Davis and dignitaries

continued from previous page

served at 9/11, their families, and union leadership:

"The museum proudly features objects from TWU Local 100 that highlight the critical work done by all those who responded to the World Trade Center immediately and in the days and weeks and months after. These artifacts highlight the heroic efforts of thousands of TWU workers who focused on searching clearing and rebuilding the site.

"We recognize the courage and sacrifices of the 911 rescue recovery and relief workers," she added, "and I'm grateful for the relationship we've been able to build over the years between our organizations. I'd also like to acknowledge your members, who are sick or have died from 9/11 related illnesses. Through artifacts like the ones



Hard hat worn by Work Train Operator Hector Soto on exhibit

Galvet shows the audience the photo of a Track Worker that appeared on the cover of the NY Times, taken on Sept. 12th

that you loaned to us and events like tonight, we are committed to ensuring that their sacrifices will be honored and remembered for generations to come."

Former President Tony Utano, who made the 911 Recognition project a priority for his administration, said:

"I want to thank Elizabeth [Hillman]. When we started this fight, I went to talk to her. She was very open to the idea. And now I can take my grandchildren and my kids here. I'm going to tell them the story – how their grandpas, their grandmas, their parents – they all responded. We're always there for the city, and we'll always be there for the city."



This NY Times cover photo from Sept 12th is featured in the Museum's collection



Union 911 Medals on display before the awards



Union leadership addresses news cameras outside courtroom where Jonathan Davalos was ordered held without bail.

As Stabbing Victim Recovers Changes in MTA Policy Urgently Needed

You're clearing the 4 train at Utica Avenue so it can be put back in service. All of a sudden, you're being chased down the platform by a knife-wielding ex-con. Dirty Harry is not around to blow the psycho away – that job is up to the NYPD, and they respond quickly, arresting the suspect, but not before you've been stabbed nine times.

Responding to Kings County Hospital with RTO VP Canella Gomez, Local 100 President Richard Davis had twin concerns: make sure Train Operator Myran Pollack's family is assisted in any way possible, and find any weakness in NYC Transit's operating procedures that can be changed to ensure this doesn't happen again.

At Pollack's hospital bed two days later – when Pollack had recovered enough to speak – Davis and Gomez had a first-hand account from him about what happened on the morning of October 8th in Brooklyn. He spoke of having eye contact with the stabber, 27-year old Jonathan Davalos, who appeared to be shaking and in some distress before he suddenly turned on the Train Operator. They learned that the attack happened so fast that police officers and national guardsmen, stationed at the location, were unable to prevent the injuries – although they arguably saved his life.

The Union swiftly organized to pack the courtroom for Davalos's arraignment in Brooklyn central booking, on October 9th, where the presence of so many transit workers

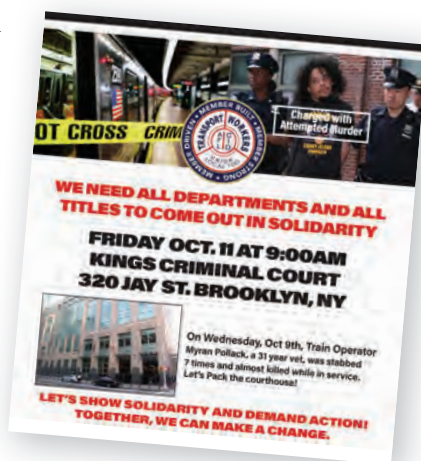
ensured that the judge had Davalos remanded to custody without bail. That status was confirmed on October 11th at Kings County Supreme Court, when we again filled the courtroom and Davalos, charged with attempted murder, was ruled ineligible for bail with a new court date set for January 23, 2025.

Outside the courtroom, President Richard Davis told the media that MTA CEO Janno Lieber must order the

MTA Police to have a higher-level presence at New York City Transit locations rather than the LIRR and Metro North. He called for judges to expand the order of protection issued against perpetrators covering their victims to be expanded to include the transit system. Along with RTO VP Canella Gomez, he also called for NYCT to change operating procedures to assign two Train Operators to each train so that they together could clear the cars at the end of their runs.

"It's a proven fact that cleaning out trains is no longer safe," Gomez said. "We need the MTA to authorize policy changes. Our members' safety is the number one priority and it's time for them to open up the checkbook... WE need the MTA to use their own police forces in New York City Transit at these locations where trains need to be cleaned out.

"These changes have to happen – it's either going to be the easy way, when we sit down and we work together, or there will be changes the hard way."



In Brooklyn, Labor Gets Its Due

A high-wattage political dinner for the Kings County Democratic Party brought out House Minority Leader Hakeem Jeffries, Gov. Kathy Hochul, NYS AG Tish James, Comptroller Tom DiNapoli, and a host of lesser lights to Giando on the Water, a catering hall on the Williamsburg waterfront.

TWU Local 100 President Richard Davis, one of five major union sponsors of the event, accepted an award for outstanding service to the Brooklyn community – only fitting, since more Local 100 members live in this borough than anywhere else. The late-October dinner came just prior to the 2024 election, with the stakes high in national races. Here in Brooklyn, however, outcomes were not in doubt. These power players will remain in charge.



NYS Comptroller Tom DiNapoli and Pres. Davis with the evening's host, Brooklyn Democratic party chair Rodneyse Bichotte Hermelyn.



NYS Attorney General Letitia "Tish" James with her longtime union allies. We've been with her since she was a City Councilwoman. Now she's on the national stage.



Pres. Davis takes a moment with rising star Assemblyman Alex Bores, who represents Manhattan's "silk stocking" district on the Upper East Side.



A major concern for the union is swift justice for anyone assaulting a transit worker. Much of that power is in the hands of Brooklyn DA Eric Gonzales.





Pres. Davis spends a few minutes talking semi-privately to NYS Governor Kathy Hochul, who controls the MTA. Next to them is our PAC Director, Sharase DeBouse.



Pres. Davis greets former Brooklyn Democratic Party Boss Frank Seddio, now in line to be a Commissioner at the Board of Elections. Looking on is former President Tony Utano.



At press time, we were wondering if Hakeem Jeffries, now Minority Leader of the House of Representatives, would ascend to the Speaker's job. With Pres. Davis and PAC Director Sharase DeBouse.

TWU Local 100 President Richard Davis, one of five major union sponsors of the event, accepted an award for outstanding service to the Brooklyn community – only fitting, since more Local 100 members live in this borough than anywhere else.



Along with other labor leaders, President Davis picks up a recognition award from the Kings County Democratic County Committee on behalf of our 44,000 members.



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TWU LOCAL 100 GIVES YOU
A NEW REASON
TO SMILE



New Dental Plan Expands Network; Implants Covered in Full

After months of negotiations, Local 100 has reached an agreement with a new provider, EmblemHealth, to significantly improve our dental benefits. Additional funding came from the employer as part of our 2023-2026 contract agreement. It covers all TA/OA/MTA Bus members as well as members employed by Liberty Lines in Westchester.

The plan is a big improvement from our previous coverage, and includes 13,553 dentists in New York and New Jersey, and 415,000 + nationwide.

The new benefits came online on October 15th, with enrollment cards being mailed out to all covered members. Just scan the QR on this page to see a summary of all benefits and download forms to add or change dependents.

One feature many members will welcome is coverage in full for one implant per member or dependent per year, at no charge with an in-network dentist.

The new plan features an expanded network of top-tier providers and specialists, including:

- 100% coverage of the allowed amount for preventive, basic, major, and orthodontic services.
- One implant per year covered in full
- Bone grafting
- One fluoride treatment per child annually until age 26
- An expanded network for pediatric dental care
- Emergency bedside calls
- Temporary dentures prior to permanent ones
- Higher annual maximums (\$2,000 per individual and \$4,000 per family per calendar year.)

The plan is a big improvement from our previous coverage, and includes 13,553 dentists in New York and New Jersey, and 415,000 + nationwide. This is the result of your union standing strong for you. If you have not received a card, and are represented by TWU Local 100 (OA/TA/MTA Bus, Liberty Lines) call 866-234-8697 for customer service.

Union Rallies at Stabbing Scene

OCTOBER 17 – Hundreds gathered at the Utica Avenue site of the brutal stabbing of Train Operator Myran Pollack to demand changes in MTA policy affecting public-facing transit workers.

With news cameras rolling, President Davis said that our Conductors and Train Operators “will no longer be subjected to clear the trains at terminals without enforcement from the NYPD or the MTA police.”



RTO VP Canella Gomez told the crowd: “We’re out here today because, as everyone knows, there was a brutal attempted murder at Utica Avenue. Enough is enough. We need major policy changes to keep transit workers safe. We need to be protected and respected. We move NYC and it’s time the politicians, the judges, the DA’s, and the City to value us, and start protecting us the way we need to be protected.

“They have to do a better job. And we’re not asking for them to do a better job – we’re demanding that they do a better job.”

The MTA has to fix the related problem of fare evasion, Davis said, not the union membership.

“We are not going to lose our life for a fare,” he said. “Do not push anybody for a fare. If they want the bus, or they want the train, teach them how to drive it and let them take it. You’re not a police officer. You’re not a security agent.”

Davis added that the private security workers hired by the MTA to guard subway entrances often allow people to jump turnstiles without consequences.

Station VP Robert Kelley called for a new policy to take the mentally ill out of the system.

“The old way of doing business, bringing out these support teams, to ask [homeless] people, would you like some place to go? Would you like a hot and a cot? Bullshit. The reality is that they need to do something better. [The transit system] is not for them to dwell in, to do harm to our brothers and sisters. No more!

President Davis added: “We are not a home for people to sleep, to dwell, to bring their luggage into.” The crowd picked up the message and started chanting, “No More EDP’s!” referring to the mental illness that seems to afflict most of those who assault riders and workers in the mass transit system.

“Our lives cannot be at risk because Social Services is not taking care of the citizens,” Davis said. “They have to be able to help those people who need help. Mental health is a struggle. We do not want to target people – but we are not here to be targeted. They need to take the people out of the subway and put them where they belong, get them help.”

He led the crowd in another chant about the riding public: “If we’re hurt, they’re hurt!”

“Without us, they can’t go to school, they can’t make doctors appointments, they can’t go to the grocery store. We are the lifeline of this great state of New York.”



Puerto Rican Day Parade

JUNE 9 – The vibrant Puerto Rican Day Parade took over 5th Avenue on June 9th, and TWU Local 100's contingent took over the parade! Led by Local 100 President Richard Davis and TWU International President John Samuelson, the exuberant march featured the Union's Honor Guard and a music-blasting float. For more photos, scan the QR on this page.



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WORKERS' COMPENSATION – SOCIAL SECURITY DISABILITY – PERSONAL INJURY

Union Pride at the Pride Parade

JUNE 30 – What city has the largest pride event in the world? New York, of course. In keeping with our longstanding tradition of standing up against discrimination, TWU Local 100 brought a bus (from Big Bus Tours, who we represent) and an enthusiastic crowd to the event. RTO VP Canella Gomez and other union leaders stood with President Richard Davis as we let the world see that TWU supports our Union brothers and sisters of all stripes.



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RTO VP Canella Gomez and T/O Magwood



PAC Director Sharase DeBouse with RTO members



Union's contingent was backed up by a Big Bus that rolled on the route



Davis at the parade with Union Officers and rank & file

Bangladeshi Day

JULY 24 – Every year in August, TWU Local 100 Bangladeshi members, many in Station and Car Equipment Departments, celebrate their culture with food, entertainment, and games for the kids. Local 100's commitment to our members is also a commitment to celebrate their culture and history.



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Flags Fly at Dominican Day

AUGUST 13 – TWU Local 100 stepped out for the annual Dominican Day Parade which takes over 6th Avenue in Midtown. President Richard Davis and Liberty Lines Chair Carlos Bernabel led the parade, advancing along with the union's Honor Guard and dozens of enthusiastic union members. Members were treated to great Dominican cuisine before stepping off.



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Chinese Day

SEPTEMBER 20 – Sunset Park's New Phoenix Seafood Restaurant again hosted Local 100's Mid-Autumn Celebration, honoring and acknowledging the many Chinese-American members of the Union. Great food, dancers, and a dragon ceremony made for a great night. For more pix, just scan the QR.



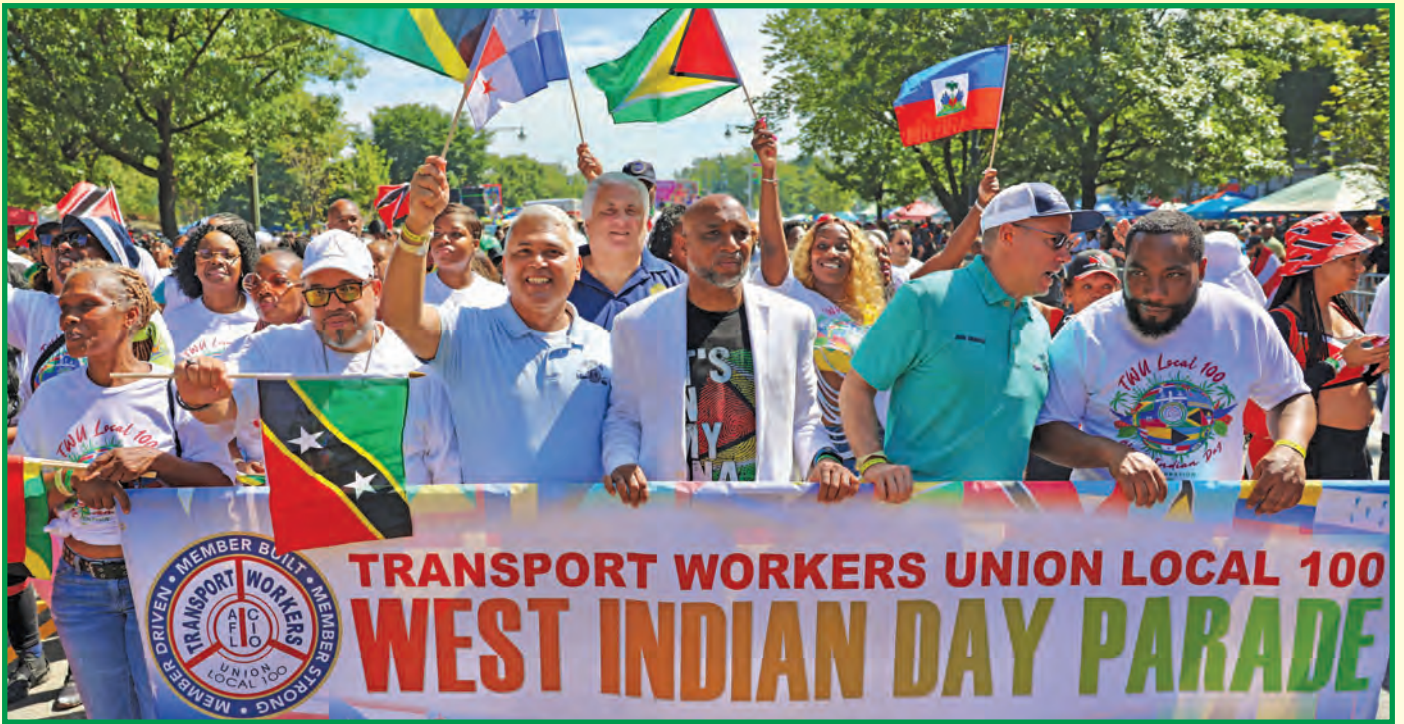
One Love as TWU Rocks WIADCA Parade

SEPTEMBER 2 – It's the biggest parade in New York, claiming the Labor Day holiday as its own. President Richard Davis – the second Caribbean-American at the helm of the Union after Roger Toussaint – has seen our participation grow each year. Every politician who hopes to win or retain high offices comes to the parade – and each one seeks out the TWU. The joyful event features Caribbean cooking provided by your Union as well as bespoke T-shirts.



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Pres. Davis, 2nd Caribbean-American Union President, leads our contingent.



Onlookers cheer our float



Gov. Hochul with Pres. Davis & officers



NYS AG Letitia James with Union officers





Local 100 Celebrates in Harlem

SEPTEMBER 15 – TWU Local 100 rocked Harlem with a union float, a flashy Motorcycle Club, banners and t-shirts. President Davis led the procession from 112th Street and Adam Clayton Powell Blvd to the reviewing stand on 125th. Radio personality Dr. Bob Lee mingled with his favorite union. For more photos, scan the QR.



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Eastern European Day at the Boardwalk

OCTOBER 6 – Tatiana's restaurant was the epicenter of Local 100 social whirl on October 6th as hundreds of union Brothers and Sisters enjoyed a long afternoon of dining, dancing, and show-stopping entertainment. International President John Samuelson joined TWU Local 100 President Richard Davis and top officers as we raised a glass to transit workers from Eastern Europe and Central Asia. MC Grigory Dunichev played host and the weather cooperated with a beautiful day for outside seating. Scan the QR for all the photos.



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NEW *Groundbreaking* **On The Job Death BENEFITS!**

- Canceling outstanding covered loan balances up to a combined \$525,000 in the event of Loss of Life
- This complimentary benefit is our way of saying thank you to all those currently serving as transit workers, whether they are a federal, state, county, or municipal agency employee
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- Off duty stress related covered

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PAC Director Honored

If you want to talk to the people who move New York, you've got to see her first. Sharase DeBouse, our Political Director, is the go-to person for literally hundreds of politicians who want to know where they stand with TWU Local 100. And she'll let them know.

Recently, Sharase was honored by the Bronx Democratic Party "For Your Service and Commitment to the People of the Borough of the Bronx," and by the Westchester Chapter of LCLAA, "In recognition of your Exceptional Leadership and Advocacy of Latino Workers. The high-profile affairs were



attended by political leaders including New York's Governor, Kathy Hochul, who runs the MTA.

In spite of all the flash, plaques, and smiles, these events aren't personal. For DeBouse, it's about wielding the clout of TWU Local 100 wisely. The votes of 44,000 transit workers can make the difference in a close race. A Manhattan County executive in addition to her union job, she relies on her decade of experience in our political operation to make the right call on who's been naughty, and who's been nice – to transit workers.



Wellness for Transit Workers: An Interview with Lalita Dunbar

Lalita Dunbar has been conducting yoga classes and relaxation exercises for transit workers for the past three years at TWU/NYCT wellness events, which are presented by Health Fairs Direct, under the direction of company president Maria Orellana. Dunbar notes that in the beginning, some were reluctant to try the exercises and were skeptical about their effectiveness. Since then, more and more people have been signing up. She is on Instagram at #lalitasyoga.

TWU Bulletin: How do yoga and relaxation contribute to the health of our workforce? What can you say about it from your experience with transit?

Lalita Dunbar: I call it active healthcare, or real healthcare. It's doing something to promote and support your own health and wellbeing, as opposed to something passive – like popping a pill. I'm talking about yoga, relaxation pods, acupuncture, aromatherapy, and therapeutic tactile therapies – massage. I'm talking about practicing helpful movement, stretching, and breathing classes. We create a quiet space, where people can come and reconnect with themselves.

TWU Bulletin: What do Transit workers say about the stress of their jobs?

Dunbar: There is a stoicism in union members, as you can imagine. I can read between the lines. Sometimes, there is a kind of resignation that may come from not being “seen,” and I also see incredible resilience and camaraderie. And a very, very strong support system. This is what I've



Lalita Dunbar directs chair yoga.

experienced – a community of people that really look out for each other, and love each other. That's what I see.

TWU Bulletin: Have you heard about stress on the job?

Dunbar: I have had some stories. There was a Bus Operator who got into some trouble because he hit somebody back who punched him or spat at him, or both. I get to work with wonderful, warm people, who are so strong and resolute. They really keep it buttoned up. I see people holding and carrying a lot of stress, and not having an outlet for it.

TWU Bulletin: You've seen an increased interest in these programs?

Dunbar: Yes, and gratitude. I get a lot of gratitude. A lot of people come up afterwards and say, thank you so much. Thank you for coming. They're just really appreciative. I've seen a



huge difference over the past three years. Now, I see people lining up for therapies.

Can I say this as a foreigner? American culture has not encouraged the practice of self-care. Even if you're sick, or broken, it's all about showing up for your shift, no matter what – and that takes a toll.

TWU Bulletin: We generally perceive people at work as being fine – but when you look at the ads on TV it seems a majority are suffering from serious health issues, including depression.

Dunbar: According to The Commonwealth Fund, the US spends more on health care than any other high-income country, but “Americans are sicker, die younger, and struggle to afford essential health care.” We can do better, especially for the people who are the backbone



of the City and commerce. To me, transit workers are like saints. They're sacrificing themselves for the public good, and for their families, too.

Working with the Union and New York City Transit, one of the things I see happening is that we are able to be innovative. For example, bringing in the relaxation pods has been a very big deal. It's very labor intensive. It's just an example of the lengths that we will go to, to keep the members of the Union inspired and excited about what we're bringing. There's a lot of thought that goes into it.

TWU Bulletin: What is your message to transit workers who are looking to try one of these approaches?

Dunbar: Be open to trying something new. Be prepared to be a little bit vulnerable. You'll be healthier and happier for it.



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TWU/M3 Scholarships Award \$152K to Union Families

In August, we held our annual scholarship awards, with President Richard Davis and M3 CEO John Pescitelli hosting dozens of winning college students from union families. Awards ranged from \$10,000 to \$5,000 to \$2,000 each, all drawn by lottery. A special scholarship in memory of Train Operator Garrett Goble for \$2500 was also awarded. With the grants from this year's event, just under \$1 million has been awarded since 2010.



President Davis and M3 CEO John Pescitelli with RTO Train Operator Chair JonLuke Rodriguez and scholarship winner Christian Alvarez. At right is Trustee Shannon Poland.



MTA Bus Winner Katey Ocasio. At left is PBL VP Danny D'Amato.



Station Winner Kevin Sookway. At left next to Pres. Davis is Station Division Chair Nicolette Browne.



C&S Winner Laverne Riley Watkins. Next to her is C&S Rep Denise Wellington.



Shannon Poland and John Pescitelli with M3's Angela Neal.



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FROM THE EVENT



MOW Winner Nicholas Noel. Behind him at his right is Secretary-Treasurer John Chiarello.



CED Winner Mahruckh Mustafa. CED Exec Board Member Joan Bygrave stands next to her with President Davis.



TAS Winner Naomi Bonilla. At left is TAS Operators Chair Ronald Carter.



MABSTOA Winner Matthew Hendricks. At left representing the Department is Harriette Goodridge-Seymour.



Young Interns Opening a

By Alan Saly

It was 1934. Attempts to organize subway workers had been going on for 30 years – always beaten back by the private companies that ran the system, usually with “the bayonet, the billy club, and the bullet,” to quote the TWU’s founder, Mike Quill.

Twenty-two transit workers were dying in industrial accidents every year on the subway lines. The Great Depression was full-on, with American unemployment at 25%. But millions of people still needed to get from point A to point B in New York every day, and competition for transit jobs was fierce.

In 1935, Congress passed the Wagner Act, which guaranteed the right of private sector employees to organize into trade unions, engage in collective bargaining, and take collective action such as strikes. A small handful of Irish immigrants – and one Hungarian – working in the transit lines in New York City knew the time was ripe to spark a revolution under the umbrella of the Congress of Industrial Organizations (CIO). That was how the TWU began.

Looking through the photographs from those years – the 30’s, 40’s, and 50’s – you can feel the excitement of those times. It was time to fight the bosses, and fight the bosses



Fighting for civil rights, TWU says, Let all be Free and Equal



Bus Operators at a Union office at a bus depot, date unknown

Forge and O’Connell Ran Communications in Our Early Years

In 1930, Maurice Forge started driving for transit after losing his job as a commercial artist. Working at night, he began organizing by day for the fledging Transport Workers Union. His union involvement deepened when he became editor of the TWU Bulletin and the leading voice behind the TWU’s publicity Department. Years after he passed away in 1990, a box containing TWU artifacts was found in his home and brought to the Union. The box includes numerous union buttons, worn as proof of monthly dues payment, delegate pins, and badges. The photos were taken by summer intern Anayjah Tacneaux using a Sony A7C camera with a macro lens attachment. More can be seen on the union’s flickr website.



Window into Our Past

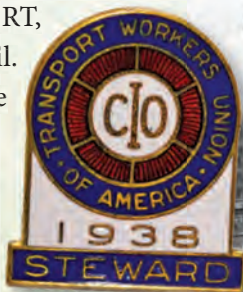


At WPIX studios on May 17, 1951, TWU leaders prepare to go before the cameras

they did. First gathering strength in the IRT, the TWU expanded into other lines as well. When BMT bosses fired two powerhouse workers at the company's power plant on Kent Avenue in Williamsburg, a sit-down strike, run by the TWU, proved successful. Swift organizing on the bus lines followed.

The first Transport Workers Bulletin was published in 1934. The key players in the nascent union were Mike Quill, John Santo, Douglas MacMahon, and Austin Hogan. They were joined soon after by Maurice Forge, a writer, photographer, and graphic designer. He took charge of the Bulletin.

Continues on next page



Motorman and Conductor celebrate their pending retirement



Quill leads strike against Yonkers Bus Co.



TWU is up for a fight as Quill is set to address a rally against Omnibus Corp.

Window into Our Past

Continued from previous page

Every anniversary of the union's founding was a cause for celebration. Vacations were won for the first time, firings were reversed. The 40-hour week replaced the 48-hour week with no loss of pay. Pensions became possible, Union pride was on display, and members wore their monthly TWU buttons, which they received upon the payment of dues.

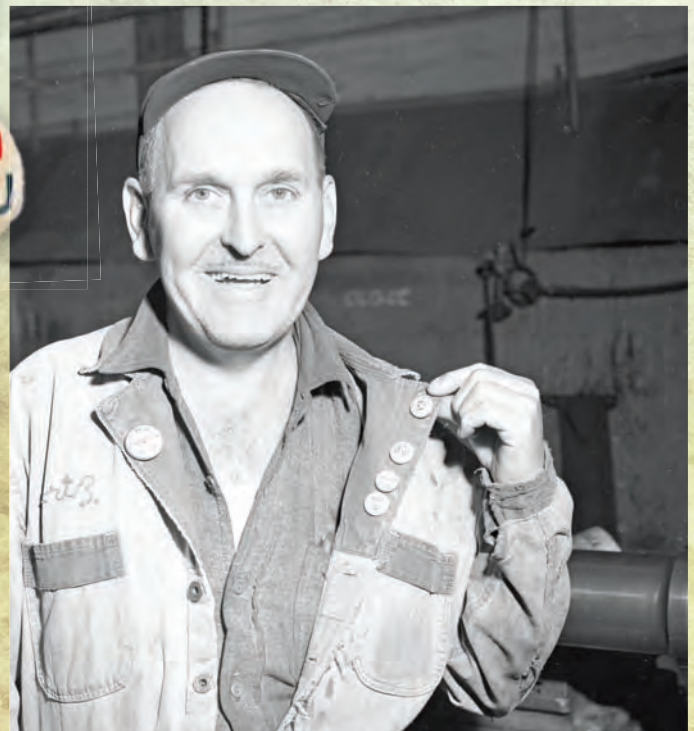
Playing a big part in raising the profile of transit workers was John J. O'Connell, who came up in the ranks, becoming Director of Publicity from 1949 until his retirement in



Bus Strikers bring their families to the picket line



Crew Quarters 242nd st terminal May 23 1956



At 147th Street Garage on Sept. 22, 1955, Union Rep wears his buttons with pride.



Longtime worker gets a watch on January 13, 1958 at the 148th Street Shop

O'Connell in Our Early Years

John O'Connell, a former seminarian and Third Avenue section officer, first appears as a union activist in 1946. Trouble was brewing within the union as charges and counter-charges were leveled about union officers' membership in the Communist Party, which had been instrumental in the TWU's growth. O'Connell helped Quill get on the winning side of that debate, and then went on to serve on the TWU's Executive Board and as Director of Publicity. He wrote an unpublished history of the TWU that you can read here. Scan QR for O'Connell's History of the TWU.



John O'Connell is at far left



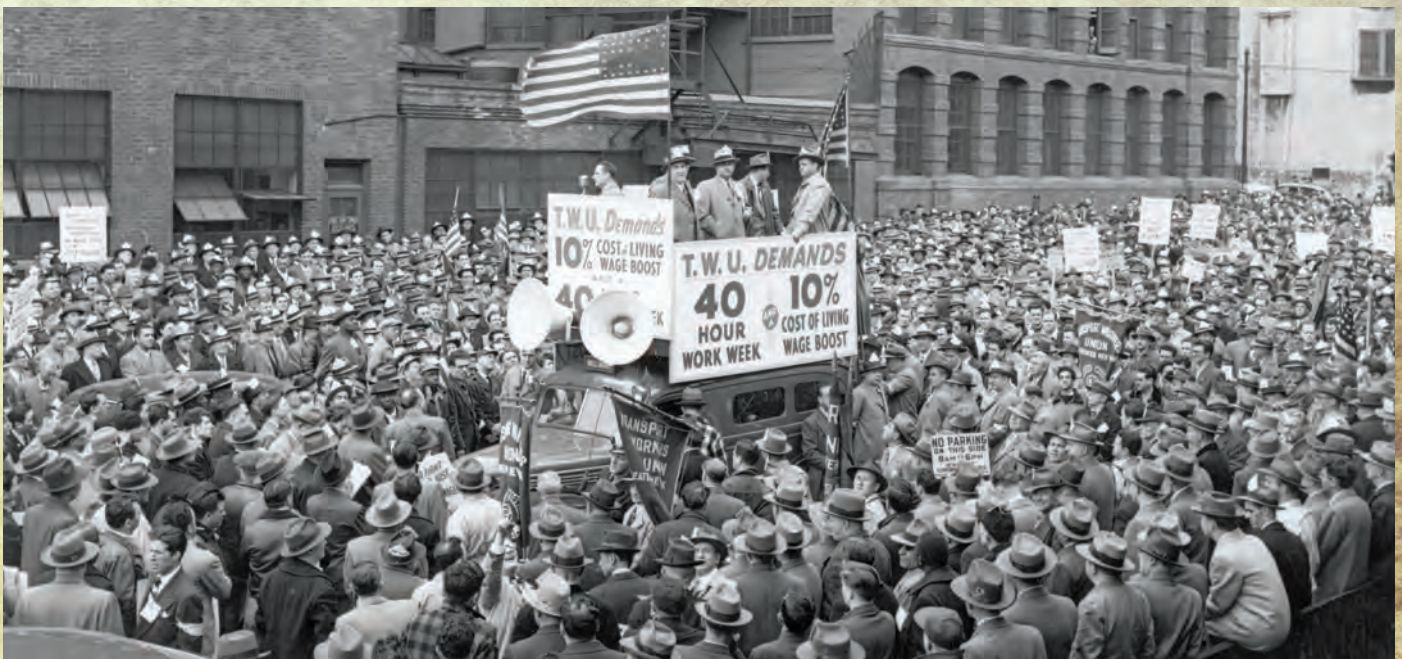
1979. Forge passed away in 1990, and O'Connell died in 1998. But evidence of their work remains, both in the increases in wages, benefits, and working conditions we have won over the years, and also in a trove of photographic negatives at the Union Hall.

That's where Local 100 summer interns Bushra Rahman and Anayjiah Tacneaux came in. Both daughters of Station Agents, Bushra and Anayjiah got to work digitizing the union's old photo files. Using an Epson V850 Scanner and photoshop software, they scanned hundreds of large format 5 x 4 negatives that tell the triumphant story of the growth of TWU Local 100.

You can see some of those photos on these pages. Thank you, interns, for keeping the flame alive!



Bushra Rahman and Anayjiah Tacneaux in front of the Epson scanner which they used to digitize photographic negatives.



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After breaking his wrist on the job, Rick, a bus mechanic, lost eight weeks of work. He was compensated for the eight weeks, and shortly thereafter was told by the Workers' Compensation Board that there would be **"no further action"** on his case. The TA informed him the case was closed. If Rick had not consulted our attorneys, he may never have learned that he was entitled to an additional 53 weeks of compensation for permanent damage to his arm, over and above the money he had already received while recuperating.

Lucinda, a subway cleaner, broke her leg in 5 places after slipping on a wet staircase. She was out of work for fourteen months, and unable to do any type of work at all. Fifteen months after the incident, she returned to light duty work. Everyone she spoke to said she'd never get Social Security Disability if she wasn't permanently and totally disabled. Fortunately, in working on her compensation case, we informed her she was getting incorrect information. We guided her through the application for a disability award. Ultimately, she and her family were found eligible for a Total Family Social Security Disability Benefit Package of \$36,000, for the period of time she was out of work due to her disability, (called a **"closed period,"**) even though she had been paid full salary for part of the time (including Workers' Compensation), and even though she had, by that point, returned to work!

Both Lucinda and Rick thought their injuries should entitle them to more than just pennies on the dollar.

We thought so too! And, we guided them through the processes required to maximize the monetary benefits to which they were entitled. If you're hurt or develop a job-related illness.

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Student Interns Added Value over the Summer

It was a two-way street for eleven children of Union members who came to TWU Local on internships last summer. The paid gigs, lasting 11 weeks, brought the young adults (High School Juniors and Seniors, and College Freshmen), to the Union Hall for placement within six Departments – Accounting, Communications, IT, Production, Member Services, and the President’s Office.

Applicants were selected at random from a pool of about 150 who applied. We made sure that every one of our Operating Departments (CED, MABSTOA, RTO, TAS, PBL, MOW, and Station) were represented by at least one intern. In keeping with our mission of bringing fair wages to our working families, the internships paid \$18/hour.

Comptroller Natasha Kerr, who is in charge of Accounting, said, “We had quite a bit of filing that had to be done – so they did filing, and data entry. They were



Natasha Kerr

very quick. You would give them a task and, within a few minutes, they would be done and looking for more work. One intern who did data entry had no experience with MicroSoft Excel before coming here – and when she left, she was proficient in Excel.”

Ms. Kerr says IT Director Robert Taylor was happy with his intern, who was looking for a career in the same field and who gained from his Union experience.

“We had two in Member Services,” she reports. “They were on the phone with members, interacting personally, and it was a great experience for them.”

With everyone pleased with this trial run, it’s likely that our internship program will be back next summer. Next time, Kerr says, we may select interns based on work experience and resumes, rather than adopting a random screen.





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